

June 2025

SOUTH OF FORD LANE,
YAPTON & FORD

**DESIGN & ACCESS
STATEMENT**



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01 Introduction

Purpose of the Document

Design & Access Statement

1.1 This Design and Access Statement (DAS) accompanies the Outline Planning Application submitted by Vail Williams Planning on behalf of SBEPI Ltd for the site located south of Ford Lane, Yapton.

1.2 The document summarises the site's physical characteristics and policy context, highlighting how these factors have shaped the proposed design. It sets out the design rationale behind the development, outlining how it responds to technical constraints, planning guidance from the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and consultation with local community groups.

Site Overview & Proposed Development

2.3 The site is located across two civil parishes within the Arun District in West Sussex (Figure 01 & 02). The east portion of the site is located within the Parish of Ford and the west portion of the site falls within the Parish of Yapton.

2.4 The site occupies an area of approximately 34.7ha and predominately comprises agricultural land, currently utilised for agriculture. The site is bounded by the village of Yapton to the south and west, Ford Lane to the north, with further agricultural land to the north east of the site.

2.5 With reference to the masterplan (Figure 20, Page 32) SBEPI Ltd is seeking Outline Planning Application for the following:

- 12.9ha of Residential Development (up to 400 dwellings)
- 8.4ha 10FE Secondary School
- 13.1ha Public Open Space (POS) including a 7.8ha Country Park, green corridors, play areas, habitat creation and green infrastructure
- Potential for 0.3ha Commercial / Community Hub
- Associated transport infrastructure, including vehicular access from Ford Lane

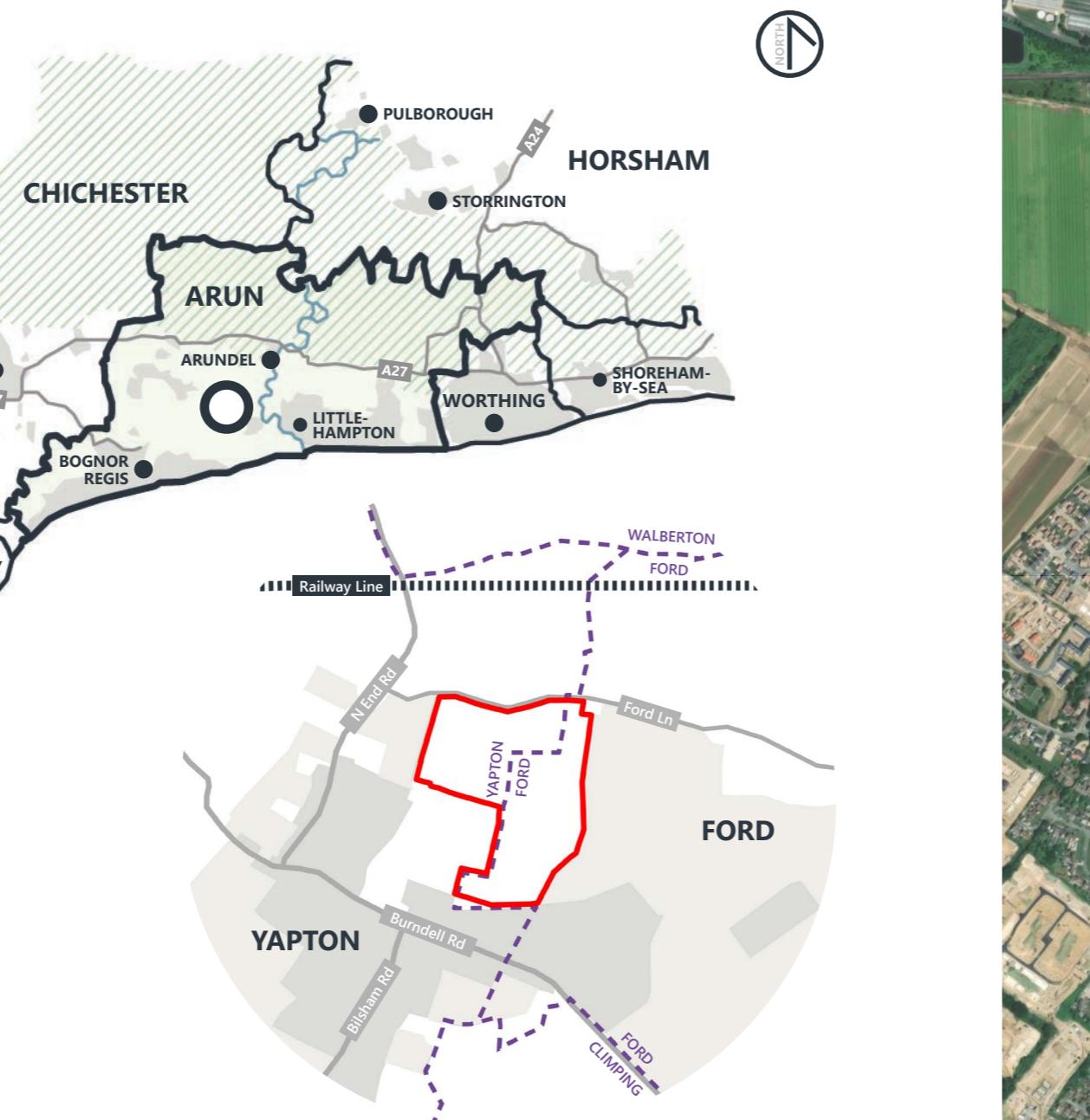


Figure 01. Site Location Infographic



Figure 02. Site Location Plan



Image 01. The site is predominately arable cropland with some mature vegetation associated with the field margins, contributing to the site's rural character



