

Bilsham Crematorium

Visual Appraisal

10 Acre Field
Grevatt's Lane West
Bilsham
West Sussex

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plinke.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

This report has been prepared by Plincke Landscape Ltd on behalf of Landlink Estates Ltd. This report supports the Planning Application for development of a new single chapel crematorium Bilsham (the 'Proposed Development') at 10 Acre Field, Grevatt's Lane West, Bilsham (the 'Site') to serve central Arun. It provides an appraisal of the likely visual impact of the scheme and recommendations for mitigation of any negative effects.



2.0 Site Context

2.1 Topography

The landform in the vicinity of the Site slopes gradually from north to south within a gently undulating coastal plain landscape, incised by river valleys, ditches (or 'rifes') and drains, as part of a broader transition in the wider landscape which descends from the relatively high chalk downlands to the north of the Site, towards the low-lying coast to the south at elevations between approximately 7 metres (m) and 0m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

2.2 Vegetation

Vegetation patterns in the vicinity of the Site (see Figure 2: Site Context Plan) feature hedgerows with intermittent hedgerow trees, and there is occasional woodland in the form of isolated blocks within farmland and linear belts along the banks of the Ryebank Rife and field boundary drains.

2.3 Settlement Pattern

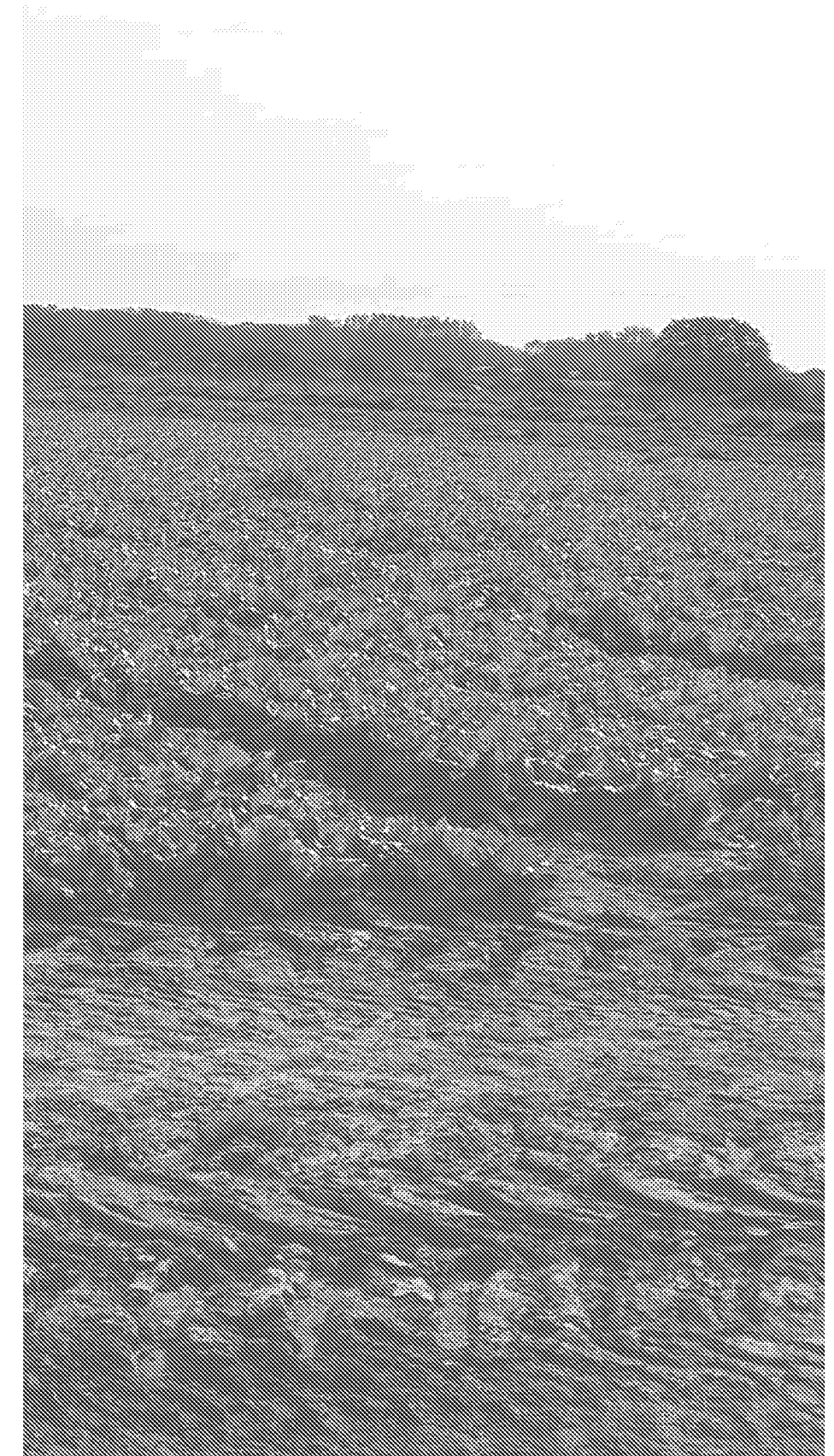
The Site is located a short distance (approximately 280m) from the eastern edge of the hamlet of Bilsham, from which it is separated by fields and boundary vegetation, and to the south of the village of Yapton. An isolated dwelling, White Rails, is situated to the southwest of the Site, and a traveller site is situated to the further southwest. The town of Middleton-on-Sea is located at a further distance from the Site, along the coast to the south. Grevatt's Lane West lies to the immediate south of the Site, with Grevatts Lane (A259) to the further south. Bilsham Road (B2132) lies to the west, and Yapton Road (B2233) to the east.

