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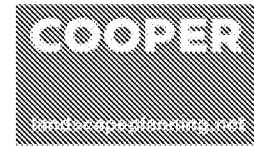
Landscape and Visual Assessment

Chalcroft Nursery, North Bersted

For Landform Bersted Limited

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) for the Chalcroft Nursery site has been prepared by **COOPER** Landscape Planning, on behalf of Landform Bersted Limited, using the methodology set out by the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, 2013. As this is not development involving an ES this appraisal is carried out as a landscape and visual assessment (LVA), not a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), therefore the effects are assessed in terms of their importance, rather than their significance.
- 1.2 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, 2013, note that: '*The [EU] Directive [covering EIA] is clear that the emphasis is on the identification of likely significant environmental effects...*' (para. 1.17, page, 9).
- 1.3 The Guidelines also note in relation to Scope, at paragraph 6.2, page 98, that: '*...The emphasis must be on a reasonable approach which is proportional to the scale and nature of the proposed development...*'
- 1.4 This LVA has been prepared for an outline planning application at Chalcroft Nursery and involves commercial buildings and private dwellings. and is also related to a potential future planning application for the wider site to the north and west ('Nursery Fields'). Nursery Fields is not the subject of this LVA.
- 1.5 The Description of Development is:

Outline development of up to 20 residential dwelling, 2,240 sqm of commercial space (Use Class A1, B1(b) B1(c) and B8), landscaping, access, parking, and associated infrastructure.
- 1.6 The site forms part of the Strategic Site Allocation in the Adopted Local Plan Policy H, SP2, Policy SD3: Land at West Bersted. As part of this allocation consultations have taken place directly with Fabrik, the landscape consultants for the wider site, and they have received draft copies of this assessment.
- 1.7 This assessment considers effects on landscape and views as separate issues. Landscape effects relate both to physical changes to landscape elements, for example, landform, watercourses, footpaths, trees, hedgerows, and other types of vegetation, and to the resulting landscape character. Visual effects relate to changes in views from public locations. No assessment was made from private dwellings, to which there was no public access.
- 1.8 Surveys were undertaken in the winter of 2020 and the assessment undertaken in May- June 2020. This considers the following:
 - ✧ the landscape character of the site and its relationship to its surroundings;

- » landscape related planning designations;
- » views to and from the site;
- » a landscape strategy designed to integrate the proposed developments into their setting;
- » mitigation; and
- » potential landscape and visual effects arising, on completion in winter, and after 15 years, in summer.

1.9 The assessment is based on the following plans and documents:

- » the illustrative master plan produced by JTP Architects;
- » the Land Use and Building Heights Parameter Plan also JTP; and
- » a Tree Condition Survey, undertaken by A.T. Coombes Associates Ltd.

1.10 The assessment has been based on the proposals set out on the master plan. Those elements of the proposals with relevance to this landscape and visual assessment include:

- » construction of new dwellings;
- » retention of some existing commercial buildings;
- » construction of other new commercial buildings;
- » construction of a new access road;
- » construction of attenuation ponds and SuDS features;
- » retention and management of trees and hedgerows
- » the provision of new public open space;
- » structural tree planting; and
- » the retention and reinforcement of existing hedgerows.

2.0 METHODOLOGY AND STUDY AREA

- 2.1 The methodology is set out at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 An assessment of the local, largely flat, topography is provided by Plan L1. Landscape designations and landscape character are set out on Plans L2a and b, and the visual assessment and Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) on completion shown by Plan L3. The illustrative Landscape Master Plan is Plan L5. Panoramic photographs from typical representative locations are provided in Appendix 2.
- 2.3 The study area was determined by the theoretical extent to which the proposed development is likely to be visible within the surrounding landscape, as shown by the ZTV, up to an initial limit of approximately 2.5km. Beyond this distance, site appraisal and professional experience showed that visual effects will be limited in this flat coastal plain landscape.
- 2.4 The ZTV of the proposed development was established by computer modelling to determine the visibility of the site and create the study area, using barriers created by buildings and woodland. Representative viewpoints were visited and, where selected, these are set out on the plan. Some views were rejected because there were no views available of the site, these including:
- ✧ Pagham Road;
 - ✧ Bognor Regis town centre; and
 - ✧ Chichester bypass.
- 2.5 This assessment considers landscape and visual effects as follows:
- ✧ On Completion: in winter, without the benefit of effective planting mitigation; and
 - ✧ 15 Years After Completion: in summer, with the benefit of effective planting mitigation.
- 2.6 The assessment of the effects on landscape and visual receptors is explained in Appendix 1, this being derived from GLVIA3, 2013, with landscape and visual assessments being based on receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of change. To ensure a consistency and transparency to these assessments, it is useful for the assessor to have an initial touchstone of the likely effects, and this is provided using the table below. This table is to provide initial guidance, with the results then modified by site specific factors, on their merits, using the methodology.