Image 02. The character of Yapton Church Lane Conservation Area has an influence on the western portion of the site



Image 03. An important view from the site towards the South Downs National Park, establishing a strong connection between the site and the wider landscape

02 Site Appraisal

Planning Context

Planned Growth
2.6 The Arun District Local Plan identifies Strategic Housing Allocations within the district including several sites within the vicinity of the proposed development (Figure 03).

2.7 The former Ford Airfield (Housing Allocation SD8), located to the immediate east of the site, has recently received planning consent for a mixed-use development (referred to as The Landings) which will comprise of circa. 1,500 dwellings, a new local centre and a 2FE primary school.

2.8 Several additional housing sites at the neighbourhood level are either under construction or have been recently completed in Yapton and Ford. These include Meadow Gardens, a development of approximately 100 dwellings located to the west of the site.

2.9 Due to the established need for school provision, along with the proposed delivery of Strategic Housing Allocations and the additional housing sites at neighbourhood level, local policy supports the delivery of a new 10FE secondary school within the district.

2.10 In response, the site presents an opportunity to deliver a 10FE secondary school which is centrally located within the district and within close proximity to the proposed development at The Landings, promoting sustainable active travel to school.

Other Planning Policy
2.11 The current extent of the built-up area as defined in the Local Plan extends along the full length of the eastern boundary and abuts part of the southern and western boundary.
2.12 The area of the site within the boundary of Ford Parish is designated as a Local Gap in the Ford Neighbourhood Plan.
2.13 Refer to the Planning Statement accompanying this application for further information.