2.4 Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments

The village of Bilsham includes four listed buildings, of which Hobbs Farmhouse (Grade II) is the closest to the Site, at a distance of approximately 435m. Further listed buildings lie to the south, along the northern edge and within the historic centre of Middleton-on-Sea, to the southwest, within the village of Flansham, and to the north, generally clustered within and around the conservation areas within the northern area of Yapton. Outside of the Study Area, medieval earthworks east and southeast of St Mary's Church at Climping, to the east of the Site, are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

2.5 Public Rights of Way

There are various Public Rights of Way (PRoW) which cross the landscape in the vicinity of the Site, including footpaths 166, which runs north-south to the north and east of the Site, footpath 144, which runs east-west to the north and west of the Site, and footpath 2997, which runs between Bilsham Road (B2132) and Middleton-on-Sea. Footpath 165 lies to the southeast of the Site and runs between Middleton-on-Sea and Grevatts Lane (A259).



2.6 Landscape Character

The Site has been assessed at national and county levels. The most detailed assessment (West Sussex Landscape Assessment) is at county level, which subdivides the West Sussex landscape into Character Areas. The Site falls under SC9 Chichester to Yapton Valley. The SC9 character area identifies the following relevant characteristics of this landscape type:

- 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.
- 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 [...] 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.

The study makes references to the following landscape and visual sensitivities relevant to the Site:

- Key views to the South Downs, Chichester Cathedral and Arundel.
- Fragmentation and loss of hedgerows and connections between hedgerow and woodland.
- Replacement of mature treescape.
- Changes in drainage patterns.
- Development on settlement edges of Bognor and suburban settlements of Tangmere, Barnham, Yapton and Westergate.
- Loss of distinction between different settlements due to urban expansion.

The assessment provides the following guidelines to aid appropriate development:

- Create a new, large scale tree and hedgerow framework which complements the open intensively farmed landscape
- 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 and promote land management schemes to increase species rich grassland areas.
- 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.
- Promote sympathetic design of new road schemes.
- Encourage bold tree planting associated with large [...] buildings to attempt to assimilate them into the landscape.

