

SUE SUTHERLAND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

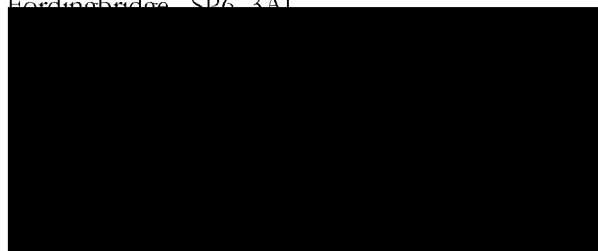
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL
OF
PROPOSED CREMATORIUM, CLIMPING, WEST SUSSEX

FOR

Southern CO OP

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report is a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) of the proposal to build a new crematorium near to the village of Climping in West Sussex.

1.2 It has been prepared by Sue Sutherland Landscape Architects (SSLA) who are Chartered Members of the Landscape Institute and a Registered Practice. It considers the potential effects of the proposed dwellings on:-

- Landscape character
- Visual amenity

1.3 The main objectives of the LVIA are:-

- To identify, evaluate and describe the current Landscape Character of the site and its surroundings and any existing important elements.
- To look at latest planning Policy Guidance on Landscape issues
- To determine the sensitivity of the landscape to the type of development proposed
- To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to see the development) and evaluate their sensitivity to the changes proposed
- To identify and describe the effects of the development on either landscape character or views of it and to evaluate the significance of any such effects and to relate these findings to policy objectives
- To suggest mitigation proposals and then to re-assess any residual impact on either landscape character or visual amenity and to evaluate the significance of any such residual effects

- 1.4 The methodology used is in line with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third edition) prepared by the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Landscape Institute.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 2.1 The site consists of a rectangular piece of land 18 metres wide by 30metres deep situated to the south of the A259 almost half way between Middleton-on-Sea and Littlehampton, in an area of open countryside. It forms part of the coastal plain, with the coast line running almost parallel to the A259, 125metres to the south.
- 2.2 Topographically the site is virtually flat, low lying land varying from 4 metres AOD in the north to 3 metres AOD by Grevatt's bridge in the south.
- 2.3 The site currently forms part of a larger field which is bounded to the east by a field drain which flows south into the Ryebank Rife, a tributary of the River Arun. (See Figure 6 Pan 6) There is no vegetation along this ditch and visually the field flows uninterrupted to Hobbs New Barn and the new, large, intrusive, industrial buildings recently constructed to the west of Hobbs New Barn.
- 2.4 A public footpath runs along the western boundary of the site, linking Middleton on Sea and Yapton, part of a comprehensive network of footpaths in the area. It takes the form of a wide grassy swathe of land with hedges on both sides, more mature to the east but well established if not young to the west.(Fig4 Pan 4) Species include oak, ash, willow, alder, beech, hawthorn and dog rose. (Photo 3 Fig 8) This footpath continue southwards beyond the site, traversing the Ryebank Rife by a narrow metal bridge, and following the western edge of a block of woodland.(Photo 6 Fig 8)
- 2.4 The land is currently an arable field with no trees or shrubs within it . However, a strong belt of trees borders the site to the north separating it from the A259. (Pan 2 Fig 3) The southern site boundary follows the Ryebank Rife, a deep ditch which is hedged with mature trees along its course, mostly lying to the south of the ditch

with occasional trees on the northern bank.(Fig 6 Pan's 7 and 8 There are banks lining both sides of the ditch to contain overflow water at times of flood.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE SURROUNDING AREA

- 3.1 The site lies on the edge of the parish of Climping adjoining the parish of Middleton-on-Sea. It is a rural agricultural area of large angular fields now largely laid to arable farming but historically open common land which has been farmed land since the 1086. (Fig 1 Site context)
- 3.2 The original manor house to the area is Atherington Manor now known as Bailiffscourt Hotel. This manor is of great antiquity but the buildings of Bailiffscourt Hotel although appearing to be medieval are of a much more recent construction.(Photo's 1 and 2 Fig 7) The estate was purchased in 1927 by Lord Moyne who demolished the original buildings with the exception of the chapel and set about an imaginative recreation of the medieval character of the site. The new layout of buildings and moat took their inspiration from the Nordon's map of 1606.
- 3.3 Between 1927 and 1932 Lord and Lady Moyne created a new park at Bailiffscourt (Atherington Manor) extending northwards as far as the Ryebank Rife and along the coast in both directions, westwards almost to the parish boundary. They planted circa 1500 grown trees, mostly ash and oak, to form belts of woodland both within the park and elsewhere on the estate. A new drive to the house was laid out from the north west crossing the moat by the re-erected gatehouse. A five mile route around the estate was known as Lady Moyne's walk.
- 3.4 Remnants of these tree belts can be seen still existing and forming the only woodland within what is otherwise an open flat area of farm land (see Aerial Photo's Fig 2).
- 3.5 In 1925 the owner of Tortington Park school, to the north of Ford, built Poole Place, another historic property situated 800 metres to the west of Bailiffscourt and to the south of the site, overlooking the coast, apparently in the expectation

of development similar to its neighbour at Middleton-on -sea. However, as a result of Lord Moyne's purchase of Baiffscourt estate in 1927 the southern part of the parish was preserved from building, resulting in the largest open area of coast between Bognor Regis and Brighton known as the Climping Gap.