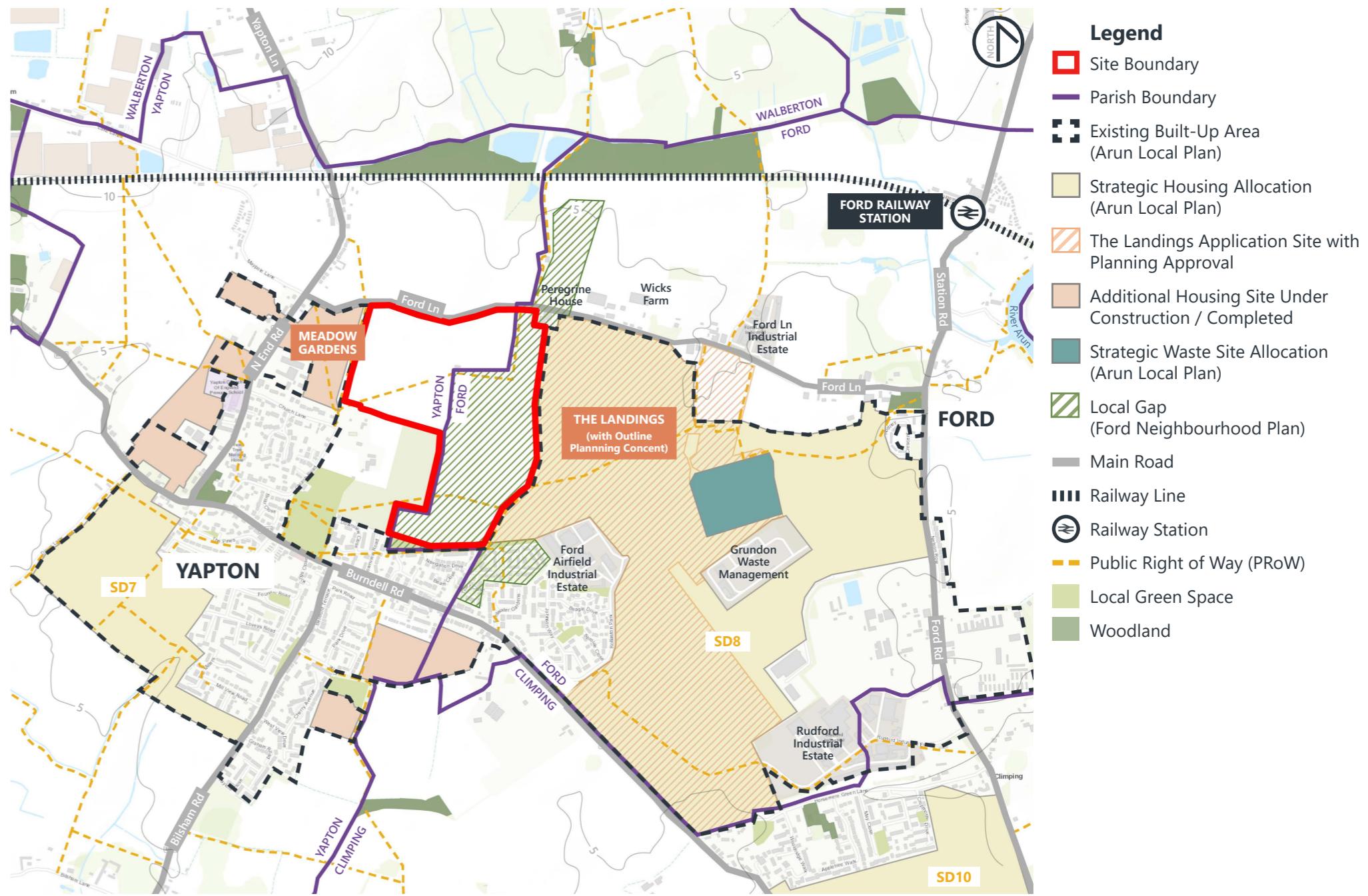


Figure 03. Site Context Plan

Urban Context & Connectivity

Urban Context

2.14 Existing facilities within the vicinity of the site are generally located to the south-west along the main arterial roads which run through Yapton (Figure 04). The existing facilities in the centre of Yapton comprise of Yapton & Ford Village Hall and a row of shops which includes a local supermarket and a pharmacy, approximately 375m (5 minutes walk) from the site.

2.15 A new local centre is proposed as part of The Landings within 520m (7 minutes walk) from the site. Proposed facilities will include a new community centre, local supermarket and space for additional retail facilities.

2.16 There is currently one primary school in Yapton, located 500m to the west on the western extents of the village, approximately 350m (4 minutes walk) from the site. A new 2FE primary school is proposed as part of The Landings within 530m (7 minutes walk).

2.17 The nearest medical practice is located to the south within 500m (7 minutes walk) from the site. Potential healthcare facilities are also proposed as part of new local centre within The Landings.

2.18 The closest towns include Littlehampton (3.9km to the south-east) and Bognor Regis (3.8km to the south-west) which offer a wider range of facilities including large supermarkets, healthcare facilities, commercial and retail centres, and food and drink establishments. Additionally, the nearest hospital is located in Bognor Regis, approx. 5.7km from the site.

2.19 The Ford-Barnham railway link runs to the north of the site, exerting an urbanising influence along Ford Lane.

Connectivity

2.20 Yapton is well served by existing bus services providing connections to Arundel, Littlehampton and Chichester. The closest bus stops are located on Burnell Road approx. 220m (3 minutes walk) from the site.

2.21 The closest railway station is located at Ford 1.7km (20-25 minutes walk) to the north-east, providing direct train links to Chichester, Southampton and Brighton.

2.22 Two Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) run through the site:

- Footpath 359 runs through the northern portion of the site connecting Yapton to the east with Ford Lane to the north.
- Footpath 363 runs through the southern portion of the site and adjoins the proposed Arun Way (forming part of The Landings) which connects to Ford Lane / Station Road to the north and onwards to Ford railway station.

2.23 For additional detail, refer to the Transport Assessment accompanying this application.

Recreation

2.24 There are several recreation spaces and play areas within Yapton. The nearest play area is within Meadow Gardens to the east, and the nearest recreation ground is associated with the Village Hall to the south-west of the site. This recreation ground includes informal sport provisions, play areas, a multi-use games area and skatepark. In addition, a play area and small multi-use games area are located to the immediate south of the site.

2.25 Additional recreation spaces, sports facilities and play areas are proposed as part of The Landings and will be in walking distance of the site.

