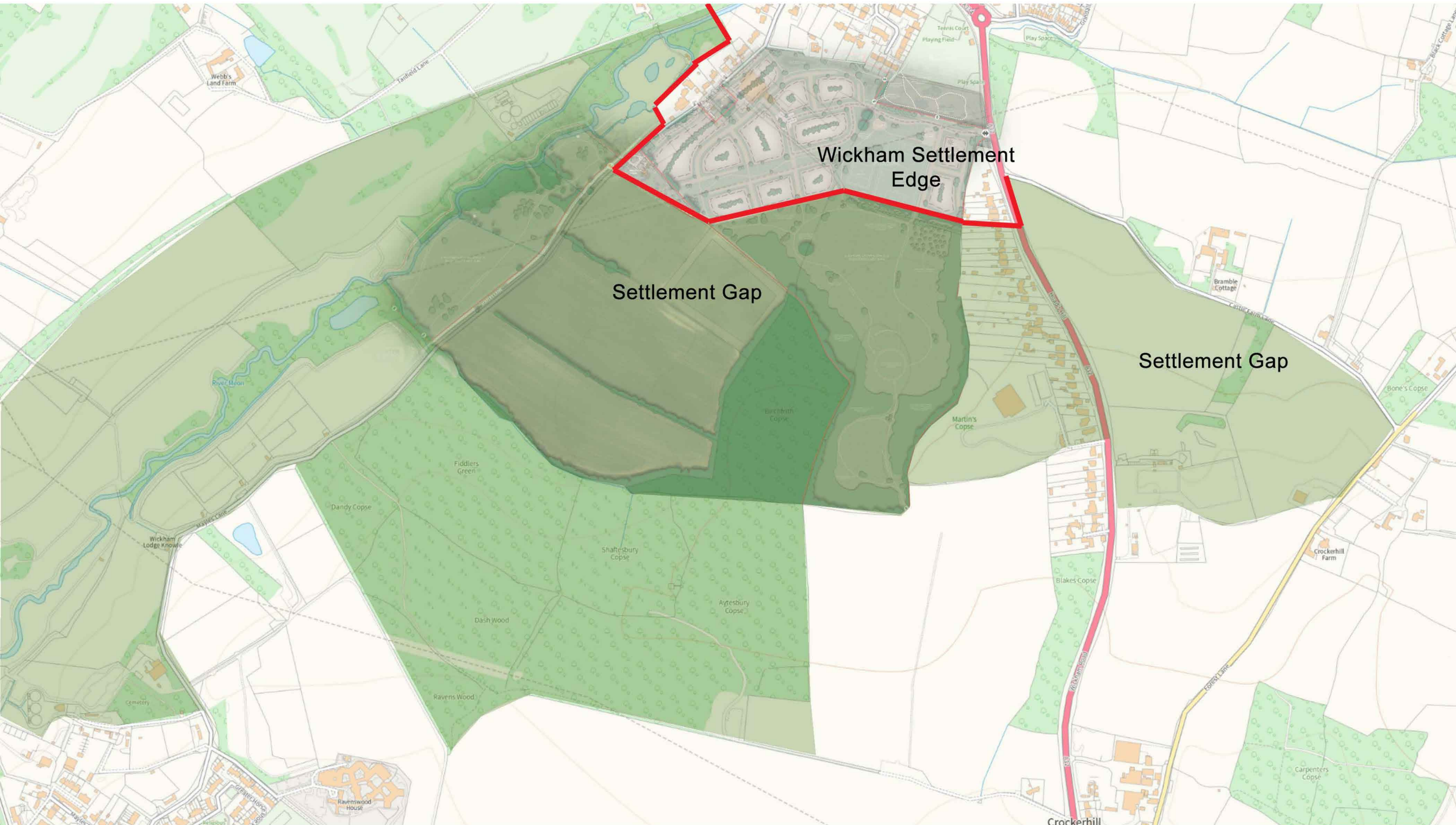


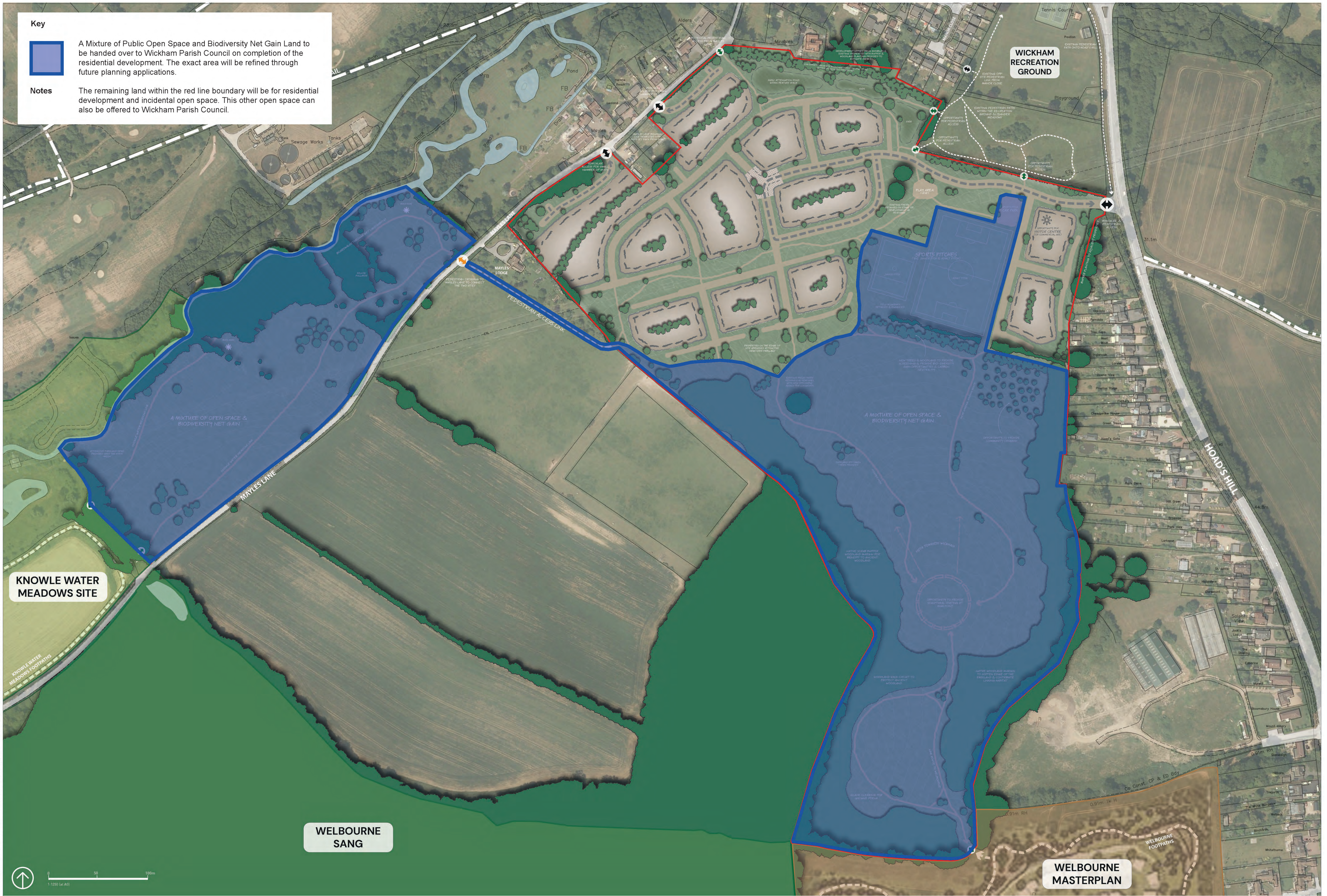
Settlement Boundary Extension



Key

 A Mixture of Public Open Space and Biodiversity Net Gain Land to be handed over to Wickham Parish Council on completion of the residential development. The exact area will be refined through future planning applications.

Notes The remaining land within the red line boundary will be for residential development and incidental open space. This other open space can also be offered to Wickham Parish Council.



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LAND AT MAYLES LANE, WICKHAM - MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK

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Land at Mayles Lane, Wickham

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

October 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Document

1.1 Ubu Design Landscape Architects were commissioned by Macra Limited to undertake a landscape and visual appraisal for Land at Mayles Lane, Wickham, Hampshire for a proposed mixed use development of houses, commercial and community uses, along with open space and new connective pathways.

Aims of the Appraisal

1.2 This appraisal seeks to inform the evolving design and layout of the development through an appraisal of the landscape and visual considerations relating to the site and its setting, through a combination of desktop studies and field survey work. The report aims to:

- Establish a clear understanding of the site and its setting in respect of landscape character and visual amenity;
- Establish an understanding of the proposed development in terms of its relation to landscape character and visual amenity;

1.3 A review of this document will be required if the design of the development progresses. A further document would seek to:

- Identify potential direct and indirect effects of the proposed development upon the landscape;
- Identify potential effects on visual receptors;
- Determine mitigation measures necessary to reduce/eliminate any potential adverse effect on the landscape or visual amenity arising as a result of the proposed development;
- Identify opportunities for enhancement measures; and
- Establish the likely residual effects of the proposed development.

Methodology

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Guidance Documents

1.4 The methodology used to carry out the landscape and visual appraisal of the proposed development is primarily based upon that set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment – 3rd ed. 2013).

1.5 The process follows a standard approach, namely establishing:

- The baseline conditions, i.e. the character, quality, value and relative sensitivity of the landscape;
- The type and relative sensitivity of visual receptors;
- The sensitivity to change of the landscape in relation to the proposed development;
- Mitigation measures, for the landscape and visual receptors.

Site Visit and Conditions

1.6 A site visit was carried out on Friday 27th September between 10:00 and 13:00, to undertake the appraisal of the visual and landscape impacts of the proposed site. The conditions were cloudy, with light drizzle at times but good visibility.

1.7 The visit was preceded by a desk top study of landscape designations and analysis of the zones of visual influence. Field work focussed on the site and surrounding roads and footpaths. The appraisal was carried out during early autumn when the deciduous trees and vegetation on and surrounding the site were in leaf. This represents near to the best case scenario in relation to screening effects of vegetation. The screening effect of the deciduous trees, hedgerows and understory shrubs will decrease during the winter when vegetation will become denuded.

Landscape

1.8 During the site visit, the site and local area were assessed through observation, recording of observations and through photographs. The appraisal reviewed site and local landscape features, character and condition, and the key views into the site.

Visual Amenity

1.9 The viewpoints used in the appraisal were selected in order to:

- Determine the extent of visibility of existing site features;
- Determine the potential visibility of the proposed development, utilising the results from the desk study to guide field work;
- Gain further understanding of the components which create the landscape character; and
- Carry out the assessment of landscape and visual effects.

1.10 The following types of viewpoints were investigated:

- Representative viewpoints (for example representing views of users of a particular footpath);
- Specific viewpoints (for example a key view from a specific visitor attraction);
- Illustrative viewpoints (chosen to demonstrate a particular effect/specific issue); and
- Any important sequential views (for example along key transport routes).

1.11 The potential visual receptors that would be affected at the chosen viewpoints include:

- Public footpath and cycle route users including pedestrians;
- People using public open spaces and parks;
- People living in, working in, or visiting the settlement and the neighbouring properties and farmsteads; and
- People using roads or railways.

Photography

1.12 Photographs were recorded using the equivalent of a 50mm focal length lens on a Nikon DSLR-D3300 digital camera.

1.13 Panoramic views were created by taking a series of overlapping photographs (overlapping by 30-50% as recommended in the guidelines). These have been stitched together using Photoshop, employing the 'reposition photomerge' method.

Description of study area

1.14 The study area for the assessment of landscape and visual effects of the proposed development is shown on Figure 1 and covers an area extending up to approximately 3km from the centre of the site. This is considered to be the maximum extent within which significant visual effects could occur for the type of development proposed.

Site location

1.15 The site is located between Mayles Lane and Hoads Hill, the A32, with a grid reference of SU572107 centrally.

Development description

1.16 The Application Site extends to approximately 32.34 ha of which 6.92 ha would be built/deliverable area. The site is split into Phase 1 and 2. Phase 1 lies to the west

of the site and is proposed for a low density residential development of larger homes addressing Mayles Lane, comprising around 10 units, which it is intended would be brought forward in the short term, utilising existing points of access and incorporating the demolition and removal of the existing redundant farmyard at Mayles Farm. Phase 2 to the central and east side of the site is the broader development site incorporating the delivery of significant public open greenspace to mitigate for the development and provide a connected strategy with the Welborne Sustainable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG), alongside a housing scheme of at least 100 units of mixed density and tenure including affordable housing. The site will also provide Community and Commercial use accessed from Hoads Hill - A32. The site plan also proposes car parking for these uses and shows potential sports pitch allocation. The largest proportion of the site comprises new open space provision alongside Birchfrith Copse, with footpath link (& potential cycle link) proposed to connect to Welborne. A further off road option is proposed to the west of Mayles Lane, offering further open space with connects to the river and alternative to the road for walkers and potentially cyclists.

- 1.17 Key design features of the development proposals include:
- Existing site access retained off Mayles Lane for Phase 1 and a new access from the A32 Hoads Hill for Phase 2;
 - Development comprises residential dwellings to both phases, with some commercial and sports/ leisure provided in Phase 2 near to the existing recreation ground facilities;
 - Large areas of the site are to be allocated as Public Open Space (POS) with connecting footpath networks to the Welborne Development and links to Knowle Water Meadows.

Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- 1.18 The landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) has been undertaken within the context of relevant legislation, planning policies and guidance documents.

National policy

- 1.19 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated in December 2023, provides guidance relating to planning and new development in England.
- 1.20 Para 8 of the NPPF sets out the three overarching and interdependent objectives required to achieve sustainable

development, which underpin plan-making and decision-taking. The overarching objective of relevance to landscape and visual amenity comprises:

- The 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.'

- 1.21 The landscape aspects of the NPPF as described below are supported by Planning Practice Guidance: Natural Environment, Landscape.
- 1.22 In respect of the natural environment, Section 15, Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states that:
- 1.23 *'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – 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 where appropriate;*
 - (d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
 - (e) 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 and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
 - (f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.'*

Local policy

- 1.24 The site lies within Winchester City Council's district. The Local Plan for Winchester City Council includes the Local Plan Part 1 - Joint Core Strategy, adopted in 2013, and the Local Plan

Part 2 - Development Management and Allocations, adopted in 2017.

- 1.25 There is also an emerging draft replacement Winchester District Local Plan (2018 - 2039), which is currently in the Regulation 19 Consultation therefore both sets of policies have been taken into consideration.
- 1.26 The following are key policies that relate to the landscape and visual issues. The following Planning Statement identifies key planning policy that is of relevance to the application.

Winchester District Local Plan - Part 1 Joint Core Strategy

Policy MTRA 4 - Development in the Countryside

- 1.27 *In the countryside, defined as land outside the built-up areas of Winchester, Whiteley and Waterlooville and the settlements covered by MTRA 2 and 3 above, the Local Planning Authority will only permit the following types of development:*
- *expansion or redevelopment of existing buildings to facilitate the expansion on-site of established businesses or to meet an operational need, provided development is proportionate to the nature and scale of the site, its setting and countryside location; or*
 - *small scale sites for low key tourist accommodation appropriate to the site, location and the setting.*
- 1.28 *Development proposed in accordance with this policy should not cause harm to the character and landscape of the area or neighbouring uses, or create inappropriate noise/light and traffic generation.*

Policy CP13 - High Quality Design

- 1.29 *New development will be expected to meet the highest standards of design. In order to achieve this all proposals for new development (excluding small domestic applications and changes of use) should demonstrate that:*
- *an analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the site and its surroundings have informed the principles of design and how the detailed design responds positively to its neighbours and the local context;*
 - *the proposal makes a positive contribution to the local environment and creates an individual place with a distinctive character*
 - *the public realm has been designed to ensure that it is attractive, safe, accessible and well connected to its surroundings, including walking and cycling routes to and*

within the development, to encourage their use;

- the accompanying landscape framework has been developed to enhance both the natural and built environment and maximise the potential to improve local biodiversity.

Policy CP16 - Biodiversity

- 1.30 The Local Planning Authority will support development which maintains, protects and enhances biodiversity across the District, delivering a net gain in biodiversity, and has regard to the following:
- new development will be required to avoid adverse impacts, or if unavoidable ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated, with compensation measures used only as a last resort. Development proposals will only be supported if the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the harm to the habitat and/or species.

Policy CP18 - Settlement Gaps

- 1.31 The Local Planning Authority will retain the generally open and undeveloped nature of the following defined settlement gaps:
- Bishop's Waltham – Swanmore – Waltham Chase –
 - Shedfield – Shirrell Heath
 - Denmead – Waterlooville
 - Kings Worthy – Abbots Worthy
 - Otterbourne – Southdown
 - Winchester – Compton Street
 - Winchester – Kings Worthy/Headbourne Worthy
 - Winchester – Littleton
 - Whiteley – Fareham/Fareham Western Wards (the 'Meon Gap')
- 1.32 Within these areas only development that does not physically or visually diminish the gap will be allowed.
- 1.33 To protect the individual character and identity of those settlements adjoining the proposed SDA at North Fareham, an area of open land is identified as a Gap to be maintained between the SDA and Knowle and Wickham (see Policy SH4). Development which would threaten the open and undeveloped character of this area will be resisted and the land should be managed to secure the long-term retention of its rural character.

Policy SH4 - North Fareham SDA

- 1.34 The City Council will cooperate with Fareham Borough Council to help develop a Strategic Development Area of between 6,500 - 7,500 dwellings together with supporting uses, centred immediately to the north of Fareham.
- 1.35 Land within Winchester District (as shown on the plan below) will form part of the open areas, required by the South East Plan, to ensure separation between the SDA and the existing settlements of Knowle and Wickham. The open and undeveloped rural character of this land will be retained through the application of Policy CP18 - Gaps. See Appendix B

Policy CP19 - South Downs National Park

- 1.36 New development should be in keeping with the context and the setting of the landscape and settlements of the South Downs National Park. The emphasis should be on small-scale proposals that are in a sustainable location and well designed. Proposals which support the economic and social well being of the National Park and its communities will be encouraged, provided that they do not conflict with the National Park's purposes.
- 1.37 Development within and adjoining the South Downs National Park which would have a significant detrimental impact to the rural character and setting of settlements and the landscape should not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposal is of overriding national importance, or its impact can be mitigated.

Policy CP20 - Heritage and Landscape Character

- 1.38 The Local Planning Authority will continue to conserve and enhance the historic environment through the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans and/or other strategies, and will support new development which recognises, protects and enhances the District's distinctive landscape and heritage assets and their settings. These may be designated or undesignated and include natural and man made assets associated with existing landscape and townscape character, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, listed buildings, historic battlefields and archaeology. Particular emphasis should be given to conserving:
- recognised built form and designed or natural landscapes that include features and elements of natural beauty,

cultural or historic importance;

- local distinctiveness, especially in terms of characteristic materials, trees, built form and layout, tranquillity, sense of place and setting.

Winchester District Plan - Part 2, Development management and site allocation Adopted April 2017

DM 16 - Site Design Criteria

- 1.39 Development which accords with the Development Plan will be permitted provided it:
- i. responds positively to the character, appearance and variety of the local environment, within and surrounding the site, in terms of its design, scale and layout;...
 - ...iii. designs any service areas, including parking provision, cycle storage and bins, as an integral part of the scheme, ensuring it does not dominate the site or the surrounding area;
 - iv. provides boundary treatments that respond positively to the local context around the site and between different elements within the site of larger schemes;
 - v. uses an appropriate ratio between hard and soft landscaping, having regard to the character of the area;
 - vi. uses high quality materials that are attractive and durable and appropriate to the context and the proposed design.

Policy DM23 – Rural Character

- 1.40 Outside defined settlement boundaries, development proposals which accord with the Development Plan will be permitted where they do not have an unacceptable effect on the rural character of the area, by means of visual intrusion, the introduction of incongruous features, the destruction of locally characteristic rural assets, or by impacts on the tranquillity of the environment.
- 1.41 The following factors will be taken into account when considering the effect on the rural character and sense of place:
- Visual - intrusion should be minimised, including the effect on the setting of settlements, key features in the landscape, or heritage assets. The cumulative impact of developments will be considered, including any ancillary or minor development that may occur as a result of the main proposal.