- 3.6 Overall the countryside to the south of the A259 consists of fields divided by areas of woodland and shelterbelts. There are no views from the site of the coast owing to the abundant vegetation between nor is there a view to the South Downs owing to the tree belt along the A259. Looking north from the A259 the landscape is more open and there are views to the South Downs and of numerous large agricultural / industrial buildings situated on the old Ford Aerodrome 800 metres to the north of the site.
- 3.7 The old part of the village of Climping lies due east along Climping Street a narrow lane which runs perpendicular to the A259 down to the sea. There are many listed buildings among the properties along this road which are constructed of a particularly attractive layering of flints and cement. This lane is also the access to Bailiffscourt Manor, now a hotel and spa but formerly Atherington Manor. There are no views from Old Climping or Bailiffs Court Hotel to the site owing to the numerous tree belts planted in the 1920's by Lord Moyne.
- 3.8 The rapidly expanding town of Middleton on Sea lies only 800 metres to the south of the site but there are no views of the residential areas owing to the wooded nature of the landscape. (Fig 4 Pan 4 and Fig 5 Pan 5)
- 3.9 The most local Landscape Character Assessment was carried out in 2006 by Hankinson Duckett Associates "the Arun Landscape Study." (TALS) This study places the site within **Area 31 The Climping Lower Coastal Plain**. This study was essentially produced to consider the landscape and visual amenity aspects of development choices in the Arun District over the period 2006-2026.
- 3.10 This study defines each of the character areas in terms of its sensitivity to development and its landscape value. Area 31 is described as being largely rural without settlement, substantially low lying and partly within the flood plain. *"It separates Bognor from Littlehampton and is considered to have a high level of*

inherent landscape qualities". The final assessment considers this character area to be of substantial sensitivity to development.

3.11 In terms of its landscape value measured by several factors, listed below the Study concludes that the 'Climping Lower Coastal Plain' has substantial landscape value "*Moderate scenic beauty with undeveloped coastline*".

- Landscape designation or other designations
- Contribution to setting of 'outstanding assets' eg National Park
- Special cultural/historic associations
- Perceptual aspects

3.12 Prior to TALS West Sussex County Council carried out a Landscape Character Assessment in 2003, which located the site within a larger coastal plan area **SC9 Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain**. (WSLCA) Although of earlier origin, the format is more typical of a Character Assessment, describing Key Characteristics; Key Issues Landscape and Visual Sensitivities and Land Management Guidelines.

3.13 In general terms, the WSLCA characterises the area as comprising a mainly flat, open landscape crossed by meandering rife. Dominated by highly productive arable fields and modern farm buildings, it has fragmented hedgerow and hedgerow tree pattern.

3.14 Under **Key Issues for Change** it lists 11 points of which the following are relevant to this site

- *Urban development pressure, especially in the gaps between settlements*
- *Loss of mature trees in the 1970's and 80's due to Dutch elm disease*
- *Loss of tree and hedgerow cover from agricultural intensification since World War II*
- *Farm diversification and garden centres leading to introduction of signs and fencing*

3.15 **Key sensitivities** again relate to loss of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and the development on settlement edges of Bognor and suburban settlement of Barnham Yapton and Westergate.

3.16 The **Landscape Management Guidelines** give several useful areas where the key issue can be dealt with to provide a more robust and distinctive landscape.

- 1. Create a new large scale tree and hedgerow framework which complements the open intensively farmed landscape whilst maintaining significant views to Chichester Cathedral and the South Downs.*
- 2. Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts*
- 3. Link up existing remnant hedgerows and tree lines to re-establish coherent field boundaries and wildlife corridors.*
- 4. Encourage and promote land management schemes to increase species rich grassland areas*
- 5. Promote management and establishment of grassland regimes of grazing, hay cutting and silage*
- 6. Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements*
- 7. Encourage bold tree planting associated with large agricultural buildings, glasshouses and industrial buildings to attempt to assimilate them into the landscape more satisfactorily.*
- 8. Enhance the visual prominence of rife thrush the establishment of waterside vegetation features*
- 9. Maintain , restore and enhance floodplain woodland and associated species including native black poplar where appropriate*

3.17 The WSLAC was updated in 2013 by the **West Sussex Landscape Character Guidelines** which looks at **Local Distinctiveness**. Under the category, Key Landscape Features to Protect conserve and enhance are the following relevant items:-

- *The tranquil and open character of the landscape*

- *Undeveloped sections of coastline to maintain gaps and links to the sea*
- *The hedgerow framework, restoring where necessary and retaining oak standards and other hedgerow trees*
- *Re-establish large trees to replace the elm trees lost to Dutch Elm disease and storms*

3.18 The most recent landscape Character assessment was carried out on behalf of Clymping Parish council in January 2015 in order to inform the Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted in October 2015. They divided the parish in to 5 character areas of which the first and last are relevant to this proposal:-

- The Open Countryside
- The Beach and Clymping coastline
- Traditonal Clymping
- Horsemere Green and recent associated housing developments
- Along the A259

3.19 The value to Clymping of the flat open arable farmland and countryside that separates it from neighbouring parishes is paramount. *“This separation is important to the village’s distinctive identity”* The paragraph titled Design Guidance for the Open Countryside read s:

“ there are many open views toward Arundel and the South Downs, of the River Arun valley and to the coast and sand dunes (Figure 6), which are important to retain”

Of the views shown on Figure 6 the only one approximately affecting this site is view 12 from Northwood farm looking south

3.20 The design guidance continues *“ much of it forms the strategic gap between Littlehampton and Middleton on Sea....It is an important area for wildlife particularly along field boundaries. The area is naturally prone to flooding and due consideration for any potential development would include assessments of any impacts on existing flood defences and the limited capacity of the areas drainage systems”*

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The proposal is to build a new crematorium on a greenfield site between Middleton on Sea and Littlehampton. The site will be accessed from a new access off the A259 close to the existing farmer's access in the east of the site. A new right turning lane for traffic approaching the site from the east will be provided to prevent hold ups on the A259. This will require using part of the existing wide verge.
- 4.2 The new crematorium will be a statement building in a contemporary style, with tiered, curving, vegetated roofs. The entrance is on the end of the building facing the A259. The vehicular circulation has been designed with a separate funeral vehicle route, within which 95 parking spaces have been provided of which 6 are for disabled persons. A further 55 spaces are proposed in a potential overflow car park, which would be surfaced in a geotextile and grass seeded to minimise the visual impact of hard surfaces
- 4.3 The site lies partially within the Environment Agency flood zones 2 and 3 requiring compensatory water storage areas to be provided within the layout of the site. It is intended that this storage will be provided in the form of new ditches and swales.
- 4.4 The scheme includes generous landscape proposals which have been designed to mitigate identified visual and landscape effects. These proposals have taken on board the landscape management guidelines of the West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment and the design guidance in the Clymping Character Assessment which was produced to inform the Neighbourhood Plan. Rather than screening the development the landscape proposals seek to integrate the proposals into the wider landscape and to provide ecological linkages in accordance with the objectives of the local Plan to enhance the biodiversity and landscape of the Plan area.
- 4.5 A new 7 metre wide tree belt is proposed along the eastern site boundary to replicate the tree belts in the landscape further to the south that were planted in

1927. This tree belt will help to screen the recent large agricultural buildings that have been constructed along the western boundary of Hobbs Barn Farm. Screen planting is also proposed along the eastern edge of the public footpath to bolster the existing planting along this boundary; within the northern boundary of the site to the A257 and along the southern boundary to the Ryebank Rife. Native tree and shrub planting are proposed along these boundaries which will function as a continuation of the existing tree belt to the south, providing a new ecological corridor linking the roadside trees along the A259 to the existing woodland to the south. This planting will be deer fenced to protect it from grazing and it is proposed to attach windbreak material and rabbit proof mesh to the deer fence to help the plants to establish

4.6 The remainder of the site will be sensitively landscaped in grass with mown paths cut through it, with more formal gardens along the site's eastern boundary.

4.7 The car parking will be softened by planting of curving lines of ornamental trees.

5.0 LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 **Arun District Council** Local plan 2011-2031 (ALP) was adopted in July 2018. Section 7 of the ALP deals with Settlement Structure and Green Infrastructure with the strategic objective being to:-

“Protect and enhance Arun’s outstanding landscape, countryside, coastline, historic built and archaeological environment as well as the setting of the South Downs National Park, **thereby reinforcing local character and identity**”

5.2 **Policy C SP1 Countryside** deals with land outside of Built Up areas Boundaries and ensures that it “*will be recognised for its intrinsic beauty*” This policy sets out the types of development which will be permitted in the countryside. Crematoriums are a type of development not mentioned specifically in any way in the Local Plan. However much they are needed, they are in a way viewed as antisocial and not welcomed near to residential areas. They are as a result often located in the countryside.

- 5.3 **Policy GI SP1 Green Infrastructure and Development** encourages all major developments to be designed to protect and enhance Green Infrastructure (GI) assets and the connections between them and specifically mentions that " *The Green Infrastructure Network must be protected from light pollution*" The GI study identified a number of opportunities to strengthen the GI network and specifically noted the opportunity to strengthen the network within Gaps " *Gaps between settlements which perform a sense of place function provide the last sections of undeveloped coast in the district and should be safeguarded to resist coastal squeeze and coalescence*" and the opportunity to " *Improve biodiversity and landscape quality of the strategic gaps along the coast and provide connectivity between gaps to open countryside in the District*"

5.4 **Policy SD SP3 Gaps between Settlements**

The generally open and undeveloped nature of the following gaps as identified on the Policies Maps will be protected to prevent coalescence and retain their separate identity:

Littlehampton to Middleton-on-Sea

Development will only be permitted in Gaps if:

- It would not undermine the physical or visual separation of settlements.
- It would not compromise the integrity of the gap either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development
- It cannot be located elsewhere
- It maintains the character of the undeveloped coast
- Or if a subsequent DPD or Neighbourhood plan deems it appropriate through an allocation

- 5.5 Section 7.5 of the ALP deals with landscape, noting that landscape character is an important element in contributing to the sense of Place and the high quality of life in the area. " *Certain parts of Arun District are of particular special landscape*

character due to their lack of development, retaining an unspoilt open character with scenic value.... The coastal plain exhibits a high level of landscape and visual sensitivity”

5.6 Policy LAN DM1 Protection of Landscape Character

“Development throughout the Plan area should respect the particular characteristics and natural features of the relevant landscape character areas and seek wherever possible to reinforce or repair the character of those areas”

5.7 POLICY D SP1 Design

“All development proposals should seek to make efficient use of land, but reflect the characteristics of the site and local area in their layout, landscaping, density, mix, scale, massing, character, materials, finish and architectural details. Development proposals should have been derived from a thorough site analysis and context appraisal...”