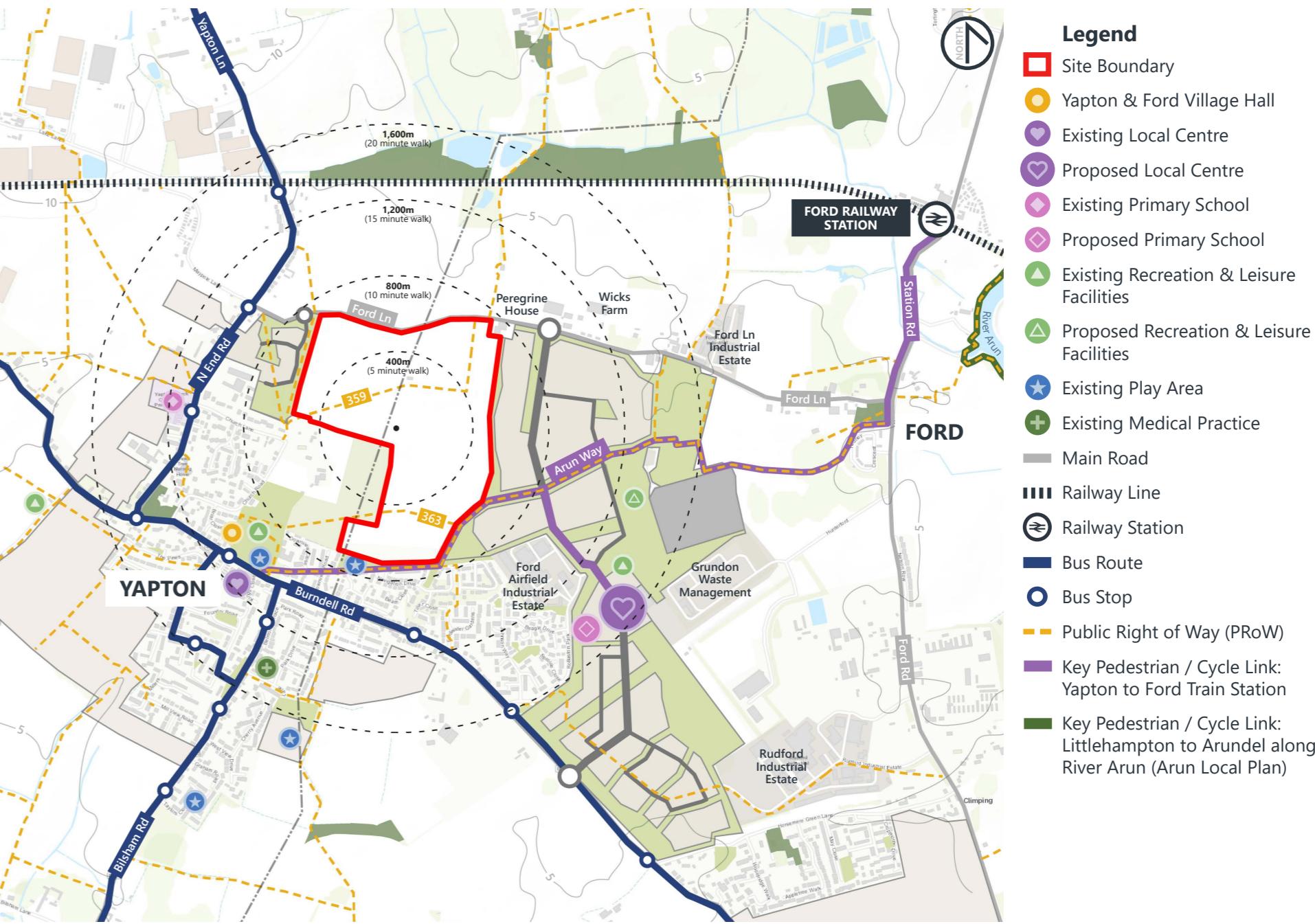


Figure 04. Urban Context & Connectivity Plan

Historic Environment

Heritage Designations

2.26 The site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory heritage designations.

2.27 There are two Conservation Areas within the vicinity of the site, the Yapton Road / North End Road Conservation Area and the Yapton Church Lane Conservation Area. The Yapton Church Lane Conservation Area abuts part of the south-western boundary (Figure 05).

2.28 The nearest listed building to the site is the Grade I listed Parish Church of St Mary which is 75m south-west of the western site boundary. These local heritage assets have an insular character and views into and out of the Yapton Church Lane Conservation Area and towards the Parish Church of St Mary are very limited.

2.29 A Grade II listed structure Manorial Dovecote at Church Farm is located 275m from the site boundary. There are several other listed buildings within the vicinity of the site, typically concentrated in and around the two Conservation Areas.

2.30 The nearest scheduled monument is the medieval earthworks east and south-east of St Mary's Church, which lies approximately 1.8km south-east from the site.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

2.31 Grove Lodge Non-Designated Local Heritage Asset is located is located 550m to the west.

2.32 The alignment of the former Portsmouth and Arundel Canal runs adjacent to part of the southern boundary. Remnants of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal including Burndell Bridge, which is located 130m to the south of the site, are noted as important early 19th century features within the landscape.

Heritage Views

2.33 A key rural heritage view from Ford Lane towards Yapton Church Lane Conservation Area and the Parish Church of St Mary has also been identified.

2.34 **Archaeology**
The south-western end of the study site lies within an Archaeological Notification Area (DWS8515) associated with Bronze Age and Roman activity, the deserted medieval village of Yapton, and the parish church of St Mary.

2.35 A 2021 geophysical survey identified features indicative of late Prehistoric and Roman settlement, as well as evidence of historic agricultural use. The site has high potential for Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, and Medieval activity, particularly related to occupation and cultivation. Early Prehistoric potential is considered low to moderate.

2.36 The site has been in continuous agricultural use since at least the late Medieval period, with cultivation likely causing moderate but widespread sub-surface disturbance. Despite this, the site is considered to retain archaeological potential.

2.37 Any remains present are anticipated to be of low (local) to medium (regional) significance based on current evidence.