- *Physical* – developments will be encouraged to protect and enhance the key characteristics of the landscape and should avoid the loss of key features or the introduction of elements that detract from the special qualities of the place. Any re-modelling of the landscape will also be taken into account.
- *Tranquillity* – developments should not have an unacceptable effect on the rural tranquillity of the area, including the introduction of lighting or noise occurring as a result of the development, taking account of the relative remoteness and tranquillity of the location. New lighting will generally not be permitted in unlit areas and the type, size, design and operation of any lighting may be controlled where necessary by the use of conditions.

1.42 *Developments should not detract from the enjoyment of the countryside from the public realm or public rights of way.*

Winchester District Local Plan (2018-2039)

Strategic Policy D1 High Quality, Well Designed and Inclusive Places

- 1.43 *Development should make a positive contribution to the area and be the result of a process which considers and responds to the immediate and wider context of the development site in order to achieve good design.*
- 1.44 *All development should use high quality materials that are attractive and durable and appropriate to the context and the proposed design.*
- 1.45 *Proposals should not have an unacceptable adverse impact on adjoining land, uses or property by reason of intrusive lighting, overlooking, overshadowing or by being overbearing.*
- 1.46 *Proposals for new development (excluding householder applications and changes of use) should explain each step in the design process starting with an analysis of the constraints and opportunities of the site and its surroundings followed with justification for decisions made, and how it addresses and responds to the ten characteristics of well-designed places as set out in the National Design Guide, and any relevant local evidence on context and other design issues.*
- 1.47 *Where appropriate, proposals should demonstrate that:*
- *i. The proposal makes a positive contribution to the local environment that responds positively to its immediate and*

wider setting including good permeability within the site and connectivity to the surrounding area;

- *ii. A high quality public realm has been incorporated to ensure that the proposal is attractive, safe, easily navigable and there are permeable and accessible routes for all users through the development including for those living with dementia, people with disabilities or anyone whose has reduced mobility;*
- *iii. The proposal is connected to green/blue infrastructure, public places and street patterns where appropriate, including creating safe and accessible walking and cycling routes to/from local services, public transport and green spaces within and beyond the development, to encourage active travel;*
- *iv. It has been designed to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour;*
- *v. The accompanying landscape framework has been developed to enhance both the natural environment by maximising the potential to improve local biodiversity;*
- *vi. Car parks, footpaths and public spaces have been designed to support access by people with poor mobility, avoiding uneven surfaces, obstructions or excessive street clutter, minimising steep slopes or level changes;*
- *vii. Measures to minimise carbon emissions, considering the potential for both passive solar gain and overheating and promoting the inclusion of renewable energy and reduce impact on climate change form an integral part of the design solutions (Policy CN1);*
- *viii. Measures to enhance biodiversity, including nature based solutions where possible, have been explored in response to the nature emergency and form an integral part of the design proposal (policies NE1 and NE5);*
- *ix. Within mixed use development, locating local services and community facilities in a central and/or easily accessible part of the development by walking and cycling;*
- *x. It provides boundary treatments that respond positively to the local context around the site and between different elements within the site;*
- *xi. It makes adequate provision for refuse and recycling;*
- *xii. The smart design and location of cycle parking, car parking and bus stop infrastructure in this policy to both support active travel whilst not negatively impacting on those with mobility issues; In addition, proposals should set out how they have responded to the following objectives;*
- *xiii. Designing buildings with clearly identifiable and accessible entrances and larger developments need to include landmarks, waymarking and environmental and*

public realm improvements to aid with navigation;

- *xiv. Providing seating in new public spaces and along longer pedestrian routes where appropriate in order to provide an interesting and stimulating sensory environment; and*
- *xv. Retaining and reusing existing buildings which contribute positively to the character and appearance of their surroundings are retained and re-used.*

Strategic Policy NE1

Protecting and enhancing Biodiversity and the Natural Environment in the district

- 1.48 *Development will only be permitted where it demonstrates that it will protect and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity including the natural beauty of the landscape, all natural resources, habitats and species; and*
- *i. Avoids significant harm to the natural environment, biodiversity and geodiversity or can adequately mitigate any harm arising and can clearly demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact on the conservation status of key species, internationally protected sites, nationally protected designated sites, or locally designated sites and there will be no net loss or deterioration of a key habitat type including irreplaceable habitats and the integrity of linkages between designated sites and key habitats;*
 - *ii. Safeguards features of the natural environment and nature conservation interest and makes nature based solutions part of the plans to tackle the climate emergency. These should include measures to retain, conserve and enhance habitats, including, internationally, nationally and locally designated sites, priority habitats, networks of ecological interest, ancient woodland, water features, hedgerows and wetland pastures as corridors and stepping- stones for wildlife;*
 - *Protecting and enhancing Biodiversity and the rural Environment in the district*
 - *iii. Does not harm/degrade the Ecological Network or result in its fragmentation;*
 - *iv. Development which would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration and where a suitable compensation strategy exists;*
 - *v. Normally any mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures are required to be delivered on-site, unless*

special circumstances dictate that offsite mitigation or compensation is more appropriate. A financial contribution, in lieu of on-site mitigation, will only be considered in limited circumstances and where it is demonstrated that the proposed mitigation is deliverable and effective; and

- *vi. Protects, conserves and enhances ecology and the air and water environments in the district.*

Policy NE7

Settlement Gaps

- 1.49 *The local planning authority will retain the generally open and undeveloped nature of the following defined settlement gaps:*
- *i. Bishop's Waltham – Swanmore – Waltham Chase – Shedfield – Shirrell Heath*
 - *ii. Denmead – Waterlooville*
 - *iii. Kings Worthy - Abbots Worthy*
 - *iv. Otterbourne – Southdown*
 - *v. Winchester – Compton Street*
 - *vi. Winchester – Kings Worthy/ Headbourne Worthy*
 - *vii. Winchester – Littleton*
 - *viii. Whiteley – Fareham/Fareham Western Wards (the 'Meon Gap')*
 - *ix. Knowle, Wickham and Welborne*
- 1.50 *Within these areas only development that does not undermine the function of the gap and its intended role to define and retain the separate identity of settlements will be permitted. Any development should not threaten the generally open and undeveloped nature of the gap and avoid coalescence.*

Policy WK3

- 1.51 *The city council will cooperate with Fareham Borough Council to help develop a Strategic Development Area of about 6,000 dwellings together with supporting uses, centred immediately to the north of Fareham. Land within Winchester district. See Appendix C*
- 1.52 *Welborne Open Space will form part of the open areas, to ensure separation between the SDA and the existing settlements of Knowle and Wickham. The open and undeveloped rural character of this land will be retained through the application*

of Policy NE7 – Settlement Gaps.

Policy NE8

South Downs National Park

- 1.53 *Development in close proximity the South Downs National Park will only be permitted where it would be in accordance with the statutory purposes and duty for National Parks as specified in the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949, as amended by the Environment Act 1995 and where they conserve and enhance the intrinsic quality of dark night skies and the setting of the National Park.*
- 1.54 *Development proposals in close proximity to the South Downs National Park are expected to take account of the National Park assessments of landscape and tranquillity and demonstrate how a proposal conserves and enhances the special qualities of the Park.*

Policy NE9

Landscape Character

- 1.55 *The Local Planning Authority will permit new development where it protects and enhances the district's distinctive landscape character as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment 2022. Development proposals may be permitted where they conserve and enhance landscape character by evidencing;*
- *i. They are informed by the existing landscape character and respond positively to the landscape type within which they are located;*
 - *ii. Local distinctiveness, especially in terms of trees, hedges, other landscape features, tranquillity, sense of place and setting has been taken into account;*
 - *iii. New planting is consistent with local character, enhances biodiversity, contributes to the delivery of green infrastructure and uses native species, unless there are appropriate and justified reasons to select non-native species; ...*
 - *...v. The settlement pattern and individual identity of settlements and the integrity of predominantly open and undeveloped land between settlements will not be undermined. Where possible, the layout of development should be informed by the existing settlement pattern and the character it creates; and*

- *vi. Green and blue corridors will be safeguarded. Development proposals should identify and take opportunities to create and connect green and blue corridors. A Landscape Visual Appraisal (LVA) or a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) proportional to the proposed development must be provided in order to assess potential harm to the character of the area.*

Policy NE14

Rural Character

- 1.56 *Outside defined settlement boundaries, development proposals which accord with the Development Plan will be permitted where they do not have an unacceptable effect on the rural character of the area, by means of visual intrusion, the introduction of incongruous features, the destruction of locally characteristic rural assets, or by impacts on the tranquillity of the environment.*
- 1.57 *The following factors will be taken into account when considering the effect on the rural character and sense of place:*
- 1.58 *Visual - intrusion should be minimised, including the effect on the setting of settlements, key features in the landscape, or the significance of heritage assets. The cumulative impact of developments will be considered, including any ancillary or minor development that may occur as a result of the main proposal.*
- 1.59 *Physical – developments will be encouraged to protect and enhance the key characteristics of the landscape and should avoid the loss of key features or the introduction of elements that detract from the special qualities of the place. Any remodelling of the landscape will also be taken into account.*
- 1.60 *Tranquillity – developments should not have an unacceptable effect on the rural tranquillity of the area, including the introduction of lighting or noise occurring as a result of the development, taking account of the relative remoteness and tranquillity of the location. New lighting will generally not be permitted in unlit areas and the type, size, design and operation of any lighting may be controlled where necessary by the use of conditions.*
- 1.61 *It should be demonstrated that all opportunities to reduce light pollution have been taken, having due regard to the following hierarchy:*

- *i. The installation of lighting is avoided or minimised;*
- *ii. If lighting cannot be avoided, it is demonstrated to be necessary and appropriate, for its intended purpose or use; and*
- *iii. Any adverse impacts are mitigated with details of the mitigation scheme to be agreed prior to planning permission being granted.*

1.62 *Developments should not detract from the enjoyment of the countryside from the public realm or public rights of way.*

1.63 *The impact resulting from the volume and type of traffic generated by the development will be assessed along with the ability of rural roads to accept increased levels of traffic without alterations that would harm their rural character....*

2. BASELINE LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

Site description

2.1 The application site is irregular in shape and currently consists of a large barn and various outbuildings in the north west of the parcel, and grassland for most of the remainder. The site is partly bound by Mayles land on its western boundary and the rear boundaries of properties along the A32 Hoads Hill to its east .

2.2 Key features of the site include:

- Existing Yard access on Mayles Lane on the west side for Phase 1, and a new access is proposed from Hoads Hill on the east for Phase 2. See Appendix F
- Mayles Lane is hedged and treed along the majority of its eastern side,
- Partial tree and hedgerow vegetation runs along Mayles Lane and the southern boundary for the southern section (Proposed Phase 1) on Mayles lane;
- The northern boundary is part treed and hedged to the boundaries of dwellings off Mayles Lane and Manor Close, and to the recreation ground;
- The farm buildings are accessed via a wide entrance with concrete hardstanding leading into the site.

2.3 Features of the local site context include:

- The main settlement of Wickham adjoins the site to the immediate north, with dwellings set off Mayles Lane and Manor Close backing onto the west and central part of the site.
- A linear grouping of dwellings is set on Mayles Lane along its west side facing the existing yard site and looking towards the Proposed Phase 1 development of the site.
- A linear group of dwellings sits between the site and Hoads Hill on the east side of the site adjoining proposed phase 2 and proposed open space.
- Wickham recreation ground immediately adjoins the north east of the site. The rec contains a tarmac surfaced car park, wildflower area to the south, fenced tennis courts and various play equipment with two associated buildings including the cricket club on the east boundary.
- Agricultural land lies beyond the site to the south-west and south-east;
- To the south of the site Birchfrith Copse a wooded feature sits at 60m AOD and is seen in the wider landscape.

- Mayles Lane is a Private Road south of the main site to the east of Mayles Lane.
- The River Meon is 100 metres to the west of Mayles Lane and is heavily wooded along its banks.
- A partially raised disused railway line serves as a PRoW to the north west of the site, crossing the River Meon close to the site. It is for the most part, wooded.
- A designated housing site, part of the Welborne Strategic Housing allocation abuts the southern boundary of the proposed new POS, this site is starting to be cleared for build out.

Topography and soils

2.4 The west of the site proposed for Phase 1 sits at a lower topography around 22m AOD and the site slopes up gently to the east with levels at Hoads Hill around 35m AOD. The open space proposed sits higher at 35-55m AOD and sits east of to Birchfrith Copse (60m AOD)

2.5 Reference to the Cranfield Soil and AgriFood Institute (CSAI) Soilscape Viewer identifies the main parcel as Soilscape 18 - Slowly permeable, seasonally wet, slightly acidic but base rich loamy and clayey soils. Impeded drainage and medium fertility. The parcel to the left of Mayles Lane is Soilscape 20 - Loamy and clayey floodplain soils with naturally high groundwater.

Landscape, ecological and historic designations

2.6 The South Downs National Park lies 650 metres to the north of the site where Rookesbury Park sits. There is no visual intervisibility from this closest point.

2.7 Wickham Conservation Area sits 280 metres north west of the site with no intervisibility

2.8 Shedfield Conservation Area sits approximately 3km away on the edge of study area

2.9 The nearest Listed Building to the site is "Mayles" a Grade II dwelling on Mayles Lane, set opposite the western boundary of the site.

2.10 Birchfrith Copse is a woodland abutting the south of the site which is an area of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland

2.11 For mapped information of the above designations, and for mapped information regarding landscape and environmental designations at a greater distance from the site than those described above, refer to Figures 5 and 6.

National landscape character

2.12 The site and study area falls just within National Character Area (NCA) 128 South Hampshire Lowlands as defined by Natural England, published in 2015 and superceding the previous Countryside Agency Character Area profile.

2.13 Key characteristics of these NCAs pertinent to the site context are defined as:

- Low-lying, undulating plain abutting the chalk downs to the north and the coastal plain and Southampton Water to the south. An underlying geology of open marine, estuarine and freshwater Tertiary gravels. Soils over much of the area are heavy and clayey with localised pockets of more freely draining soils on higher land.
- Fast-flowing chalk rivers in wide, open valleys with watermeadows and riparian vegetation that provide valuable wildlife habitats for species such as breeding and overwintering birds, otter, water vole, Atlantic salmon, brown trout and the endangered, native whiteclawed crayfish.
- Woodland a feature of the central downs and, to a lesser Well-wooded farmed landscape (particularly to the east of Southampton), characterised by ancient woodland such as Botley Wood and West Walk, the remnants of the Royal Hunting Forest of Bere.
- Mixed agricultural landscape dominated by pasture with small pockets of horticulture and arable.
- An intimate and enclosed field pattern with many small and irregular fields generally bounded by mixed-species hedgerows or woodland.
- In parts, a very urban NCA dominated by the city and port of Southampton and other large towns such as Waterlooville and Havant. The more rural hinterland is characterised by small, loosely clustered or dispersed settlements, intermixed with isolated farmsteads.
- Fragmented by major transport links, including the M3 to London and the M27 to Portsmouth which cross the NCA.

Regional landscape character

Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment

2.14 At a County level, Hampshire County Council have produced the Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment in 2012. This assessment classifies the area within which the site lies as the 2F: Forest of Bere East landscape character area to the east of the site and 3E: Meon Valley landscape character area to the west of the site.

2.15 Key characteristics of Forest of Bere East landscape character area of relevance to the site and context include:

- A low lying landscape with shallow undulations, predominantly south sloping.
- Varied geology and soils, with seasonally saturated heavy clays in the central and southern parts and locally higher, more undulating sandy outcrops resulting in agriculturally poor soils. .
- Predominantly pasture, commercial forestry and woodland with small some smallholdings
- High proportion of woodland, both coniferous plantation and ancient seminatural woodland, some fairly extensive, often accessible.
- Woodland creates a secluded landscape, contrasting with the adjoining major towns, although there are strong urban fringe influences around large settlements.
- High proportion of semi natural habitats including ancient woodlands, wet woodland, remnant heath, unimproved neutral meadows and acid grassland supporting a rich biodiversity.
- Part of the former hunting reserve of the Royal Forest of Bere, which has shaped the pattern of woodland, commons and assart fields. Hedgerow oaks and hedgebanks are common features. The fringes are typically of later formal enclosure.
- Routes vary from straight roads with wide verges associated with formal enclosure, to narrow, winding, hedged lanes.
- Historically, mixed settlement pattern of low density dispersed farms, with linear settlements along stream tributaries and common edges.

2.16 Physical Characteristics and Land Use.

- This is a low lying, gently undulating landscape, predominantly south sloping, but rising to the base of Portsdown Hill in the south. Locally higher and more undulating where sand and gravel outcrops occur in the

central and southern areas. The Lowland Mosaic Small Scale Wooded landscape in the north is underlain by silty sandy clays. Clay and gravel head deposits are found in the lower sections of the Wallington catchment and in 'fingers' of lowest lying land. Soils are seasonally waterlogged and generally unproductive, although higher quality soils are found on the lower slopes around the head of the Wallington and in a narrow band south and west of Boarhunt.

2.17 Key characteristics of Meon Valley landscape character area of relevance to the site and context include:

- A fairly narrow major river valley with a relatively narrow valley floor, which passes through downland, lowland mosaic and coastal plain landscapes.
- Increasing proportion of grazing and improved grassland land on the valley sides from the downland to the lowland landscapes.
- Woodland is common on the steeper slopes and is a particular feature where the Meon passes through the lowland mosaic and coastal plain landscapes.
- Major communication links follow close above the valley floor, eg A32, B3334 and the disused Meon Valley railway (now a recreational route).
- Extensive informal enclosure field patterns and significant water meadow (fairly simple layout) survive in the downs section while assarts and formal parliamentary enclosures dominate the lowland mosaic section.
- Strong pattern of nucleated settlements within the valley at strategic river crossing points with relatively little 20th century expansion.

2.18 Physical Characteristics and Land Use.

- The middle section (Soberton Heath to just north of Titchfield abbey) is characterised by the presence of waterlogged soils associated with London clay. Sandier lighter soils do occur in association with the Wittering formation either side of the Meon around Wickham. The valley sides are generally a shallower gradient than in the downland setting and the valley width is narrower. Improved grassland and dairying predominate and there is a greater presence of semi and unimproved grassland on the valley bottom and woodland cover on the sides.

2.19 Within the Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment, the landscape character is broken down into a number of landscape types. This assessment identifies the area within which the site falls as Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale. Key characteristics of this type include:

- Undulating predominantly clay soils with sandy gravelly outcrops
- Clay soils low lying - seasonally wet and not particularly good agricultural grade.
- High biomass and moderately high heathland creation opportunity
- Associated with small chalk fed streams.
- Large Ancient woodlands, blocky shaped woodland and thick hedgerows
- Proportion of grazing land slightly more than arable but less permanent pasture than most other Lowland Mosaic Types.
- Low built up percentage compared with other Lowland Mosaic Types
- Significant association with common land and open access
- Surprising sense of remoteness as often close to large centres of population.
- Rich in wildlife designations and BAP priority habitats particularly Ancient semi natural woodlands, hedgerows, neutral and acid grassland, heath associated habitats, freshwater associated and wet woodland.
- High proportion of assarting
- Numerous cultural associations from the medieval period and Royal hunting forests, including deer parks and lodges and woodpasture. Little intensive exploitation pre Saxon period and less intensively post disafforestation than most lowland mosaic types.
- Few settlements and development. Particular association with Common Edge settlement type.
- Low density dispersed settlement pattern where this type occurs in North and South Hampshire and South of New Forest National Park.

Local landscape character

WCC Landscape Character Assessment SPD

2.20 Winchester City Council has produced the WCC Landscape Character Assessment, adopted as an SPD in 2022. This assessment classifies the area within which the west of the site lies as the LCA20 Lower Meon Valley and the east side with the Recreation ground within LCA18 Forest of Bere Lowlands landscape character area.