Consistency Checklist				
Sensitivity	High Magnitude	Medium Magnitude	Slight Magnitude	Negligible Magnitude/ No Change
High	Major Effect	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Minor or No Effect
Medium	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Minor Effect	Minor or No Effect
Low	Moderate Effect	Minor or No Effect	Minor or No Effect	Minor or No Effect

- 2.7 The assessment of importance of the effect, or its significance is made by professional judgement with the reasons for that judgement given in the text of the assessment tables, and in the conclusions to this report.

3.0 LANDSCAPE POLICY

- 3.1 Plan L2 shows the location of the site in relation to landscape planning designations, noting that Policy matters are properly dealt with in the planning report.

National Planning Policy

- 3.2 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2012. The overarching objective is to help achieve sustainable development.
- 3.3 Section 11 of the NPPF refers to the protection and enhancement of valued landscapes, the weight to be given to criteria based policies, such as landscape character designations, and the need to create, protect, enhance, and manage green infrastructure. This is not a valued landscape.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.4 Plan L2 illustrates the landscape designations applicable to the site and surrounding area.

Arun District Council Local Plan

- 3.5 The site has no specific landscape designation; however, landscape planning policies relevant to the site and surrounding area are set out below.
- 3.6 In relation to the form of new development, Policy GEN7 states:

'Planning permission will only be granted for schemes displaying high quality design and layout. Development proposals involving new buildings or significant extensions, or alterations must be accompanied by an illustrated written analysis of the site and its immediate setting, together with its relationship with the relevant townscape, landscape... characteristics of the wider area.

Development will be permitted provided it:

(ii) demonstrates that it responds positively to the identified characteristics and resources of the site and the area to create attractive places and spaces with the needs of people in mind and respects and enhances local distinctiveness;

(vi) retains significant open or wooded areas which, in their own right, make a material contribution to the local environment...'

The Arun District Local Plan

- 3.7 The site has been identified as part of a wider area for growth as part of a strategic site

allocation under Policy SD3.

- 3.8 The Council have prepared a new Local Plan and the planning statement will include a full review of planning policies.
- 3.9 A Sustainability Appraisal has been produced by the Council which appraised the content of the proposed Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal - Main Report identifies the site as part of a wider area for growth which proposes up to 2,000 residential units with employment. Regarding the effects upon the landscape character and the strategic gap the report acknowledges that development can be accommodated without significant impacts:

'This would result in an incursion into the countryside westwards but there is sufficient capacity within the landscape that with appropriate landscaping this can be accommodated without any significant impacts on the overall gap and views.'

Arun Landscape Study 2006

- 3.10 Arun District Council appointed Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA) in March 2006 to consider the landscape and visual amenity aspects of development choices in Arun District over the period 2006-2026. The study is to inform decision-making on where major development might be accommodated within the District without an unacceptable impact on landscape character in general and on the setting of outstanding assets within Arun District.
- 3.11 The Arun Landscape Study undertook a local landscape character assessment to identify landscape types and areas, which provide the framework for the assessment of landscape sensitivity and value, which together determine the overall landscape capacity.
- 3.12 The site lies within the North Bersted Matrix (LCA 8) and has been given a Medium/High landscape capacity for development. Six levels of capacity were used to assess the sites, as follows:
- ⌘ *Medium, Low or Negligible ratings* for landscape capacity indicate that development would have a significant and detrimental effect on the character of the landscape, and/or on the setting to existing settlement or outstanding assets within the District;
 - ⌘ *Medium/High or High/Medium* identifies a landscape character area with the capacity for limited development, in some areas, having regard for the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas; and
 - ⌘ *High or Very High capacity* identifies landscape character areas of low sensitivity and low landscape value which, from a landscape perspective, could accommodate significant allocations of development, subject to the same

caveats set out above for landscape character areas with High/Medium capacity.