5.8 This Policy is further refined in terms of Aspects of Form and Design in **Policy D DM1 Aspects of Form and Design** which specifically addresses, Character; Appearance and attractiveness; Impact; Innovation; Adaptability; crime Prevention; Trees and Woodland; Solar gain; Public Realm; Layout; public Art ; Density and Scale;

5.9 Clymping Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in October 2015 (CNP). Their Vision on page 19 recognises that it is a very special coastal and rural community with a strong desire to maintain a sense of place, whilst making community improvements through development and infrastructure improvements. There are a number of Policies in the NP which need to be taken into account with respect to this proposed crematorium.

5.10 Policy CPN Protection of Open Views

“All development will be considered with regard to the need to protect the open landscape character of the countryside and beach. The Clymping character assessment will be used as a reference to assess the impact of proposals”

5.11 **Policy CPN 8 Protection of Trees and Hedgerows**

Development requiring Planning Permission that damages or results in the loss of trees or hedgerows of arboricultural or amenity value will not be permitted unless the benefits of the proposed development outweigh the amenity value of the protected trees.

6.0 **METHODOLOGY**

6.1 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify the effects of a specific development on “landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity, paragraph 1.1.

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA), These two elements, although inter-related, should be assessed separately.

6.2 As GLVIA (paragraph 2.23) states; professional judgement is an important part of the LVIA process: whilst there is scope for objective measurement of landscape and visual changes, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements. It is critical that these judgements are based upon a clear and transparent method so that the reasoning can be followed and examined by others.

6.3 This assessment looks in depth at the Landscape and Visual Effects of the developments and I set out below the methodology I have used.

6.4 ***Identification of landscape receptors***

In accordance with GLVIA the first stage in assessing landscape effects is to determine the landscape receptors (paragraph 5.34)

“The first step is to identify the components of the landscape, likely to be affected by the scheme, often referred to as landscape receptors, such as overall character and key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects.”

6.5 GLVIA recommends assessing effects at all different stages of a development, including construction, built scheme and after mitigation,

which in the case of planting is usually taken immediately after planting i.e. Year 1 and later once the planting has established and the desired effect has been reached, which can range from 5 to 15 years.

6.6 **Assessing Sensitivity**

An essential part of the baseline information for each site is to assess the **susceptibility** of each receptor to the development proposed and the landscape **value** of each receptor. This information then gives the **sensitivity** of each receptor to the specific development. **Table 1** sets out the identified landscape receptors of the Appeal Site together with my assessment of their value and sensitivity.

6.7 **Assessing Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to Change**

As set out in GLVIA this means the ability of the landscape receptor to “accommodate the proposed development without undue adverse consequences for the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies”. Judgement of susceptibility is particular to the specific characteristics of the proposed development and the ability of a particular landscape or feature to accommodate the type of change proposed. Aspects of the character of the landscape that may be affected by a particular type of development include landform, skylines, land cover, enclosure human influences including settlement pattern; and aesthetic and perceptual aspects such as the scale of the landscape, its form, line, texture, pattern and grain, complexity, and its sense of movement, remoteness, wildness or tranquillity. For example, an urban landscape which contains a number of industrial buildings will have a low susceptibility to buildings of a similar scale and character. Conversely, a rural landscape containing only remote farmsteads is likely to have a high susceptibility to large scale built development.

Table A1
Landscape Receptor Susceptibility to Change

	Susceptibility Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is highly susceptible to the proposed development because the key characteristics of the landscape have no or very limited ability to accommodate it without undue adverse effects taking account of the existing character and quality of the

	landscape.
Medium	The landscape receptor is moderately susceptible to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape have some ability to accommodate it without undue adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Low	The landscape receptor has low susceptibility to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape are generally able to accommodate it without undue adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape

6.8 **Assessing Landscape Value**

Although the starting point for assessing value is whether or not the landscape is designated, GLVIA makes clear in para 5.19 page 80

“...A review of existing designations is usually the starting point in understanding Landscape value but the value attached to undesignated landscapes also need to be carefully considered.”

GLVIA helpfully provides a table showing the range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscape at Box 5.1 page 84

Range of Factors that can help in the Identification of valued landscapes (GLVIA Box 5.1)

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

A term used to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly visual)

Rarity

Presence of rare features or elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type

Representativeness

Whether the landscape contains a particular character and /or features or elements, which are considered to be particularly important examples.

