
10 May 2018

Proposed
Dementia Care
Centre at Land to
the Rear of Baird's
Farm Shop,
Crookthorn Lane,
Climping

Landscape and
Visual Impact
Assessment

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This report is a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and does not constitute a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of technical aspects of the development.



Section 1: Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1. This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Tyler Grange LLP (TG) to accompany a full planning application for a proposed 64 bed dementia care centre development at land to the rear of Baird's Farm Shop, west of Littlehampton, West Sussex (OS Grid Reference SU 999 017), hereinafter referred to as 'the site'.
- 1.2. This report sets out the baseline landscape and visual context of the site and provides an assessment of the changes (in terms of the visual context and current landscape character) and the impacts that are likely to be derived following the proposed development of the site.

Site Context

- 1.3. The site location and immediate surroundings is shown on the Site Context – Aerial Photography plan (11423/P03) contained to the rear of this report. The site covers an area of approximately 0.787 hectares (1.94 acres) and is located to the south of Crookthorne Lane (A259), east of Climping Street. Topographically the site is broadly flat, situated approximately between 5m to 6m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The site comprises a parcel of poor semi-improved grassland, improved grassland, areas of scrub bound to the west by mature tree cover and by young hedgerow planting to the east.
- 1.4. Whilst the wider landscape to the east and west of the site comprises arable farmland, the site itself is currently in use as an informal outdoor dog training facility. The site is also contiguous with ribbon development and dense tree cover off Climping Street, being contained to the north by built form at Baird's Farm Shop (comprising open storage, commercial units and garden centre infrastructure with associated car parking) and to the south by commercial and residential development at Hobbs Farm.

Methodology - Undertaking the Landscape & Visual Assessment

- 1.5. To assist the reader in understanding the purpose for undertaking landscape assessment work, the definition of 'landscape' as defined by the European Landscape Convention (ELC, 2000) is set out below.

"Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors.

- 1.6. In the context of this definition the assessment process seeks to consider the effects in an objective and systematic manner whilst recognising the perceptual and therefore subjective response to the landscape. Whilst subjectivity can never be removed from the assessment process, by following a systematic and structured framework of assessment, a more robust assessment can be performed, and more rational and transparent conclusions drawn.
- 1.7. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity. The process therefore deals with the separate but interlinked issues of:



Landscape Character: The effects of the proposed development upon discrete character areas and/or character types comprising features possessing a particular quality or merit; and

Visual Context: The effects of the proposed development on views from visual receptors, and upon the amenity value of the views.

- 1.8. The methodology and guidelines used in the preparation of this baseline report has been developed from the following documents:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), Third Edition, Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013; and
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment – Natural England, 2014¹.
- 1.9. Landscape character is defined in the Landscape Institute's guidance ('Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) 2013) as:
- "A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse."*
- 1.10. Changes to landscape character can arise as a result of:
- Changes to the fabric of the landscape including either the loss of key elements or introduction of incongruous features which can alter the distinct character of the landscape; and
 - Changes which alter the way in which the landscape is perceived or appreciated.
- 1.11. Changes to views will occur where there is alteration of an existing view in terms of elements present and their distribution or dominance. Such changes may or may not have a significant effect on the visual amenity of identified visual receptors. The nature of any landscape and visual effect is a function of the sensitivity of the affected landscape resources and visual receptors against the magnitude of change that they would experience.

Baseline Appraisal

- 1.12. In order to establish the degree of change arising from the proposed development of the site and the extent to which that change will affect local receptors, it is important to understand the existing situation and site context in terms of amenity, availability of views and the landscape character areas associated with the local area. The baseline appraisal process is a crucial part of any assessment and includes:
- An overview of statutory plans and other data regarding relevant designations and landscape and visual related planning policies for the area;
 - An assessment of the landscape character of the site with reference to published works and checked and verified through field work;

¹ The explanation of Landscape Character Assessment is included in the 'Landscape Character Assessment – Technical Information Note 08/2015, Landscape Institute, (2016)'



- Field work to determine the extent to which the site can be seen from the wider area, taking into account any significant vegetation or built form which restricts or limits the extent of visibility of the site;
- Identification of representative viewpoints and determining likely visual receptors; and
- A visual appraisal of the site and its surroundings was carried out during March 2018.

Impact Assessment

1.13. The assessment process has considered the following:

i. The classification of the landscape resources in terms of sensitivity to change. This is dependent on:

- The pattern and scale of the landscape and the contribution the landscape resources make to landscape character;
- The value placed on the landscape;
- The scope for mitigation; and
- The ability of the landscape to accommodate the change associated with the proposed development (landscape susceptibility).

1.14. Those landscape resources which make a notable contribution to the character and cannot be replaced or substituted will be of high sensitivity, those resources which are replaceable or contribute little to the overall character of the landscape will be of low sensitivity.

ii. The classification of the representative viewpoints in terms of their sensitivity to change. The sensitivity of the visual receptors will be dependent on:

- The location and context of the viewpoint;
- The expectations and occupation or activity of the receptors;
- The importance of the view;
- The ability of the visual receptor to view the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences (landscape susceptibility).

1.15. Those receptors which classified as being of high sensitivity to change may include users of public rights of way or nearby residents, those of low sensitivity to change may include people in their place of work or travelling through the landscape in cars, trains or other modes of transport.

iii. The identification and assessment of the potential landscape and visual impacts of the development proposals and consideration of the likely magnitude of change.

1.16. The magnitude of effect lies along a continuum from high, where there is a prominent and notable change to the landscape character of view to low where the change is barely perceptible.

iv. The consideration of further mitigation with the aim where possible, of avoiding, reducing or offsetting significant adverse landscape or visual effects, determined during the course of the assessment; and



- v. The evaluation of landscape and visual effects following mitigation, known as residual impacts.
- 1.17. Overall, the assessment of the nature of the effect depends on the degree to which the development:
- Complements, respects and fits into the existing scale, landform and pattern of the landscape context;
 - Enables enhancement, restoration or retention of the landscape character and visual amenity and delivers policy aspirations; and
 - Affects strategic and important views in addition to the visual context of receptors.
- 1.18. For the purposes of this report, the terms 'impact' refers to the causation of change and 'effects' are the results of the changes on the landscape and visual context.
- 1.19. The assessment stage included overseeing and informing the photomontage process² to prepare verified visualisations of the proposed scheme in context.

Assessment Criteria

- 1.20. Best practice guidelines stipulate that the significance of any landscape related impact should be evaluated, both during the construction works and following completion of the development. The significance of any landscape and visual effect is a function of the sensitivity of the affected landscape resources and visual receptors against the magnitude of change that they would experience. As such, the assessment of potential and residual effects can be described as being:
- **High beneficial:** The development would fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, and enhance the existing landscape character. The development would create a highly improved change in the view;
 - **Moderate beneficial:** The development would fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, maintain and/or enhance the existing landscape character. The development would create a noticeable but improved change in the view;
 - **Minor beneficial:** The development would complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, whilst maintaining the existing character. The development would result in minor improvements to the existing views;
 - **Negligible:** The development would cause very limited changes to the landscape and/or views but creates no significant effects;
 - **Minor adverse:** The development would cause minor permanent and/or temporary loss or alteration to one or more key elements or features of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. The development would cause limited visual intrusion;
 - **Moderate adverse:** The development would cause substantial permanent loss or alteration to one or more key elements of the landscape, to include the introduction of

1.1 ² The photomontages have been prepared by Troopers Hill Limited (THL) a practice specialising in visualisations. The methodology used in preparing the photomontages is included in **Appendix 2**.



elements that are apparent but may not be substantially uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape. The development would be clearly visible; and

- **High adverse:** The development would cause total permanent loss or major alteration to key elements and features of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. The development would be clearly evident and would disrupt fine and valued views both into and across the area.

- 1.21. There are instances where impacts are neither harmful nor beneficial. These effects are considered to be **Neutral**.
- 1.22. Criteria that relates to receptor sensitivity and the magnitude and nature of any changes are contained at **Appendix 1** to the rear of this report. They will be referenced as part of the assessment process set out within Section 6 of this report. It is also important to note that the GLVIA (Third Edition) places emphasis on professional judgement and less reliance on a formulaic approach; however, a transparent assessment process should still be evident and supported by a clear narrative.



Section 2: Landscape Planning Policy Context

- 2.1. The site lies within the administrative area of Arun District Council. The specific local level policies applicable to the site in relation to landscape and visual matters are illustrated on the Landscape Planning Context and Public Rights of Way plan (11423/P04) contained to the rear of this report. This section includes a review of planning policies relevant to landscape and visual issues at a national and local level.

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 2.2. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions and outlines the Government's planning policies for England, setting out how these are expected to be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF sets out three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- *“an economic role – building a strong, responsive and competitive economy to support growth and innovation;*
- *a social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities and responding to local needs; and*
- *an environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.”*

- 2.3. For plan making, this means that local planning authorities *“should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs for their area”, with “sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change unless any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against NPPF policies”.*

- 2.4. The policies that indicate development should be restricted, as set out at footnote 9 of paragraph 14, relate to:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Green Belt;
- Local Green Space;
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Heritage Coasts;
- National Parks;
- Designated Heritage Assets; and
- Areas at Risk of Flooding or Coastal Erosion.

- 2.5. The site is not currently subject to any of the above designations.

- 2.6. At paragraph 17, the NPPF outlines twelve Core Planning Principles including an aim to *“always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings”* and to *“take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty*



of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it". Another aim is to contribute to "conserving and enhancing the natural environment".

2.7. For decision making, development that accords with a current development plan should be approved without delay; and, where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, permission should be granted unless:

- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole; or
- Specific policies as set out within the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

2.8. Paragraph 58 of the NPPF relates to delivering high quality design. It states that local planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- *"will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;*
- *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- *create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping."*

2.9. Paragraph 60 states the need to promote or reinforce "local distinctiveness", whilst paragraph 64 adds that *"Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions"*. Paragraph 69 states that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve places that promote:

- *"Opportunities for meeting between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed-use development, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages which bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity;*
- *Safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *Safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public spaces which encourage the active and continued use of public areas"*.

2.10. Paragraph 75 considers the importance of public rights of way, stating that *"planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails"*.

2.11. Paragraph 109 states that *"The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment"*. The paragraph adds that this should include *"protecting and enhancing valued landscapes"*. The value assigned to every landscape must therefore be considered and this is not



limited to designated landscapes alone. Paragraph 187 also states that “*decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible*”.

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 2.12. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched a web-based resource of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) in March 2014 which links with policies of the NPPF. Particular sections within the NPPG that are of relevance to landscape and visual matters are set out below:

- 2.13. Design. The guidance emphasises the need for development to be integrated with its surrounding context in order to ensure that it integrates into the wider area, reinforces local distinctiveness, reduces impacts on nature and sense of place, and considers views into and out of sites. This includes the use of local building forms to ensure that development reflects the layout, scale, pattern and materials within new development. At paragraph 007 Reference ID: 26-007-20140306, it states:

"Planning should promote local character (including landscape setting). Development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation".