2.21 Key characteristics of LCA20 Lower Meon Valley character area relevant to the site include:

- A linear, fairly narrow river valley with gently sloping sides, situated within the clay lowlands of the Hampshire Basin.
- The area has a complex geological makeup, with riverine associated alluvium and gravel passing through bands of clays, sands and loam.
- The Lower Meon Valley floor has a riparian character, with a flat low lying flood plain, with riverside pastures and marshy grassland. Important ecological habitats within the area include the river itself, floodplain grazing marsh and woodlands and copses.
- The valley floor and sides are typified by paddocks and pastures (enclosed meadows), with little remaining evidence of original water meadows. The adjoining sloping fields, are typified by medium irregular assarted fields, particularly to the south, and larger parliamentary fields to the north.
- The area is well treed, with a sense of intimacy and enclosure.
- Locally registered deer parkland at Park Place, west of Wickham
- Routes within the character area generally follow the valley, on the higher ground of the valley sides. Titchfield Lane runs along the skyline forming a visual horizon to the river valley to the west of the railway line.
- A sparse pattern of settlement, with dwellings generally located on the higher ground of the valley sides. Wickham is the main settlement within the character area. This compact nucleated historic village has expanded east and west of the river around a medieval planned centre. Knowle is also developing as a new, nucleated village with a character strongly influenced by its previous use as a Victorian hospital .
- Traditional building materials in the area are influenced by the clay geology and include red and grey bricks and clay plain tiles. Later buildings such as Knowle hospital are also roofed with slate. Thatch is not common in this area and flint is rare.

2.22 Key characteristics of LCA18 Forest of Bere Lowlands character area relevant to the site include:

- Undulating landscape at the foot of the Chalk Downs which drop steeply down to the coastal plain at Portsdown Hill to the south of this area.
- Varied geology, mainly consisting of London Clay with areas of Bagshot sand and river valley alluvium.
- Land cover characterised by farmland and a high proportion of assarted woodland.

- The farmland is largely arable, with pasture concentrated on lower ground.
- High proportion of semi-natural habitats.
- The area is historically strongly associated with the Royal Forest of Bere, which was once a royal hunting reserve, encompassing a much larger area than the present forest.
- The framework of the landscape is typified to the south by assarts evolved from the piecemeal clearance of woodland from medieval times onwards, forming irregular enclosures and winding lanes. To the north of the area, parliamentary type enclosure is typical.
- Routes vary from straight roads with wide verges associated with heathland settlements and the pasture on clay and long winding narrow hedged routes through the mixed farmland and woodland.
- Settlements are scattered throughout the area, with the largest ones located in the north and small shrunken hamlets and farms to the south such as Boarhunt. Sprawling 19th century settlements associated with heathland to the north include Soberton Heath, and chalk-clay spring line settlements such as Denmead

Site landscape character

2.23 The landscape character of the site itself accords with the local landscape character assessments. The site lies within the Lower Meon Valley (LCA20) to the west and Forest of Bere Lowlands (LCA18) to the east.

2.24 The site has the following key characteristics:

- The site is an irregular shape, used as grassland for grazing animals with a mixture of well vegetated boundaries and other which could be strengthened.
- The site has a north westerly aspect and is predominantly enclosed by residential development to the north, east and west.

Landscape condition

2.25 The site lies between Mayles Lane, and Hoads Hill to the south of Wickham. The eastern boundary along the rear boundaries of residential properties on Hoad's Hill are mature trees, with the southern boundary linking to Birchfrith Copse well treed too. Existing woodland of Birchfrith Copse is a well defined boundary. From Birchfrith Copse to Mayles Lane the boundary is less apparent with sparse patches of vegetation. The settlement of Mayles Lodge is fairly well

vegetated. Mayles Lane is well vegetated with a hedgerow with occasional trees, gaps are present into the fields and farms. The northern boundary is fairly well vegetated with both trees and hedgerows. The SW parcel is also well vegetated on the boundaries with a good hedgerow with occasional trees along the Mayles Lane boundary and woodland to the south and along the River Meon. The landuse is currently grassland which is grazed.

2.26 Three pylons are present on site.

2.27 The wider area is a mixture of housing to the west, north and east with woodland and arable farmland to the south. Beyond this lies the River Meon to the west with the disused railway line which is now a public bridleway, and the golf course beyond. To the north is the settlement of Wickham dissected by the river and former railway line. To the east is farmland and woodland with a mix of arable and pasture. To the south is Birchfrith Copse and Fiddlers Green woodland with the development of Welborne taking place beyond.

Landscape value

2.28 The site has medium/low landscape value. This is largely due to the pylons which dominate the site with the lack of variety in landcover being mainly grassland with some well vegetated boundaries and others with room for improvement.

2.29 The red line boundary vegetation, consisting of unmanaged trees and hedgerow shrubs, forms part of the local landscape pattern. Existing rough grassland on the site provides little biodiversity value although the red line boundary vegetation is of some limited value.

2.30 There is the potential to enhance the site landscape through new tree and hedgerow planting and large areas of public open space.

Landscape Sensitivity

2.31 The site is not designated at national, regional or local level, therefore landscape sensitivity is judged based on landscape value and landscape susceptibility.

2.32 Landscape Value is low/medium and susceptibility low/medium as the key elements of the landscape, namely the boundary vegetation will be retained with the main loss of grassland some of which will be retained in the public open space but enhanced to offer a more diverse environment for both people

and wildlife.

Landscape receptors

- 2.33 A number of landscape receptors were selected for the landscape assessment, representing those landscape receptors considered to be potentially affected by the proposed development, as follows:
- Setting of the South Downs National Park. This has been scoped out of the assessment as there was found to be no intervisibility between the site and the SDNP from publicly accessible locations
 - Setting/ character of the Lower Meon Valley and Forest of Bere Lowlands local character areas in the vicinity of the site;
 - The setting of the listed Mayles Grade II dwelling
 - Application site landscape features, principally grassland.
- 2.34 One Listed Building lies within the Zone of Theoretical Visibility for the development as above Mayles is Grade II
- 2.35 Further listed assets in the Wickham Conservation area are within the ZTV but do not have any intervisibility with the site.

3. BASELINE VISUAL ASSESSMENT

Potential visual receptors

3.1 A series of representative viewpoints were chosen to provide coverage of potential views of the proposed development from a range of directions. The potential viewpoints were then tested through field survey and those where no visibility of the development was achieved were discounted. The selected viewpoints are representative of a range of receptors including residential, recreational and transport.

3.2 A number of potential visual receptors were identified to provide a detailed assessment of the visual effects of the proposed development. The potential receptors are described below.

Recreational receptors

- 3.3 Potential recreational receptors identified included the following public routes, which run in the vicinity of the site:
- NCN 224, Meon Valley Churches Walk, Old Way which all run along Mayles Lane
 - Mary's Crescent Walk and Old Way which run along Hoad's Hill and PRow 251/10/1
 - Bridleway 251/501/1 which runs along the disused railway line
 - PRow 251/5/1 to the west of the site
 - PRow 251/11/1 to the east of the site
 - PRow 084/87/1 to the south of the site

Residential receptors

- 3.4 Residential properties and other buildings potentially in view of the site have been considered.
- 3.5 To the west of the site there are residential properties along Mayles Lane. These were reviewed through the site assessment: and found to be partially screened in views towards the site by localised boundary vegetation but where access point exist or are proposed visibility will be gained of the new development. The rear of some properties on Manor Close will also experience a change in their rear outlook. Residential properties along Hoad's Hill will also experience some change. Although the rear boundary of properties is fairly well established the more northern properties will be close to both the new vehicular entrance and eastern parcel of development and this is where the existing boundary

treatment is less well established.

3.6 More distant glimpsed views of the site may be possible from School Lane and the adjoining new estate, properties on Titchfield Road and Southwick Road. These are represented by viewpoint photos.

Transport receptors

- 3.7 Travelling receptors include those using major and minor roads in close proximity to the site. For this site these roads are:
- Hoad's Hill
 - Mayles Lane

Viewpoint descriptions

3.8 Figure 9 and 10 identifies the locations of all the receptor viewpoints (provided in Chapter 9). Descriptions of the receptor viewpoints are provided below.

Viewpoint 01

- 3.9 View 01 is taken from Mayles Lane at the entrance to a residential property known as Mirables on the NW corner of the site boundary. The view looks SE towards the site.
- 3.10 The view shows a partial view of the site which is just discernible through the foreground fencing and vegetation.

Viewpoint 02

- 3.11 View 02 is taken from Mayles Lane, opposite the Listed Building (Mayles) and outside an existing vehicle entrance to the site. The view looks SE towards the site.
- 3.12 The property to the left of the view remains unchanged. Boundary vegetation to the right of the view will also remain limiting views to the gate opening to the right of the view.

Viewpoint 03

- 3.13 View 03 is taken from Mayles Lane just south of Mayles Lodge. The view looks south west towards the site.
- 3.14 The view shows the pylons marching through a landscape of improved grassland with good hedgerows and scattered trees along the roadside and woodland lining the other boundaries.

Viewpoint 04

- 3.15 View 04 is taken from Mayles Lane to the south of the site. The view looks north east towards the site.
- 3.16 The view shows the three pylons present on site. The field to the left of the road forms part of the site with the portion to the right of the road hidden by intervening topography. Birchfrith Copse is just visible

Viewpoint 05

- 3.17 View 05 is taken from Mayles Lane to the south of the western parcel of the site. The view looks north towards the site.
- 3.18 The view shows improved grassland beyond a strong hedgerow with occasional trees. Telegraph poles and pylons are present. The River Meon is marked by woodland and the land then rises slightly with Webbs Land Vineyard visible.

Viewpoint 06

- 3.19 View 06 is taken from PRow 251/10/1 as it adjoins Hoad's Hill. The view looks west towards the site.
- 3.20 The view looks across Hoad's Hill towards the site which is located behind residential properties along the western side of the road. The view shows the proposed site entrance to the right of the view.

Viewpoint 07

- 3.21 View 07 is taken from the footpath which runs along the western side of Hoad's Hill. The view looks west into the site.
- 3.22 The view looks through a gap in the boundary vegetation, revealing a partial view of the site at an field entrance into the site. This is proposed to be the main vehicular entrance into the site.

Viewpoint 08

- 3.23 View 08 is taken from the Recreation Ground to the south of the club house. The view looks south west towards the site.
- 3.24 The view shows mature trees dotted along the boundary of the recreation ground with further vegetation beyond in the wildflower area with the site beyond. The pylons are on site. To the right of the view the residential development along Manor Close is just visible.

Viewpoint 09

- 3.25 View 09 is taken from Southwick Road opposite the entrance to a small development. The view looks south towards the site.
- 3.26 The view shows unimproved grassland beyond a gappy hedge with residential properties visible on Grindall Fld, School Road and Glebe Cor. The pylon on site is visible behind the residential properties on School Road.

Viewpoint 10

- 3.27 View 10 is taken from PROW 084/87/1 just to the west of the residential property to the west of Hoad's Hill. The view looks north towards the site.
- 3.28 The development is not visible from this viewpoint due to topography but the southern site boundary is just visible with the treelined boundary currently forming the horizon. However, with the approved Welborne Masterplan residential development, housing will be built inbetween the viewpoint location and the site.

Viewpoint 11

- 3.29 View 11 is taken from PROW 251/11/1 to the south of the pylon line. The view looks west into the site.
- 3.30 The view looks through a broken hedge line over an arable field to clumps of trees. The pylon on site is visible in the view.

Viewpoint 12

- 3.31 View 12 is taken from PROW 251/11/1 opposite the property to the south of Southwick Road Motor Repairs. The view looks west towards the site.
- 3.32 The view shows isolated dwellings surrounded by pastoral farmland used to graze horses with fencing and occasional mature trees. The distant views are of woodland. The nearest two pylons in the view are off site but the three behind are those which are on the site.

Viewpoint 13

- 3.33 View 13 is taken from Mill Lane close to Cutlers. The view looks south towards the site.
- 3.34 The view looks down the road which is well vegetated with trees. Where trees are not present open views are gained

over arable farmland which limits distant views.

Viewpoint 14

- 3.35 View 14 is taken from Titchfield Lane at the entrance to MetOcean Telematics UK. The view looks southeast towards the site.
- 3.36 The view looks across Titchfield Road towards Wickham Park Golf Club

Viewpoint 15

- 3.37 View 15 is taken from Titchfield Lane at the entrance to Higgles Raw Milk. The view looks east towards the site.
- 3.38 The view looks across improved grassland used for grazing animals to Little Tapnage Farm. Distant views might possibly show Birchfrith Copse.

Viewpoint 16

- 3.39 View 16 is taken from PROW 251/5/1 as it passes over a stile from the golf course track to Webbs Farm. The view looks east towards the site.
- 3.40 The view looks down the road which is well vegetated with trees. Where trees are not present open views are gained over arable farmland which limits distant views

Viewpoint 17

- 3.41 View 17 is taken from PROW 251/501/1 at the entrance to Wickham Wastewater Treatment Works. The view looks east towards the site.
- 3.42 The view looks over the wastewater treatment works with the central pylon on site just visible.

4. IMPACT APPRAISAL

Landscape appraisal

Setting of the South Downs National Park

- 4.1 The National Park lies immediately to the north of the site, with the boundary of the SDNP 650m proximity to the site boundary.
- 4.2 The development proposal lies beyond the existing settlement of Wickham when viewed from the SDNP, but within the context of the built edge of the settlement and the ribbon development along both Mayles Lane and Hoad's Hill.
- 4.3 There were no publicly accessible locations within the study area within the SDNP.
- 4.4 The ZTV showed that the track leading to Rookesbury Park may experience some views towards the site of the proposed development but this would be seen in the context of Wickham, sitting behind the existing development.
- 4.5 The landscape effects of the development proposal on the setting of the SDNP will be indistinguishable from those of the existing development located between the SDNP and the site, with the potential for the proposed development to result in a beneficial effect on the setting of the SDNP through enhancements to the landscape of the application site and wider ownership site, in particular improvements to boundary planting and the creation of a significant amount of publicly accessible open space.

Setting/ character of Lower Meon Valley and Forest of Bere Lowlands local character area in the vicinity of the site

- 4.6 The proposals would retain existing boundary vegetation while enhancing with buffer planting and providing a long term management plan.
- 4.7 Opportunities to enhance the riparian character of flat low lying areas with riverside pastures and marshy grassland as part of the public open space to the west of the site.
- 4.8 The area is well treed, with a sense of intimacy and enclosure which could be enhanced through further planting and an increase in diversity.
- 4.9 Better connections though the character area could link to the existing infrastructure to offer further opportunities for existing and proposed residents.

4.10 Traditional building materials could be utilised within the development to further strengthen character through the use of red and grey bricks and clay plain tiles and slate.

4.11 Returning some of the area to woodland would return the landscape to how it was historically

4.12 Large areas of the site would be undeveloped and used as public open space providing natural habitats, opportunities for recreation and heathland area while providing better connectivity on bike and foot.

Application site landscape features principally open grassland.

4.13 There are very limited existing landscape features within the site, principally grassland and boundary vegetation. Boundary vegetation will be retained and the grassland area within the proposed public open space will be enhanced through improving biodiversity and public access.

4.14 There is the potential for new native hedgerow and tree planting along the boundaries to fill the gaps and restore these habitat corridors.

4.15 Whilst there will be some adverse impacts on the landscape due to grassland being replaced by dwellings, there will also be positive impacts of accessibility to significant areas of public open greenspace for both existing residents of Wickham and new residents of the proposed development and the in-progress development at Welborne. The development will provide a broad and connected network of greenspaces which will be a significant boost to residents existing and new alike.

4.16 Appropriate mitigation proposals would produce greater beneficial effects in the longer term as planting matures, increasing biodiversity, reconnecting habitat corridors and restoring landscape features which could strengthen the local landscape pattern and create an improved setting to the proposed development.

Visual appraisal

Mayles Lane

4.17 Mayles Lane is a narrow 30mph road with pavements on one side from Winchester Road to Mayles Close then no provision for walkers. Development is present on both side of the road from Winchester Road to the site boundary and then only on the western side. After the housing stops the road changes to a 20mph Private Road but is NCN 224 for its whole length. The route is well vegetated throughout its length.

4.18 There will be some very limited adverse impact to users of the lane, with two new entrances created to serve a limited number of dwellings proposed facing Mayles Lane. This approach will retain most of the existing vegetation retaining the character of the road. Two new pedestrian links are also proposed into the site from Mayles Lane, to the northern and southern extents of the western boundary of the site adjoining Mayles Lane. Refer to Viewpoints 1 and 2.

Hoad's Hill

4.19 This road is a relatively fast, 50mph between Wickham and Crockerhill, with a very narrow footpath on the western side. The carriageway travelling south between Wickham and the Fareham boundary is dualled. The route is well vegetated. The road only adjoins the site boundary very briefly at the north east corner, which is where the main access onto the site is proposed. Refer to Viewpoints 06, 07 and 08.

4.20 There will be limited adverse impact to road users from this gap, with views of the access road and potentially partial views of the proposed commercial units on the eastern side of the site possible.

Dwellings on the West side of Mayles Lane

4.21 'Mayles', a Listed Building dwelling on the west side of Mayles Lane along with other dwellings on the west side of Mayles Lane, may potentially have windows with views towards the site. These would be predominantly screened by the intervening boundary vegetation on the eastern side of Mayles Lane, however there may be potential glimpses through the denuded vegetation in winter. These potential glimpsed views would be seen against the backdrop of the existing pylons.

5. MITIGATION

- 5.1 The following mitigation measures should be given careful consideration to lessen adverse effects of the completed development, where required, and to ensure the full potential of beneficial effects to the landscape and visual amenity are realised.
- Existing hedgerows and trees within the site should be retained where possible and used to provide a mature setting for the new development.
 - New native tree and hedgerow planting should be introduced to fill the gaps in the existing boundary vegetation, soften the development with the opportunity to create buffer planting to further enhance boundaries;
 - Positive management of the existing and new boundary hedgerows and trees to improve the density, structure and longevity of the vegetation;
 - Species choice of planting tailored to reflect locally found species and to enhance potential biodiversity value.

6. SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The application site comprises mainly grassland with a large farm barn towards the north west corner of the site.
- 6.2 The site lies to the east and west of Mayles Lane with the development area located to the north east. The site extends east to Hoad's Hill, briefly intersecting with the road before running to the rear of existing ribbon development along Hoad's Hill.
- 6.3 The development comprises residential dwellings to the NW. Public Open Space to the west of Mayles Lane and to the rear of properties along Hoad's Hill. Sports Pitches separate proposed residential development from an area proposed as visitor centre or commercial use.
- 6.4 The boundaries are predominantly vegetated but range from well vegetated with trees and shrubs to sparsely vegetated with the odd shrub. There is an opportunity for mitigation planting to add trees and buffer planting to strengthen these boundaries to both enhance the landscape character and the habitat value. The vast swathes of public open space also offer opportunities to increase the diversity of the landscape for both residents and wildlife. While good management of the existing landscape features will provide a mature landscape setting for the proposed development with has longevity for the future.

Landscape and visual effects

- 6.5 The visual and landscape effects of the proposed development have been investigated and appraised.
- 6.6 There is the potential for beneficial effects to the setting and character of the Lower Meon Valley and Forest of Bere Lowlands local character area, through enhancements to the landscape of the site, in particular, improvements to boundary planting and the creation of areas of open space.
- 6.7 There will also be some initial beneficial impacts on the landscape features of the site with the creation of more diverse area to form the public open space, with the potential for greater beneficial effects through enhancements to boundary planting and addition of buffer planting.
- 6.8 Opportunities are available to significantly improve connectivity in the area, providing an off road alternative for cyclists and pedestrians from Hoad's Hill. Further cycle network linked to the National Cycle Network which runs along Mayles Lane. Connectivity into the wildflower area to the south of Wickham Recreation Ground and beyond into Manor Close.
- 6.9 The site is generally well contained visually with only the pylons visible from the majority of locations.

Local policy

- 6.10 The development proposals are in accordance with Winchester City Council's Local Plan policies regarding landscape and visual amenity.
- 6.11 The development would fall within the settlement gap identified to prevent development merging following the approval of the Welborne Masterplan. The proposal would still retain a gap between existing development along Hoad's Hill and the proposed Welborne Masterplan and Wickham. The gap land would be defined as Public Open Space and Sports Pitches providing greater protection for the land.
- 6.12 The Mayles Lane development will not have a detrimental impact to the character of the landscape as the development is medium scale on existing grassland and is associated with existing residential development along Mayles Lane, Manor Close and Hoad's Hill.
- 6.13 Beneficial landscape effects will result from increased

biodiversity, with the potential for greater beneficial effects through the restoration of boundary trees and hedgerow planting.

- 6.14 Landscape and visual mitigation features such as the introduction of wildflower meadows and new tree and hedgerow planting will enable the development to integrate into the local landscape character of the area, improve the immediate landscape condition, restore a habitat corridor and provide benefits to the biodiversity of the site.