Conservation Interests

Presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add value to the landscape as well as having a 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, notably wildness or tranquillity

Associations

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

6.9 Assessing Magnitude of Landscape Change

The overall effect on a landscape receptor is a judgement of **Sensitivity x Magnitude**, and magnitude of effect has three component parts: - Scale (degree of alteration of component parts), Geographical extent and Duration and Reversibility of effects. These are also shown for each site on Tables A8 and A11 Appendix 2

6.10 Size and Scale of Change

The size and/or scale of change in the landscape takes into consideration the following factors:

- *the extent/proportion of landscape elements lost or added, and/or*
- *the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and*
- *whether this is likely to change the key characteristics of the landscape.*

6.11 The criteria, used to assess the size and scale of landscape change are based upon the amount of change that will occur as a result of the proposals, as described in the table below.

Table A2

Magnitude of Landscape Change: Size/Scale of Change

Category Description

Major level of landscape change	The proposals will result in a large amount of change in landscape character and especially in the key characteristics. There will be major loss of or change to existing elements or
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	aesthetic aspects of the landscape and or the introduction of major new and uncharacteristic elements or major change to aesthetic attributes
Moderate level of landscape change	The proposals will result in a moderate level of change in landscape character. There will be moderate loss of or change to existing elements or aesthetic aspects of the landscape and/or the introduction of moderate new and uncharacteristic elements or moderate change to aesthetic attributes
Minor level of landscape change	The proposals will result in only a minor level of change in landscape character. There will be minor loss of or change to existing elements or aesthetic aspects of the landscape and/or the introduction of minor new and uncharacteristic elements or minor change to aesthetic attributes
No or negligible landscape change	The proposals will result in no, or a barely discernible level of change in landscape character with very little loss of or change to existing elements or aesthetic aspects of the landscape and/or negligible effects from the introduction of minor new and uncharacteristic elements

6.12 Geographical Extent

The geographical extent of landscape change is assessed by determining the area over which the changes will influence the landscape. For example this could be at the site level, in the immediate setting of the site, or over some or all of the landscape character types or areas affected.

Table: A3
Magnitude of Landscape Change: Geographical Extent

Category	Description
Large extent of landscape change	The changes will extend over a large area and will influence landscape character at some distance from the site of the proposal and covering several landscape character types or areas
Medium extent of landscape change	The changes will extend over a moderate area and will influence landscape character at a medium distance from the site of the proposal, including the immediate setting of the site and the landscape character area within which it lies
Small extent of landscape change	The changes will extend over a small area and will influence landscape character only within the site itself or within the immediate vicinity of the site of the proposal

6.13 ***Duration and Reversibility of Changes***

The duration of the landscape change is categorised **permanent** 25 years or more; **long term** – 10-25 years and reversible; **medium** up to 10 years and reversible and **short term** 0 to 5 years and reversible.

6.14 It is the combination of these three factors which determines magnitude.

6.15 ***Significance of Effects***

The significance of effect is produced from a combination of magnitude and sensitivity of each receptor with:-

“those effects indicated as being of Moderate or major significance of effect may be regarded as likely to be equivalent to significant effects when discussed in terms of EIA regulations”

Table A4 – Typical Descriptors of the Landscape Significance of Effect Categories

Neutral	Typically, the proposed changes would (on balance) maintain the character (including value) of the landscape and would: - be in keeping with landscape character and blend in with characteristic features and elements; and - enable a sense of place to be maintained.
Minor Adverse	Typically, the landscape resource has a low sensitivity with the proposals representing a Minor adverse magnitude of change and/or the proposed changes would: - not quite fit the character (including value) of the landscape; - be at variance with characteristic features and elements; - detract from sense of place.
Moderate Adverse	Typically, the landscape resource has a Medium sensitivity with the proposals representing a Moderate adverse magnitude of change and/or the proposed changes would: - conflict with the character (including value) of the landscape; - have an adverse effect on characteristic features or elements; and - diminish a sense of place.
Major Adverse	Typically, the landscape resource has a High sensitivity with the proposals representing a Major adverse magnitude of change and/or the proposed changes would:

- be at variance with the character (including value) of the landscape;
- degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements or cause them to be lost; and
- change a sense of place.

6.16 **Visual Effects**

Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposals. They generally include users of public rights of way or other outdoor recreational facilities; travellers who may pass through the study area because they are visiting, or living or working there; residents living in the study area, either as individuals or, more often, as a community; and people at their place of work.

6.17 Viewpoints are chosen, in discussion with the competent authority and other stakeholders and interested parties, for a variety of reasons but most commonly because they represent views experienced by relevant groups of people.

6.18 *Visual Receptor Sensitivity*

Table A5

Sensitivity	Type of Receptor
High	- Residents; - People engaged in outdoor recreation where their attention is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views; - Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views of the surroundings are an important part of the experience; - Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents; and - Travellers on scenic routes where the attention of drivers and passengers is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views.
Medium	Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes, where attention is generally less likely to be focused on views and visual amenity
Low	- People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve appreciation of views; - People at their place of work, where the setting is not important to the quality of working life; and - Travellers, where the view is incidental to the journey.

6.19 ***Magnitude of Visual change***

The magnitude of visual change is defined by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and reversibility of the change.

6.20 ***Size and Scale of Change.***

The criteria used to assess the size and scales of visual change (GLVIA 6.39) are as follows:

- *the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view, changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development and distance of view;*
- *the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of factors such as form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture;*
- *the nature of the view of the proposed development, for example whether views will be full, partial or glimpses or sequential views while passing through the landscape.*

6.21 ***Geographical Extent***

The geographical extent of the visual change identified at representative viewpoint is assessed by reference to the defined study area and field work.