- 2.14. The use of high quality hard and soft landscape design to help successfully integrate development into the wider environment is also emphasised as being important to consider from the outset, in order to ensure proposals improve the overall quality of the townscape and landscape.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.15. The current adopted development plan for the site includes saved policies of the adopted Arun District Local Plan 2003. Local policies applicable to landscape and visual matters and the site are summarised below.

Arun District Local Plan ‘saved policies’ (April 2003)

Policy AREA 10 Strategic Gaps

- 2.16. As shown on the Landscape Planning Context and Public Rights of Way plan (11423/P04) contained to the rear of this report, the site lies within a designated Strategic Gap (entitled “Littlehampton and Middleton-on-Sea”).
- 2.17. Regarding such gaps, the policy states that “*Development will only be permitted if:*
- *it is demonstrated to be necessary to meet the requirements of, or is consistent with, other policies of the Development Plan;*
 - *it would not compromise, either individually or cumulatively, the objectives and fundamental integrity of the strategic gap; and*
 - *attention is given to the long term enhancement of the landscape, amenity and conservation value within the gap and, where possible, to the improvement of public access”.*
- 2.18. The policy notes state that reason for the policy is “*to prevent coalescence and retain the separate identity and amenity of settlements and to protect the undeveloped coastline*”. The policy explanation notes that “*Proposals will be subject to 'rigorous examination', which includes an assessment of the type of use, the proposed level of activity, the scale of the proposed buildings, the impact on the*



surrounding environment in terms of contributing to the coalescence of settlements and the reduction in openness of the strategic gaps”.

Policy GEN1 Sustainability

- 2.19. When considering new development, the policy seeks to ensure that *“present-day demands do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs or enjoy a high quality environment”* (TG emphasis).
- 2.20. The policy adds that development must *enhance the Plan area's essential character and environmental assets*”, including *“the general attractiveness and diversity of the landscape”, “the open and undeveloped nature of the countryside”, “the public rights-of-way network”, “land of recreation and amenity value” and “the setting, form and character of settlements”.*

Policy GEN7 the Form of New Development

- 2.21. The policy states that *“Planning permission will only be granted for schemes displaying high quality design and layout”, adding that “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, wildlife and movement characteristics of the wider area.”*
- 2.22. The policy requires new development to demonstrate *“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”.*

Policy GEN16 Public Rights of Way

- 2.23. The policy states that *“The Council will protect the rights of way network and will support and encourage improvements and enhancements. Development will not be permitted which would have an adverse impact on the use of a right-of-way. The rural characteristics of rights of way outside of the built-up area boundaries should be retained”.*

Policy GEN27 Landscape Diversity

- 2.24. The policy states that *“Development which would have an unacceptable adverse impact on individual features or the character of the landscape will not be permitted”.*

Local Plan Evidence Base and Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents

The Green Infrastructure Study (June 2012)

- 2.25. LUC was commissioned by Arun District Council to undertake a Green Infrastructure (GI) Study of the District. The study identifies a range of GI typologies and associated functions and assets for the local area whilst also providing an appraisal of the defined Strategic and Local Gaps within the district.
- 2.26. Identifying high level GI issues for the locality, the ‘Littlehampton and Middleton-on-Sea’ strategic gap area (within which the site lies) is described as an area of *‘poor landscape quality, including loss of treescape, scrub growth and pony paddocks’* (Figure 3.9 of the GI Strategy).
- 2.27. The southern portion of the ‘Littlehampton and Middleton-on-Sea’ strategic gap area is also described as an area which *“resists coalescence and provides areas of tranquillity close to urban areas”* and where the *“conservation of habitats”, retention of “public access routes to link Middleton-*



on-Sea and Littlehampton” and conservation of the “*setting to Listed buildings*” are seen as local sensitivities / issues (Table 4.1 of the GI Strategy).

2.28. Chapter 6 of the GI Strategy includes a number of GI opportunities which have been identified for the District and those opportunities which are applicable to (and deliverable for) the site are set out below:

- *There are opportunities to create less formal, more naturalistic and/or productive spaces;*
- *There are major opportunities for enhancing the biodiversity of the intensively farmed (mainly arable) land on the coastal plain, focussing on the network of hedges, ditches and rife that form important wildlife corridors;*
- *There are opportunities to create or retrofit a softer edge to the urban edge, with green wedges or features (such as semi-natural hedges) extending into developed land; and*
- *Protect the strategic GI corridors to conserve views.*

2.29. Figure 6.1 of the GI Strategy addresses location-specific issues and opportunities and identifies the landscape encompassing the site as an area for “*improved landscape management of Climping Gap, including new tree planting, scrub management and reduced pony paddock management issues*”.

Public Rights of Way

2.30. As shown on the West Sussex on-line interactive mapping facility accessed on 19th March 2018, there are no public footpaths traversing or immediately adjoining the site. Public footpath ref. 169 is located beyond the southern site boundary, with a network of public rights of way present across the wider locality.

2.31. The routes of local public rights of way in relation to the site are shown on the Landscape Planning Context and Public Rights of Way plan (11423/P04) contained to the rear of this report.

Interim Conclusions

Policy AREA 10 - Strategic Gap

2.32. As set out above, the site lies within the defined Policy AREA 10 Strategic Gap. Within this gap, it must be shown that development “*would not compromise, either individually or cumulatively, the objectives and fundamental integrity of the strategic gap*”. Policy AREA 10 states that “*attention is given to the long term enhancement of the landscape, amenity and conservation value within the gap and, where possible, to the improvement of public access*”.

2.33. Clearly, the policy wording shows that Policy AREA 10 does not seek to preclude all development within the Strategic Gaps, but rather it seeks to ensure that the principal aims of the Strategic Gap are safeguarded. This assessment seeks to determine the extent of impact that the proposed scheme may have upon the character and visual amenity of the local countryside and functionality of the Strategic Gap and provides evidence as to the way the gap will continue to function given the extent of surrounding built form and vegetation across the edges of the site.

2.34. In terms of physical separation and the perception of coalescence within the Strategic Gap, it is clear (from a review of available aerial photography and on-site observations during field work) that existing built form off Climping Street (including at Hobbs Farm beyond the southern site boundary)



forms an established building line which extends eastwards beyond the site. There would be no reduction in the width of the physical gap at this location as a result of the proposed development as the proposals do not extend development eastwards beyond the established building line of Climping Street. The proposals would also not extend development into the gap to the west, north or south.

- 2.35. Perceptual aspects of the gap, on the ground, also need to be considered when addressing the perception of coalescence. The site does not constitute a remote and undeveloped landscape. It is contiguous with existing built form and settled land uses. The arrangement of adjacent ribbon development, highways infrastructure, commercial development and tree cover along Climping Street (typical of urban fringe characteristics and adjoining the northern, western and southern edges of the site) provides a distinct visual barrier between Littlehampton and Middleton-on-Sea.
- 2.36. The availability of direct inter-visibility between the two settlements is also restricted by the layering of intervening vegetation belts across the wider Strategic Gap. As the surrounding context of vegetation and built form will remain unaffected, there would be no apparent coalescence from surrounding public vantage points within the Strategic Gap in this locality as a result of the proposed development.

Remaining Applicable LVIA Related Planning Policy

- 2.37. Landscape and visual related planning policy is concerned with the quality of design and the impact in relation to the setting, form and character of settlements and the landscape, as well as seeking the provision, protection and enhancement of landscape features (Policies GEN1, GEN7 and GEN27).
- 2.38. Local policy also addresses the provision and protection of green linkages and public rights of way as part of a broader Green Infrastructure network for the wider locality (Policy GEN16).
- 2.39. Landscape enhancements associated with the strengthening of eastern boundary vegetation have been designed to provide amenity benefits for the users of local footpaths to the east of the site by retaining a degree of low level screening and a robust landscape framework across the periphery of the site. Mature tree cover within influence of the site is also proposed for retention.



Section 3: Landscape Character Baseline

- 3.1. This section considers the existing landscape character of the site and its environs. In order to establish the degree of change arising from the development of the site it is important to understand the existing situation and site context in terms of landscape characteristics associated with the local area. The characterisation process is a non-value judgement process; therefore classifying landscapes into distinct areas does not suggest that one character is more sensitive than another or valued by people more or less.
- 3.2. The landscape character appraisal process reviews the wider landscape character context at a national level and then explores in more detail character features at a district/local level, before analysing site specific land use that informs local distinctiveness and sense of place. Character Areas applicable to the site and surrounding area are illustrated on the Published Landscape Character Context plan (11423/P05) contained to the rear of this report.

National Character

- 3.3. The Countryside Agency's Character Map of England identifies broad, strategic character areas for the whole of England. Work undertaken by Natural England has updated a series of National Character Area (NCA) profiles to collate information from across a range of environmental disciplines to identify key opportunities and context for local decision making and action. The site is identified within the 'NCA Profile 126 – South Coast Plain'.
- 3.4. The principal features of this character area relevant to the site and surrounding landscape are described as:
- *Stretches of farmed land between developed areas, often with large arable fields defined by low hedges or ditches. The plain slopes gently southwards towards the coast;*
 - *Tree cover is limited to isolated wind-sculpted woodlands and shelterbelts;*
 - *Sand dune grasses and intertidal marsh communities are characteristic of the coastline, while small areas of species-rich meadow remain inland;*
 - *The area has significant urban development, with settlements along the coastline dominated by the Portsmouth conurbation, suburban villages and seaside towns including Bognor Regis, Littlehampton and Worthing linked by major road and rail systems.*
- 3.5. For the purpose of assessing the effects of development, National Character Areas are relevant for understanding the broad landscape context; however, they aim set out the key characteristics, opportunities and constraints for large geographical areas. As such, the studies do not identify the site-specific settled urban fringe context local to the site, adjacent commercial land uses and adjoining residential and tree lined backdrop surrounding the site, nor the adjoining highways network and existing site boundary landscape framework which all constitutes a component part to the perception of character in this location.
- 3.6. Whilst there would be a localised effect following development of the site, there would be no perceptible effect upon the wider National Character Area or any particular features of merit described within the study.
- 3.7. The South Coast Plain NCA profile does also provide a series of Statements of Environmental Opportunity ('SEO's). The objectives are broad, but SEO 2 is applicable to the site, stating that there



is an opportunity to “Plan for the creation of a strong landscape framework” while “managing and enhancing existing greenspace and access”.