7. REFERENCES

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- 7.3 Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland. Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002.
- 7.4 Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland: Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity. Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2004.
- 7.5 Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/04 as Amended (August 2008): Use of Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Assessment. The Landscape Institute, 2008.
- 7.6 Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/17: Visual Representation of Development Proposals. The Landscape Institute, 2017.
- 7.7 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated in December 2023
- 7.8 National Character Area Profile 128 South Hampshire Lowlands, 2015.
- 7.9 Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment. Hampshire County Council, 2012.
- 7.10 Winchester City Council Landscape Character Assessment 2022. Terrafirma for Winchester City Council, 2022.
- 7.11 Winchester District Local Plan - Part 1 Joint Core Strategy
- 7.12 Winchester District Plan - Part 2, Development management and site allocation Adopted April 2017
- 7.13 Winchester District Local Plan (2018-2039)

Figure 1: Access and Circulation

Scale 1:25,000

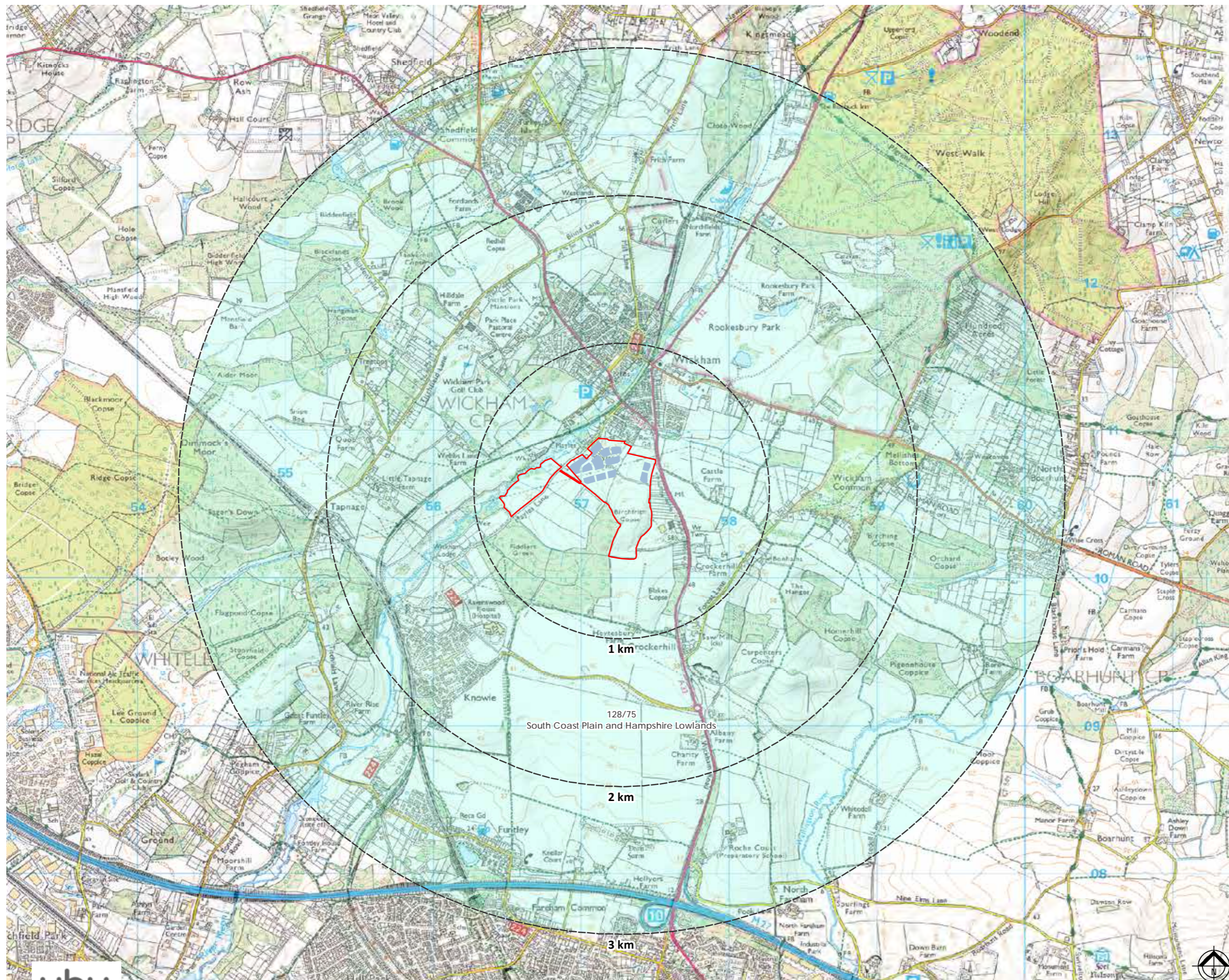


- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- Development
- Public Right of Way**
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Promoted Walking & Cycling Route**
- Mary's Crescent Walk
- Meon Valley Churches Walk
- Old Way
- Pilgrim's Trail
- National Cycle Network**
- Route No.224

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Figure 2: National Landscape Character

Scale 1:25,000



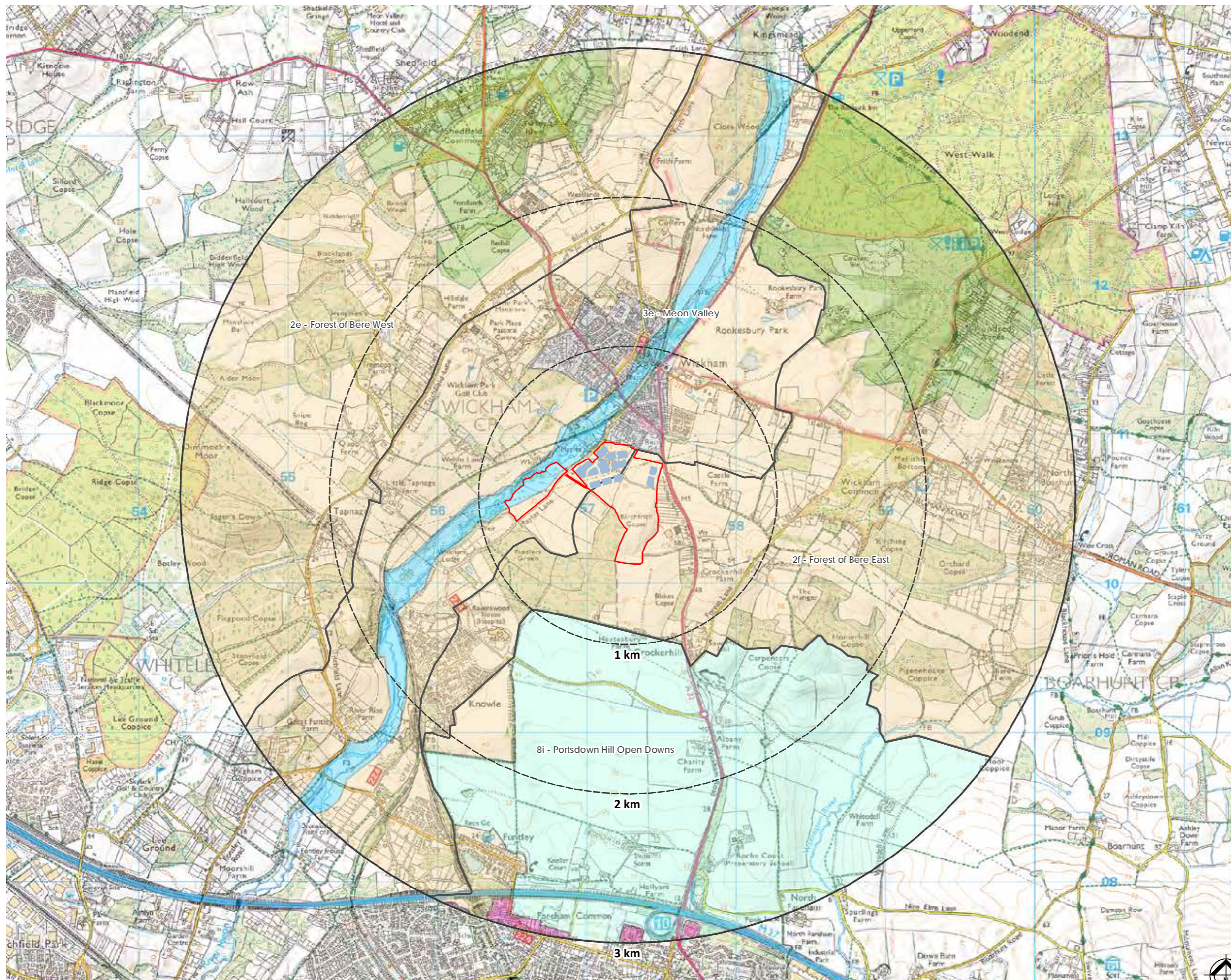
- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- Development
- National Character Area**
- South Hampshire Lowlands

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Figure 3: Regional Landscape Character

Scale 1:25,000



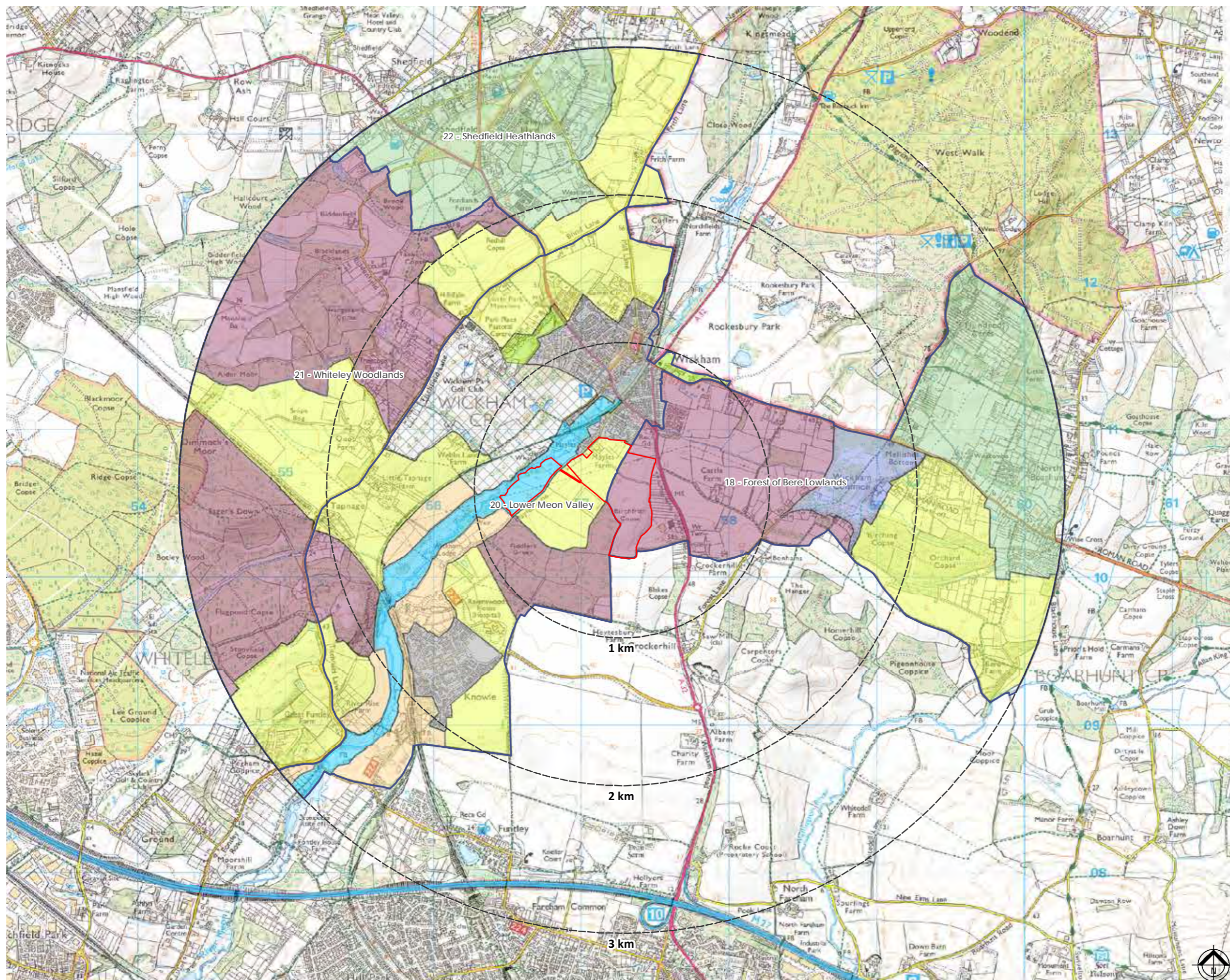
- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- Development
- Hampshire Landscape Character Area
- Local Landscape Character Type**
- Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated
- Lowland Mosaic Medium Scale
- Open Downs
- River Valley Floor
- Settlement
- TCA/TCT Boundary

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Figure 4: Local Landscape Character

Scale 1:25,000



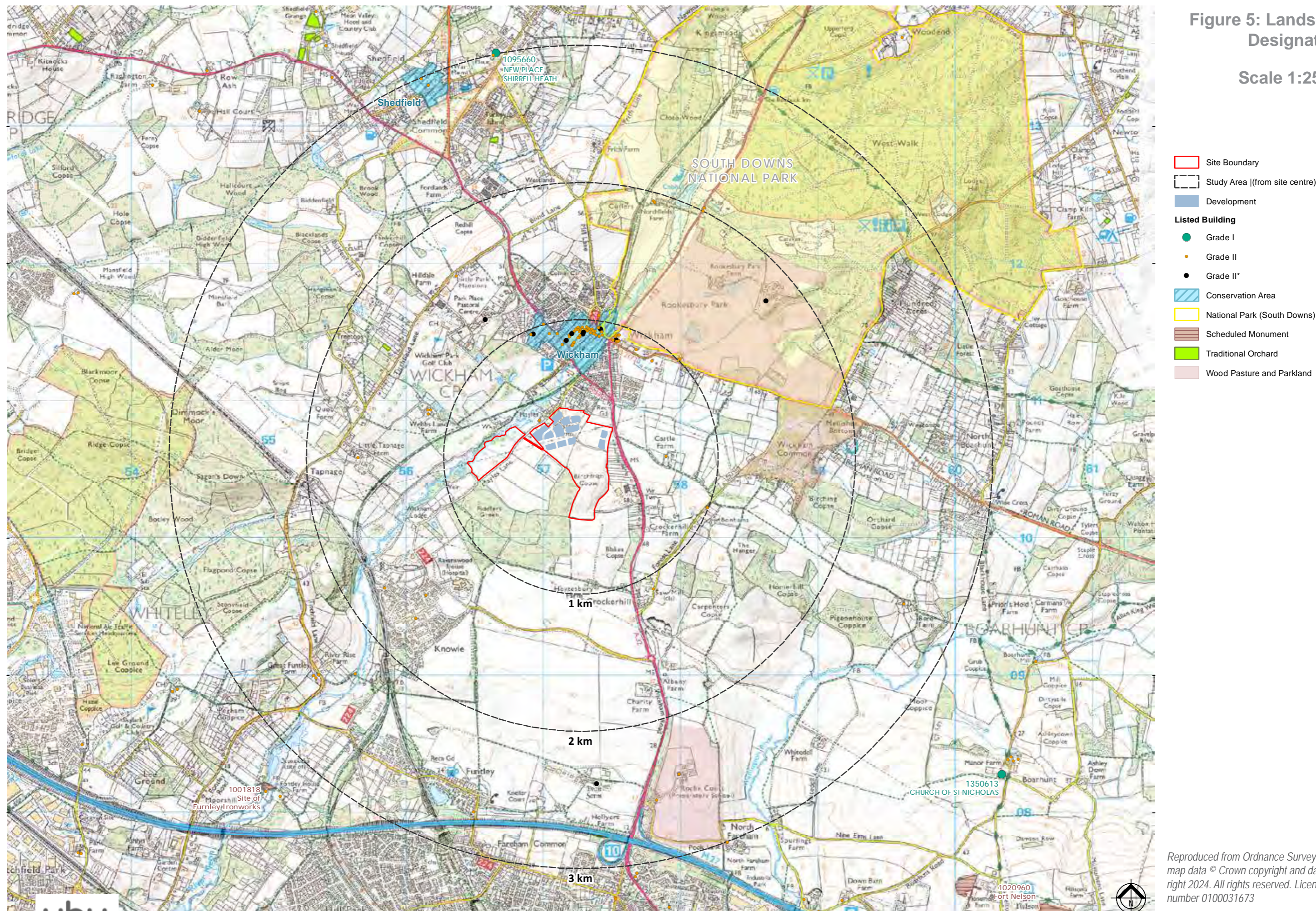
- Site Boundary
- Study Area [(from site centre)]
- Winchester Character Area
- Winchester Landscape Character Type**
- Golf Courses
- Heathland
- Horticulture and small holdings
- Mixed Farmland Woodland Enclosed
- Mixed Farmland and Woodland
- Parkland
- River Valley Floor
- River Valley Side
- Urban Areas

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Figure 5: Landscape Designations

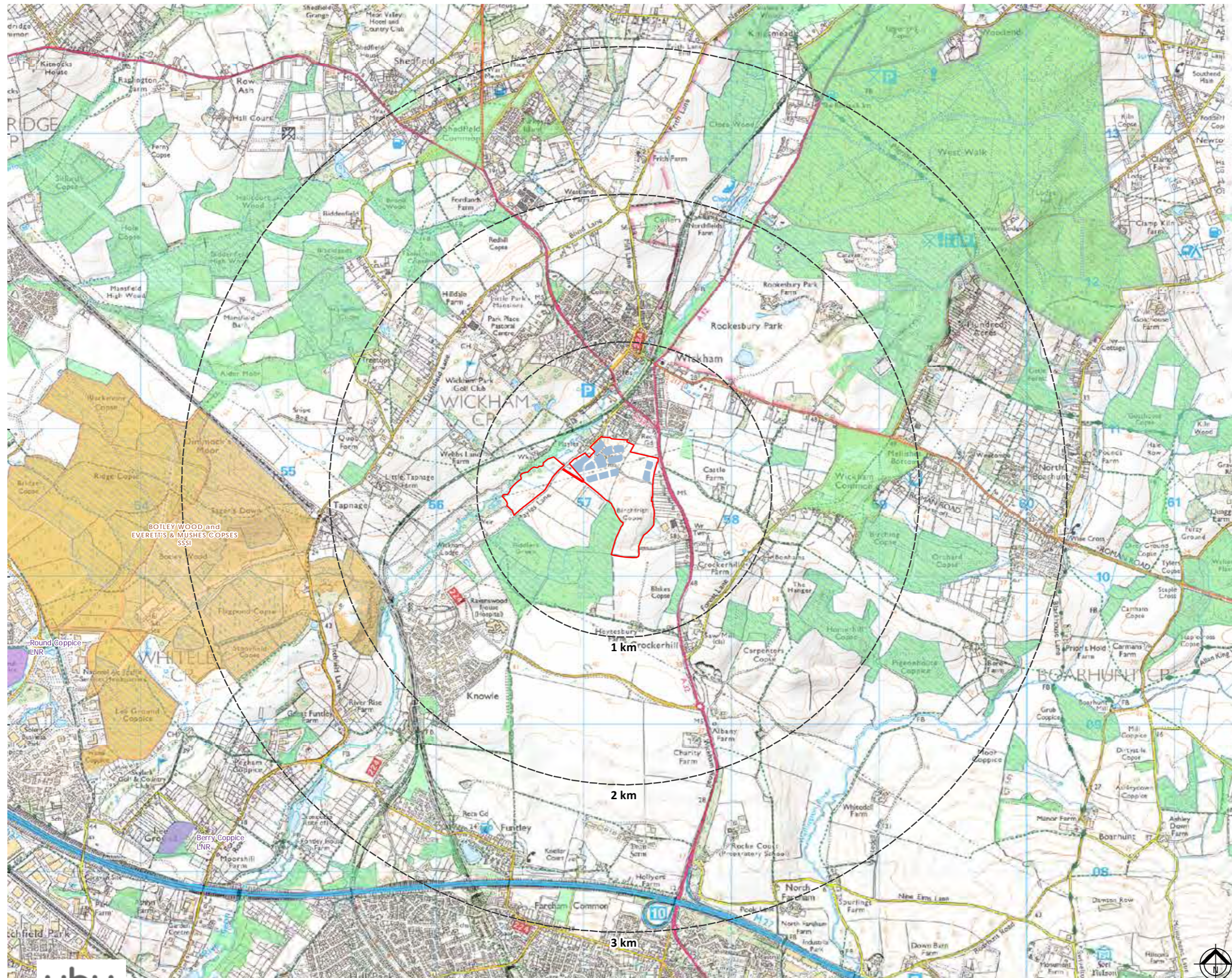
Scale 1:25,000



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Figure 6: Environmental Designations