The following factors are considered (GLVIA 6.4):

- *the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;*
- *the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development;*
- *the extent of the area over which changes would be visible.*

6.22 **Table A6 Visual Magnitude of Change: Geographical Extent**

Category	Description
Large extent of visual change	The proposal is continuously visible across a large proportion

of the study area	
Moderate extent of visual change	The proposal is visible across a moderate proportion of the study area and/or visibility is intermittent and not continuous
Slight extent of visual change the study area	The proposal is visible from a limited number of locations in Negligible extent of visual change The proposal is either not visible in the study area or visible only from one or two specific locations

6.23 *Duration and Reversibility of Change*

The duration of the visual change at representative viewpoints is categorised as permanent; long term reversible; medium term reversible and short term reversible as for Landscape effects.

6.24 Overall Magnitude of Visual Change is determined by combining Geographic extent; size and scale and duration and reversibility.

Table A7 – Magnitude of Change: Visual Receptors

Major	Complete or very substantial change in view; change very prominent involving complete or very substantial obstruction of existing view or complete change in character and composition of baseline, i.e. pre- development view through removal of key elements or addition of uncharacteristic elements.
Moderate	Moderate change in view: may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of baseline, i.e. pre-development view, through the introduction of new elements or removal of existing elements. Change may be prominent but would not substantially alter scale and character of the surroundings and the wider setting. Composition of the views would alter. View character may be partially changed through the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.
Minor	Minor change in baseline, i.e. pre-development view; change would be distinguishable from the surroundings while composition and character would be similar to the pre-change circumstances
Negligible	Very slight change in baseline, i.e. pre-development view; change barely distinguishable from the surroundings. Composition and character of view substantially unaltered approaching a 'no change' situation
No change	No part of the proposed development or work activity associated with it is discernible

6.25 *Significance of Visual Effects*

The significance of effect is produced from a combination of magnitude and sensitivity of each receptor

**Table A8 –
Typical Descriptors of the Visual Significance of Effect Categories**

Major Beneficial:	Typically, the proposed changes would lead to a substantial improvement to a view from a highly sensitive receptor
Moderate Beneficial:	Typically, the proposed changes would lead to an obvious improvement to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity or perceptible improvement to a view from a more sensitive receptor.
Minor Beneficial:	Typically, the proposed changes would cause limited improvement to a view from a receptor of high or medium sensitivity or would cause greater improvement to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.
Neutral:	Typically, the proposed changes would be in keeping with, and would maintain, the existing view or where (on balance) the proposed changes would maintain the quality of the view (which may include adverse effects which are offset by beneficial effects for the same receptor) or due to distance from the receptor, the proposed change would be barely perceptible to the naked eye.
Minor Adverse:	Typically, the proposed changes would cause limited deterioration to a view from a receptor of high or medium sensitivity, or would cause greater deterioration to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.
Moderate Adverse:	Typically, the proposed changes would cause obvious deterioration to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, or perceptible deterioration to a view from a more sensitive receptor.
Major Adverse:	Typically, the proposed changes would lead to a substantial deterioration to a view from a highly sensitive receptor

7.0 EFFECT ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 7.1 Any assessment of effects of a development on Landscape character must first establish the area of landscape likely to be affected by the development proposed, which in the case of this site is going to be the extent of land from which the development is potentially visible (GLVIA para 5.2).
- 7.3 The site is described in section 2 of this report and its context in section 3.
- 7.4 Owing to the flat nature of the landscape and the preponderance of woodland and hedgerows through this part of the Coastal Plain, the Study Area chosen is quite small, and is shown on Figure 1. The main effects will be experienced up to 500 metres from the site with some minor effects up to 1000 metres from the site. It is felt that beyond this there will be no effects.
- 7.5 Landscape features affected by this proposal are principally the agricultural field, which is Grade 2 land. The creation of a new access off the A259 and the resultant road widening will require the loss of some of the existing roadside vegetation,(Fig 5 Pan 6) but this has been kept to a minimum and new planting to the south of the site boundary within the site will amply compensate for any minor losses.
- 7.6 In pure landscape terms the susceptibility of the landscape of the site is considered to be medium i.e. the relevant characteristics have some ability to accommodate the development proposed without undue adverse effects. This is based on the flat and wooded nature of the landscape, limiting visibility of the site and to the attractive design of the new crematorium, which should enrich the visual qualities of the area, especially in comparison to the recently built very large agricultural buildings lying to the east of the site.
- 7.7 However in planning terms the site lies within a 'gap' (Fig 1) which limits development that might lead to coalescence of settlements or to affecting the separate identity of settlements. Any development will have physical effect on the gap no matter how small or sensitive, but the design and location of the proposed crematorium will be much less intrusive than the large agricultural buildings to the east, recently constructed in the gap. There is no visual link

between the site and the settlements of Littlehampton or Middleton on Sea and the development proposed will therefore not compromise the visual separation of settlements. Likewise, there is no visual link with the coast to the south (Fig Pan 5) so maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast.