County Level Character

West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment

3.8. In 2003 West Sussex County Council carried out an assessment of the landscape character of West Sussex. “A strategy for the West Sussex Landscape” was adopted in October 2005 and this resulted in the identification of 42 unique Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) with land management guidelines produced for each area. The site is located within LCA **SC9: Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain**. The key characteristics of this LCA relevant to the study area include:

- *Low lying flat open landscape;*
- *Meandering rife 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;*
- *The relatively open character of much of the area allows long views so that village church towers are important landmarks in views;*
- *Frequent urban fringe influences of horse paddocks, light industry and disused airfields, with busy minor and major roads; and*
- *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.*

3.9. Key sensitivities relevant to the site include:

- *Fragmentation and loss of hedgerows and connections between hedgerow and woodland.*
- *Replacement of mature treescape.*
- *Loss of distinction between different settlements due to urban expansion.*

3.10. It is evident from the above characteristics, that the site does contain some features representative of the Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain LCA, however, it does not contain any particularly notable, rare or unique features. This is important to understand when considering the potential impacts of the proposed development in the context of the locality. The characteristic boundary treatments of hedgerow trees and established tree stock of merit will also be incorporated into the proposed development on-site and strengthened in accordance with the LCA strategy objective.

3.11. Whilst LCA SC9: Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain covers the site and surrounding landscape, the landscape to the far east is included within the Lower Arun Valley character area, SC10 which is described as an area of extensive floodplain, meandering river and stretches of engineered concrete river banks. LCA SC9 is also noted for the adjoining urban influence with surrounding suburban activities where the ‘loss of pastoral character of the valley’ and ‘development pressures at Littlehampton’ are considered to be a key issue for the locality.



District Level Character

Arun Landscape Study: Landscape and Visual Amenity Aspects of Development Choices in Arun District 2006-2026

- 3.12. In March 2006 the Council employed Hankinson Duckett Associates to carry out a Landscape Sensitivity Study covering the part of the District between the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the coastline but excluding the defined built up areas.
- 3.13. The purpose of the study was to prepare an independent assessment of landscape sensitivity in order to provide a further tool to assist strategic decision making and the broad location of future major new greenfield developments in the district. A second aim was to consider carefully the existing boundaries of the Strategic and Local Gaps and to make recommendations as to whether they can be altered compromising either visual or perceived coalescence between the relevant settlements. The report does not constitute Arun District Council policy but will form part of the evidence base used in preparing the emerging Local Development Framework.
- 3.14. In order to establish a comprehensive baseline of information and provide a robust basis for determining and mapping the landscape capacity of the District a landscape character assessment was undertaken, with a series of Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) being identified.
- 3.15. Within the study, the site is identified as part of the '*Large-scale enclosed arable farmland*' Landscape Character Type (LCT L1a) and within the **Climping Lower Coastal Plain** Landscape Character Areas (LCA 31). The study provides the following descriptive summary for LCA 31:
- *Abuts Arun River valley to the east and Ford to the north.*
 - *Almost entirely intensively farmed arable land.*
 - *Predominately large field sizes.*
 - *Blocks of arable fields separated by roads with scattered and ribbon development.*
 - *Fields with hedgerows and tree belts providing enclosure.*
- 3.16. An assessment is provided within the study to determine the landscape sensitivity and capacity of LCA 31, which is described as having 'Negligible / Low' capacity as *"the only substantial area of undeveloped coastline, largely rural, within the floodplain and provides separation between Middleton-on-sea and Littlehampton"*.
- 3.17. The identified sensitivities of LCA 31 as a whole are clearly associated with the rurality of the arable plain landscape and undeveloped coastline which LCA 31 covers, along with the role of the character area as a buffer between settlements. Such characteristics are not directly associated with the site itself, nor are they at risk as a result of the development as proposed. It is important to reaffirm that the proposed development will occupy a single field, bound by a retained shelter belt with proposed site boundary landscape enhancements, and will remain contiguous with a cluster of existing built form and ribbon development with associated urban fringe land uses. The site is physically and largely visually segregated from the undeveloped coastline and arable plain landscapes for which LCA 31 is deemed to be valued.

Land Use & Local Site Context

- 3.18. Whilst the site lies within and adjacent to character areas and types as defined by the published landscape character assessments summarised above, and shares some of their characteristics, the published assessments do not consider the nature of the site-specific issues and context. Differences



in landform, land use, landscape structure, degree of visual enclosure and influence of built development creates variation in landscape character and local distinctiveness. A site-specific review of land uses and characteristics does not involve the application of sensitivity or value but does assist in exploring the suitability and ability of the landscape to absorb further change, restoration and enhancement in relation to such matters as condition, scale, relationship with other uses and spatial arrangement.

- 3.19. The surrounding wider landscape to the east and west of the site comprises an arrangement of largely flat arable farmland fields containing pockets of shelter belt tree cover, a network of public rights of way, ditches and transport corridors typical of the largely undeveloped characteristics of the arable plains associated with the published LCA 31 and SC9: Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain landscapes described above. The site itself is contiguous with existing built form and settled land uses, positioned in a corridor of ribbon development and dense tree cover along Climping Street. This forms a linear band of scattered built form and shelter belt tree cover linking Crookthorne Lane (A259) to the coast. The site does not represent an open nor isolated landscape.
- 3.20. The site is contained to the north by built form at Baird's Farm Shop (comprising open storage, commercial units and garden centre infrastructure with associated car parking) and to the south by commercial and residential development at Hobb's Farm. Land at Hobb's Farm to the immediate south of the site comprises a mix of existing and approved commercial development proposals including holiday lets, residential uses and seasonal camping ground.
- 3.21. Given the extent of adjoining built form, and the current land use as an informal outdoor dog training facility, the site itself is markedly settled in character, providing an urban fringe context where adjacent built form and associated curtilages provide a developed backdrop in the immediate context of the site.



Site Context Photograph 1: Tree-line on the western site boundary



Site Context Photograph 2: Native species-rich hedgerow on the eastern site boundary



Site Context Photograph 3: On site semi-improved grassland with adjoining residential development (The Cottage), site boundary tree stock and swathes of scrub, on-site outbuildings and open storage.



Site Context Photograph 4: Northern boundary interface with rear of Baird's Farm Shop building, including naturalised scrub, self-seeded vegetation and open storage



Site Context Photograph 5: On-site remnant tracks of hardstanding, open storage areas at the periphery of the Baird's Farm Shop building, scrub and ephemeral habitats.

Interim Conclusions

- 3.22. The wider rural landscape to the east and west of the site forms an arable plain landscape of medium to large scale fields with scattered stands of remnant hedgerow vegetation and stands of shelter belt tree cover and drainage channels consistent with the published Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain (LCA SC9) and Climping Lower Coastal Plain (LCA 31) Landscape Character Areas.
- 3.23. The site itself, and its immediate environs share some of these characteristics, but forms a comparatively small-scale field parcel where adjacent urban fringe uses have an influence on the character, rurality and immediate context. The site is contiguous with existing built form, and the character of the site is markedly influenced by the proximity to adjacent development and hard standing at the Baird's Farm Shop to the north, adjacent residential and commercial development to the south at Hobb's Farm where derelict out buildings and naturalised vegetation are present alongside gardens and dwellings in a largely settled context.
- 3.24. 'The Cottage' adjoins the site to the north-west and comprises a two-storey listed dwelling of flint cobbles with brick dressings and white rendering and associated garden vegetation; this further segregates the site from the wider rural landscape of large scale arable fields west of the site.
- 3.25. The characteristic landscape features of hedgerows and tree belts which provide enclosure at the site boundaries, identified within the Climping Lower Coastal Plain LCA are to be maintained, strengthened and enhanced as part of the on-site development proposals. Integrating the care home development into the landscape of adjoining built form and tree cover through the retention and enhancement of the site's Green Infrastructure, a scheme can be delivered which is assimilated into the existing landscape rather than imposing itself upon it.



Section 4: Visual Context

- 4.1. In order to establish the degree of any change that may arise from a future residential development on-site and the extent to which such changes will affect identified local receptors, it is important to understand the existing situation in terms of visual amenity alongside the availability and context of views associated with the local area.
- 4.2. The extent of the baseline study area was established through a preliminary analysis of GIS topographical data with field work being informed by a Theoretical Zone of Visual Influence mapping exercise which calculates the extent to which the site could potentially be seen from the wider area. This first sieve exercise was taken to site to review any significant vegetation or built form which restricts or limits the extent of visibility.
- 4.3. Following the completion of a visit to the site on 6th March 2018 a field verified Visual Envelope (VE) was prepared as shown on the Visual Analysis and Photoviewpoint Locations plan **11423/P06** included to the rear of this report. In accordance with GLVIA3, the visual analysis is based on views from external spaces within the public domain and not from inside buildings or private spaces. However, where notable views from private properties are possible, these have been recorded and comments made if appropriate.
- 4.4. Photographs were taken from selected viewpoints with a digital camera with an equivalent 50mm focal length lens at eye level (approximately 1600mm above ground). A total of 17 representative viewpoints have been chosen from locations surrounding the site to enable the effects of the development to be assessed from all directions (see **Photosheets for Photoviewpoints 1-17** contained at the rear of this report). Whilst the views are chosen to be representative of the area, they cannot provide continuous coverage of all potential locations within the vicinity of the development. Often views will occur as a sequence within the surrounding environment. Where this is a significant aspect of the landscape experience sequential views have been noted within the assessment. Likewise, where transient or fleeting views are possible, and of significance as part of the landscape experience, they have been addressed in the assessment.
- 4.5. The 17 viewpoints are as follows:
 - **Photoviewpoint 1:** Facing north from public footpath 829, approximately 1.2km south east of the site.
 - **Photoviewpoint 2:** Facing north from byway 197, at the junction with public footpath 173, approximately 790m south east of the site.
 - **Photoviewpoint 3:** Facing west from public footpath 172, adjacent to Lower Daisy Barns, approximately 690m east of the site.
 - **Photoviewpoint 4:** Facing west from public footpath 169, adjacent to the curtilage of St Mary's C Of E Primary School, approximately 350m east of the site.
 - **Photoviewpoint 5:** Facing west from public footpath 169, approximately 250m east of the site.
 - **Photoviewpoint 6:** Facing north west from public footpath 169, approximately 110m south east of the site.



- **Photoviewpoint 7:** Facing north from Climping Street, approximately 20m south of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 8:** Facing south from Crookthorn Lane (A259) overlooking Bairds Farm Shop, approximately 70m north of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 9:** Facing west from Crookthorn Lane (A259) approximately 30m north east of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 10:** Facing west from Crookthorn Lane (A259) approximately 390m east of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 11:** Facing east from Crookthorn Lane (A259), at the junction with B2233 adjacent to The Oystercatcher, approximately 150m west of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 12:** Facing south west from public footpath 168, off Church Lane, approximately 570m north east of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 13:** Facing west from Crookthorn Lane (A259), adjacent to the entrance to Kent's Farm, approximately 495m east of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 14:** Facing north west from public footpath 174, at the intersection with footpath 173, facing north west approximately 1.17km south east of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 15:** Facing west from public footpath 829-1, approximately 2.15km east of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 16:** Facing east from public footpath 165, approximately 1.26km west of the site.
- **Photoviewpoint 17:** Facing east from an unnamed road off Crookthorn Lane (A259), approximately 720m west of the site.