Scale 1:25,000



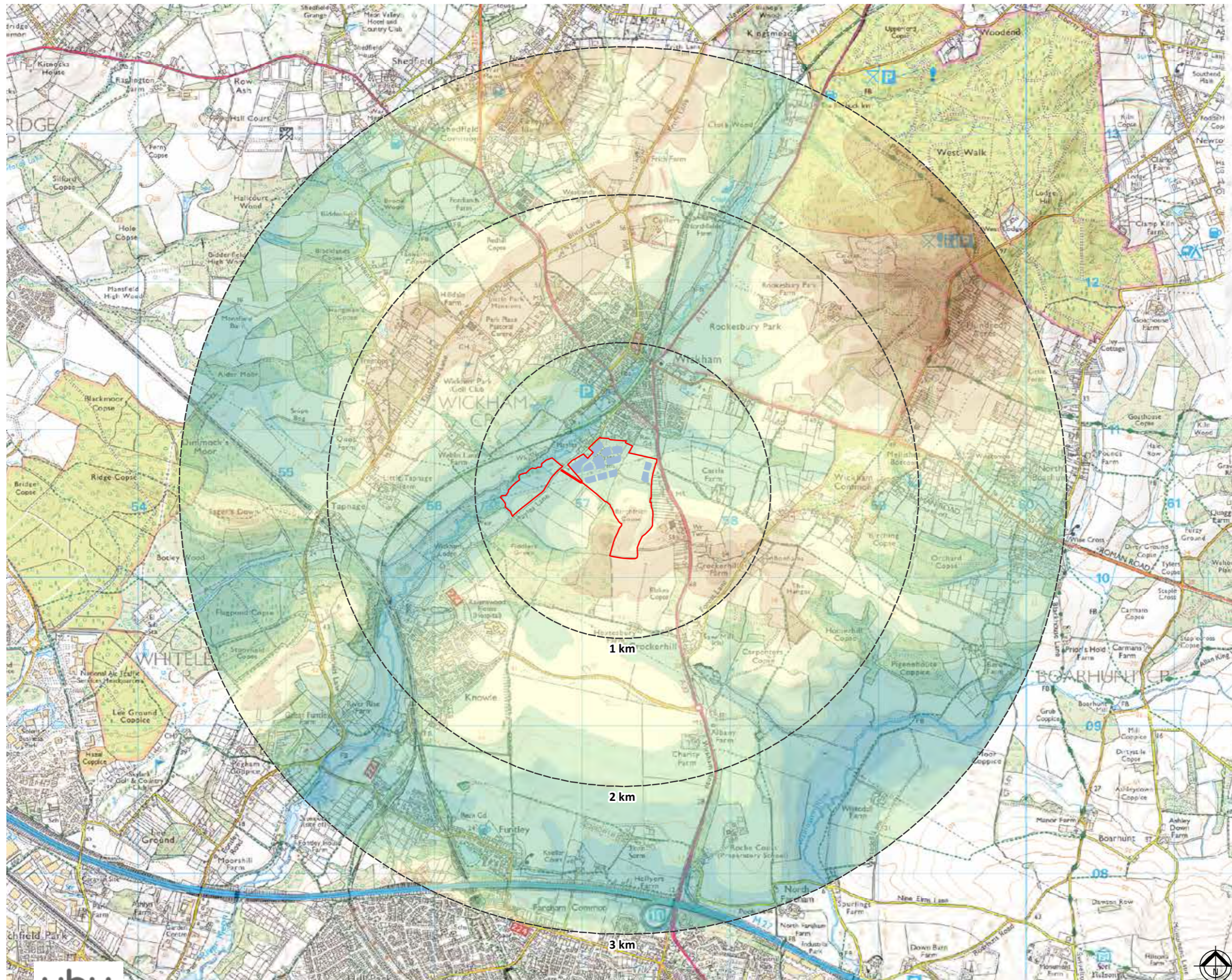
- ▭ Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- Development
- Ancient Woodland Inventory
- Local Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Site
- Site of Special Scientific Interest

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Figure 7: Topography

Scale 1:25,000



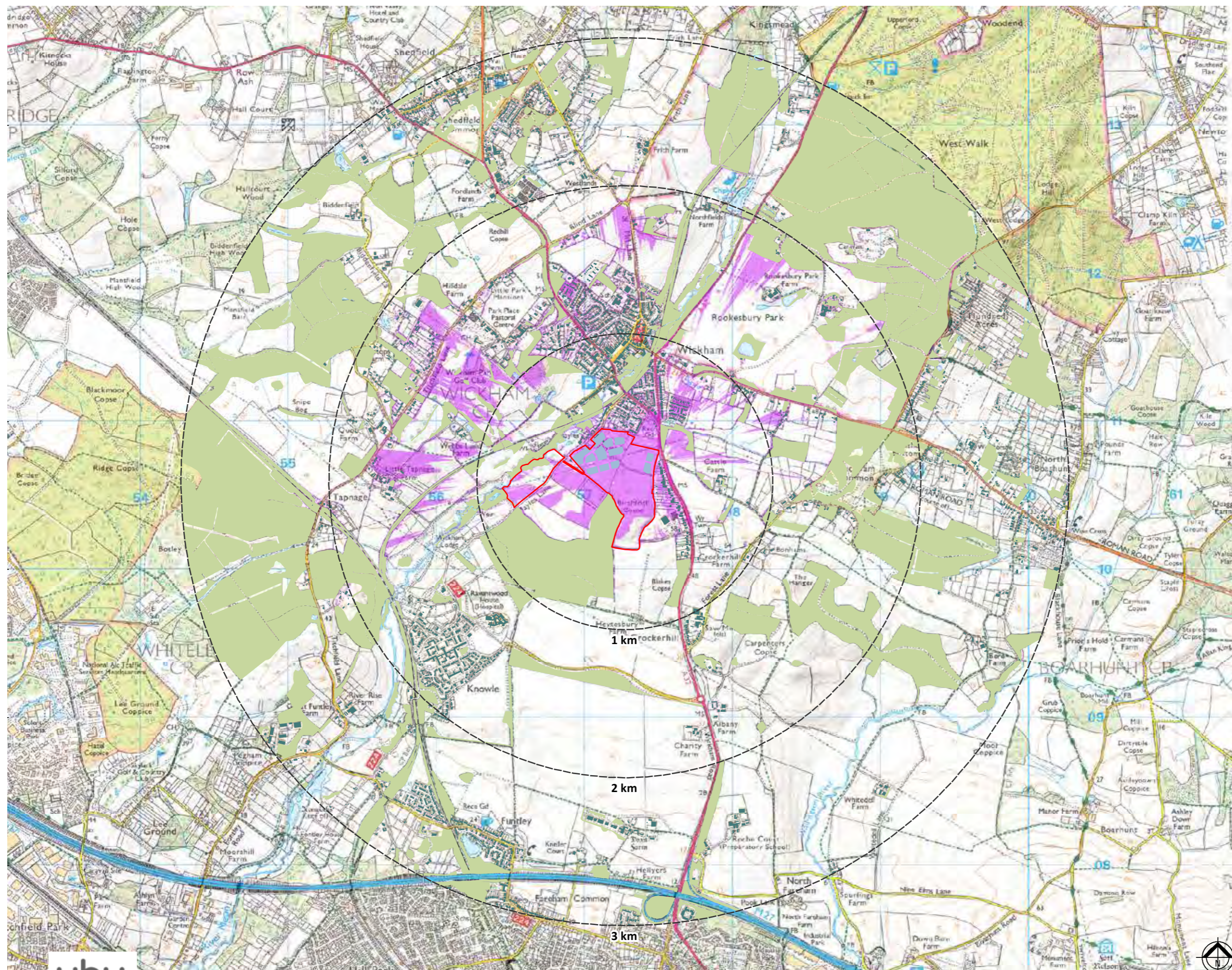
- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- Development
- Height AOD
 - 4m - 10m
 - 11m - 20m
 - 21m - 30m
 - 31m - 40m
 - 41m - 50m
 - 51m - 60m
 - 61m - 70m
 - 71m - 80m
 - 81m - 100m

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Figure 8: Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Scale 1:25,000



- Site Boundary
- Study Area (from site centre)
- Development
- Building
- Woodland
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility**
- Area where Development may be visible

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9. VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN & VIEWPOINT PHOTOGRAPHS

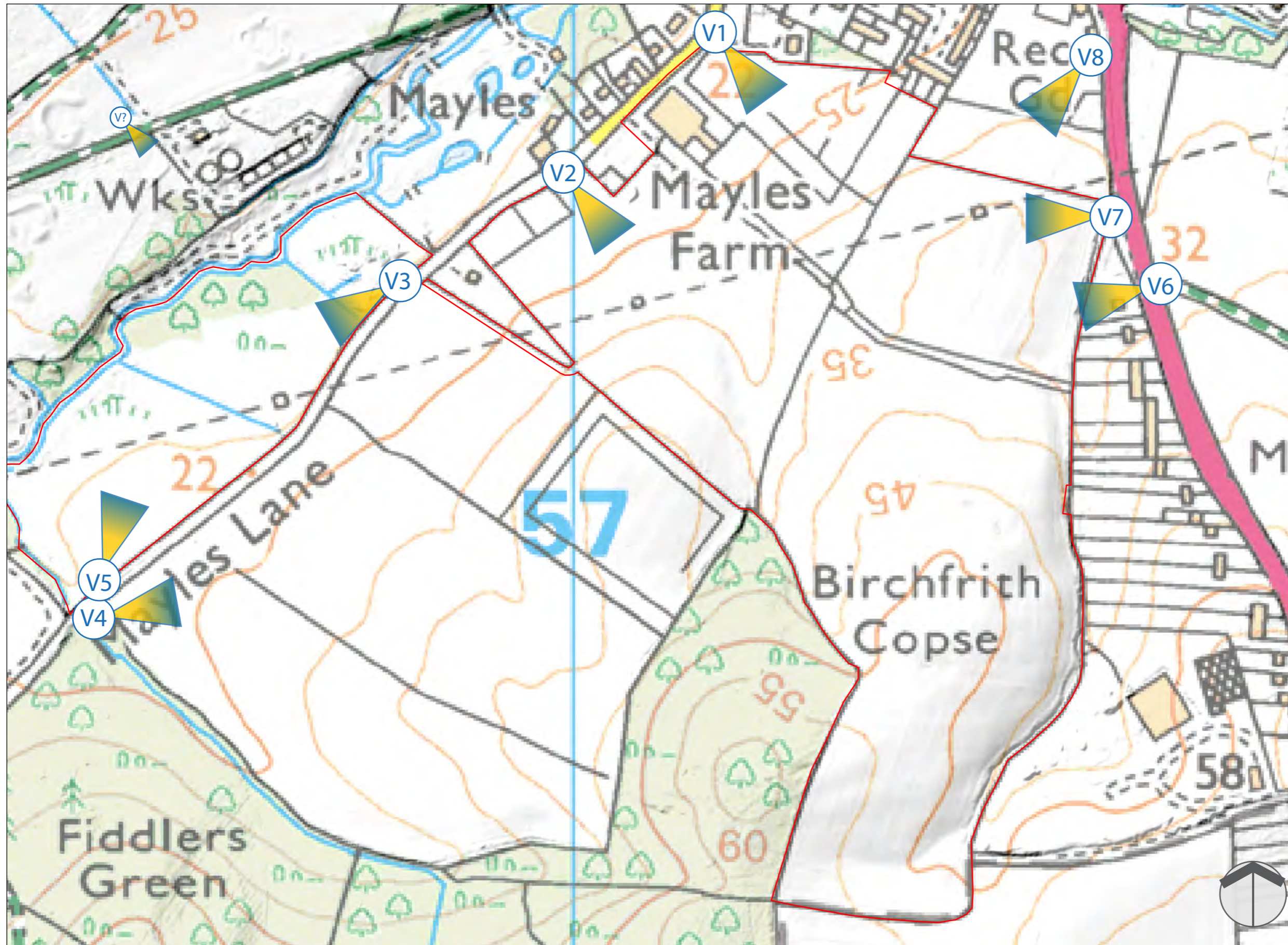

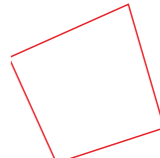


Figure 9: Viewpoint Location Plan Close Scale: NTS

KEY

-  Viewpoint location number and indication of direction of view
-  Site boundary

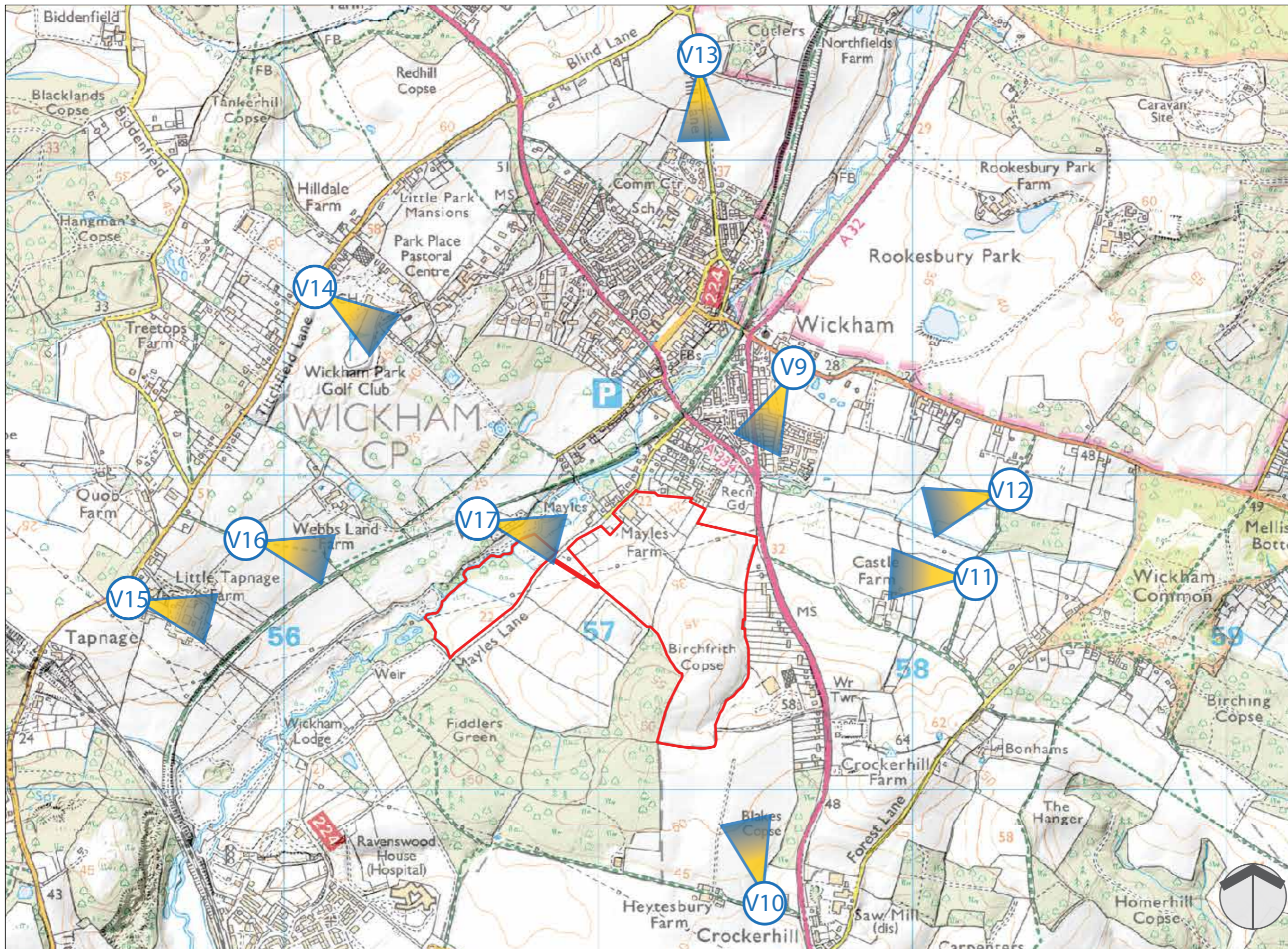

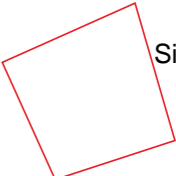


Figure 10: Viewpoint Location Plan Distant Scale: NTS

KEY

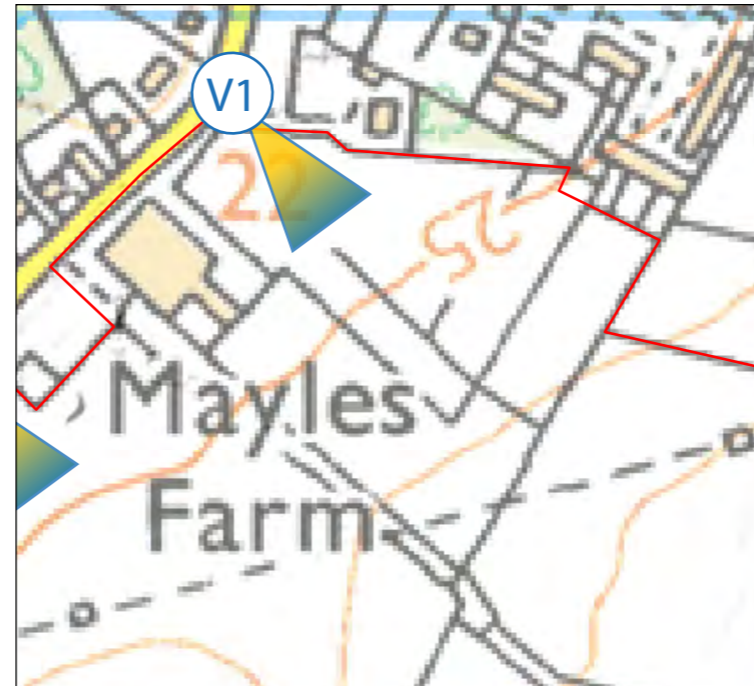
-  Viewpoint location number and indication of direction of view
-  Site boundary

Viewpoint 01

View 01 is taken from Mayles Lane at the entrance to a residential property known as Mirables on the NW corner of the site boundary. The view looks SE towards the site.

The view shows a partial view of the site which is just discernible through the foreground fencing and vegetation.

Viewpoint 01 Location

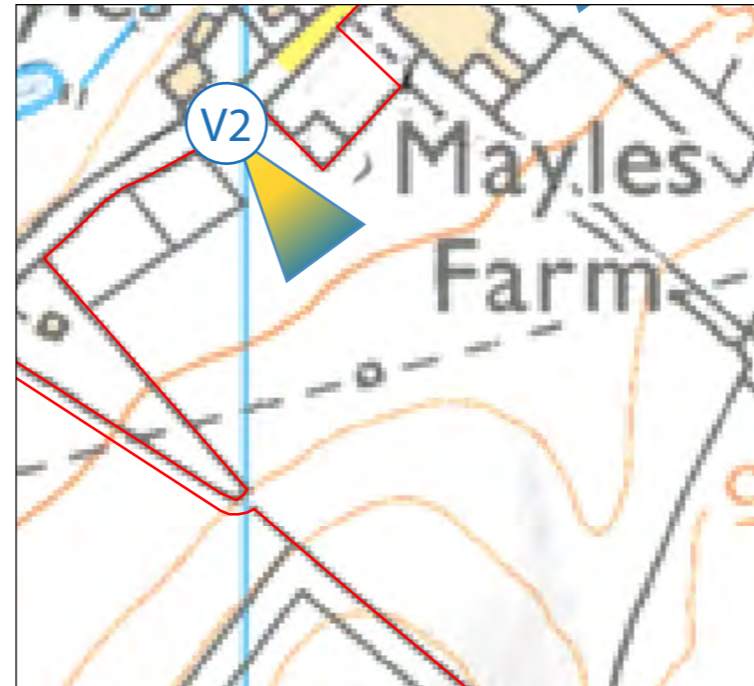


Viewpoint 02

View 02 is taken from Mayles Lane, opposite the Listed Building (Mayles) and outside an existing vehicle entrance to the site. The view looks SE towards the site.