- 3.13 The Arun Landscape Study tested the extent to which designated gaps fulfil their policy function. Each of the Strategic and Local Gaps identified in the Arun District Local Plan has been assessed based on the structural landscape analysis, landscape characterisation and visual assessment to address the following criteria:
- ⌘ the potential for coalescence between settlements;
 - ⌘ the potential for the erosion of settings of a settlement and loss of separate identity;
 - ⌘ the potential for impact on Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, and significant views to landmarks;
 - ⌘ intervisibility with adjacent settlements; and
 - ⌘ protection of undeveloped coastline.
- 3.14 The study concludes that some of the character areas, including the area of the site (North Bersted Matrix LCA 8), has a medium/high capacity for development and states that: '[the character area is a] *partially enclosed arable landscape adjacent to settlement on coastal plateau, some intervisibility with housing*'.
- 3.15 Consultations with officers have suggested that the design should consider Arun District Council SPD on Public Open Space, Playing Pitches and Build Facilities and the emerging Design Guide SPD. Both documents set out expectations for the type and quality of open space provision, including trees together with build and sports facility provision.

4.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.1 Published sources describing landscape character at the National, Regional and District level are shown on Plan L2:

- ✧ Natural England's National Character Area Profile 126: South Coast Plain;
- ✧ West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment, 2003 (unpublished); and
- ✧ Hankinson Duckett Associates' Arun Landscape Study, August 2006.

4.2 Plan L2 illustrates the landscape character areas applicable to the site and surrounding area.

National Landscape Character

4.3 The site lies within National Character Area (NCA) 126: South Coast Plain. Key characteristics of this NCA, of relevance to the site and locality, include:

- ✧ *'The plain slopes gently southwards towards the coast. From the coastal plain edge there are long views towards the sea and the Isle of Wight beyond...*
- ✧ *In places, streams and rivers flow south from the higher land of the Downs to the sea...*
- ✧ *There are stretches of farmed land between developed areas, often with large arable fields defined by low hedges or ditches...*
- ✧ *Along the exposed, open coastal plain and shoreline, tree cover is limited to isolated wind-sculpted woodlands and shelterbelts...*

Regional Landscape Character

4.4 The unpublished West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment (2003) characterises the area encompassing the site as the Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain Landscape Character Area (LCA). The key characteristics of this LCA are:

- ✧ *'Low lying flat open landscape.*
- ✧ *Meandering rifes and straight drainage ditch systems, with associated unimproved grassland and edged by reed beds.*
- ✧ *A low density of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with occasional shelterbelts.*
- ✧ *Large-scale arable farming and market gardening. Extensive farms with both traditional and modern farm buildings and silos...*
- ✧ *Scattered, historically nucleated villages with mixed building materials of flint, brick, half-timber and stone.*

- » *Large farmsteads along roads, and on dead-end tracks.*
- » *Long views to Arundel, the Downs and to the distinctive spire of Chichester Cathedral.*
- » *The relatively open character of much of the area allows long views so that village church towers are important landmarks in views...*
- » *Few trees or hedgerows, partly as a result of Dutch Elm Disease, from the 1970s and the Great Storm of 1987 and overall high quality agricultural land, although, where they do exist, they form prominent features...'*

4.5 The broad landscape management objectives for the Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain are to:

- » *'Create a new, large scale tree and hedgerow framework which complements the open intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining significant views of Chichester Cathedral, the South Downs and local features.*
- » *Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts.*
- » *Link up existing remnant hedgerows and tree lines to re-establish coherent field boundaries and wildlife corridors...*
- » *Establish landscape management plans for urban edges, notably Bognor Regis, to enhance the distinction between the urban and rural landscape.*
- » *Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements...*
- » *Establish new vegetation features by the planting of hedgerows and tree clumps in field corners and along roadsides, especially those approaching settlements...'*

Local Landscape Character

4.6 The Arun Landscape Study (2006) by Hankinson Duckett Associates includes a local landscape character assessment of the district. The study initially identified a series of landscape character types and has characterised the area encompassing the site as Landscape Character Type (LCT) L2: Medium/Small-scale Arable. The key characteristics of this LCT are:

- » *'Intensive arable farmland;*
- » *Medium-small fields across relatively flat or gently undulating landform;*
- » *Field boundaries include ditches, fencing, hedges; and*
- » *Greater sense of enclosure as compared with large-scale arable farmland.'*