4.6. In accordance with best practice the photoviewpoints and corresponding photosheets have been issued to Arun District Council to seek agreement on the scope and location of views. At the time of writing TG are awaiting a response to the viewpoint selection.

4.7. The extent of the field verified Visual Envelope (VE) is described below:

- To the **north** – visibility is contained by adjoining built form at the Baird's Farm Shop and Café to the immediate north of the site. Roadside vegetation aligning the A259 provides a further layer of visual filtering within longer distance views north of the site. At close proximity, glimpsed views into the site from the adjoining highway is limited to gaps in between built form and vegetation at the Baird's Farm Shop development, with views being heavily filtered from the A259 by intervening field boundary hedgerow vegetation and roadside structure planting.
- To the **west** – views are contained by the surrounding tree cover and residential development at Climping Street which abuts the western site boundary. Within longer distance views the site is obscured by the layering of field boundary vegetation, tracts of shelter belt tree cover and pockets of intervening built form across the wider landscape west of the site.



- To the **south** – the visual envelope is contained by residential and commercial development along Climping Street, namely the adjoining built-form and associated curtilage of Hobb's Farm beyond the southern site boundary. A belt of naturalised conifer trees and garden vegetation to the south east of the site, to the eastern edge of properties off Climping Street provides a principal screen in the landscape, to the south east of the site.
- To the **east** – open views are afforded across the adjoining arable plain of flat farmland to the immediate east of the site, although stands of tree cover and pockets of built form serve to restrict views at greater distances. Views into the site are restricted by hedgerow vegetation along the eastern site boundary, with off-site hedgerow planting within the adjoining field to the east of the site providing further layered screening to obscure the lower reaches of the site from view. Available views towards the site comprise a well-treed backdrop where the presence of built form in the immediate vicinity of the site is an established component of the visual experience. The presence of dense tree cover and townscape features at Climping Street to the immediate north, south and west of the site truncates longer distance views across the landscape within site facing views.

Visual Receptors

- 4.8. Within the field verified Visual Envelope the visual receptors, i.e. those people or groups of people who are likely to see the site and experience a potential change in the view should it be developed in-part, can be summarised below.
- Public and recreational users of public footpaths 169, 172, 173 and Byway 197 to the east of the site, with longer distance views available from footpath 174 and 829-1;
 - Residential views (predominantly upper storey) from adjacent dwellings at The Cottage on the western site boundary and Hobb's Farm to the south;
 - Users of a short section of Climping Street to the south west of the site, with receptors (including cyclists, horse riders, walkers, users of public transport and vehicle drivers) observing the site through gaps in site boundary vegetation;
 - Users of Crookthorn Lane (A259) in the vicinity of Baird's Farm Shop to the north of the site;
 - Heavily filtered views from the curtilage of St Mary's C Of E Primary School, approximately 350m east of the site; and
 - Agricultural workers and visitors associated with the adjoining land and wider surrounding agricultural setting to the immediate east of the site.

Interim Conclusions

- 4.9. A preliminary GIS Zone of Theoretical Visibility has been verified in the field and the likely receptors identified. The visual envelope is largely contained by built form and vegetation to the immediate north, west and south of the site with open views to the east becoming increasingly obscured at greater distances due to the arrangement of intervening pockets of vegetation.
- 4.10. Visibility from the local public rights of way network is limited to partially screened views to the immediate east of the site where the presence of built form at Baird's Farm Shop and Hobb's Farm is an established component of the visual experience for public receptors observing the site.
- 4.11. Users of the public rights of way network to the east of the site will likely be the most sensitive receptors to on-site development and are likely to experience the most prominent effects as a result



of the proposals, although the site is observed in the context of surrounding built form and tree cover and The Cottage provides a backdrop of residential development within site-facing views. The proposed retention of green infrastructure of merit across the site boundaries will further increase the extent of screening within site facing views, reducing the visual envelope and likely number of visual receptors as the proposed vegetation becomes established.



Section 5: Landscape Strategy Proposals

- 5.1. In response to the landscape and visual baseline analysis, review of local planning policy and proposed use of the site as a new Dementia Care Centre, a series of landscape objectives, design principles and development opportunities have been developed by Tyler Grange LLP in conjunction with the project architects to ensure that the development response reflects the local circumstance whilst addressing the design opportunities for landscape enhancement and dementia care, creating a framework for later detailed design for people with cognitive and/ or sensory impairment.
- 5.2. The information below, and illustrated on the Landscape Strategy plan **11423/P08c** included to the rear of this report, sets out those aspects of the proposed layout which have been considered as part of the submitted scheme layout.

Retention and Enhancement of Existing Site Boundary Vegetation

- **The design parameters have sought to retain and enhance the existing eastern boundary hedgerow and western boundary mature tree line to assist with the assimilation of the proposed development into an established landscape framework.**

The layout will develop a programme of enhancement and re-stocking of boundary vegetation with emphasis on strengthening tree planting towards the southern and eastern edges of the site to fill gaps within the existing arrangement of site boundary planting. The layering of proposed amenity grassland areas, wild flower meadows, managed scrub and shrubs, understorey screening mixes and proposed tree cover will create an eco-tone of layered canopies and vegetation heights to create visual interest, diversity in wildlife habitat provision and enhanced screening at the edges of the site.

Considered Development Massing and Ridgeline

- **The ridge height of the proposed development has been designed to sit lower than the retained western boundary tree line and adjoining Cottage dwelling to ensure a sensitive incorporation of new built form within site facing views.**

Through a process of inter-disciplinary design, the scheme can be delivered which is assimilated into the existing landscape rather than imposing itself upon it, ensuring the building is screened from receptors west of the site, and appearing inconspicuous within site facing views from the east by not breaking the skyline.

Green Roof Provision

- **The proposals include for the provision of a green roof to provide additional habitat for wildlife.**

To compensate for the removal of existing grassland habitat given the footprint of the proposed unit, new planting will be provided across the proposed Care Centre. Whilst the green roof will not form part of a ground level 'green corridor', this will present a green 'stepping stone' in the landscape with opportunities for enhanced sustainable urban drainage.



Landscape Design for Dementia Care

- The proposals will include a range of specialist design interventions for the safety and well-being of residents whilst seeking enhancement of resident amenity and landscape interaction.

Access and Movement: The proposed layout will utilise an arrangement of clearly defined, level and barrier free pedestrian routes. Such pathways are designed to offer circular walking with clear navigational markers, seating areas and sheltered spaces.

Sensory Stimulation through Soft Landscape Design: Plants are selected to avoid toxic, thorns or species with serrated leaves. An on-site 'sensory' planting scheme will utilise species combinations selected for diversity of colour, texture, sound and scent. Scented plants can be implemented alongside pathways, with strongly scented plants also be utilised as 'markers' in the garden areas (at corners, seating areas or access points) to enhance legibility and aid wayfinding. Shrub, grasses, bulb planting and a variety of trees will be implemented to soften the incidental public open spaces within the development whilst an arrangement of amenity grassland areas and adaptable informal meadow spaces, which can be shaped by site users, to offer visual interest and a variety in landscape treatment and opportunities for interaction.

Security: The definition of private and communal spaces will be informed through the utilisation of clipped and secured hedgerow planting to offer security whilst adding further habitat provision and greening of the built edge. The combination of site boundary hedgerow stock and new fencing will provide a secure boundary with a physical barrier and defensive planting.

Activity: A mix of formal and informal planting and management, coupled with the implementation of reinforced paths, mown grassland walkways, vegetable garden plots and shrub beds will reinforce a strong sense of place whilst promoting interaction with the on-site Green Infrastructure, as well as a degree of diversity and permeability in the provision of habitats and site boundary screening. Vegetable garden areas and potting sheds provided to facilitate horticultural activities with raised planters implemented to enable residents of limited mobility to participate in gardening activities.

- 5.3. The proposed masterplan demonstrates an appropriate strategy to retain and manage landscape features as well as ensuring future succession of new planting whilst improving the condition and connectivity of boundary trees and hedgerow. The design response has sought to complement the surrounding townscape, in terms of settled land uses, scaling and materiality, whilst seeking to implement a high quality layout and design for specialist dementia care.



Section 6: Receptor Sensitivity and Impact Assessment

- 6.1. As set out in the methodology (Section 1), the impact assessment addresses the degree of landscape character and visual sensitivity in order to determine the magnitude of effect associated with the proposed development. The sensitivity of identified receptors is summarised below with criteria that relates to receptor sensitivity and magnitude of change contained at **Appendix 1**.
- 6.2. In terms of landscape character, the starting point in considering the effect of the development is to consider the sensitivity of the landscape. This combines a judgement on value and susceptibility.

Value of the Landscape and Site

- 6.3. In considering the value of the landscape the following aspects of the landscape are noted³ as relevant in the assessment process. Judgements are set out below with regards to the visual perception of the site under the following headings:

“Landscape Quality (condition): A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements;

Scenic Quality: The term used to describe landscapes which appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses);

Rarity: The presence of rare features and elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type;

Representativeness: Whether the landscape contains a particular character, and/or features and elements, which are considered particularly important examples;

Conservation interests: The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of a landscape as well as having value in their own right;

Recreation value: Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important;

Perceptual aspects: A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities and/or tranquillity; and

Associations: Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or event in history that contribute to perceptions of natural beauty of the area.”

- 6.4. For each of these considerations the landscapes performance against these criteria can be appraised as ‘good’ through ‘ordinary’ to ‘poor’. The table below explains Tyler Grange’s judgement on these issues. Judgements are made with reference to the observable landscape features, which can include components such as landform, vegetation, housing, roads, watercourses etc.

³ GLVIA 3 - Box 5.1, Page 84



Criteria	TG Observations/Comments
Landscape Quality	The immediate environs to the west and east of the site generally reflects the West Sussex and Arun District published Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain (LCA SC9) and Climping Lower Coastal Plain (LCA 31) Landscape Character Areas, notably the <i>“Low lying flat open landscape” of “arable fields separated by roads with scattered and ribbon development” with “predominately large field sizes” and “drainage ditch systems” where “low density of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with occasional shelterbelts” are present.</i> Those landscape features which are present in association with the site itself, including the boundary features of naturalised mature trees, hedgerow planting and rough grassland pasture are considered to be ‘ordinary’.
Scenic Quality	The identified sensitivities of LCA 31 as a whole are clearly associated with the rurality of the arable plain landscape and undeveloped coastline which LCA 31 covers. Such characteristics are not directly associated with the site itself, nor are they at risk as a result of the development as proposed. The site occupies a single field, bound by a shelter belt to the west and contiguous with a cluster of existing built form and ribbon development with associated urban fringe land uses to the immediate north and south. The degree of enclosure afforded by intervening vegetation and built form in the vicinity of the site limits the opportunity to appreciate the site itself in the middle to long distance. Within such views from the wider landscape, the site is seen as part of a wide backdrop of settled ribbon development at Climping Street where pockets of agricultural, commercial and residential development serve to truncate long-distance vistas across the landscape. As a result of these matters the site’s scenic quality is considered ‘ordinary’.
Rarity, Conservation Interests and Representativeness	The landscape features bounding the site is broadly consistent with the wider landscape character area and as such the features present are typical and not rare locally or at a broader scale, and whilst the site does not lie within or adjacent to a Conservation Area, “The Cottage” Grade II listed building is present in the vicinity and immediate visual context of the site. The Listing Text for the dwelling does not refer to the adjoining fields or specific open spaces and associated functions adjacent to the curtilage of the building, and as such the site’s role in terms of the setting of the dwelling is therefore considered to be no more than ‘ordinary’.
Recreational Value	The site is not publicly accessible and is not a formal or informal recreational asset to the locality in its current form. The value is ‘poor’ for the site and ‘ordinary’ for the wider LCA which has a typical distribution of paths and accessible recreational spaces.