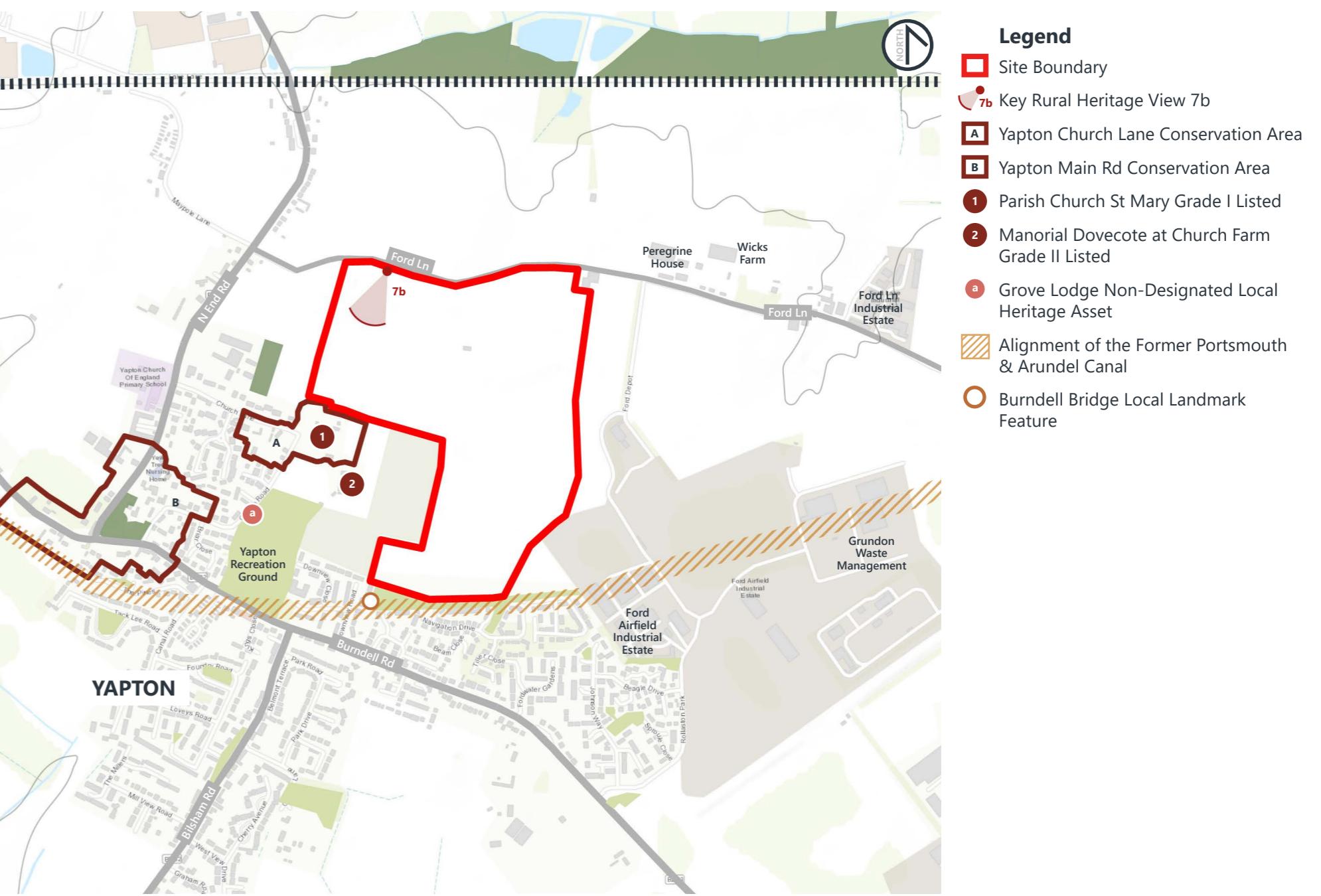


Figure 05. Historic Environment Plan

Natural Environment

Landscape Designations

2.38 The site does not lie within a statutory landscape designation.

2.39 The nearest statutory landscape designation is the South Downs National Park (SDNP), which lies approximately 1.75km to the north-east of the site (Figure 06).

2.40 The site is considered to be within the setting of the National Park. However, a preliminary landscape appraisal has been carried out which identified only limited intervisibility of the site from within the SDNP.

2.41 There are two internationally designated sites within 10km of the site. These are Duncton to Bignor Escarpment Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Arun Valley SAC, Special Protection Area (SPA), and Ramsar site. The Arun Valley site is also covered by three Sites of Special Scientific Interest, which are protected at a national level.

2.42 There is no ancient woodland within the site, with the nearest located approximately 1.3km east of the site.

2.43 However, there are several notable specimen trees associated with the field margins along the western boundary of the site.

2.44 The trees within the north-western part of the site are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Ecology

2.45 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal identified the site as having potential to support bats, reptiles, badgers, breeding birds, as well as wintering birds.

2.46 The site is characterised by intensive cropland, modified grassland margins, trees and hedgerows. These habitats are considered to be common and widespread, and providing either limited ecological value or being in poor condition.

2.47 The most valuable ecological features on site which should be retained are the mature trees and hedgerows (Figure 07).

2.48 Species-specific surveys indicate:

- A low population of reptiles on site
- A low to moderate activity on site by foraging and commuting bat species
- A number of bird species of conservation concern using site during breeding season (although no SAC / SPA / Ramsar site linked species)
- Primarily resident birds using site during winter (with no SAC / SPA / Ramsar site linked species).

2.49 These surveys indicated the need for mitigation measures to be incorporated into the design.

2.50 For further information in relation to the ecological baseline assessment, refer to the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment which accompanies this application.