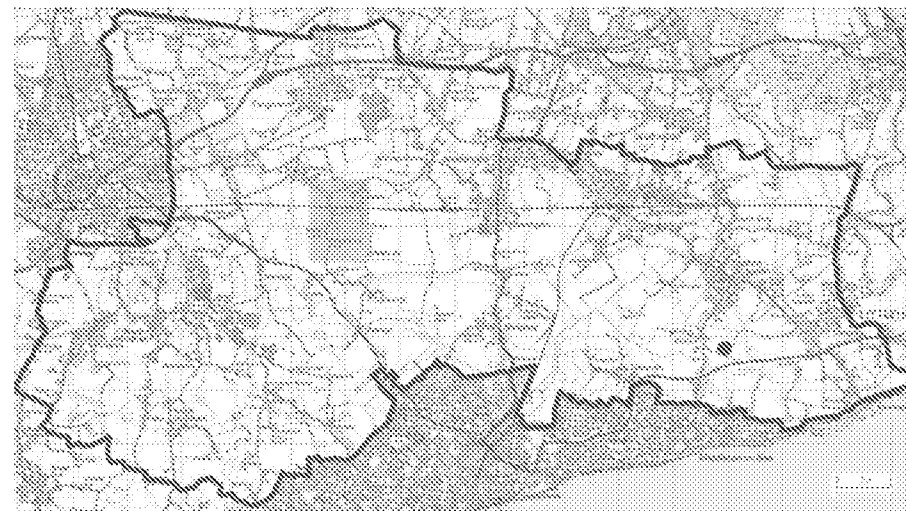


Figure 1: Site location (indicated by a red dot) in the SC9 character area

2.7 Local Policy

The Site is not located within, or adjacent to, any spatial landscape planning designation, but planning control for the Site is covered nationally by Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places) and Chapter 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework and locally by the adopted Arun Local Plan 2018 (2011-2031) of which policies relevant to the Site are listed below:

Chapter 7: Settlement structure and green infrastructure

- Policy LAN DM1 Protection of landscape character: requires that development respect and, where possible, seek to reinforce or repair the character of the relevant landscape character areas.

Chapter 13: Design

- Policy D SP1 Design: requires that development proposals use land efficiently while reflecting the character of the Site and the local area, and that proposals are informed by thorough site analysis and context appraisal with sustainability in mind.
- Policy D DM1 Aspects of form and design quality: requires high quality development that is attractive, has low impact on neighbouring outlook, is innovative, adaptable, safe, integrates existing and new trees, enhances public realm, promotes integrated transport, legibility, and is of appropriate density and scale. Compliance with the Arun District Council Design Guide is also sought.
- Policy ECC SP1 Adapting to climate change: requires development be located and appropriately designed to adapt to impacts arising from climate change.

Chapter 17 Natural Environment

- Policy ENV SP1 Natural Environment: seeks preservation, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity, especially in designated sites, and creation of new habitat areas.
- Policy ENV DM4 Protection of trees: requires protection and appropriate management of existing trees and woodland on development sites.
- Policy ENV DM5 Development and biodiversity: requires development to achieve a net gain in biodiversity, and to link habitats.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  | Site Boundary |  | Chapter 14- Health, Recreation & Leisure |
|  | 2 KM Radius Study Zone |  | Chapter 16- Building Conservation & Archaeological Heritage |
|  | Existing Woodlands, Copses and Tree Belts |  | |
|  | Existing Water Courses and Water Bodies |  | |
|  | Existing Public Rights of Way |  | |
|  | National Cycle Route |  | Chapter 17- Natural Environment |
|  | Chapter 7- Settlement structure & Green Infrastructure |  | |
|  | Built-up Area Boundary | | |
|  | Gaps Between Settlements | | |