Criteria	TG Observations/Comments
Perceptual Aspects	Because of the limited public access, the site itself is not an area which provides an opportunity to enjoy the landscape or the wider context. The wider landscape of LCA 31 is valued for its rurality and arable plain landscape and undeveloped coastline which LCA 31 covers. Such characteristics are not directly associated with the site itself. The site is therefore considered to be no more than 'ordinary' in terms of perceptual aspects.
Associations	There are no known associations which would indicate a strong and important link between this landscape and its historic or current appreciation. It is therefore considered 'poor' in that context.

- 6.5. The Arun Landscape Study determines the wider LCA 31 Climping Lower Coastal Plain (within which the site lies) to be of '*substantial*' landscape value, citing the proximity of the character area to the Arun Valley and abutting the undeveloped coastline. The study also concludes that LCA 31 attains '*moderate scenic beauty with undeveloped coastline*'. As determined throughout the baseline sections of this report, the character of the site itself is markedly influenced by its proximity to adjacent dwellings and commercial development to the immediate north, west and southern site boundaries. Such development associates the site within the ribbon of settled land uses and dense tree cover along Climping Street which in turn, affects the rural quality, particularly in respect of relative tranquillity and remoteness.
- 6.6. The site should not therefore be conflated with the sensitivities of the wider LCA 31 as it is in stark contrast to the undeveloped arable landscape framework and coastal context for which LCA 31 is valued.
- 6.7. Having considered these key elements related to value it is considered that there is nothing associated with the site itself to warrant it more than ordinary and is therefore valued no higher than of **Low - Local Importance**. It is not considered a valued landscape for the purposes of the Framework, with reference to paragraph 109.

Susceptibility to Change

- 6.8. In relation to the susceptibility⁴, based on our experience as professional practitioners and derived from various workshops coordinated by the LI on the GLVIA, we apply the levels of susceptibility for this project as being:
- *High Susceptibility* - The landscape is such that changes in terms of the development proposed would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale and mass.

⁴ Landscape Susceptibility - The ability of a defined landscape to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences

- *Medium Susceptibility* - The proposed development has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.
- *Low Susceptibility* - The development proposed is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale and mass.

6.9. Given the baseline context and criteria described above, it is determined that the site represents **Medium Susceptibility**.

6.10. Contextually the site represents a single field, partially contained by built form, vegetation and settled land uses, with which it has a visual relationship. There is a clear disparity, in terms of landscape character, between the scaling, containment, settled context and current land uses on-site, and that which is observed across the wider LCA 31 arable plain landscape. It is considered that the development as proposed is able to take advantage of local screening afforded by existing vegetation whilst referencing the adjacent scaling, materiality and massing of adjoining built form and will therefore have a correspondingly reduced influence on the character of the wider landscape.

Sensitivity

6.11. The Arun Landscape Study categorises the site as being within LCA 31 Climping Lower Coastal Plain and determines that LCA 31 represents a landscape of 'substantial' sensitivity owing in part to the presence of "*Substantial shelter belts and relatively intact hedgerow network*" and comprising "*largely rural areas without settlement*". The study also cites the role of LCA 31 as an area which "*separate Bognor and Littlehampton*".

6.12. Following a review of the available baseline information, the site-specific context and in combining judgments on value and susceptibility, it is considered that the site and corresponding Climping Lower Coastal Plain LCA in this locality represents a **Low - Medium** sensitivity landscape character resource.

6.13. The sensitivity rating relates to the assessment criteria contained at **Appendix 1**, with additional commentary set out below:

Landscape Baseline Considerations	Commentary/Justification
Landscape Designations	The LCA contains some landscape elements/features which are subject to appropriate policy protection and lies within the Policy Area 10 Strategic Gap, but landscape features local to the site such as field boundary hedgerows and scattered hedgerow trees are of a limited quality and not intrinsic to the character of the wider LCA. The provision, protection and enhancement of landscape features, trees and woodland, as well as the provision of new open spaces, planting and green linkages as part of a broader Green Infrastructure network for the wider locality are also principle local policy objectives.
Key Characteristics and Features	A landscape of strong contrasts with many local variations and settled influence; urban fringe land uses dominate the site's immediate context – including vehicular infrastructure, residential and commercial uses in places.



Landscape Baseline Considerations	Commentary/Justification
	The wider Climping Lower Coastal Plain landscape comprises a broadly flat arrangement of medium to large scale arable fields traversed by footpaths and drainage channels with parcels of smaller fields, equestrian uses, shelter belts and scattered field boundary trees occurring around settlements. With the site itself being of a smaller scale, comprising mixed and informal land uses with a settled context of adjoining built form, this is clearly a varied landscape, with occasional uncharacteristic elements that detract from the landscape character of the area.
Landscape Condition	There are localised areas of intact landscape framework, consisting of occasional field boundary hedgerows with scattered hedgerow trees and shelter belts largely associated with farmsteads, ribbon development and isolated pockets of built form within the landscape. Away from the undeveloped coastal areas, the landscape is considered to still exhibit some recognisable structure and characteristic patterns, but with detracting features and urban influence also present.

- 6.14. The site is contiguous with residential and commercial land uses associated with Climping Street, and is influenced by Crookthorn Lane (A259) and presence of the Baird's Farm Shop to the north. The sites relationship with the open countryside is limited to the arable land and adjoining camping field in the immediate vicinity to the east of the site.
- 6.15. The site's connection to the wider arable landscape to the west is severed by intervening built form and tree cover which reduces the sense of openness in the locality. The site is physically and visually segregated from the wider undeveloped coastal areas which are considered to represent the principle sensitivities within the Climping Lower Coastal Plain LCA.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 6.16. The sensitivity of visual receptors is defined by the assessor with reference to the established guidelines and the assessment criteria contained at **Appendix 1**. The receptor sensitivity is summarised in the table below:

Type of Visual Receptor	Sensitivity Rating	Commentary
Users of public rights of way (PRoW)	High	Sensitive recreational views from those enjoying the visual amenity of the countryside or open space. Sensitivity may be affected by the condition, use and existing context of the PRoW network.
Private residential dwellings	Medium to High (reduced where views are from upper floors, oblique	Sensitive residential views from windows associated curtilage. Sensitivity and ability to absorb change is influenced by the adjacent residential developed context and the extent to which views are filtered, oblique and obscured by intervening vegetation.



Type of Visual Receptor	Sensitivity Rating	Commentary
	or heavily filtered)	GLVIA 3rd Edition reiterates that in some cases it is appropriate to consider the effects upon private viewpoints, particularly if a larger number of combined residents are to be affected.
Business and commercial premises	Low	People at their place of work whose attention is focused on their work have a greater capacity to absorb change, particularly where activities are largely indoors or focused internally as part of an industrial estate or business unit.
Drivers, passengers and users of local roads	Low	Transient views of those engaged in the principal activity of driving are less sensitive. Views are limited to close proximity and are influenced by adjacent residential context.
Other land, agricultural and farming activities	Low	Views associated with outdoor farming activities are considered to be of a nature of which is potentially tolerant of more substantial changes.

Prediction of Potential Impacts

Scheme Description

- 6.17. This report has been prepared to accompany a detailed planning application for a proposed 64 bed dementia care centre development at land to the rear of Baird's Farm Shop, west of Littlehampton, West Sussex.
- 6.18. The accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS) sets out a detailed site analysis and assesses the constraints and opportunities for the site, including the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development.

Temporary (Construction) Impacts

- 6.19. The principal construction impacts in relation to the proposed development can be summarised as:
- The erection of temporary site hoardings in association with site access point and implementation of construction compounds (including any necessary tree protection measures) prior to commencement of ground works;
 - Removal of the existing surface vegetation, site levels re-grading and groundworks to establish the appropriate finished floor levels for development areas and connecting access roads;
 - The digging of service trenches and establishment of drainage systems;
 - Ground works to implement new internal and site boundary planting with the presence of plant and machinery to undertake the site preparation, delivery and foundation works, including



vehicle movements to remove waste material, undertake deliveries and the movement of construction works associated with the implementation of the development;

- The removal of construction compounds and hoardings; and
- Restoration of degraded habitats and areas disturbed during construction.

Permanent Impacts & Residual Effects

6.20. The residual (permanent) landscape and visual effects that are expected to remain after mitigation (at year 15) are described in response to professional judgement and in accordance with the established assessment criteria. The likely permanent impacts will arise in relation to the following principal scheme elements:

- The presence of a new green-roofed residential care centre to the east of Climping Street, adjacent to existing commercial and residential development, the ridgeline of which is designed to sit lower than adjoining dwellings and the surrounding mature tree line;
- Enhanced site boundary landscaping to include additional hedgerow standards and tree cover across the eastern and southern edges of the development; and
- Dementia-care led design forming a specialist landscape framework of new site-wide grassland, meadow, shrub, bulb and tree planting with new hedgerow boundaries to define the residential curtilages. Communal garden spaces seeking sensory stimulation, gardening activities and landscape interaction within a formal garden arrangement of pathways, amenity grassland and site boundary eco-tone vegetation.

Landscape Character Effects

6.21. The proposed development will result in a magnitude of change in relation to the 'Climping Lower Coastal Plain' LCA. The principal criteria to consider (established in response to GLVIA 3rd Edition) and the predicted changes are set out in the table below:

Magnitude of Change Criteria	Commentary of Effects upon the LCA 31 Climping Lower Coastal Plain LCA
Components to be lost as a result of proposals	The addition of the development will result in the permanent loss of a small area of grassland / outdoor dog-training to accommodate the physical footprint of the care centre and associated parking and garden areas, but proposals are included for the implementation of a new green roof and formal garden vegetation to reduce the extent of vegetation loss. Two low quality northern boundary roadside trees will be removed to implement the proposed access arrangement.