4.7 The Landscape Study also identified local landscape character areas, with the site lying in Landscape Character Area (LCA) 8: North Bersted Matrix. The key characteristics of this North Bersted Matrix are all relevant to the site:

- » *'Patchwork of predominately small scale arable fields and occasional large, open arable fields;*
- » *Abuts a northern extension of Bognor along Chichester Road;*
- » *Backs onto back gardens and roads; and*
- » *High urban influence.'*
(our emphasis)

4.8 The westerly expansion of Bognor Regis and high urban influences are common elements common to the area, its local fields, hedgerows, and shelterbelts. Development is not to be excluded from the area, but it is a stated purpose that a well-considered development should be achieved that is in accordance with the landscape character.

4.9 Hankinson Duckett also considered the landscape capacity of the site and its surroundings in their draft report entitled *Landscape Capacity of Strategic Sites in Arun District, August 2016*. North Bersted is considered at page 27 of that document where at Paragraphs 3.3 it considers Area 3a (the allocated site which surrounds the site to the west) as follows:

'Area 3a is a large scale open landscape, with intervisibility with the South Downs to the north, and has been judged as having moderate sensitivity and value. The area is therefore considered to have medium landscape capacity for development and could potentially be suitable in landscape terms for limited development which would 'round off' the settlement edge in combination with adjacent areas. Any development proposals should include careful consideration [and] regard for the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of the adjacent landscapes.'

4.10 Together the Chalcroft Nursery site (the subject of this LVA) and the potential future application for the wider Nursery Fields site are referred to as part of Area 3b, which is considered to have a medium/high capacity for new development:

'Area 3b is better related to the existing settlement edge and has been judged to have a medium/ high landscape capacity for development which could accommodate a small urban extension, due to its generally lower landscape value, provides sensitive considerations are taken into account, in particular the setting to the surrounding landscape.'
(our emphasis)

4.11 At Paragraph 4.1-4.3 this report recommends green infrastructure proposals for the potential development of the site including:

- » development of the wider 3a area should include the reintroduction of vegetated boundaries to create a network of green corridors;
- » Area 3a has a greater level of boundary vegetation than 3b, with the potential for enhancement to limit the impact of the built form;

- » open space within development should be located along the western and northern edges, this to maintain a soft edge to the rural landscape; and
 - » landscape policy for the development should be consistent with the protection of the features and character of the rife landscape which lies to the west.
- 4.12 The 2012 Arun Green Infrastructure Study, produced by LUC, refers to the various growth areas being considered at that time and considers by way of stakeholders' meetings the green infrastructure implications for each of the potential allocations.
- 4.13 The implications of development in the Chalcraft Lane area are drawn together in the Bognor Regis Eco Quarter. The pressures on Green Infrastructure of this potential allocation were described as:
 - » population growth and pressures on Pagham Harbour;
 - » potential views from the South Downs National Park;
 - » the need to connect the pedestrian and cycle routes; and
 - » the enhancement of waterways and hedgerows.
- 4.14 The landscape sensitivities to development were:
 - » Pagham harbour, its sensitivity, and the need for mitigation;
 - » preservation of views of the Chichester Cathedral Spire;
 - » a largely high capacity for development;
 - » fragmentation and the loss of hedgerows;
 - » replacement of lost woodland and connections between hedgerows and woodland; and
 - » the preservation of the meandering surface water systems called Rifles, and their associated vegetation.
- 4.15 Recommendations set out in this document provide the strategy for the layout and landscape of the new urban quarter. These include:
 - » a buffer strip around the outside, especially to provide a green framework for views from the National Park;
 - » a restoration of the lost landscape character around development and in the gaps between settlements, particularly field boundaries and shelter belts, including the lost black poplar;
 - » maintain the visual and ecological importance of the rifles;
 - » creation of a large scale woodland and hedgerow network to complement the intensively farmed landscape;
 - » recreation of the indigenous landscape framework;

- » provision of bold tree planting around large agricultural and industrial buildings; and
- » provision of good landscape management; and
- » as priority projects 4a and b, provide community owned open space, including involvement of schools, also orchards, gardens and planting native woodland, and encouraging urban greening projects.