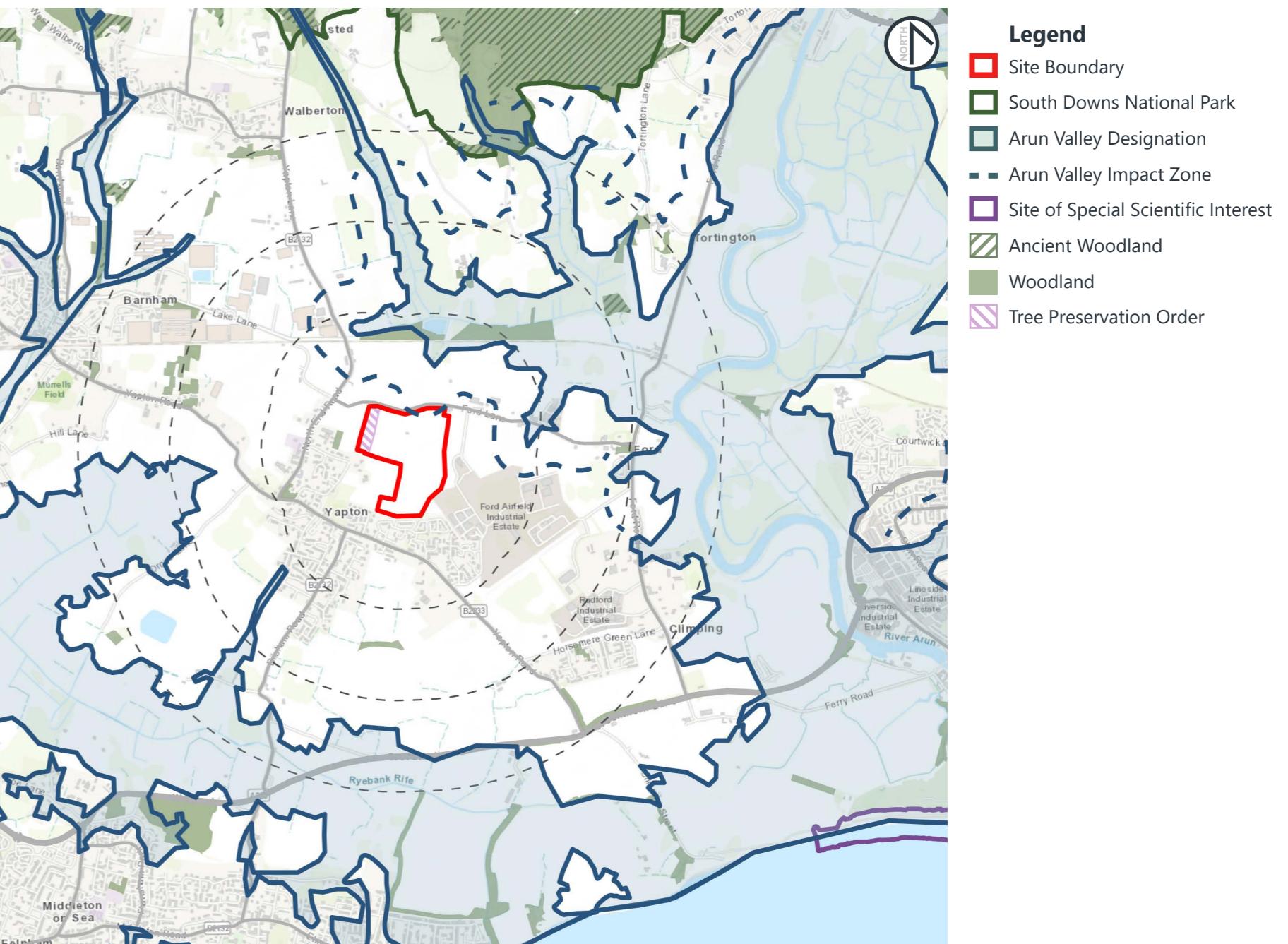


Figure 06. Natural Environment Plan



Flood Risk

2.51

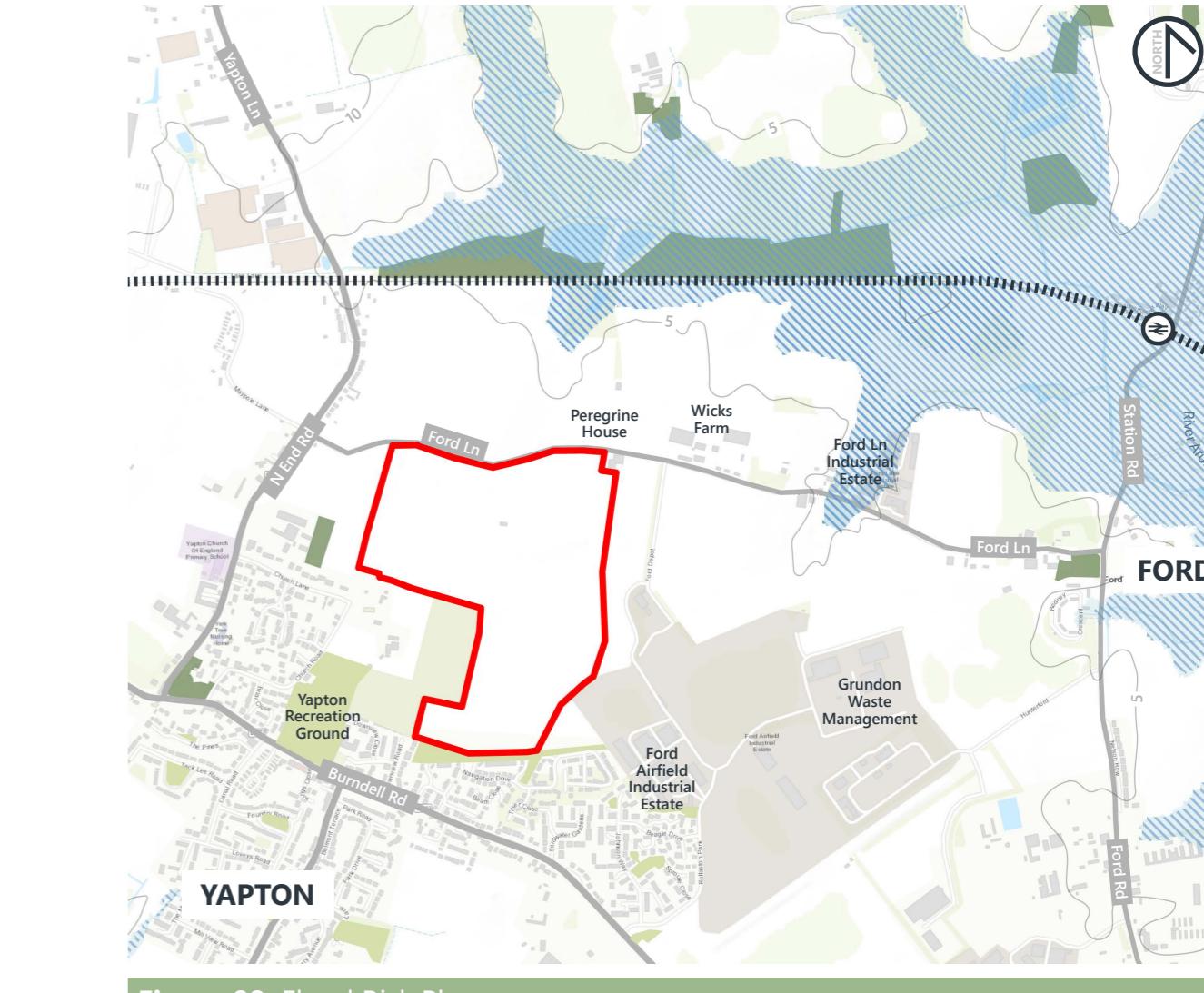
Landform & Watercourses
The landform within the site is predominantly flat, with a gentle gradient ranging from 7.75m AOD at its highest point to 6.75m AOD at its lowest. The site lies within a gently sloping landscape of flat coastal plains that incline south-eastwards toward the Lower Arun Valley.

2.52

The River Arun is located approximately 1.8 km east of the site and flows into the English Channel 3 km to the south. The river is wide and meandering, fed by several rives and dykes, including a straight drainage ditch system situated roughly 650m north of the site.

2.53

Flood Risk
The site is situated within Flood Zone 1 and is deemed to have a very low probability of flooding in any given year (Figure 08).



Landscape & Visual

Landscape Character

2.54 The site falls within the National Character Area 126 - South Coast Plain and more locally the West Sussex Landscape Character Area SC9 - Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain (Figure 09).

2.55 The study area is typical of the local character area and the following key characteristics recorded in the study are relevant:

- Low lying flat open landscape
- A low density of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with occasional shelterbelts
- Large-scale arable farming and market gardening. Extensive farms with both traditional and modern farm buildings and silos
- Scattered, historically nucleated villages with mixed building materials of flint, brick, half timber and stone
- Large farmsteads along roads, and on dead-end tracks.
- Long views to Arundel, the Downs and to the distinctive spire of Chichester Cathedral
- The relatively open character of much of the area allows long views so that village church towers are important landmarks in views
- Frequent urban fringe influences of horse paddocks, light industry and disused airfields, with busy minor and major roads.
- The urban fringes associated with Bognor are particularly obvious, with sporadic urban development in suburban settlements of Tangmere, Barnham, Yapton, and Westergate
- 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
- Light industry in the countryside at Ford and Tangmere

2.56 The landscape character assessment identifies 'Land Management Guidelines' for the Chichester to Yapton Coastal Plain Landscape Character Area. Those of relevance to the site are:

- Conserve the significant views to Chichester Cathedral and the South Downs
- Create a new, large scale tree and hedgerow framework which complements the open intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining significant views of Chichester Cathedral, the South Downs and local features
- Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts
- Link up existing remnant hedgerows and tree lines to re-establish coherent field boundaries and wildlife corridors
- Encourage a full tree survey of the area with a view to conserving and managing existing feature tree groups and individuals
- Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements
- Encourage landscape enhancements around villages and on their approaches
- Establish new vegetation features by the planting of hedgerows and tree clumps in field corners and along roadsides, especially those approaching settlements
- Maintain, restore and enhance floodplain woodland and associated species, including native Black poplar, where appropriate