Magnitude of Change Criteria	Commentary of Effects upon the LCA 31 Climping Lower Coastal Plain LCA
Perceptual Changes / Appearance and the degree to which the proposal fits with existing character	The development will sit against the settled edge of Climping Street, changing a single field parcel (which is commonplace within the landscape) to built form which is also common place in this location. The development will not result in the loss of any rare or distinctive features that would fundamentally alter the perceptual, aesthetic and physical appearance of the landscape within the Strategic Gap to the extent that the current situation would not continue to exist when moving through the area. The presence of the existing development pockets, adjoining camping areas, commercial and residential development, coupled with the retention of the tree lined backdrop of Climping Street along the western edge of the site, will continue to contain and restrict the degree to which the site and any subsequent changes on-site is experienced from within the wider landscape. There will be a noticeable increase in the visible extent of built form for receptors overlooking the site, namely the users of the footpath network east of the site, whereby the upper reaches of the new development will be visible over the top of the existing and proposed eastern boundary hedgerow vegetation; however, this is not an open and isolated landscape and the changes experienced will be minimal compared to the existing visual context. All available site facing views are currently experienced with an array of contiguous commercial and residential development. The proposed development would not therefore amount to an incongruous addition to the existing ribbon development at Climping Street. Views into the site will be possible at the new vehicular entrance to the development, but this equates to a limited number of transient receptors who currently experience car parking, built form and vehicular access at Baird's Farm Shop. Discernible alterations to the existing visual experience will therefore be limited. Importantly, no long-distance views across the wider landscape and Strategic Gap will be curtailed and the overall openness of the 'Climping Lower Coastal Plain' LCA will not be affected as a result of the proposed development owing to the scaling and retention of green infrastructure which have been the principal drivers for informing the proposed massing and layout for the site. Whilst there will be a direct loss of a portion of urban fringe pasture to development, site boundary vegetation is to be retained and the surrounding settled character has the ability to absorb a development that responds to the surrounding vernacular to provide a layout that respects the massing and character of adjacent development at Climping Street without affecting the undeveloped characteristics of the wider LCA or undeveloped coastline which are identified as local elements of high sensitivity. Boundary features will be enhanced and created with new trees and shrub layering introduced to help to maintain the character of the wider landscape framework whilst reducing the visibility of the proposed development at close proximity.



- 6.22. In response to the consideration of the above criteria, it is accepted that there will be a substantial change to the land use and nature of the site itself; however, the development would not result in the loss of any rare or unique landscape features, it will be limited in scale in the context of the wider LCA.
- 6.23. The changes need to be considered in terms of how the local landscape will continue to be experienced once the development is complete. Whilst there will be a direct loss or alteration to one or more elements/features/characteristics of the existing landscape, and the introduction of the proposed development may appear discernible in close proximity, the nature of the development affects only a limited geographical area and the perception or distinctiveness of the wider LCA would not be compromised.
- 6.24. Overall, the landscape change is considered to be localised, with the proposals incorporating embedded landscape and biodiversity mitigation measures to retain and enhance existing site boundary features. The magnitude of change on the wider landscape is considered to be **Moderate** with the loss of a small portion of the settled grassland parcel to built form and the introduction of elements that may be prominent at close proximity but not uncharacteristic within the surrounding landscape.
- 6.25. With reference to the sensitivity of the LCA / Strategic Gap local to the site, and the magnitude of change associated with the proposed development, the scheme will have a local / limited scale **Minor Adverse** impact via the introduction of elements of new built form (which are not considered wholly uncharacteristic). The contribution the development could make to the Green Infrastructure provision and quality of architectural design in the locality would assist with balancing out the change brought about by the introduction of new built form in this location, especially in the context of contiguous development, screening and settled land uses.

Character Receptor & Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Residual Effects (after 15 years)
<i>Low - Medium Sensitivity</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	Proposed Development Minor Adverse

Visual Effects

- 6.26. Verified AVR3 photomontages have been prepared from Photoviewpoints 3 and 5 to illustrate the changes as perceived from the adjoining public rights of way network to the east of the site. Such views assist with representing the scheme in context, simulating the likely visual changes that would result from the proposed development.
- 6.27. The principal visual effects are summarised in the table below in relation to the principal receptors identified.

Visual Impact Assessment Table 1: Effects on Visual Amenity from Publically Accessible Vantage Points during Construction Phase

RECEPTEUR TYPE AND SENSITIVITY	VIEWPOINTS	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE / COMMENTARY FOR CONSTRUCTION PHASE	SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECT - CONSTRUCTION PHASE
Drivers, passengers and users of local transport routes <i>(including cyclists, horse riders, walkers, users of public transport and vehicle drivers) at Climping Street adjacent to the western site boundary and north of the site at Crookthorn Lane (A259)).</i> <u>Low Sensitivity</u>	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17	<u>Viewpoint 7</u> Magnitude of Change: Low Construction works will remain largely screened by existing vegetation. Site boundary trees and hedgerows in the view will be retained. A vista into the site is afforded via a gap in roadside vegetation at the south western corner of the site where the introduction of construction site hoarding / temporary compound and the upper reaches of construction works will be discernible for transient receptors as a temporary detractor during the construction phase from the adjoining street scene. <u>Viewpoints 8, 9, 11 and 13</u> Magnitude of Change: Moderate Construction works will be discernible for transient receptors as a temporary detractor, increasingly so within close proximity to the proposed site access where an increase in construction traffic would be envisaged within an existing developed scene at the Baird's Farm Shop roadside frontage. The upper reaches of construction plant would be viewed as a temporary skyline feature amongst existing development. <u>Viewpoints 10, 12 and 17</u> Magnitude of Change: No Change From such distances it would not be possible to see the construction activities within the site due to the screening afforded by intervening vegetation resulting in no change to the views or visual experience. The retention of existing site boundary hedgerow vegetation will maintain screening to mitigate temporary construction impacts.	<u>Viewpoint 7:</u> Temporary Minor adverse <u>Viewpoints 8, 9, 11 and 13</u> Temporary Moderate adverse <u>Viewpoints 10, 12 and 17:</u> Neutral

Private residential dwellings <i>(incorporating residential views (predominantly upper storey) from adjacent dwellings at The Cottage adjacent to the western site boundary, and Hobbs Farm to the south of the site.</i> <u>High Sensitivity</u>	n/a	Magnitude of Change: Moderate Due to the proximity of the site, there will be an inevitable impact on views with construction activity being discernible as a temporary detractor. There is scope for ensuring suitable hoarding and construction phase screening to mitigate temporary impacts. Mature trees to the western edge of the site will be retained to maintain a degree of screening into the site, and suitable tree protection measures are to be implemented during the construction phase to ensure that trees are safeguarded during works on site.	Temporary Moderate Adverse
Users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) <i>(Less sensitive where the existing amenity is influenced by urban detractors or where distance and context reduces inter-visibility)</i> <u>High Sensitivity</u> Other land, commercial uses, agricultural and farming activities <i>(Surrounding open countryside / pasture and arable land. Adjoining commercial land uses and places of work)</i> <u>Low Sensitivity</u>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 16	<u>Viewpoints 3, 4, 5</u> Magnitude of Change: Moderate From public footpath 169 opposite the eastern site boundary, due to the proximity of the site, there will be an inevitable impact on views with construction activity being discernible as a temporary detractor. Construction activity would be increasingly screened at greater distances and the retention of existing site boundary hedgerow vegetation will maintain low level screening to mitigate temporary construction impacts. <u>Viewpoints 6</u> Magnitude of Change: Negligible The upper reaches of construction plant would be viewed as a temporary skyline feature amongst existing development but would remain heavily filtered by intervening vegetation despite the close proximity of the view from the southern site boundary. <u>Viewpoints 1, 2, 14 and 15</u> Magnitude of Change: Negligible From such distances views of construction activities within the site would be limited to only the upper reaches of on-site plant due to the screening afforded by intervening vegetation. <u>Viewpoint 16</u> Magnitude of Change: No Change The site is not visible from this location and there will be no change to the view and visual experience for the receptors during the construction phase of the development.	<u>Viewpoints 3, 4, 5</u> Temporary Moderate Adverse <u>Viewpoints 6</u> Negligible <u>Viewpoints 1, 2, 14 and 15</u> Negligible <u>Viewpoint 16</u> Neutral

Visual Impact Assessment Table 2: Permanent Effects on Visual Amenity from Publically Accessible Vantage Points

RECEPTOR TYPE AND SENSITIVITY	VIEWPOINTS	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE / COMMENTARY FOR COMPLETED DEVELOPMENT	SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECT – PERMANENT EFFECTS
Drivers, passengers and users of local transport routes <i>(including cyclists, horse riders, walkers, users of public transport and vehicle drivers) at Climping Street adjacent to the western site boundary and north of the site at Crookthorn Lane (A259)).</i> <u>Low Sensitivity</u>	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17	<u>Viewpoint 7</u> Magnitude of Change: Low Site boundary trees and hedgerows in the view will be retained. The existing vista into the site (afforded via a gap in roadside vegetation at the south western corner of the site) will be re-stocked with new planting. Site boundary planting will comprise new amenity grassland areas, wild flower meadows, managed scrub and shrubs, understorey screening mixes and proposed tree cover to create a layering of vegetation to provide a robust screen. On-site built form will therefore not be discernible for transient receptors passing the site along Climping Street. <u>Viewpoints 8, 9, 11 and 13</u> Magnitude of Change: Low The upper reaches of the proposed care home would be viewed in the context of existing development at Baird's Farm Shop. From these locations the proposed development will not obstruct views of The Cottage. The proposed site access will utilise the current roadside frontage to Baird's Farm Shop where cars, parking areas, delivery vehicles and areas of open storage and built form are an established component of the visual experience when passing the site along Crookthorn Lane (A259). The development does not therefore introduce uncharacteristic or incongruent features into the existing settled context when observed within fleeting views from a short section of the A259, where new built form will be perceived as a background component. <u>Viewpoints 10, 12 and 17</u> Magnitude of Change: No Change From such distances it would not be possible to view the proposals due to the screening afforded by intervening vegetation. The retention of existing site boundary hedgerow vegetation will maintain screening to mitigate visual impacts.	<u>Viewpoint 7:</u> Negligible <u>Viewpoints 8, 9, 11 and 13</u> Negligible <u>Viewpoints 10, 12 and 17:</u> Neutral