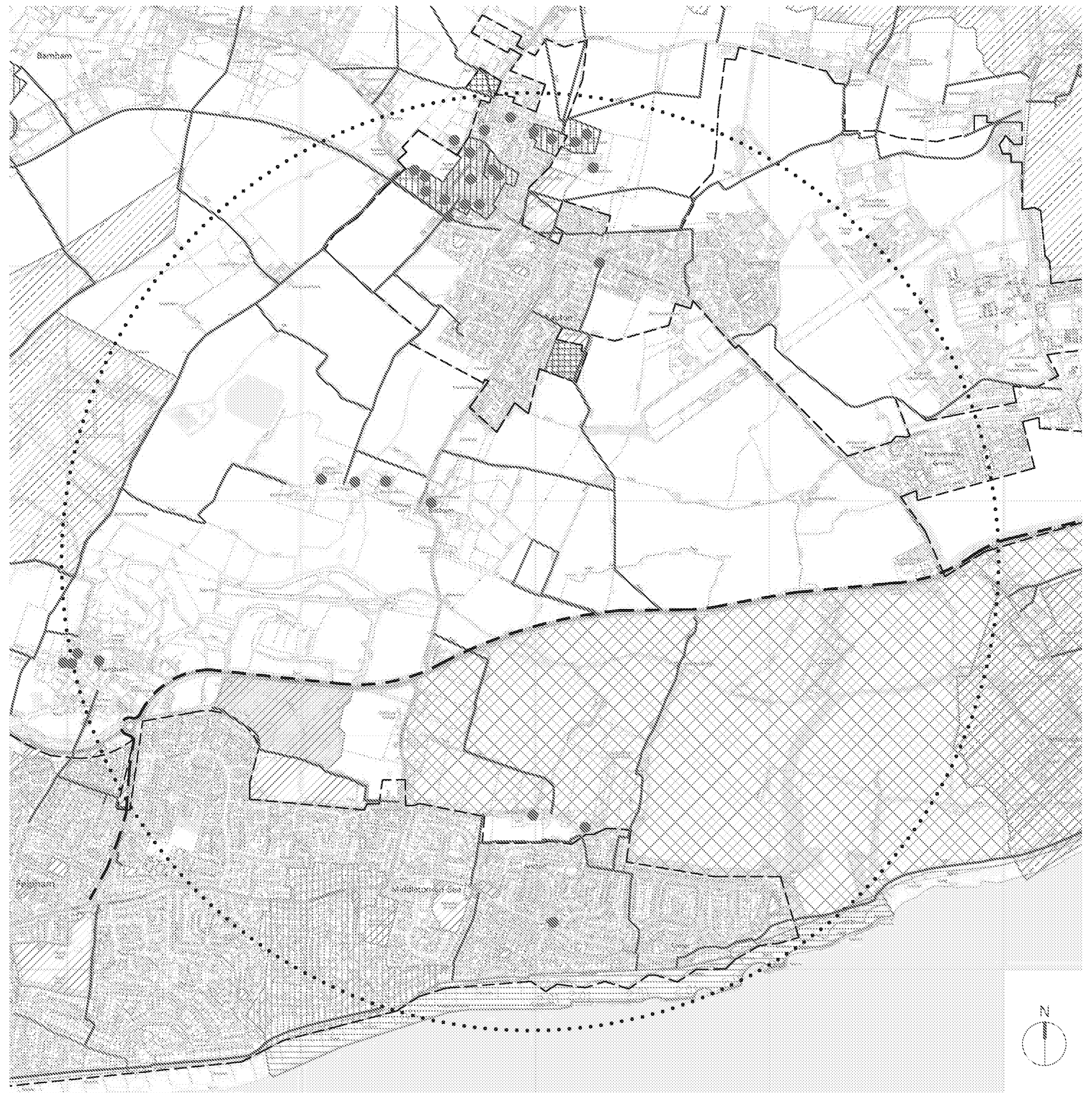


Figure 2: Site Context Plan

3.0 Visual Impact Appraisal

3.1 Visual receptors and sensitivities

For purpose of this report, only visual receptors within the short to medium distance (within a 2 kilometre radius) of the proposed development site have been evaluated as it is considered that longer distance views, including those from South Downs National Park, would be largely unaffected by the proposals due to spatial separation and/or intervening vegetation and built form. The visual impacts are generally deemed to be at a local level to the site and those local visual receptors. The Visual Appraisal plan locates the known visual receptors in order of their visual sensitivity and acceptance of change - as outlined in the guidance 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA)', 3rd Edition, by the Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013. These are categorised as follows:

- High = Public views from protected landscapes- world heritage sites, national parks, AONB. Many residential properties with views from grounds/upper floors immediately towards development
- Medium = Views from public rights of way and recreational areas towards development. Some residences directly towards development or many residences with oblique views of development.
- Low = Some residential properties get oblique or distant views of development. Views from places of work. Views from public road.

Sensitivity of visual receptors of the site can be summarised as follows:

High - No adjacent receptors are deemed to be of high sensitivity.

Medium - Users of local public rights of way with views of the development site, most notably views from footpath 166 to the east of the site, and National Cycle Route 2 to the south of the Site. Residents of White Rails, on Bilsham Road (B2132).

Low - Users of Grevatt's Lane West to the immediate south of the Site and of Grevatt's Lane (A259).



3.2 Selected Views

Views of the proposed development have been selected which represent the most sensitive of the visual receptors surrounding the immediate site, within the Study Area. These are located on Figure 3: Visual Appraisal Plan (right).

This visual appraisal uses un-verified views and the majority of views (01-09) were taken outside of the winter months, in October 2018, when trees and other vegetation were in leaf, so the visual impact of proposed development has been assessed with these limitations in mind. The remaining views (10-11) were taken in December 2018.