4.16 All of these have been incorporated into the proposals for Chalcroft Nursery.

5.0 SITE CONTEXT

Site Description

- 5.1 The site lies on the edge of North Bersted on the north-eastern edge of Bognor Regis. Its existing use is commercial, a retail nursery.
- 5.2 The site is bounded as follows:
- ✦ to the north-east by a mature hedgerow and grade B trees, beyond which lies a footpath that runs from New Barn Lane to Chalcraft Lane;
 - ✦ to the north-west by a mature hedgerow, also including Grade B trees;
 - ✦ to the south-west by the vegetation of the Cemetery, a sensitive site that will need to be protected; and
 - ✦ to the south east by properties along Chalcraft Lane, which are to be protected.

Topography

- 5.3 Plan L1: Topography shows the site to occupy principally flat low-lying ground at approximately 5m AOD.
- 5.4 In the wider context, the land begins to ascend in the north towards Chichester and Westergate and rises to above 30m AOD. Beyond the built up area of Bognor Regis, the land descends below 5m AOD to the north-east of the site. The land remains flat to the south towards the coastal edge, which is characteristic of the coastal plain. To the west, the land continues to descend before it reaches Pagham Harbour.
- 5.5 A series of small reservoirs lie to the west of the site, connected by a large network of streams which flow between Chichester and Pagham Harbour towards the south coast.

Vegetation

- 5.6 The vegetation surrounding the site consists of trees and hedgerows, as set out on the free standing arboricultural survey. This was carried out by A.T. Coombes Associates Ltd in accordance with BS 5837:2012. This identified A, B and C grade trees either as individual specimens or groups. Assessment criteria are included in the arboricultural report. Notable vegetation includes:
- ✦ rows of Grade B and other trees along the northern and north western hedgerows, as shown on Plan L5;
 - ✦ strong vegetation and Grade B trees along the edge of the cemetery
 - ✦ some poorer vegetation within the site, this remaining after the commercial

operation of the nursery was cleared; and

- » a group of Grade B trees, including oak, along Chalcraft Lane, some of which will need to be removed for the site access.

5.7 Apart from those along the Chalcraft Lane access, all Grade B trees will be retained. There are no Grade A trees. All U trees will be removed immediately.

Public Rights of Way on the Site

5.8 There are no designated public rights of way within the site. A public footpath (PROW 136) to the north east runs along the retained hedgerow between New Barn Lane and Chalcraft lane, as shown on Plan L4

Views

5.9 Views in this flat coastal plain are limited by trees, hedgerows, and buildings, Plan L4 showing that the enclosure created by the urban area limited views to local viewpoints in the west and the north west. Accordingly, nine publicly accessible viewpoints were selected to provide a representative sample of views towards the site from that direction, and from local views within the urban area.

5.10 These local views consist of the following:

- » from public footpaths to the west and north west, Viewpoints 5, 6, 8 and 9; where the site is mostly framed by trees and hedgerows;
- » local views, partially enclosed by hedgerows, from the cemetery, Viewpoint 7;
- » Chalcraft Lane, where the new access will be visible from Viewpoint 2;
- » other locations in Chalcraft Lane, Viewpoints 1 and 3; and
- » a view from the north over the playing fields , partially enclosed by trees and hedgerows.

Existing Lighting

5.11 The local urban area is illuminated by street lighting and lights from residential properties. There are no areas where light sources are not visible, either directly or as point light sources through trees and hedgerows. The site was lit as part of the commercial nursery operation, this comprising car park and shop lighting and the commercial premises.

6.0 SENSITIVITY

- 6.1 The landscape features of merit on the site are the hedgerows and trees which are found along the boundaries. These will be retained and incorporated within the new housing layout.
- 6.2 The site is small and exerts little influence on the landscape character beyond. It is characteristic of the local landscape which comprises low-lying, flat, and open agricultural landscape with hedgerows and hedgerow trees. It is influenced by the urban edge of North Bersted, which lies adjacent to the south eastern boundary. While development will change the character, the adjacent urban area and the existing commercial uses have led it to be graded as having a medium susceptibility to change.
- 6.3 The susceptibility to change for road users with only fleeting or incidental views towards the site are identified as low, for example along Chalcraft Lane, because drivers are rightly concentrating on their journeys.

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

- 6.4 The overall sensitivity of national, regional, and local landscape character is identified as medium. The overall sensitivity of local landscape features, such as landform, trees and hedgerows and public rights of way are identified as medium. There is nothing out of the ordinary.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 6.5 No views have been assessed as having high sensitivity. The sensitivity of visual receptors is graded as follows:
- ⌘ High: Cemetery users;
 - ⌘ Medium: pedestrians with views of the development, or from a local footpath; people engaged in outdoor recreation; and
 - ⌘ Low: from roads and places of work or business.