The property to the left of the view remains unchanged. Boundary vegetation to the right of the view will also remain limiting views to the gate opening to the right of the view.

Viewpoint 02 Location



Mayles Lane

Residential/farm property to remain

Site in foreground with Birchfrith Copse woodland beyond

Boundary vegetation to remain

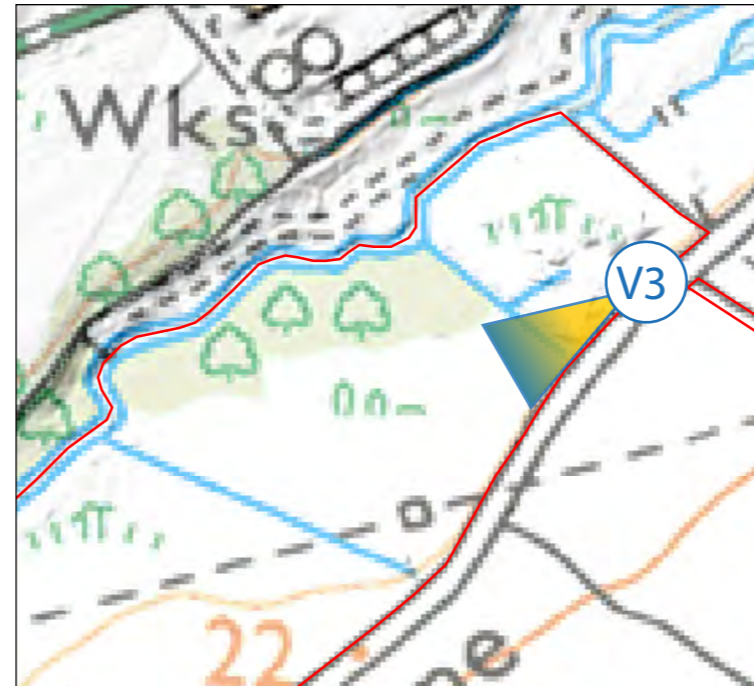


Viewpoint 03

View 03 is taken from Mayles Lane just south of Mayles Lodge. The view looks south west towards the site.

The view shows the pylons marching through a landscape of improved grassland with good hedgerows and scattered trees along the roadside and woodland lining the other boundaries.

Viewpoint 03 Location



Strong hedgerow with scattered trees run along Mayles Lane

Pylons

Woodland along the River Meon

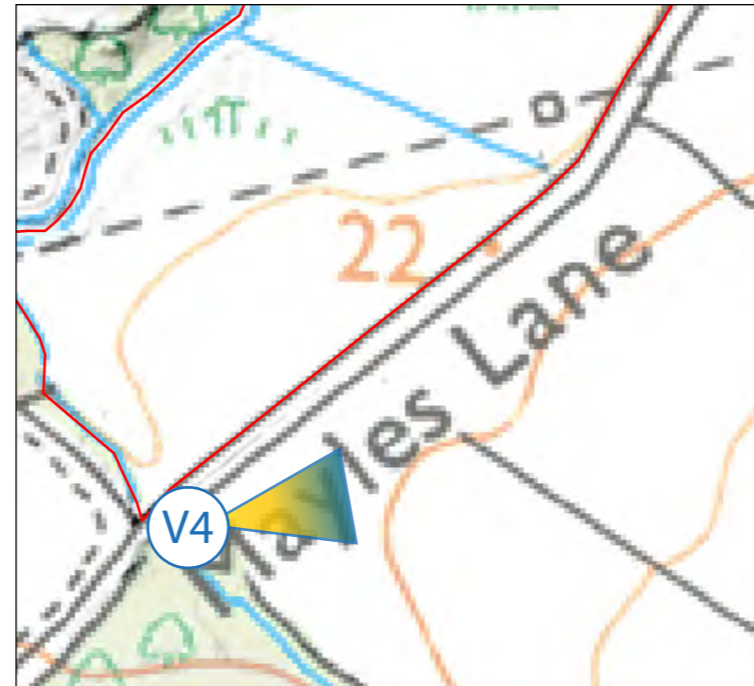


Viewpoint 04

View 04 is taken from Mayles Lane to the south of the site. The view looks north east towards the site.

The view shows the three pylons present on site. The field to the left of the road forms part of the site with the portion to the right of the road hidden by intervening topography. Birchfrith Copse is just visible

Viewpoint 04 Location



Lane within the site to the west of Mayles Lane

Mayles Lane

Pylon in NE corner of the site

Birchfrith Copse

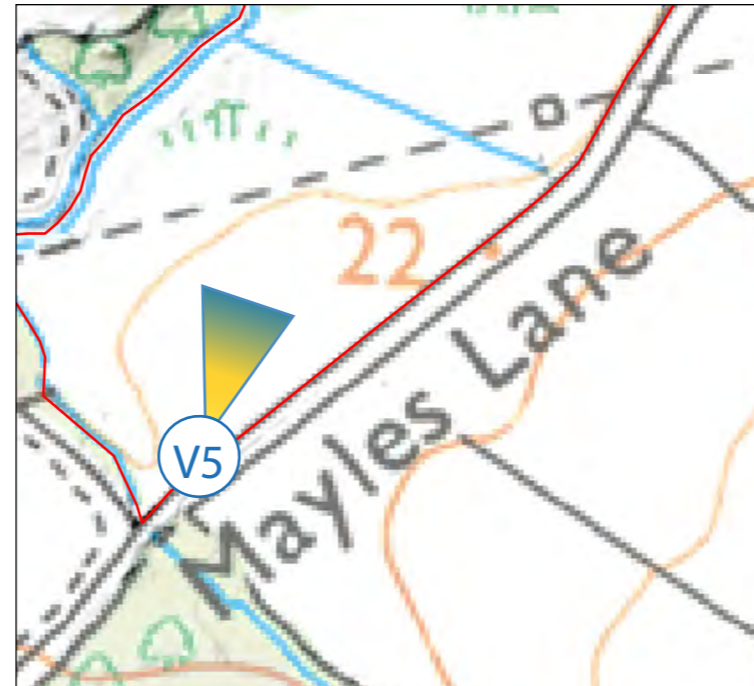


Viewpoint 05

View 05 is taken from Mayles Lane to the south of the western parcel of the site. The view looks north towards the site.

The view shows improved grassland beyond a stong hedgerow with occasional trees. Telegraph poles and pylons are present. The River Meon is marked by woodland and the land then rises slightly with Webbs Land Vineyard visible.

Viewpoint 05 Location

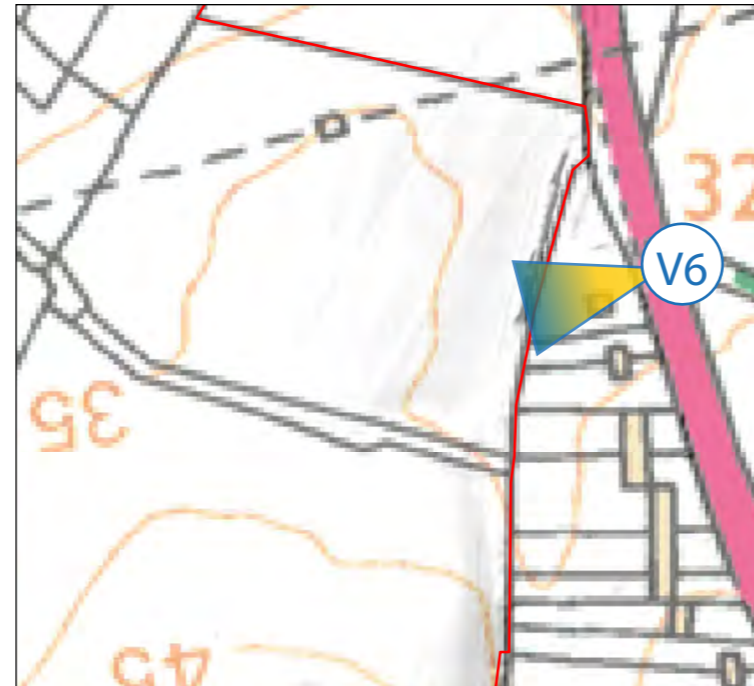


Viewpoint 06

View 06 is taken from PROW 251/10/1 as it adjoins Hoad's Hill. The view looks west towards the site.

The view looks across Hoad's Hill towards the site which is located behind residential properties along the western side of the road. The view shows the proposed site entrance to the right of the view.

Viewpoint 06 Location



Outhouses associated with existing residential dwellings along Hoad's Hill

Existing vegetation to be retained

Proposed site entrance

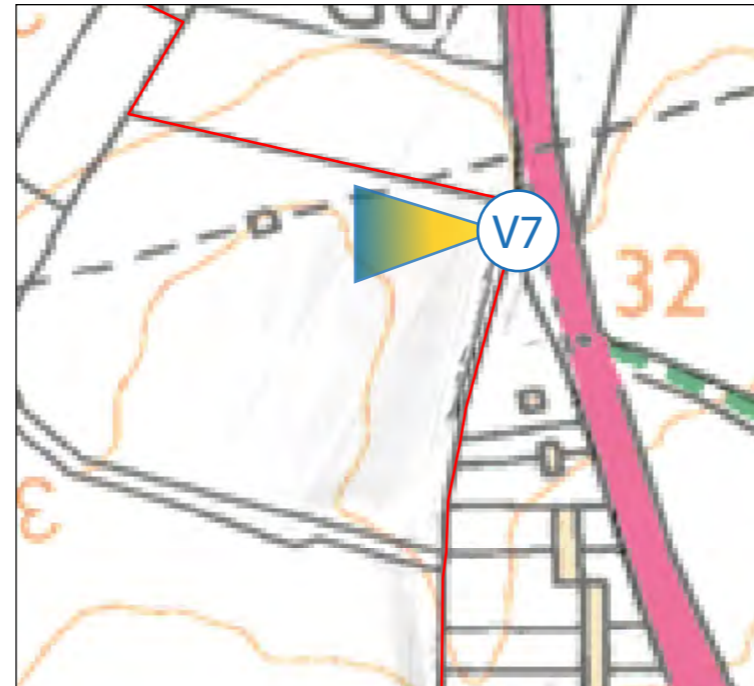


Viewpoint 07

View 07 is taken from the footpath which runs along the western side of Hoad's Hill. The view looks west into the site.

The view looks through a gap in the boundary vegetation, revealing a partial view of the site at an field entrance into the site. This is proposed to be the main vehicular entrance into the site.

Viewpoint 07 Location

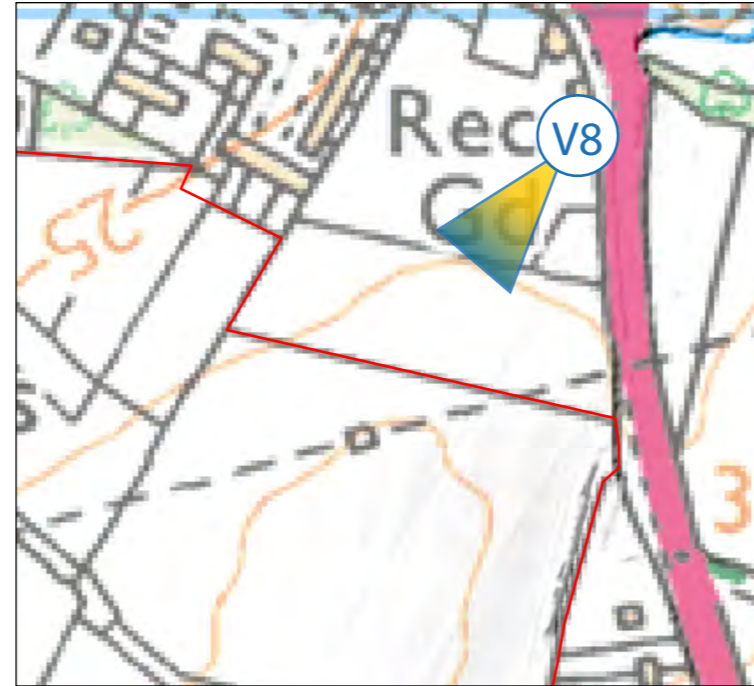


Viewpoint 08

View 08 is taken from the Recreation Ground to the south of the club house. The view looks south west towards the site.

The view shows mature trees dotted along the boundary of the recreation ground with further vegetation beyond in the wildflower area with the site beyond. The pylons are on site. To the right of the view the residential development along Manor Close is just visible.

Viewpoint 08 Location

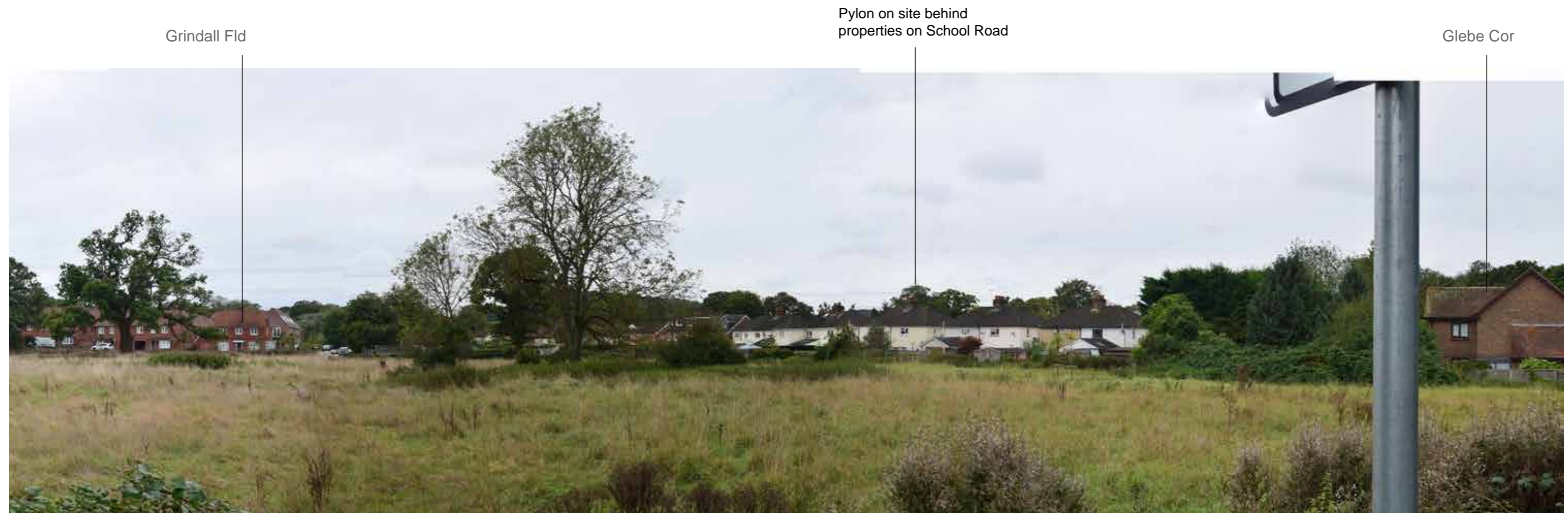
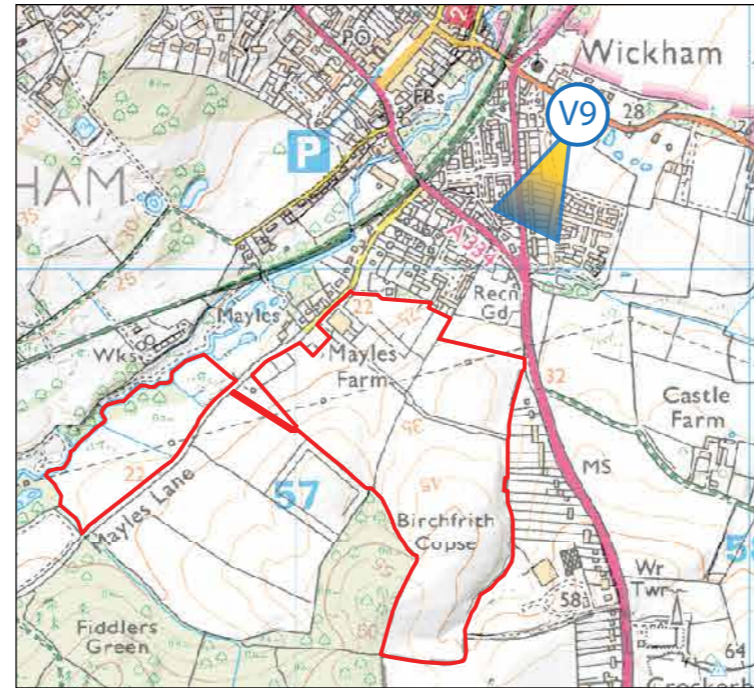


Viewpoint 09

View 09 is taken from Southwick Road opposite the entrance to a small development. The view looks south towards the site.

The view shows unimproved grassland beyond a gappy hedge with residential properties visible on Grindall Fld, School Road and Glebe Cor. The pylon on site is visible behind the residential properties on School Road.

Viewpoint 09 Location

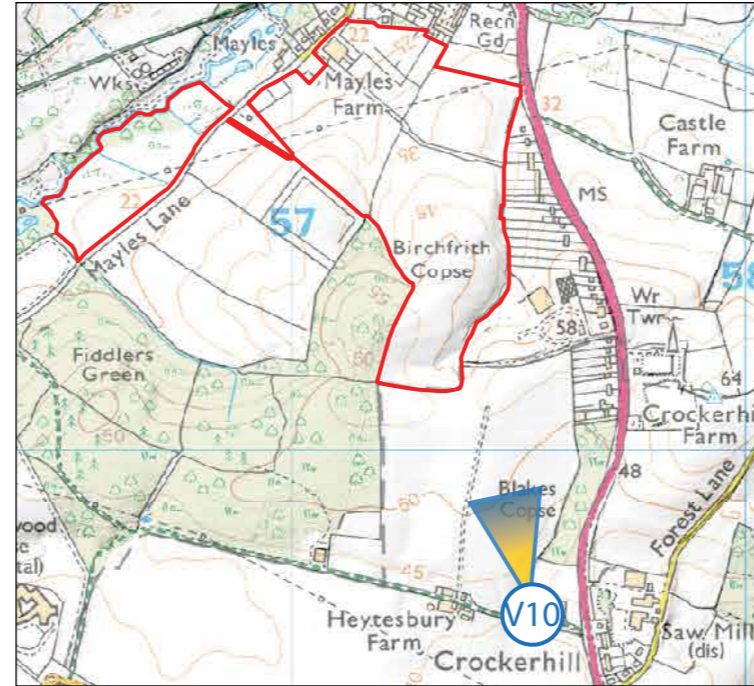


Viewpoint 10

View 10 is taken from PROW 084/87/1 just to the west of the residential property to the west of Hoad's Hill. The view looks north towards the site.

The development is not visible from this viewpoint due to topography but the southern site boundary is just visible with the treelined boundary currently forming the horizon. However, with the approved Welborne Masterplan residential development, housing will be built inbetween the viewpoint location and the site.

Viewpoint 10 Location



Birchfrith Copse

Approved Welborne development

Trees on the southern boundary of the site

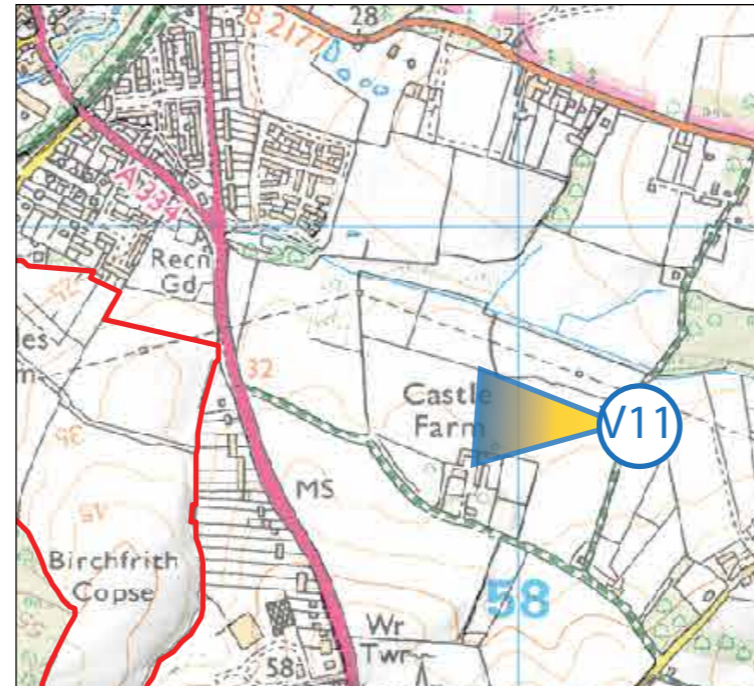


Viewpoint 11

View 11 is taken from PRow 251/11/1 to the south of the pylon line. The view looks west into the site.