3.3 Visual Impact Analysis

The images on the following pages provide a assessment of existing views of the Proposed Development and the potential visual impact of the Proposed Development, with proposals for visual mitigation where this is considered necessary. The views are unverified and provide a visual guide only.

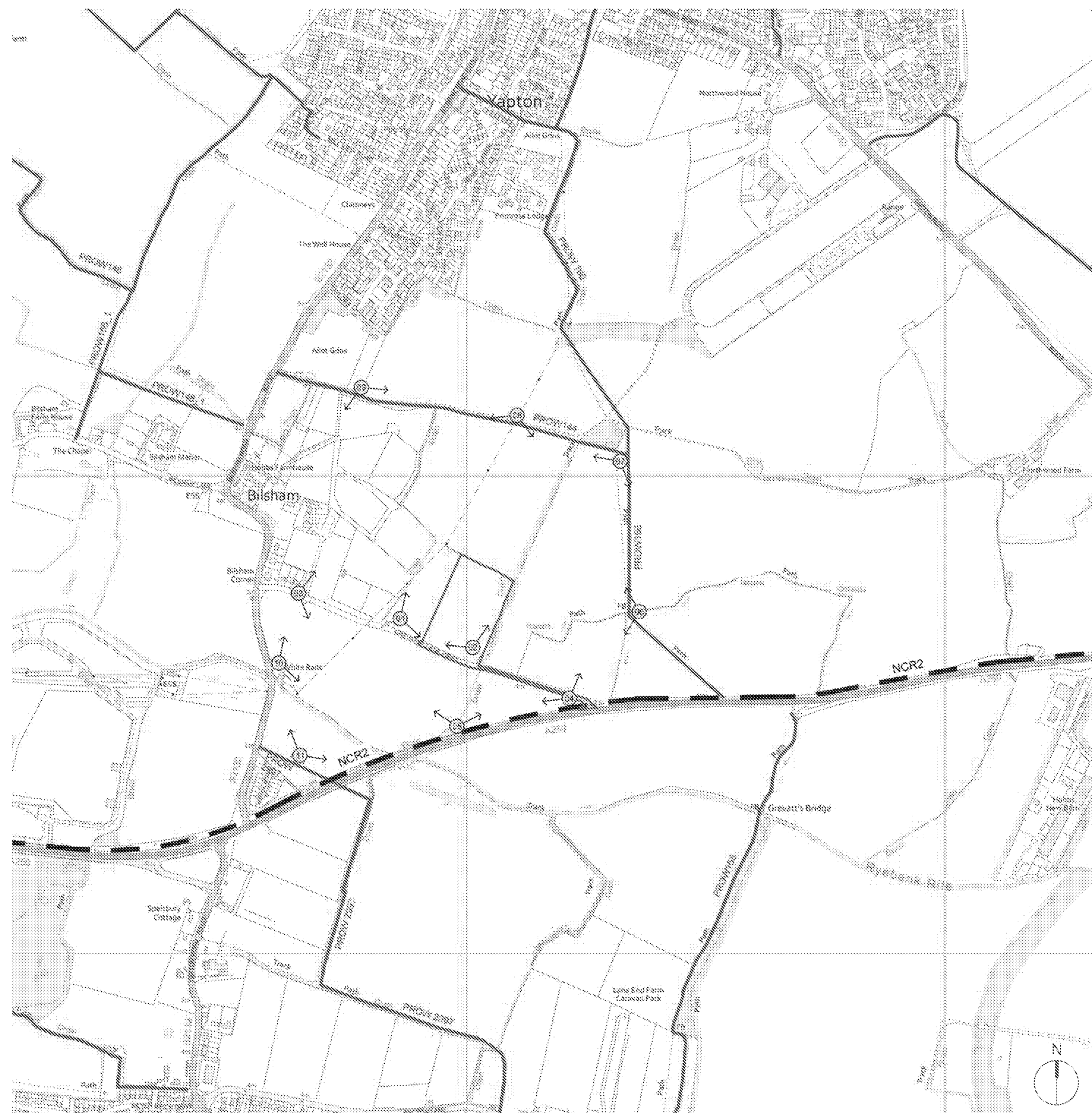
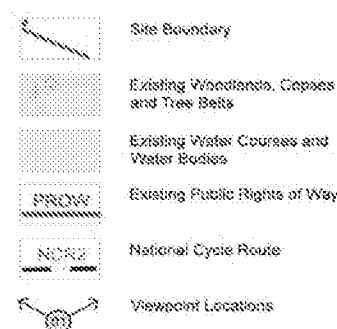
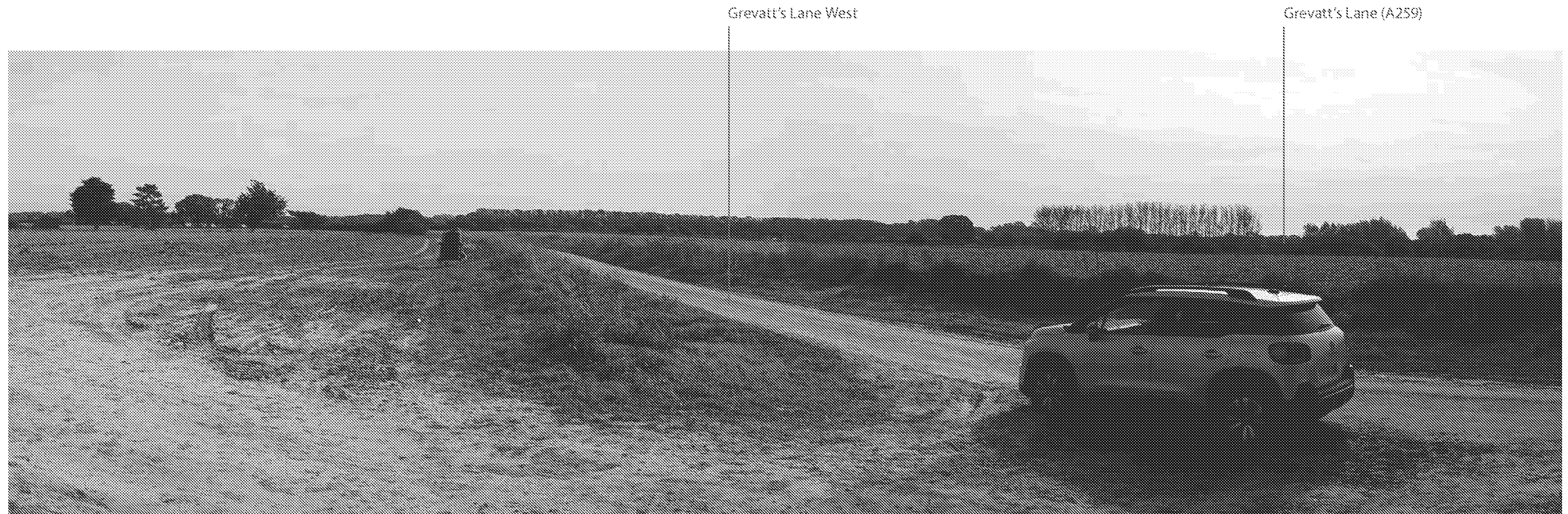
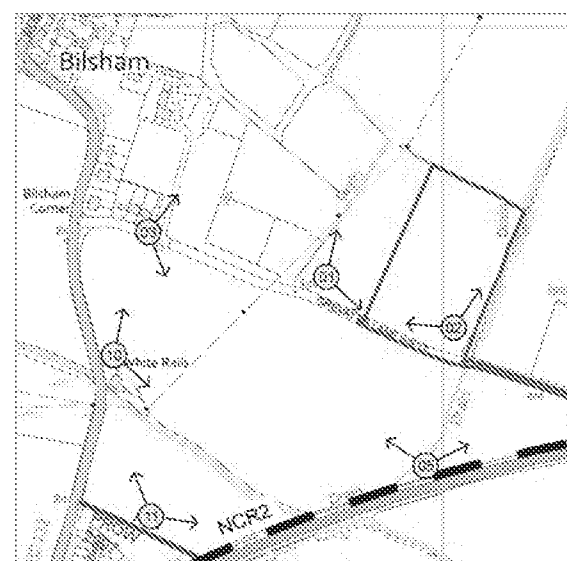