7.0 MITIGATION

7.1 The landscape strategy is shown on Plan L5. The first objective for this application will be to protect the Cemetery and retain its sense of calm, its visual isolation from neighbouring activities. The second will be to properly protect the amenity of residential properties, and users of the footpaths. This will be achieved by:

- ✧ reinforcement to the existing, already quite strong, tree cover within the site;
- ✧ retention of as much as possible of the tree cover along Chalcraft Lane, allowing for tree and hedge losses because of the new access; and
- ✧ an increase in tree cover within the site and along the access road, as a new avenue.

7.2 The landscape mitigation proposals are designed to minimise landscape and visual effects, integrate the proposed development into the landscape, and to provide benefits to the wider landscape. This is in the interests of visual amenity and sustainability. The landscape strategy includes the following features:

- ✧ carefully retaining and reinforcing the vegetation to the Cemetery boundary, and to plant or reinforce the area between the boundary and the western edge of the proposed access road together with a robust 7m planting strip including an avenue of trees, within a 10m boundary strip to include a grass verge, and a surface water drainage channel;
- ✧ no footpath to be provided on the western side of the access road, to allow space for a wider planted strip and reduce disturbance;
- ✧ a no build buffer strip within the site, adjacent to the Chalcraft lane properties, and retention of their boundary hedge;
- ✧ new and reinforced planting along boundaries;
- ✧ retaining as many trees as possible at Chalcraft Lane, and the replacement in kind any trees that may need to be felled, using 18 cm advanced nursery stock;
- ✧ a strong planted boundary to the north east of the new access road, with new 18 cm avenue trees, within the site;
- ✧ a generous level of new trees within the housing area of the nursery site at 1 tree per house overall.
- ✧ retention of existing trees and hedgerows, except for those oaks to be removed at the entrance to the site on Chalcraft Lane, which will be replaced in kind;
- ✧ a variation in housing types and heights, and varying orientation of buildings, this to break up the development;
- ✧ new structure planting to comprise locally indigenous species, designed to

provide a strong landscape framework and setting for the new development, integrate the proposed development within the surrounding countryside, and reduce its visual impact on local views;

- » use of directional downlighting to minimise surplus light spill and careful location and alignment of light sources to minimise night-time visual effects;
- » tree planting within the development to provide character and delight, including evergreen hedges with the commercial area car parks;
- » the retention and where necessary reinforcement of the hedge buffer to houses along Chalcraft Lane; and
- » a new brick and knapped flint wall at the entrance to the site.

7.3 Views to the Cathedral Spire and the South Downs will be retained as far as this is possible.

7.4 The plant stock will be locally sourced and will be maintained for a minimum of 3 years, thereafter by the management company. Materials for hedgerows will be locally indigenous and robust. The Cemetery edge will be planted with, subject to discussion with officers, suitable evergreens such as yew. Tree planting within the housing of the nursery site will comprise upright street trees and densely planted flowering shrubs to be agreed with the local authority. All planted areas will be mulched with 75mm composted wood bark and organic matter dug into the soils.

7.5 A site management plan will be agreed with the local authority as part of detailed design.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

- 8.1 Details of the landscape and visual effects, including effects on the landscape resource and on landscape character, are set out in the landscape table in Appendix 2 and the Visual table at Appendix 3.

Landscape Character

- 8.2 The assessment shows that apart from the change to the character of the site, there will be no high or high/medium adverse landscape effects created by the proposals, and none will be important.

- 8.3 The landscape effects are summarised below:

- ✧ there is an inevitable change to the site's character, because of development, and this is important;
- ✧ elsewhere there are only limited and localised changes within national and regional landscape character areas, the overall landscape effect on these has been assessed as minor;
- ✧ there will be a change in the local landscape character area, which has been assessed in the Arun Landscape Study (2006) by Hankinson Duckett Associates, as the North Bersted Matrix LCA. However, a characteristic of this area is a high urban influence. Therefore, the overall landscape effect at all periods has been assessed as up to medium; and
- ✧ there will be a short change to the character of Chalcraft Lane because of tree losses due to the new access road.