Private residential dwellings <i>(incorporating residential views (predominantly upper storey) from adjacent dwellings at The Cottage adjacent to the western site boundary, and Hobbs Farm to the south of the site.</i> <u>High Sensitivity</u>	n/a	Magnitude of Change: Moderate Due to the proximity of the proposed Care Centre, there will be an inevitable impact on views from adjoining private dwellings, and a noticeable increase in the extent of built form, but whilst there will be alterations to the visual context at close proximity, the retention and enhancement of boundary features will serve to reduce the visual impact of the proposals. The scheme has been designed to pull the building footprint away from western boundary trees and dwellings (specifically The Cottage) to ensure a 'green interface' across the southern and western site boundaries with new garden areas and associated planting. At year 15, planting will have matured sufficiently to ensure that proposed screening vegetation across the edges of the development will serve to obscure lower storey views into the site.	Minor Adverse to Negligible local / limited scale effects given the magnitude of change identified, but the scheme will be perceived as a background component. The development is not considered to be wholly incongruous due to the presence of existing built form which is contiguous with the site.
Users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) <i>(Less sensitive where the existing amenity is influenced by urban detractors or where distance and context reduces inter-visibility)</i> <u>High Sensitivity</u> Other land, commercial uses, agricultural and farming activities <i>(Surrounding open countryside / pasture and arable land. Adjoining commercial land uses and places of work)</i> <u>Low Sensitivity</u>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 14, 15, 16	<u>Viewpoints 3, 4, 5</u> Magnitude of Change: Low to Moderate Viewpoints 3 and 5 form the basis of verified AVR3 photomontages to illustrate the proposed development in context from the adjoining public footpath network. The photomontages demonstrate how the proposed development will be partially visible, but not prominent in views. There will be an inevitable impact on views and a noticeable increase in the extent of built form for receptors observing the site within close to middle distance views beyond the eastern site boundary. Prior to the establishment of proposed site boundary planting and prior to the weathering and associated assimilation of new built form on-site, the visual impact will appear greater initially. Once the proposed planting has established, this will serve to soften and heavily filter the lower reaches of the site from view, masking the internal designed garden spaces including the arrangement pedestrian paths, seating areas and planting. The photomontages for viewpoints 3 and 5 demonstrate that the upper reaches of the development are expected to be glimpsed at close proximity, becoming increasingly obscured at greater distances from the site. The placement of the dwelling within the view would partially remove visibility of the 'green' backdrop seen immediately beyond the site, but the ridgeline of the Care Centre has been designed to remain below the tree line to retain a verdant backdrop. The presence of existing rooflines and clusters of built form across the Climping Street ribbon is an established component of the visual experience in the vicinity of the site and the provision of a high quality unit with enhanced eastern boundary landscape framework will create visual interest without negatively impacting upon local amenity for receptors. The scheme will not break the skyline and will be viewed against a wooded backdrop. It will not alter any longer distance views beyond the site.	<u>Viewpoints 3, 4, 5</u> Minor Adverse local / limited scale effects given the proximity of the building to the footpath, the sensitivity of receptor and magnitude of change identified, but the scheme will be perceived as a background component given the extent of soft landscaping proposed along the eastern site boundary. Development will not protrude above existing background vegetation to be dominant on the skyline. Views of the proposals are filtered or seen in partial and glimpsed views between existing development and vegetation.



		<u>Viewpoints 6</u> Magnitude of Change: Negligible The development has been carefully designed to ensure that the ridgeline for the new Care Centre would not breach the skyline and the undeveloped backdrop would be maintained within site facing views. It would not be possible to see the proposed development from this location following establishment of proposed southern boundary tree stock, with the screening afforded by existing intervening vegetation resulting in limited changes to the visual experience. <u>Viewpoints 1, 2, 14 and 15</u> Magnitude of Change: Negligible It would not be possible to see the proposed development within the site beyond the very upper reaches of the proposed roofscape for the Care Centre due to the screening afforded by intervening vegetation. This results in negligible changes to the current available longer distance views or visual experience from the wider public rights of way network. The development has been carefully designed to ensure that the dwelling would not breach the skyline and the undeveloped backdrop would be maintained. Any glimpsed views of the proposals at greater distances will be observed in the context of surrounding built form and clusters of settled land uses and tree cover along Climping Street. The scheme does not curtail any longer distance views across the designated strategic gap. <u>Viewpoint 16</u> Magnitude of Change: No Change The site is not visible from this location and there will be no change to the view and visual experience for receptors given the screening afforded by intervening built form and vegetation.	<u>Viewpoints 6</u> Negligible <u>Viewpoints 1, 2, 14 and 15</u> Negligible <u>Viewpoint 16</u> Neutral
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Section 7: Summary and Conclusions

Assessment Context and Site Description

- 7.1. This report assesses the landscape and visual impacts associated with a detailed planning application for the erection of a new 64 bed dementia care centre development with associated garden spaces, site boundary landscaping and internal tree, shrub and meadow grassland planting. Existing site boundary vegetation of merit will be retained and the proposed care centre development has been designed to accommodate a new green roof, with the ridgeline being positioned below the western site boundary tree line to reduce wider visual impacts.
- 7.2. The development is to be located within a field of semi-improved grassland currently in use as an informal outdoor dog training facility to the rear of Baird's Farm Shop, west of Littlehampton, West Sussex.
- 7.3. The accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS) submitted within the planning application sets out a detailed site analysis and assesses the constraints and opportunities for the site, including the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development.

Landscape and Visual Planning Policy Context

- 7.4. Following a collaborative multidisciplinary design and assessment process, the project team have taken account of the applicable local policy context and SPD to inform the proposals. In accordance with local policy objectives the development parameters have sought to reference the scale of surrounding built form and retained site boundary vegetation to ensure that the scheme will not protrude above the existing backdrop of vegetation and built form in the immediate vicinity of the site to be dominant on the skyline or obstruct long distance views within the designated Policy AREA 10 strategic gap.
- 7.5. There would be no reduction in the width of the physical gap at this location as a result of the proposed development as the proposals do not extend development eastwards beyond the established building line of Climping Street. The proposals would also not extend development into the gap to the west, north or south. With the surrounding arrangement of site boundary vegetation and adjoining built form being unaffected, and maintained as existing screens in the landscape, there would be no perception of coalescence from surrounding public vantage points within the Strategic Gap in this locality as a result of the proposed development.
- 7.6. As established through the accompanying Design and Access Statement, the development will deliver a high quality and specialist soft landscape design layout focussed on dementia care objectives, to address the use of appropriate scaling, massing, siting and appearance in the landscape to respect the site's Green Infrastructure and settled context. Landscape enhancements within the eastern and southern boundaries have been designed to provide amenity benefits for the users of local footpaths to the east of the site by retaining a degree of low level screening and a robust landscape framework across the periphery of the site in accordance with local design, Green Infrastructure and landscape character policy objectives (Policies GEN1, GEN7, GEN16, GEN27).



Landscape Character Context

- 7.7. The site represents a single field parcel and portions of subdivided pasture, outbuildings and open storage to the rear of the Baird's Farm Shop development. The site is contiguous with existing built form, and the character of the site is markedly influenced by the proximity to adjacent development and hard standing at the Baird's Farm Shop to the north, adjacent residential and commercial development to the south at Hobb's Farm where derelict out buildings and naturalised vegetation are present alongside gardens and dwellings in a largely settled context.
- 7.8. The characteristic landscape features of hedgerows and tree belts which provide enclosure at the site boundaries, identified within the Climping Lower Coastal Plain LCA are to be maintained, strengthened and enhanced as part of the on-site development proposals. The landscape effects are limited to the extent of the site area and do not extend to the wider landscape context. The development proposals will deliver new landscape elements consistent with local characteristics whilst introducing no incongruent features to this settled landscape. By integrating the care home development into the landscape of adjoining built form and tree cover through the retention and enhancement of the site's Green Infrastructure and implementation of sensitive development scaling, a scheme can be delivered which is assimilated into the existing landscape rather than imposing itself upon it.

Visual Context

- 7.9. An initial GIS Zone of Theoretical Visibility has been verified in the field and the likely receptors identified. The visual envelope to the west is contained by the established landscape framework of hedgerow tree belts and intervening mature tree cover, providing dense screening. Adjoining residential and commercial land uses and associated built form to the north and south of the site further obscured longer distance visibility.
- 7.10. Views into the site from the adjoining public rights of way network to the east of the site are curtailed in part by site boundary hedgerow vegetation which is to be retained and enhanced as part of the proposed development. The presence of existing built form at the Baird's Farm Shop, The Cottage and Hobb's Farm is an established component of the visual experience for public receptors observing the site.
- 7.11. Longer distance views of the site from the east are restricted by the layering of intervening vegetation and topography, ensuring that the area from which visual change will be experienced is localised and limited in extent.

Assessment Findings

- 7.12. Mitigation has been incorporated into the design in the form of new landscaping and the considered massing and ridgeline elevation of the new care centre unit. The development will remain contained within the vegetated framework of site boundary hedgerows, with the mature tree line backdrop remaining the principle skyline feature within site facing views. The development will therefore be inconspicuous to receptors to the west of the site.
- 7.13. Where views of the site are afforded the scheme proposals will inevitably result in the addition of built form for close proximity receptors, however; the development will seek to respond to local landscape circumstance and related policy/SPD objectives by virtue of its design, use of materials, the placement of new built form in an area of settled land uses and urban influence and the retention and enhancement of landscape features across the site.



- 7.14. The principal residual visual effects relate to the higher sensitivity residential and public receptors in closest proximity overlooking the site boundaries from adjoining dwellings and the adjacent public footpath network to the east of the site. **Minor Adverse** local / limited scale effects are envisaged in such instances given the proximity and sensitivity of receptors and the magnitude of change identified, but the scheme will be perceived as a background component from the surrounding public rights of way network and development will not protrude above existing background vegetation nor be dominant on the skyline as illustrated by the accompanying verified photomontages contained to the rear of this report. The arrangement of on-site garden spaces, site boundary tree cover and internal planting has also been designed to offer a development offset from the adjoining residential receptors. The contribution the development will make to Green Infrastructure provision and architectural quality would also go some way to balancing out the change brought about by the introduction of the care centre development to views from the adjoining footpaths and residential curtilages.
- 7.15. Features described as being especially important to defining local landscape character in published SPD, such as the wider arable plain landscape and undeveloped coastline will remain unaffected by the proposals.
- 7.16. Largely **Negligible** and **Neutral** effects are judged to be experienced by many of the other identified receptors (including recreational routes at greater distances, users of local roads, surrounding commercial uses and the wider farmland) and are not significant.



Appendix 1: Tyler Grange LVIA Assessment Criteria (Sensitivity of Receptors: Landscape & Visual / Magnitude of Change: Landscape & Views)



Proposed Dementia Care Centre at Land to the Rear of Baird's Farm Shop, Crookthorn Lane, Climping
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Appendix 1: Tyler Grange LVIA Assessment Criteria (Sensitivity of Receptors: Landscape & Visual / Magnitude of Change: Landscape & Views)

Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity	Designated Landscapes (Value)	Key Characteristics and Features	Landscape Condition	Landscape Susceptibility
	Landscapes recognised and valued for their quality and / or cultural associations	As recognised in published Landscape Character Assessments	Degree to which the landscape is intact and legible	The ability of a defined landscape to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences
High	National / Regional Importance (Landscape Designations - AONB, National Park, Registered Parks and Gardens)	Features which are dominant within the landscape and are fundamental to defining the distinct landscape character of an area. Important characteristics and features recognised as forming intrinsic part of nationally and regionally designated landscapes. Distinctive individual or rare features.	Distinct landscape structure with strong pattern and intact features. Few detractors or uncharacteristic features or elements present.	The landscape is such that changes in terms of the development proposed would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale and mass.
Medium	Local Importance (Other Designations - Special Landscape Areas / Protected Features)	Locally important and notable features that contribute to the overall character of an area. Features and elements protected by local policy.	Landscape exhibits recognisable structure and characteristic patterns. Some detracting features present.	The proposed development has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.
Low	No Designation	Features or elements that are uncharacteristic and detract from the landscape character of an area.	Degraded landscape structure with fragmented pattern and poor legibility of character. Detracting features notable within the landscape. Opportunities for the restoration of landscape through mitigation measures associated with proposals.	The development proposed is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including use, scale and mass.