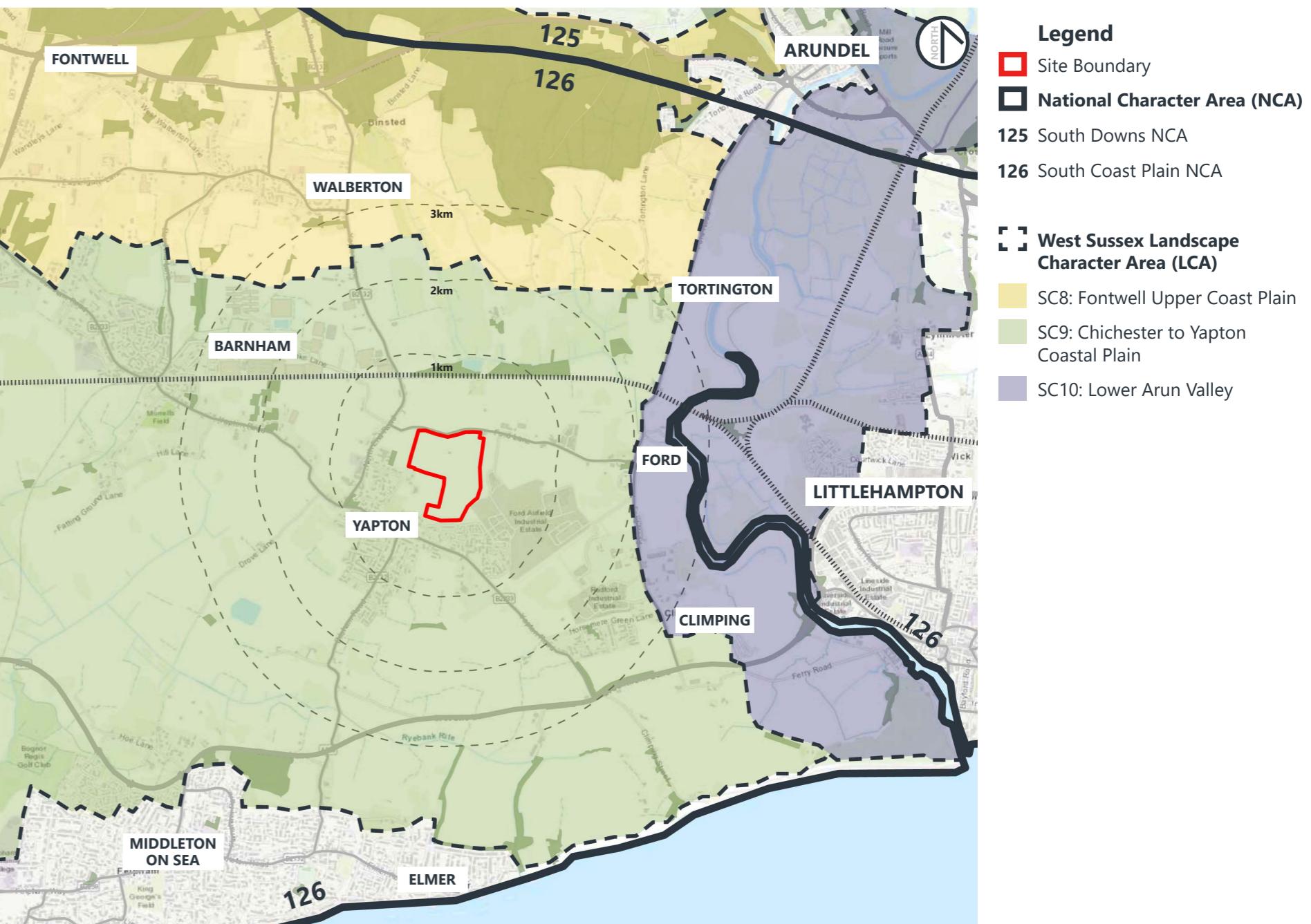


Figure 09. Landscape Character Area Plan

Landscape Value

2.57 Landscape value has been assessed in the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) in terms of the range of local factors set out in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02-21. The assessment has determined that the site, and its immediate context is of Medium landscape value.

2.58 This is due to the flat landform and lack of distinctive landscape features as well as the influence of adjacent settlement and other forms of development. The landscape has limited features of natural and cultural heritage directly associated with the site and views are limited by existing lines of trees and nearby development.

Visual Baseline

2.59 A visual appraisal was undertaken on 20th March 2025. A series of key representative viewpoints were determined and agreed through consultation by Arun District Council. The locations of the viewpoints were defined through the production of a computer modelled Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) which was used to help identify the surrounding land from within which views towards any part of the proposed development are likely to be possible. This was then refined during the field work to take account of the visual 'screening' provided by buildings, trees and other features to define a Visual Envelope (VE) which is illustrated within the LVA.

2.60 The VE of the proposed development is limited as a result of the general containment of the site. The VE extends slightly into the existing residential areas to the west and south, with the existing buildings limiting visibility beyond this. The VE extends slightly to the east but is limited by the mature tree belt along an access track to an industrial unit. To the north, the VE extends further across the open fields as a result of the current open boundary of the site but is limited by vegetation to the north of the railway line.

2.61 There could be some limited locations beyond the extent of the VE that could have a potential distant or very limited views to a part of the development. Equally, there could be some locations shown within the VE that would not experience any views of the resultant development.

2.62 'Photo Viewpoints' are referred to in the LVA as 'Type 1 Visualisations' or 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs', as referred to in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (TGN 06/19).



Image 04. View looking north towards the South Downs National Park



Image 05. View looking south-west along Ford Lane



Image 06. View looking south-east along Ford Lane