Landscape Features

During Construction and On Completion

- 8.4 It is anticipated that construction activities will include the excavation and formation of building levels, excavation of attenuation basins and construction of SuDS features, and removal of trees to enable the proposed access road into the site. The overall landscape effect on the site features during construction has been assessed as medium/low, this being due to the following:
- ✧ changes due to excavations required for the construction of roads, houses, and attenuation features;
 - ✧ the change in character of the site;
 - ✧ trees and hedgerows due to the limited areas of hedgerow removal required to accommodate the access road, most other trees and hedgerows will be retained as part of the development; and

- » the existing public right of way does not form part of the application and will be retained as it is.

8.5 On completion, the land use and character will have changed from mostly commercial uses to a residential and commercial development with associated public open space, an access road and green infrastructure.

Landscape Effects 15 years after Construction

- 8.6 There will be a loss of trees at the entrance, but extensive new tree planting will be provided across the site, although it will take time to be effective in providing visual enclosure. The field boundaries will be enhanced to provide a further enclosure, and a new avenue of specimen trees will be planted. The overall long term landscape effect on the site features on completion has been assessed as low.
- 8.7 There will be a loss of some trees, but an extensive long-term planting of new trees and hedgerows is proposed within and around the development, as well as enhancements to the existing hedgerows along the site boundaries. These will be both positive and negative.

Assessment of Visual Effects

Visual Effects During Construction and on Completion

- 8.8 Full details of the visual effects are set out in Appendix 4. The following provides a summary of high and medium effects, together with the reasons for those effects. None have been graded as important.
- 8.9 Construction activities will be as set out above. During construction, there will be up to moderate visual effects when seen from Chalcraft Lane, from outside local properties, opposite the site entrance, including Viewpoints 1 and 2. Views from properties have not been assessed, but while their sensitivity is higher the same effect is anticipated.
- 8.10 There will be up to moderate effects from local footpaths, and slight from the cemetery due to the proximity of construction activity to the receptor and the nature of the view.
- 8.11 All other viewpoints are assessed as having no or negligible effects during construction.

Visual Effects 15 Years After Completion

- 8.12 Residual visual effects are those remaining 15 years after completion, when proposed tree planting will have had the benefit of over 15 years establishment and are likely to be up to 8m in height, depending on the species and their initial planting height. Shrub planting and trees will have grown along the access road, at the entrance, and adjacent to the cemetery. New development would also have matured in this time.



- 8.13 15 years after completion, the visual effects from Chalcraft Lane will reduce to Minor, as a consequence of the new tree planting. There will be only limited glimpses of development from the cemetery, with negligible effects which will fade away as the new tree, hedge and shrub planting grows.

9.0 SUMMARY

- 9.1 Chalcroft Nursery lies on the edge of North Bersted on the north-eastern edge of Bognor Regis. It occupies a flat low-lying single agricultural field in commercial uses and has no landscape planning designation.
- 9.2 Views are mainly local and medium in terms of distance from the site. These tend to be from surrounding roads, as well as from public rights of way. Such views are mainly located from the east, with other views being limited.
- 9.3 The unpublished West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment characterises the area encompassing the site as the Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain LCA. The key characteristics of this LCA include a low-lying, flat, open landscape, with meandering rife and straight drainage ditch systems, with associated unimproved grassland and edged by reed beds. There are few trees or hedgerows, partly because of Dutch Elm Disease, from the 1970s and the Great Storm of 1987, although where they do exist, they form prominent features. Large-scale arable farming with extensive farms exist that have both traditional and modern farm buildings and silos. The relatively open character of much of the area allows for long views with village church towers being important landmarks within the views.

Landscape Effects

- 9.4 These are set out in Appendix 2.
- 9.5 The overall landscape effect of the proposals on the character of the surrounding landscape is limited, this being due to localised changes being proposed.
- 9.6 There will be changes to the local landscape character area assessed in the Arun Landscape Study (2006) by Hankinson Duckett Associates, as the North Bersted Matrix LCA. A characteristic of this area is a high urban influence. However, this is an allocated site which is assessed by the Council as having the capacity for development.
- 9.7 During construction, the landscape character of the site will change. This change will occur due to excavations required for the construction of roads, houses, commercial buildings and attenuation features, and the removal of several trees to accommodate the access road. This effect will also occur to trees and hedgerow removal where this may be needed to accommodate the access road.
- 9.8 On completion, the adverse landscape effect upon the landform, trees and hedgerows and public right of way will reduce, as mitigation measures will be put in place, which will become fully effective in time.