Figure 3: Visual Appraisal Plan



View 01
Location: West corner of 10 Acre Field - looking east

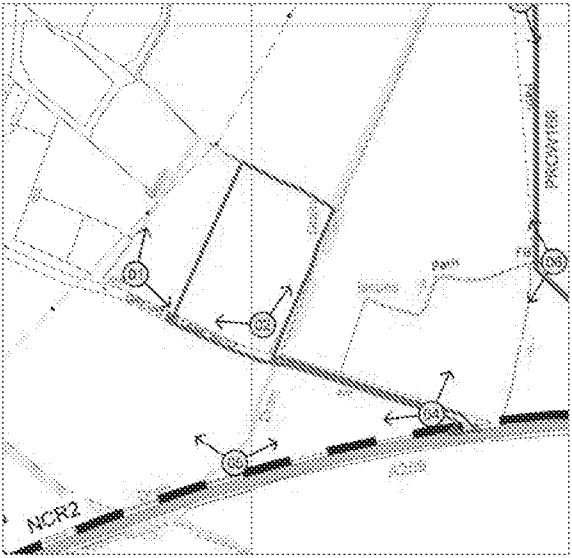


View location

Visual description	The open boundary to the centre of the photograph provides direct and unobstructed views of the major part of the Site
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be fully visible
Proposed mitigation	Proposed built form set back from Grevatt's Lane West behind a landscaped buffer, to reduce the massing of built form from this location and to soften and filter views.



View 02
Location: East corner of 10 Acre Field - looking north



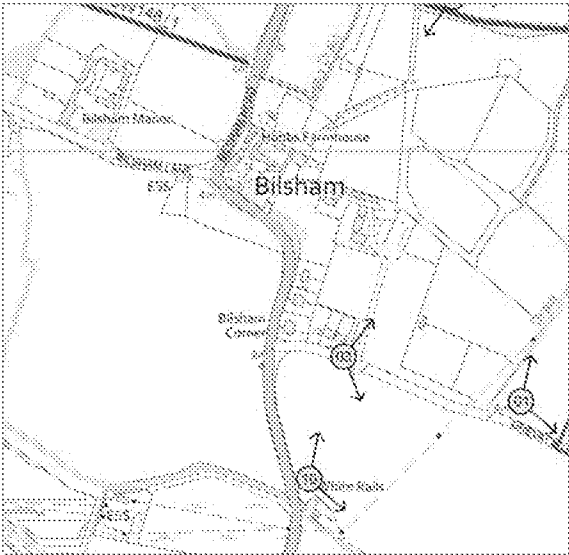
View location

Visual description	The open boundary on Grevatt's Lane West provides direct and unobstructed views of the major part of the Site
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be fully visible
Proposed mitigation	Proposed built form set back from Grevatt's Lane West behind a landscaped buffer, to reduce the massing of built form from this location and to soften and filter views.

APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF SITE



View 03
Location: Grevatt's Lane West - looking east

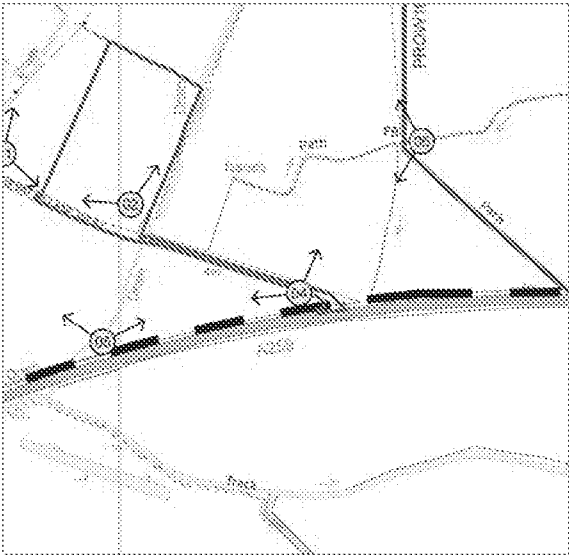


View location

Visual description	Intervening vegetation and fencing screen views to the further east
Potential impact	Proposed built form could be partially visible above intervening vegetation and fencing, with potential filtered views through hedgerow and tree canopies in winter
Proposed mitigation	Additional tree planting to western boundary of the Site to further filter or screen and soften potential views of Proposed Development