The view looks through a broken hedge line over an arable field to clumps of trees. The pylon on site is visible in the view.

Viewpoint 11 Location



Two pylons mark the site

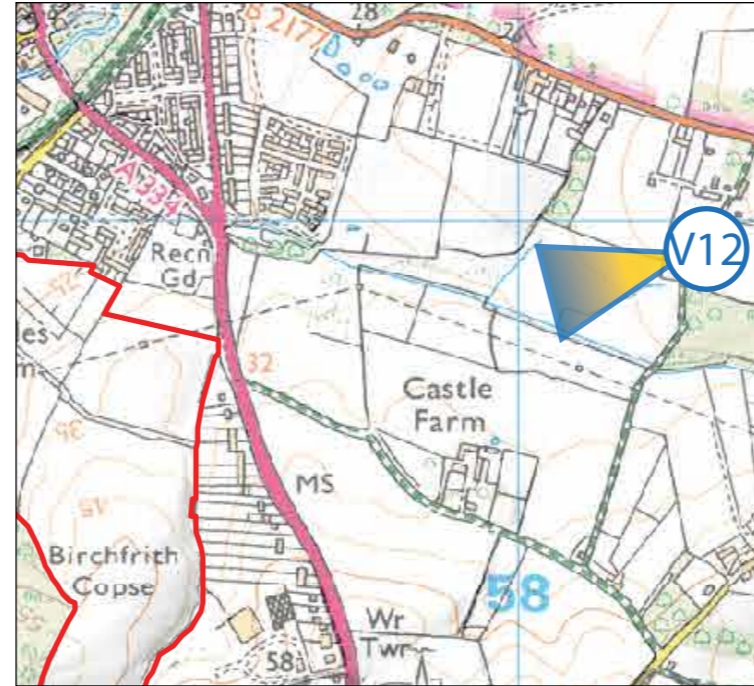


Viewpoint 12

View 12 is taken from PRoW 251/11/1 opposite the property to the south of Southwick Road Motor Repairs. The view looks west towards the site.

The view shows isolated dwellings surrounded by pastoral farmland used to graze horses with fencing and occasional mature trees. The distant views are of woodland. The nearest two pylons in the view are off site but the three behind are those which are on the site.

Viewpoint 12 Location



Three pylons on site



Viewpoint 13

View 13 is taken from Mill Lane close to Cutlers. The view looks south towards the site.

The view looks down the road which is well vegetated with trees. Where trees are not present open views are gained over arable farmland which limits distant views.

Viewpoint 13 Location



Mill Lane

Arable farmland

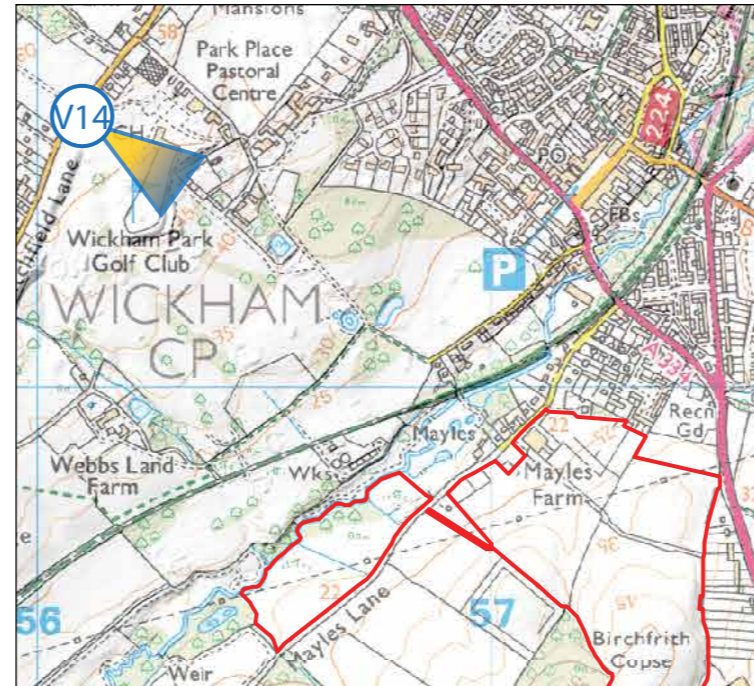


Viewpoint 14

View 14 is taken from Titchfield Lane at the entrance to MetOcean Telematics UK. The view looks southeast towards the site.

The view looks across Titchfield Road towards Wickham Park Golf Club

Viewpoint 14 Location

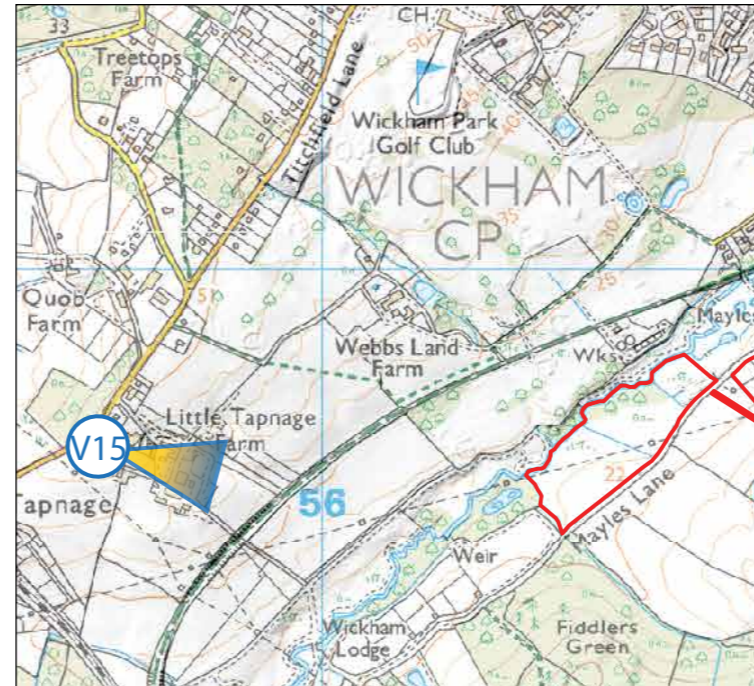


Viewpoint 15

View 15 is taken from Titchfield Lane at the entrance to Higgles Raw Milk. The view looks east towards the site.

The view looks across improved grassland used for grazing animals to Little Tapnage Farm. Distant views might possibly show Birchfrith Copse.

Viewpoint 15 Location



Possibly Birchfrith Copse

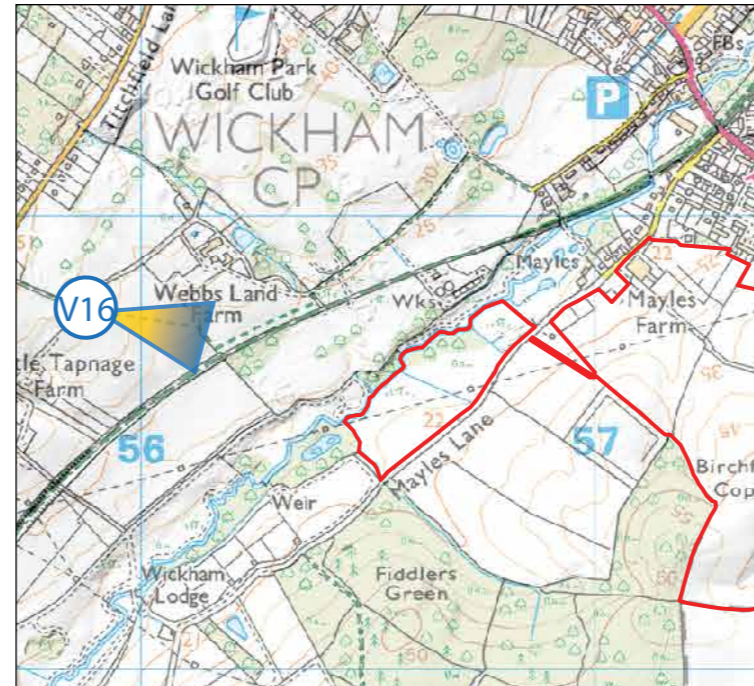


Viewpoint 16

View 16 is taken from PRoW 251/5/1 as it passes over a stile from the golf course track to Webbs Farm. The view looks east towards the site.

The view looks down the road which is well vegetated with trees. Where trees are not present open views are gained over arable farmland which limits distant views

Viewpoint 16 Location



Pylon to the NE corner of the site
Pylon on the parcel of land to the west of Mayles Lane
Pylon on site
Birchfrith Copse

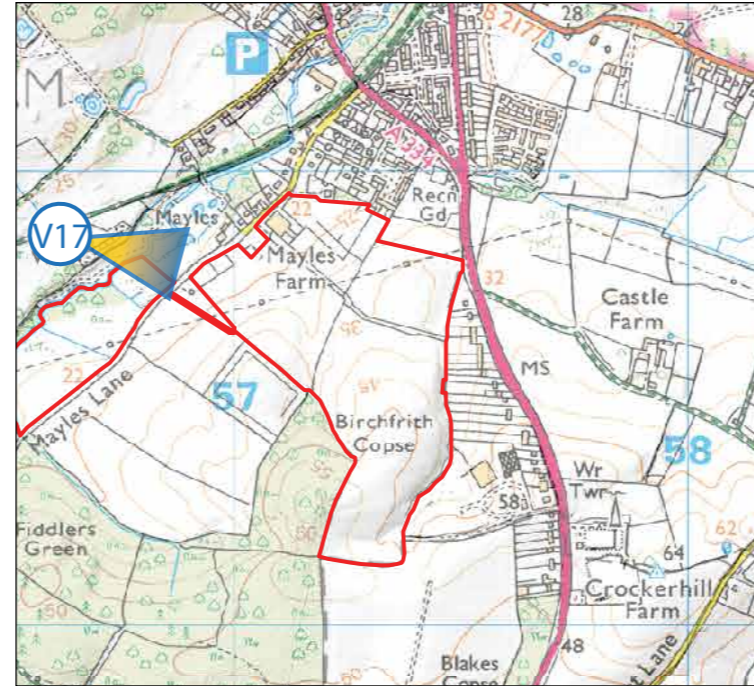


Viewpoint 17

View 17 is taken from PRoW 251/501/1 at the entrance to Wickham Wastewater Treatment Works. The view looks east towards the site.

The view looks over the wastewater treatment works with the central pylon on site just visible.

Viewpoint 17 Location

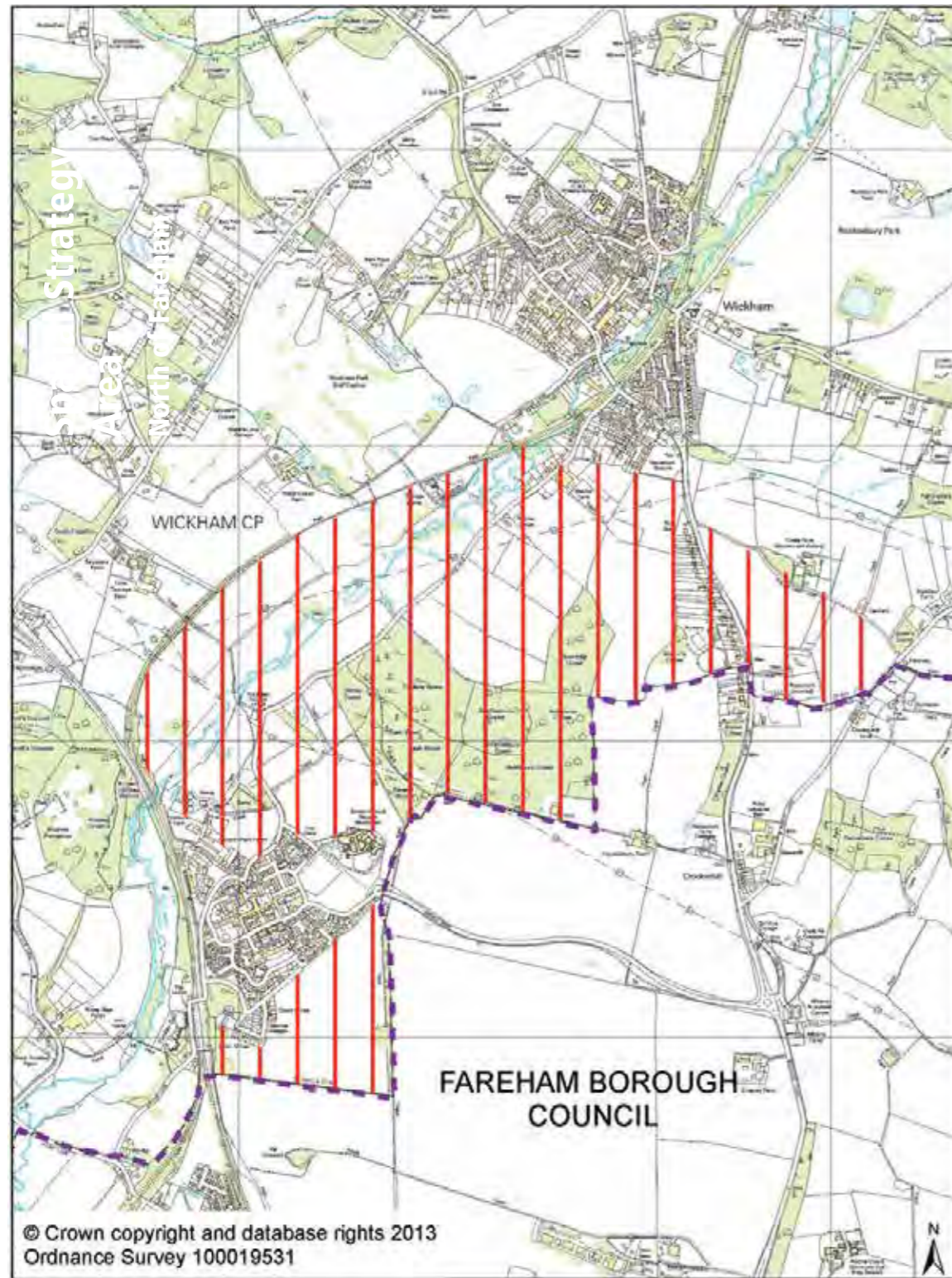


Middle pylon on site





Map 8 – SH4: North Fareham SDA



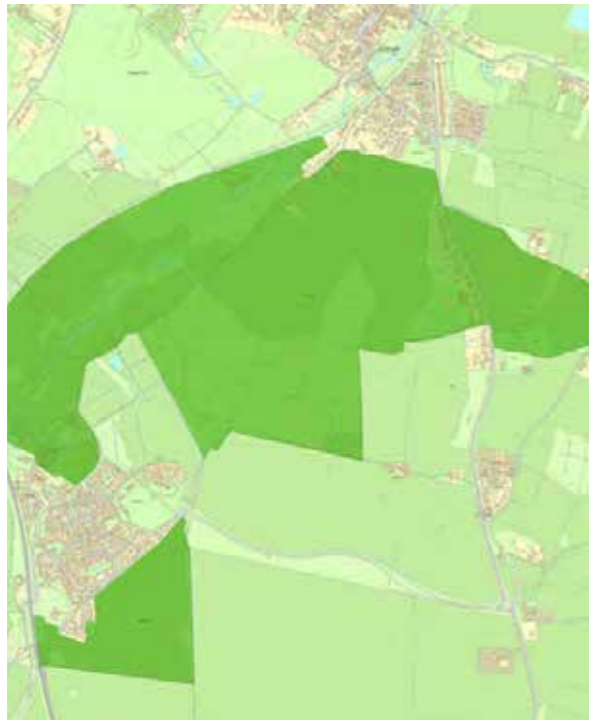
Key
| | Settlement Gap
- - - District Boundary

Spatial Strategy
South Hampshire
Urban Areas

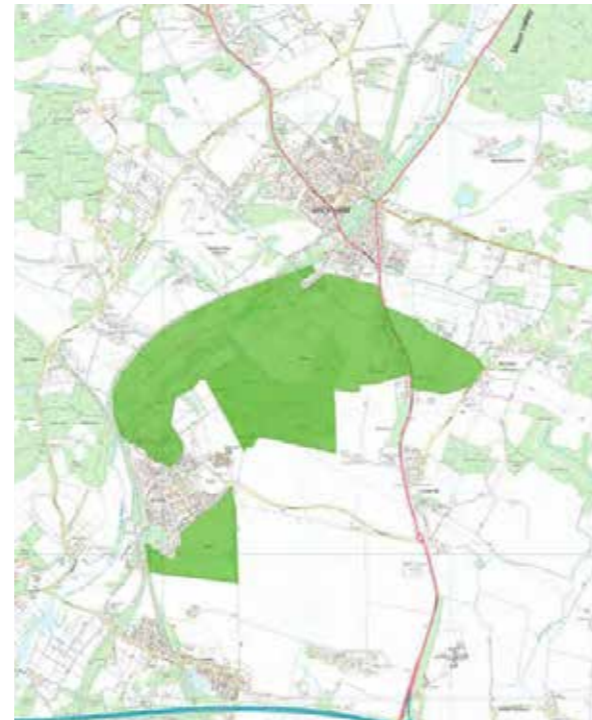


Area: Wickham	SHELAA site Reference: N/A
Name of Site: Welborne Open Space	Allocated Use: Open Space/Settlement Gap
Location: Located between Knowle and Wickham to the north of the FBC boundary	Indicative number of homes: 0
Size: 210 hectares	Existing use: Agricultural / woods