- 9.9 15 years after planting, there will still be change but some of this will be positive in the planting of trees and expansion of the footpath network.
- 9.10 There will be a change to character of the site which is inevitable and graded as important.

Visual Effects

- 9.11 During construction, there will be adverse visual effects from Chalcraft Lane, the cemetery and from local footpaths, due to the proximity of construction activity to the receptor and the nature of the view.
- 9.12 On completion, in winter, the development, including the houses, commercial buildings, roads, attenuation features and planting, will all be complete, albeit the planting will not yet be effective in visual terms. This will be important when seen from the eastern side of Chalcraft lane, opposite the site entrance.
- 9.13 15 years after completion, in summer, there will be no important visual effects. The view from Chalcraft Lane, opposite the site, will be of an attractive development to one side of the access road, framed by a new avenue of trees. The view from the cemetery will become enclosed.
- 9.14 Other than the initial view above, which will fade over time, no visual effects are considered important.

10.0 CONCLUSIONS

10.1 This LVA deals with important landscape and visual effects of this planning application for development on the Chalcroft Nursery site, as part of development of the allocated wider area to the north and north west. The layout of that land is led by Planning Consultants, Lichfields, and Landscape Consultants, Fabrik. Discussion with Lichfields and Fabrik are underway, and the two evolving master plans are being brought forward together.

10.2 Contacts have been made with the Council's landscape officer and the landscape character and planning guidance agreed.

10.3 The landscape and visual issues discussed at the meeting included matters such as:

- ✦ the master planning of the allocated site and how Chalcroft Nursery would fit into that plan;
- ✦ landscape and visual amenity;
- ✦ the effects on local properties;
- ✦ links to the wider allocated site.

The Wider Master Plan of the allocated site

10.4 The evolving master plan has been carefully considered in the proposals for the Nursery. Factors such as the retention of trees and hedgerows, protected of the landscape character, the creation of soft edges to the countryside, the preservation of the surface water system and the creation of a pedestrian route through the Nurseries site have been fundamental constraints to the layout.

The proposals

10.5 Landscape has been a fundamental factor in determining the layout of the Nurseries site. The landscape strategy for the site is set out on the illustrative landscape master plan L5 and includes:

- ✦ retention of all grade B trees, protection of their RPZs, and all hedgerows, subject only to the tree removals necessary to create the site access;
- ✦ replacement of any tree losses in kind;
- ✦ strengthening of the existing planting to the cemetery;
- ✦ a tree planted avenue along the spine road;
- ✦ tree planting within the car parking and housing areas of the site, together with new amenity space;

- » creation of a pedestrian spine, as advised by the allocated site master plan, making use of the existing hedgerows which run down the site; and
- » care with the new layouts and heights of new buildings and the creation of landscape buffers to avoid visual impact on local properties.

Landscape Effects

- 10.6 The landscape effects of the proposals are not assessed as important, apart from the inevitable change to the site's landscape character and the short term effect of the loss of trees at the entrance. Trees and hedgerows will be carefully protected, RPZs are followed, access is located adjacent to gaps in hedgerows, the footpath system is respected and new paths created, including links to adjacent areas such as the community playing field to the north east, and the allocated site areas to the north, the landscape character and the pattern on the landscape cells are followed by the new development.

Visual Effects

- 10.7 Change will occur to views, but these are not assessed as being important, apart from an initial effect when seen opposite the site entrance, this being caused by the loss of trees and the construction of the new access road. Most views are set within the context of the existing urban area, and some changes such as additional trees are anticipated to be beneficial, despite the losses at the entrance. The existing footpath to the north will be retained, with a new link created. Care will be taken with the detailed layout to ensure there will be no overlooking or loss of character, especially to properties along Chalcraft Lane. The site will be comprehensively planted to create benefit in an area lacking in trees, including a new avenue.
- 10.8 There are some properties along Chalcraft Lane that have been given special consideration with a new fence to supplement the existing hedgerows boundary; a 10m no build zone; restricted heights for buildings, and a new brick and knapped flint wall at the entrance.

Conclusion

- 10.9 The residual landscape and visual effects of the proposals are not assessed as important, and they will form an integral part of the proposals for the Council's allocated site.

APPENDICES 1, 2 AND 3

COOPER Landscape Planning

The Studio
Littleton-upon-Severn
Bristol
BS5 1NR