- 7.8 The extensive native tree and shrub planting, which forms part of this proposal will integrate the development into the wider landscape by replicating existing features. These new planted areas will enrich the landscape and biodiversity of the area and extend the 'green infrastructure of the area, all in line with objectives and policies in the Local Plan.
- 7.9 The landscape value of this character area was assessed, in the Arun Landscape Study 2006, as moderate with perceptual aspects also scoring moderate in terms of scenic beauty. It only recorded a final 'substantial' value owing to it abutting the undeveloped coastline, but as there is no intervisibility between this site and the coastline, the appropriate value for the site in question is moderate. If one takes into account, the impact on the character of the study area of the intrusive new industrial buildings adjacent to Hobbs New Barn the value and sensitivity is reduced to low.
- 7.10 The assessment of magnitude of change is based on three factors; the size or scale of change; the geographical extent and the reversibility of any changes. On the basis, that this proposal will cover just under half of the site with buildings and hard surfacing, which will change the key characteristics of the site, from open countryside and that these changes will be permanent, the magnitude of change is considered to be moderate. However, there is potential to reduce this effect to low by sensitive design of the site.
- 7.11 Using Table A4 of the methodology, the landscape significance of effect is Moderate Adverse reducing to Minor Adverse if one takes into account the intrusive impact on character of the 3 new very large agricultural buildings by Hobbs New Barn, which have no screening.
- 7.12 I therefore conclude that the development would only cause minor harm to the character and appearance of the area; in fact, the sensitive design of the site

together with the extensive landscaping proposed will improve the area generally.

8.0 IMPACT ON VISUAL AMENITY

8.1 The enclosed flat nature of the landscape within which the site is located, severely limits public views into the site. Although the South Downs National Park lies to the north of the site and is visible from the north side of the road, the flat nature of the landscape and the existing tree belt along the southern edge of the A259 screens any potential view of the South Downs from within the site (Pan 9 Fig 7)

1. View from Public Right of Way 165
2. View from the A259
3. View from footpath 166

8.2 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY 165

8.2.1 Public Right of way 165 lies to the west of the site and currently enjoys intermittent views out over the site filtered through the existing hedgerow along the eastern side of the footpath. This screen is thick for a short length in the north and for a longer section in the south but is largely open along the central portion of the path.(Fig 4) Some new planting has been attempted which is established now but is still quite low and deciduous in nature offering little screen value in winter.

- 8.2.2 This view currently looks across a ploughed field, at three very large agricultural buildings with no visual screen. Moreover a further large agricultural building has planning permission, so the visual impact of these 4 new large 'agricultural' buildings will soon increase, The more sensitive existing buildings of Hobbs New barn lie behind a mature tree screen (Pan 1 Fig 3) which allows glimpsed views in winter but probably totally screens the buildings in summer. This site is a proposed waste site in the West Sussex Mineral and Waste local Plan.
- 8.2.3 Users of this footpath are largely locals and as such are likely to be highly sensitive to change. The development proposed, will substantially improve the view by screening the intrusive buildings outlined above. There may be glimpsed views of the crematorium building but its sensitive, interesting design will have a positive impact on the view. The views at the northern end of the footpath of the entrance and car park will be visible and although it should be possible to screen most of the car park. Overall the magnitude of effect on these receptors is considered to be moderate once the new planting along the edge of the site starts to take effect.
- 8.2.4 In view of the high sensitivity of the receptor and the moderate magnitude of effect, the resultant significance of this impact is Moderate Adverse, reducing in time to low adverse.

8.3 VIEWS FROM THE A259

- 8.3.1 There are currently glimpsed views into the site from the A259, through gaps in the roadside tree belt immediately adjacent to the site and there are longer distance views from the western approach of the A259, owing to the sporadic nature of vegetation along this section of the road. It is proposed to create a new entrance to the site through the existing vegetation along the roadside verge (Pan 6 Fig 5) . This will involve the loss of some vegetation through physically creating the entrance and also by providing the necessary visibility splays at the entrance and will result in increased visibility from the A259. The receptors are

both pedestrian and motorists, although the pedestrian view will be from the footpath along the northern side of the road only. Owing to the viewing angle and distance involved the tree belt along the roadside will in effect screen views for pedestrians other than in a few isolated gaps in the tree belt and at the site entrance. The proposed planting within the site boundary will in effect screen all these views in time, except through the newly created access.

- 8.3.2 The pedestrians using this footpath are few in number and although moderately sensitive, taking into account the intrusion caused by heavy traffic and traffic noise coming from the intervening road, the magnitude of impact is considered to be low.
- 8.3.3 The motorists using the A259 are considered to be of low sensitivity and the magnitude of impact also low, especially once the site landscaping has matured to produce a screen. Longer distance views from the western section of the A259 are considered to be too distant to have any but a negligible magnitude of effect. (Pan 3 Fig 4)
- 8.3.4 The resultant significance of effect for both motorists and pedestrians is considered to be minor to moderate adverse reducing to minor adverse once the new planting has established.

8.4 VIEW FROM PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY 166

- 8.4.1 Views from the majority of this footpath will be screened by the existing and proposed planting along the western site boundary and the tree line to the north of the site,.
- 8.4.2 These receptors will be highly sensitive locals but the magnitude of effect will be low owing to the narrow window into the site offering only limited visibility. The careful design and location of the car parking and angle of the access road allow

for screen planting in the northwest corner of the site which will reduce any impact from this view to low to negligible in time.