Table 2: Visual Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity	Occupation and Activity of Users	Visual Susceptibility
		The ability of the visual receptor to view the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences
High	• Observers whose attention or interest may be focussed on the landscape and recognised views in particular. • Recognised / Important Viewpoints, including those identified within and protected by policy. These viewpoints may be tourist destinations and marked on maps. • Designed views, including from within historic landscapes. • Residential Properties - Views from rooms occupied during daylight / waking hours (predominantly ground floor rooms). • Users of Rights of Way and Recreational Trails. • Users of land with public access (i.e. Open Access Land and National Trust Land).	The visual composition following the development as proposed will include discordant and incongruent elements.
Medium	• Views of the landscape are part of, but not the sole purpose of the receptors' activities. • Residential Properties - Views from rooms unoccupied during daylight / waking hours (1st floor rooms)⁵. • Those playing or participating at outdoor sports or undertaking formal outdoor recreation. • Users of local roads where there are clear / open views across the landscape and low levels of traffic.	The visual composition with the development as proposed will be consistent with the baseline situation, although some aspects may be at odds with the visual composition.
Low	• Attention is focussed upon the activity of the receptor and not upon the wider views. • Users of main roads travelling at speed, or local roads where the focus is upon the road ahead owing to traffic conditions and the context / composition of views. • Places of Work.	The visual composition following the development as proposed will be in harmony with the existing composition.

⁵ This is based on the premise that habitable rooms are on the ground floor with bedrooms occupying the upper floors.

Table 3: Magnitude of Change Criteria - Landscape

Magnitude	Change experienced
High	• Development would result in the irrevocable loss of key landscape elements and features, resulting in a permanent change to the landscape character and context of the area. • Introduction of uncharacteristic, dominant elements within the landscape. • Proposals erode the context of existing features and their perception within the landscape. Result of change may undermine any designation. • Mitigation measures do not reserve loss although will deliver some localised benefits. • Proposals strengthen existing landscape structure through the introduction of lost or degraded features and reinstatement of fragmented landscape patterns. • Development fits within existing landscape character and enhances and / or reinstates key landscape features. • Delivers policy objectives for landscape conservation or enhancement.
Moderate	• Development would result in the localised medium to long-term loss of some key characteristic landscape features. • Introduction of development / uncharacteristic elements within the landscape alongside characteristic features. • Proposals introduce characteristic development and key landscape features whilst respecting the scale and pattern of the landscape.
Low	• Development would result in the temporary loss of a low number of localised key features. Mitigation is possible and can maintain or restore losses. • The proposals introduce temporary uncharacteristic features into the landscape. • The proposals retain existing key features and respect the pattern of the landscape. • Proposals allow for local enhancements through the removal of detracting features.
Negligible	• The development would introduce barely discernible elements or physical change to the landscape. Key characteristics of the landscape and the integrity of the landscape remain unaffected.

Table 4: Magnitude of Change Criteria - Views

Magnitude	Change experienced
High	- Proposals introduce dominant, discordant elements altering the composition and balance of the view. - Total and complete change in the composition of the view with the introduction of features and elements not present in the locality. - Development interrupts or detracts from the focus of a recognised important view or vista. - Proposals introduce features not present in skyline views of the area. - Proposal removing existing visual detractors and introduce development that respects the scale, form and layout of existing visual components. - Development introducing positive elements that enhance legibility and composition of degraded views. - Proposals reinstate a formerly lost valued view. - Development introduces a valued landmark or feature within views from a recognised vantage point
Moderate	- Development is clearly visible, but not prominent in views. - Proposals may introduce some uncharacteristic elements that are incongruous in limited localised views. - Development may form skyline features amongst existing development and / or vegetation where such skyline views are not typical. - Proposals complement the composition of the view and the scale and form of development within it.
Low	- Development does not introduce uncharacteristic or incongruent features into the view. - Proposals do not alter the overall composition of the view or the dominance or balance of elements within it. - Development does not protrude above existing elements to be dominant on the skyline. - Views of the proposals are filtered or seen in partial, glimpsed views between existing development and vegetation. - Views of development brief and fleeting as seen from moving vehicles.
Negligible	The development would be barely discernible in views. Proposals perceived as a background component in views or are subservient to other elements within it.

Table 5: Significance of Effect

Significance	Justification
High	Total permanent loss or major alteration to key elements and features of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements totally uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. Development would be visually intrusive and would disrupt fine and valued views both into and across the area (adverse). Fitting well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, and enhancing the existing landscape character. The development would create a highly improved change in views (beneficial).
Moderate	Effects that are at variance with some of the characteristics of the landscape, adversely affecting the character. Development would be visible, but not wholly incongruous (adverse), or fitting well with the landscape characteristics but changing their emphasis for improvement. The development would enhance the visual setting and complement the existing composition of the view (beneficial).
Minor	Not quite fitting the characteristics of the landscape (but not considered wholly uncharacteristic), will have local / limited scale adverse impact, and development would introduce some incongruous elements to views (adverse), or locally improving or adding to the quality of the landscape and complementing the composition and balance of elements within existing views (beneficial).
Negligible	Complementing the landscape characteristics and maintaining the existing landscape character and quality. The development would be barely discernible in views, would be perceived as a background component, or would be subservient to other elements within views.
Neutral	No perceptible changes. Instances where impacts are neither harmful nor beneficial.

Appendix 2: Photomontages Methodology



Proposed Dementia Care Centre at Land to the Rear of Baird's Farm Shop, Crookthorn Lane, Climping
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Appendix 2: Photomontages Methodology

Overview

- A2.1. The process of generating verified views (also referred to as accurate visual representations (AVR)) for the proposed Dementia Care Centre at Land to the Rear of Baird's Farm Shop, Crookthorn Lane, Climping was carried out by Troopers Hill in conjunction with Tyler Grange LLP.
- A2.2. Troopers Hill use a methodology that is compliant with relevant sections of: The Landscape Institute/IEEMA Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition 2013); The Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11 Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment and The Revised SPG London View Management Framework (March 2012). High quality/resolution photographs were taken from the agreed locations by Troopers Hill. An adequate number of visible features were subsequently surveyed, including the precise location and bearing of the camera. A development model was generated to correct geographical co-ordinates. With a known camera position and orientation, photographic and surveyed existing visible features, the development model was accurately aligned to the photograph.

Site visit

- A2.3. Viewpoint photography was obtained in April 2018. The view positions were documented by Tyler Grange LLP with the location information being passed on to the surveyors who later visited the site to record the precise co-ordinates and high-resolution photography.

Photography

- A2.4. For each photoviewpoint location, a high resolution photograph was taken with a 35mm (full frame) digital SLR camera. The camera was levelled horizontally and laterally by means of a tripod mounted levelling base and two camera mounted spirit levels. A tilt/shift or perspective control lens was used to allow vertical rise while avoiding convergence of vertical elements.

Lens Selection Criteria

- A2.5. In order to capture the full extent of the proposed development and an appropriate amount of contextual a 24mm (73° horizontal field of view) lens was used.
- Equipment Used for Photography
 - Canon EOS 5DSR digital SLR camera (35mm)
 - Canon TS-e 24mm L(mkii)
 - Remote (cabled) shutter release
 - Tripod indexed pan head
 - Levelling base with bubble level
 - Camera (hot shoe) mounted two axis spirit level
 - Plumb bob
 - Street marking paint
 - Hilti nails



Post Production

- A2.6. Each base photograph has had a level of basic colour correction applied to it so that it best represents the impression of the scene as the photographer experienced it in person.
- A2.7. This processing is predominately done to the 16bit RAW file using Adobe Camera Raw and Photoshop. It includes, but is not limited to, adjustments in; colour temperature and tint; levels such as exposure and contrast; shadow and highlight recovery; sky recovery through the use of gradient corrections; and other post processing effects such as sharpening and noise reduction.

Survey

- A2.8. The surveyor was instructed (by means of a marked-up photograph and OS map) to record a range of contextual reference points.
- A2.9. Survey Equipment Required:
- Leica GPS (either 1200 series or 500 series) with smartnet capability.
 - Leica Total station (usually TCRP1201)

Field Survey Methodology

- A2.10. Camera Locations:
- Where possible the camera position and another survey station (to use as an RO) are fixed using the GPS. If local conditions do not allow this other survey stations are fixed and the control traversed to where required and the Camera position fixed by the total station. Multiple fixes are taken with the GPS to ensure accuracy.
 - Reference points - From either the camera position, or somewhere more suitable, points on the photograph are co-ordinated using the reflectorless capability of the total station. Repeat measurements are taken on the long range shots to ensure accuracy and avoid interference from intermediate targets.

Data Processing & Delivery

- A2.11. GPS data was processed through Leica Geo-Office to acquire the OSGB36 co-ordinate system information and then processed to produce co-ordinate information for the surveyed points in the form of a delimited text file.

The Proposed Development

- A2.12. Troopers Hill imported a 3D model of the proposed development supplied by the project architect. The model was checked for accuracy against plans and elevations, remodelled as necessary and subsequently aligned to the OSGB36 co-ordinate system.
- A2.13. Working from supplied landscape proposals drawings and planting schedules, realistic vegetation models were used to simulate the possible screening effect of planting.



The Verification Process

- A2.14. The collected survey reference point data and camera location data was imported into the 3D model environment from the delimited text file (relative to the OSGB36 co-ordinate system) by means of a proprietary script.
- A2.15. At each photoviewpoint location a virtual camera was set up in the 3D software using the coordinates provided by the surveyor. The 3D coordinates of the survey reference points were used to create an accurate 'point cloud' model of the contextual surveyed parts of the scene. The scene was verified by matching the contextual surveyed points to the photograph. To do this, for each photoviewpoint, two renders* were made from the 3D model from the same virtual camera: one render showed only the development (in the chosen method of presentation); the other showed only the survey reference point data.
- A2.16. Using a photo editing package [Adobe Photoshop CC] the photography, survey reference point render and proposed development render were aligned.
- A2.17. With the rendered proposals aligned to the photography, masks were applied to the image to hide features of the proposed development that would be occluded by existing features. This process was performed on all views.

** Rendering is the process of generating an image from a model (or models in what collectively could be called the 3D environment), by means of computer programs - specifically, in this case Chaos Group V-Ray 3.4 for Autodesk 3Ds Max 2015.*