Site Plan



Wider context

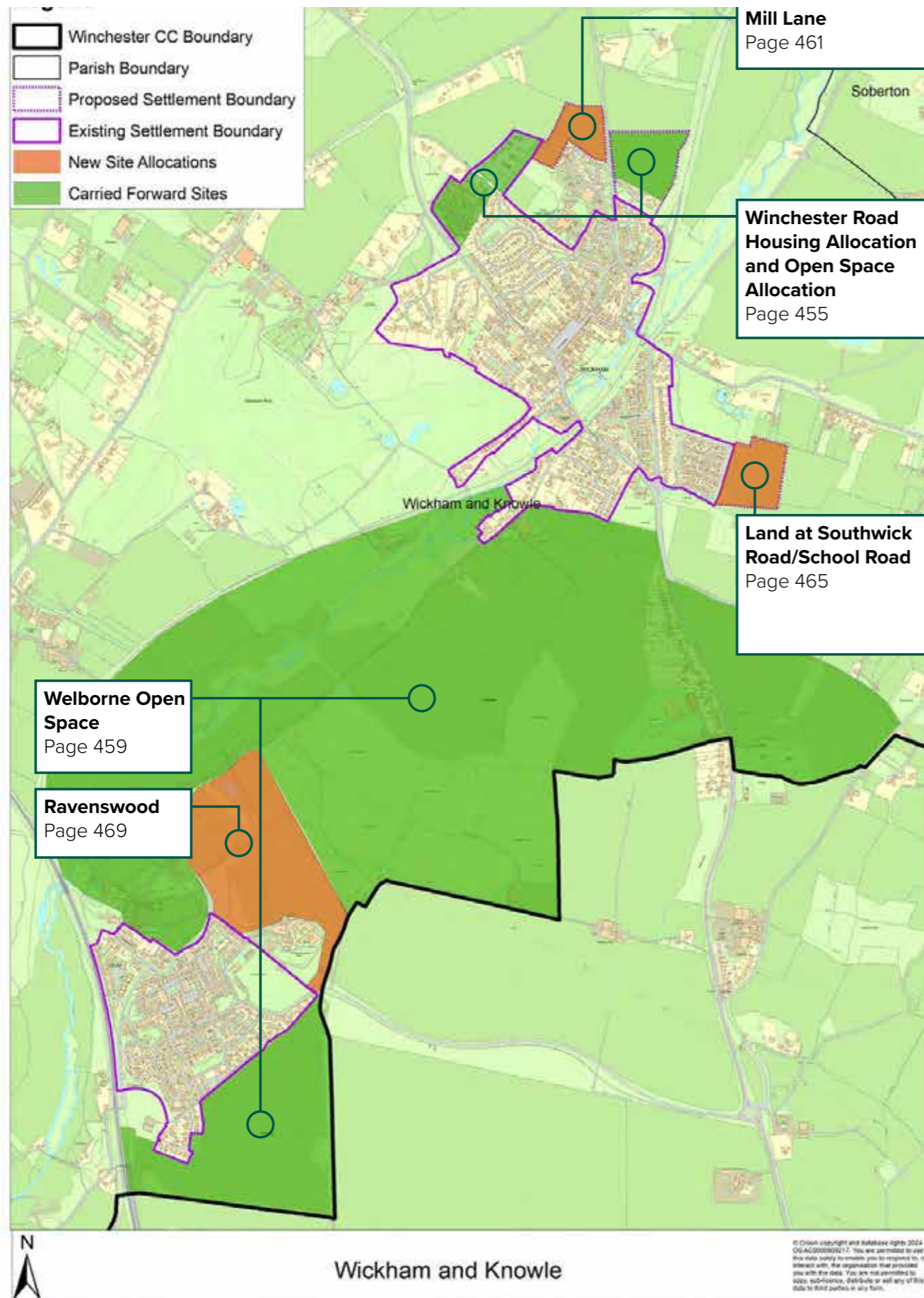


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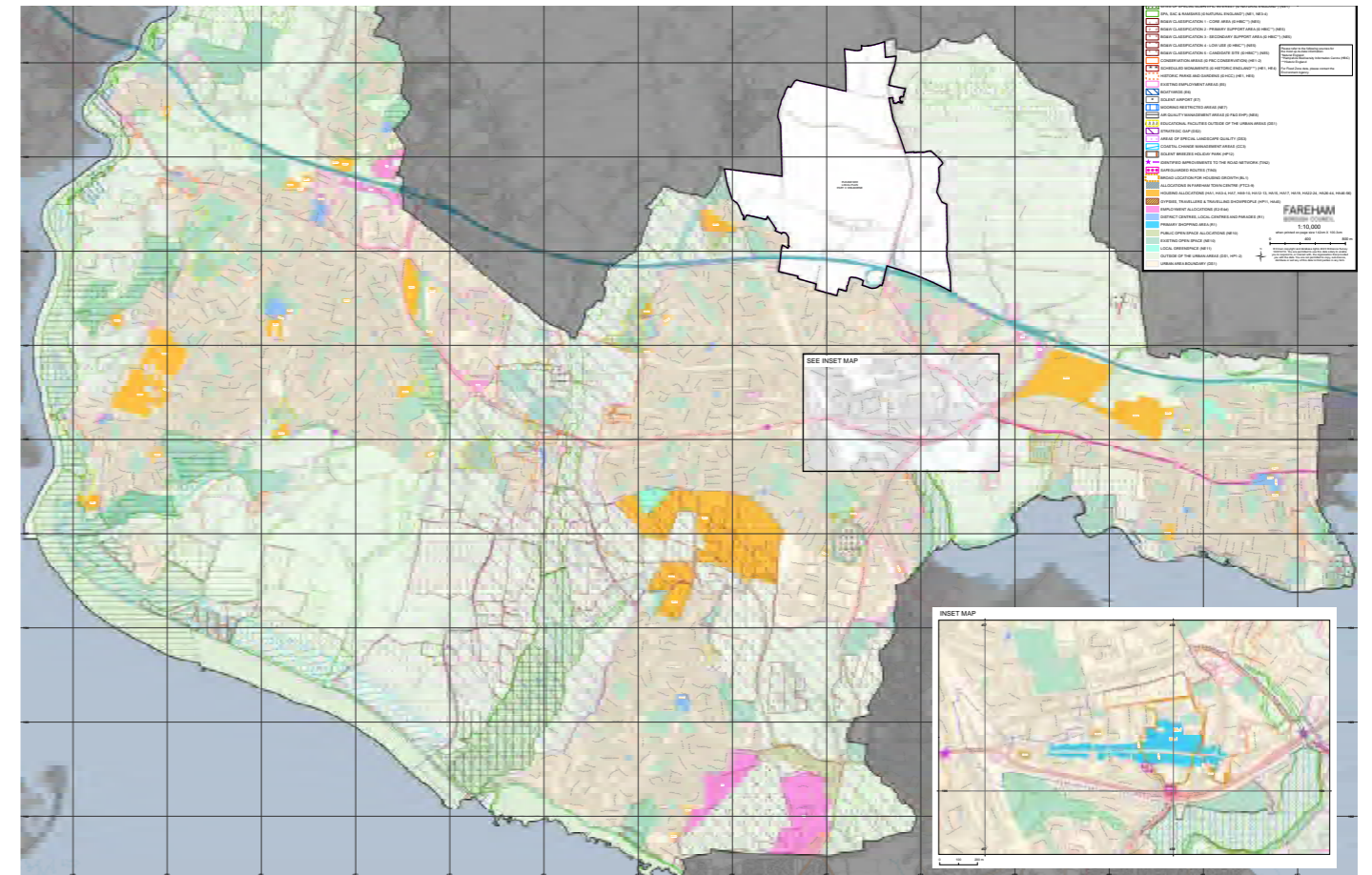
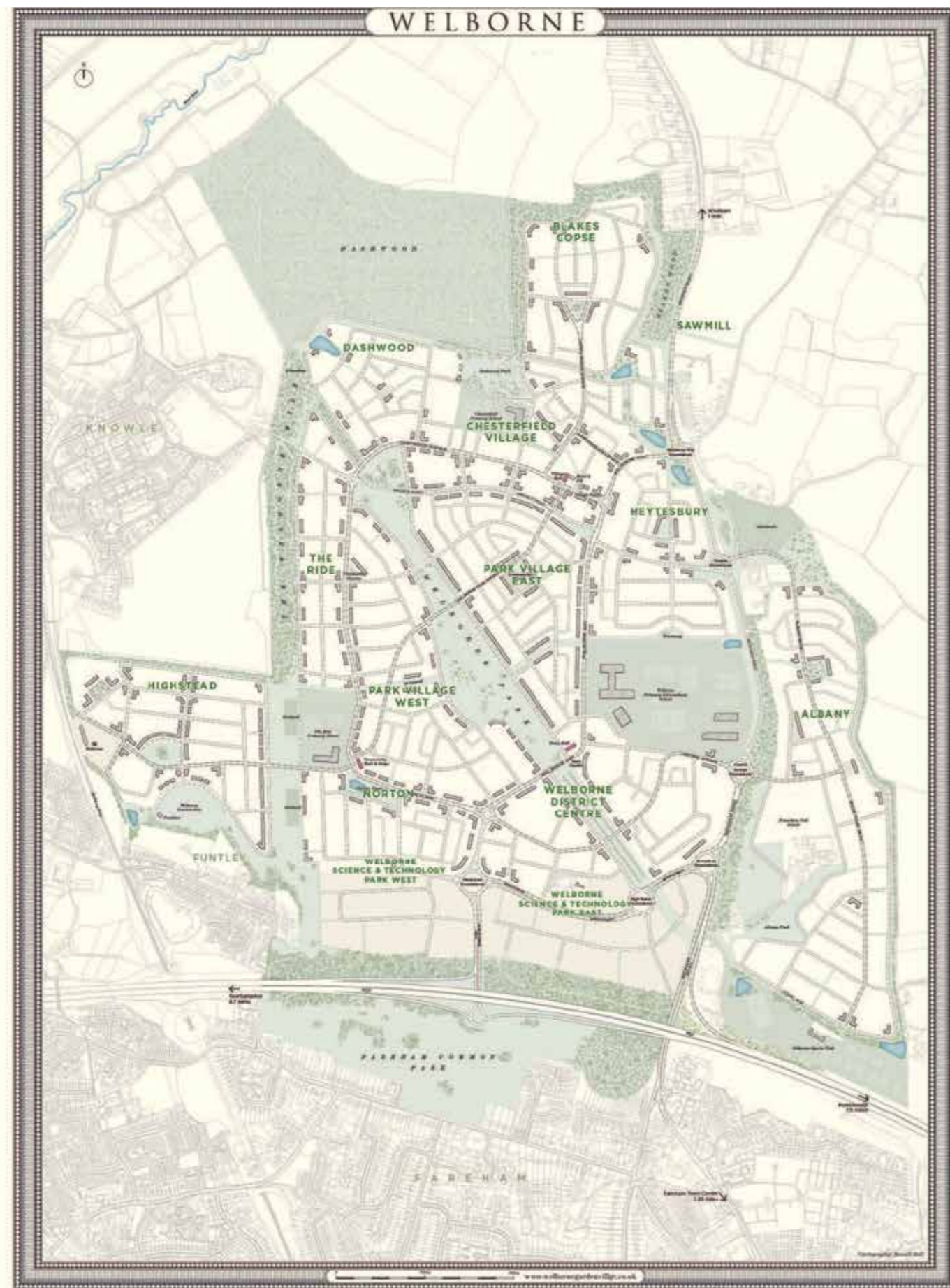
14.114

Supporting text:

The Welborne development to be located to the North of Fareham will comprise approximately 6,000 new homes and associated uses. The adopted Fareham Local Plan (2023) and Welborne Plan (2015) set out the planning framework for the development.



WINCHESTER DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN 1511



Land at Mayles Lane, Wickham

Supporting Landscape text

October 2024

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Purpose of the document	3
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Conclusion	4

Doc Ref: 5044/ LVA

Rev:

Date of Issue: 09 Oct 2024

Author: LW

Status: FINAL

1. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Document

- 1.1 Ubu Design Landscape Architects were commissioned by Macra Limited to undertake a landscape and visual appraisal and appropriate landscape assessment of the site to ascertain the baseline landscape and determine the landscape sensitivity of the site for Land at Mayles Lane, Wickham, Hampshire. The masterplan comprises a proposed mixed use development of residential, some commercial and community uses, along with open space and new connective pathways. A Masterplan layout was provided but there are no further details.
- 1.2 This supporting document appends the Baseline Landscape and Visual Appraisal of the site carried out by UBU Design.
- 1.3 It seeks to explore, using evidence including the Appraisal carried out, the potential for this site to achieve some development whilst being able to still maintain a settlement gap.
- 1.4 An assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape is set out in Chapter 2 of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal.

Policy Context

- 1.5 The landscape assessment underpinning Winchester's emerging Local Plan includes a topic paper by LUC and existing LCAs for WCC, Hampshire and the National LCA.
- 1.6 LUC's Settlement gaps review topic paper (July 2024 LUC) set out that *In Winchester District the preservation of open areas between built-up settlements is a well-established spatial planning tool. These gaps are valued by local communities for the role they play in safeguarding the visual separation and distinct identity of neighbouring settlements.*
- 1.7 The gap review also states that: *The Welborne settlement gap has not been included in the Settlement Gap Review because planning permission has already been granted for the Welborne development at Fareham. The land between Welborne and the existing settlements of Fareham, Funtley, Knowle and Wickham is designated as settlement buffers to be used as open green infrastructure, in accordance with Policies WEL5 and WEL29 (Fareham Local Plan Part 3: The Welborne Plan). This existing designation and planning framework ensure that the separation and integrity of these settlements are maintained, making further study of this settlement gap unnecessary at this moment in time.*

- 1.8 The existing Development plan had policy CP18 - this is outlined in the main LVA document with the baseline.
- 1.9 It is observed that the existing and retained gap does encompass existing large elements of housing along A32 Hoads Hill.
- 1.10 The gap also contains elements of degraded landscape such as the triangle of land that abuts the south of the site adjacent the proposed Open Space southern portion. See image 1 below: The triangle is identified as Ancient Woodland (source Magic maps) and shown as Martin's Copse.



Below - the copse only has retained mature trees to its western and southern boundary



- 1.11 In the emerging local plan Settlement Gap policy NE7 sets out to *retain the generally open and undeveloped nature of the*

following defined settlement gaps: and within these areas only development that does not undermine the function of the gap and its intended role to define and retain the separate identity of settlements will be permitted. Any development should not threaten the generally open and undeveloped nature of the gap and avoid coalescence

- 1.12 It is also noted that Policy WK3 notes the importance of *separation between the SDA and the existing settlements of Knowle and Wickham. The open and undeveloped rural character of this land will be retained through the application of Policy NE7 – Settlement Gaps.*
- 1.13 In proposing a settlement extension to the existing dwellings off Mayles Lane and Hoad's Hill, the proposal of this site works with the existing built context of south Wickham. The development and built elements of the proposal are contained in parcels which adjoin existing settlement or existing built development.
- 1.14 The landscape appraisal identifies that the site is also, in this area, visually dominated by the 3 pylons within the site, and influenced by existing settlement and urban elements in a variety of local views. The A32 is a large trunk road serving a variety of traffic in a roughly north south direction across east Hampshire and it influences the site by reducing any sense of tranquility, especially close to Wickham itself where the new larger roundabout and petrol station form part of the recognised entrance to Wickham. The new eastern site access can therefore be accommodated from the A32 with little impact to the surrounding context.
- 1.15 It would reduce the gap, however it would not visually reduce the gap, as shown in the visual appraisal. This is due to either limited views in the current context, or views already occupied by development and influenced by elements such as the pylons.



The gap would be maintained at over half a kilometre from the northern edge of the approved Welborne development into the site (green line on figure)

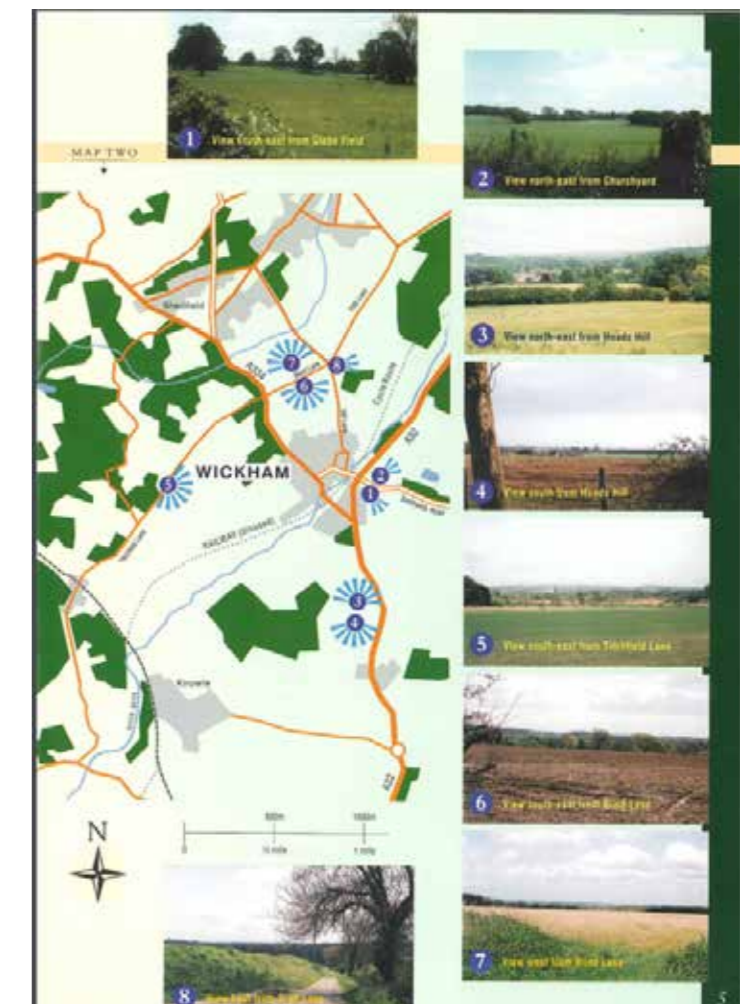
- 1.16 The site can be developed and can still function effectively as a *settlement buffer* from Welborne with little intrusion visually to local receptors.
- 1.17 There is currently no public access to the site, which can be delivered by this site, creating new views into the open countryside and increasing the landscape value of the local area.
- 1.18 Due to the way the site is developed, maintaining an open mid section, responding to existing development boundaries, the development will not create any physical or visual coalescence, with more than half a kilometre of physical separation, though this appears visually to be more, due to the topography of the site, where Birchfrith copse is the highest local point preventing longer views.
- 1.19 With regard Policy MTRA 4 - Development in the Countryside the proposal does currently fall into countryside however, it can be accommodated and would not be likely to cause harm to the character and landscape of the area or neighbouring uses, or create inappropriate noise/light and traffic generation. This is in part due to the Mayles Lane Phase 1 section utilising an existing access and working with the existing lane character as established in the visual appraisal. It also utilises existing built form on A32 Hoad's Hill for commercial and leisure uses with the new access having limited impact in an already built context.
- 1.20 With regards DM23 the site does offer development with minimal visual intrusion, as demonstrated by the LVA, the site is well enclosed by existing development and vegetated boundaries. The LVA also notes potential for improvements to buffers and vegetated boundaries, alongside the wider landscape benefits delivered with the open space. Birchfrith Copse would remain a dominant landscape feature of local value in a range of views. No key features are lost with the proposed development, in accordance with the policy.
- 1.21 There can be no comment further on Policy CP13 - High Quality Design due to the early masterplanning of this site, however the appraisal will inform future detailed layouts .
- 1.22 As above for policy D1 - the LVA has explored the sites local setting and qualities and demonstrates how it can respond with minimal impact on local receptors.

- 1.23 Echoed for Policy DM16 as above - the LVA can inform a well considered layout for the development.
- 1.24 Provision of this site can have considerable benefits for biodiversity and local and regional ecology, and will therefore be able to meet Policy CP16 - Biodiversity.
- 1.25 It accords with Policy NE1 also in this respect, with ample opportunities with the two new large open spaces, to work with the local landscape resource to develop valuable local connected green spaces.
- 1.26 In the Wickham Village Design statement (2001) it was recognised that *The intervening countryside at present maintains a rural aspect for both settlements (Knowle and Wickham) ...it is considered important to maintain a physical separation and keep Wickham within its natural boundaries. Development outside the existing village boundaries would lead to considerable difficulty in maintaining pedestrian access to the social and commercial heart of the village* .
- 1.27 It also noted that *residents have expressed a clearer requirement for Wickham to retain its compact village identity, bounded by open Hampshire countryside*. This document sets out that the spirit of these long held ambitions can be accommodated whilst allowing essential homes, also identified as a local need in the 2001 VDS.
- 1.28 The VDS also identified views, of which 3 and 4 are within the site but were and are not public views, but could essentially become views to the wider landscape with the delivery of the open space proposed as part of this proposal.

Conclusion

- 1.29 The Mayles Lane proposal seeks to provide housing adjacent to existing settlement whilst adding a demonstrable tangible benefit to the community, with provision of new open space, with more protection, with sustainable foot and potential cycle links to settlements. The site can further support local needs within the community and some commercial prospects sited close to the accessible A32 and existing residential development along the A32. The provision of these aspects which retain open space around features such as the valued ancient woodland of Birchfrith copse can outweigh any impact from the minor additions to the existing town of Wickham.
- 1.30 The designation of 'Local Gaps' is a well-established spatial

planning tool. Such gaps are valued by local communities for the role they play in safeguarding land as permanently open and providing both visual separation and protecting the distinct identity of nearby settlements. Notwithstanding this, the best way to add value to a local gap is enabling accessibility to the land to derive greater public and environmental benefit. The proposed development of Land at Mayles Farm, Wickham, will enable a well considered connected framework of greenspaces which complement the Welborne Garden Village and the proposed development at Knowle, to deliver a permeable landscape to the benefit of existing and future residents in a manner that will preserve an open gap between the settlements in perpetuity with the land in public ownership and control as designated open space.



1.31

This site, due to its medium to low landscape value and medium to low sensitivity, offers an opportunity to add to the existing settlement with an overall anticipated improvement and benefit to the landscape, local biodiversity and the community alike with linked footpaths and access to open space, whilst maintaining a strong perceptible visual gap, strengthened by new open space, extensive and significant woodland and scrub planting for biodiversity and overall improvement of the local landscape resource.