8.5 PRIVATE VIEWS

8.5.1 NORTHWOOD FARM can be seen from the drone panoramic views taken at a height of 7.5 metres and it is therefore likely that there will be a view from the farm of part of the new crematorium. The flat nature of the landscape and the mature trees along the A259 limit this view to glimpsed views only.

8.5.2 The receptors in this case although residents which are considered to be highly sensitive are considered to be of moderate sensitivity owing to the other large buildings on the aerodrome and housing of Horsemere Green visible from this property.

8.5.3 There may be medium distance glimpsed view of the roof of the crematorium, but as this will be vegetated, the magnitude of impact is considered to be low, giving an overall significance of effect as Minor Adverse.

9.0 MITIGATION MEASURES

9.1 Mitigation measures are proposed to achieve three broad functions:-

- To screen sensitive views
- To integrate the development into the surrounding landscape
- To enrich the area visually and ecologically

9.2 The broad character of the landscape is one of flat farmland bisected by wide north-south and east-west shelterbelts of mature trees. The mitigation proposals build on this character by proposing new east- west and north- south native tree and shrub belts. The internal treatment of the site is kept as simple as possible open grassland to replicate the former arable function and mown grass paths

- 9.3 The building itself is an attractive low design with tiered vegetated roofs positioned centrally in the site. Access to the Crematorium is through a new access off the A259 and simply provided in one continuous route in , around the edge of the car park and out again, with access to the car parks from this route. The car parking echoes the shape of the building and curves in concentric rings out from the building separated by trees and low planting to emphasise the gentle curving nature of the building.

10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The site forms part of an agricultural field within a broad rural landscape of fields divided up by areas of woodland which lies to the south of the A259. Although less than a kilometre from the coast there is no intervisibility owing to the intervening strong mature tree belts. As a result, the development proposed will have no impact on the coastline.
- 10.2 It does lie in the Littlehampton to Middleton on Sea gap but again there are no views from or to either settlement, therefore the development of a crematorium on the site will have no effect on the coalescence of settlements.
- 10.3 The 3, soon to be 4, very large agricultural buildings, which visually define the edge of the arable field, are very intrusive and have been permitted in the gap, with no screening to the west of them. These buildings, in terms of their visual prominence and lack of landscape treatment, have far more impact on the gap than the well- designed attractive crematorium with extensive landscaping will have.
- 10.4 This proposal will fulfil many of the Landscape Management Guidelines of the West Sussex Landscape Character Assessment and as such will be in accordance with Policy LAN DM1 of the Arun Local Plan.
- 10.5 It respects the Climping Parish Neighbourhood Plan, in that it will not affect the separation of parishes, important to the village's distinctive identity. Neither will it have any impact on important views towards Arundel or the South Downs. The

flooding aspect has been carefully taken into consideration in the design of new swales and ditches.

- 10.6 The new tree and shrub planting proposed as part of the scheme echoes the extensive tree planting carried out by Lord Moyne between 1927 and 1932 and as such will reinforce local character and identity, an objective of the Arun District Local Plan. It will also *“improve biodiversity and landscape quality of the strategic gaps along the coast and provide connectivity between gaps to open countryside in the District”* in line with Policy GI SP1.
- 10.7 On the basis, that this proposal will cover less than half of the site with buildings and hard surfacing, which will change the key characteristics of the site, from open countryside and that these changes will be permanent, the magnitude of change to the landscape is considered to be moderate. However, there is potential to reduce this effect to low by sensitive design of the site.
- 10.8 The enclosed flat nature of the landscape within which the site is located, severely limits public views into the site. The principal views of the development will be from the public footpath along the western boundary of the site. Users of this footpath are largely locals and as such are likely to be highly sensitive to change. The development proposed, will substantially improve the view by screening both the crematorium and the intrusive buildings to the east. There may be glimpsed views of the crematorium building but its sensitive, interesting design will add to the view.

Overall the magnitude of effect on these receptors is considered to be moderate once the new planting along the edge of the site starts to take effect and will be negligible once the planting has matured. The significance of impact is then moderate reducing to low adverse.

- 10.9 The other main viewing direction is from the A259. There are currently glimpsed views into the site from the A259, through gaps in the roadside tree belt immediately adjacent to the site and there are longer distance views from the western approach of the A259, owing to the sporadic nature of vegetation along this section of the road. The scheme will open up views into the site through the

new entrance but these will be glimpsed views from cars traveling at speed and are not considered to be significant

- 10.10 The pedestrians using the footpath along the northern edge of the A259 are few in number and although moderately sensitive, taking into account the intrusion caused by heavy traffic and traffic noise coming from the intervening road, the magnitude of impact is considered to be low. The motorists using the A259 are considered to be of low sensitivity and the magnitude of impact also low, especially once the site landscaping has matured to produce a screen. Longer distance views from the western section of the A259 are considered to be too distant to have any but a negligible magnitude of effect.
- 10.11 There are no other views of any significance that will be affected by the proposals.
- 10.12 The landscape proposals which accompany the application are extensive in quantity and a high quality ground and planting specification should ensure rapid establishment and early screening.