View 04
Location: Grevatt's Lane West - looking west



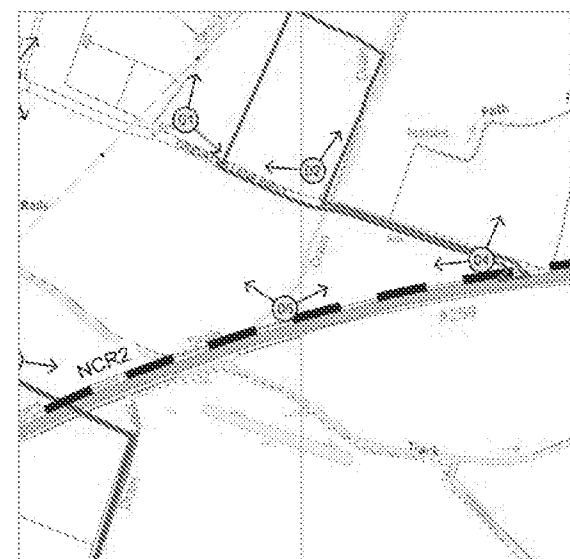
View location

Visual description	Partial direct views of the major part of the Site, screened by intervening hedgerow and filtered through trees adjacent to the eastern Site boundary, and open direct views of the proposed Site access within the foreground of the photograph
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be partially visible through intervening trees and above intervening hedgerow. Proposed highway works would be clearly visible within the foreground of this view
Proposed mitigation	Additional tree planting to eastern boundary of the Site to further filter or screen and soften potential views of Proposed Development

APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF SITE



View 05
Location: National Cycle Route 2 - looking north



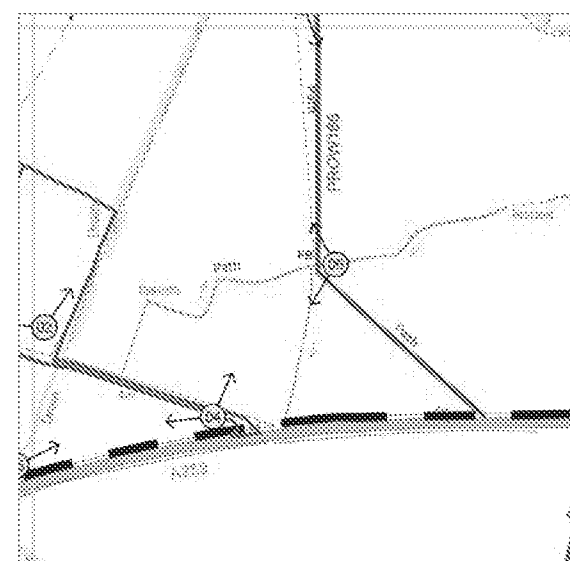
View location

Visual description	The open boundary to the centre of the photograph provides oblique unobstructed views of the major part of the Site
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be fully visible
Proposed mitigation	Proposed built form set back from Grevatt's Lane West behind a landscaped buffer, to reduce the massing of built form from this location and to soften and filter views. Additional screen planting to the foreground on other land within the applicant's control

APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF SITE



View 06
Location: PRow 166 - looking west



View location

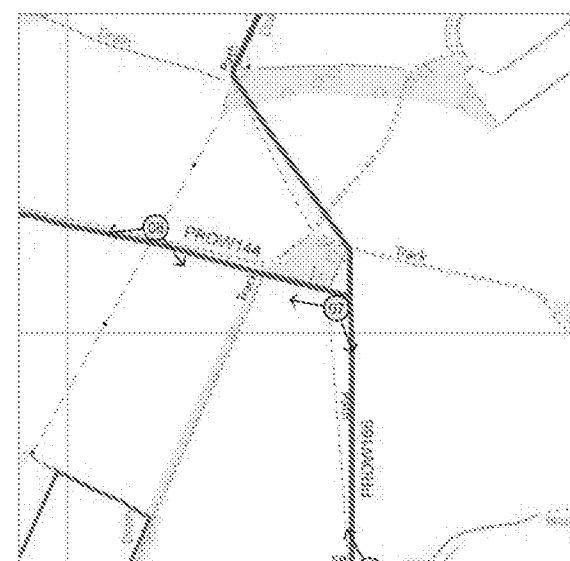
Visual description	Partial oblique views of the major part of the Site, screened by intervening hedgerow and filtered through trees adjacent to the eastern Site boundary
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be partially visible through intervening trees and above intervening hedgerow
Proposed mitigation	Additional tree planting to eastern boundary of the Site to further filter or screen and soften potential views of Proposed Development

APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF SITE



View 07

Location: Intersection of PRowS 166 and 144 - looking south



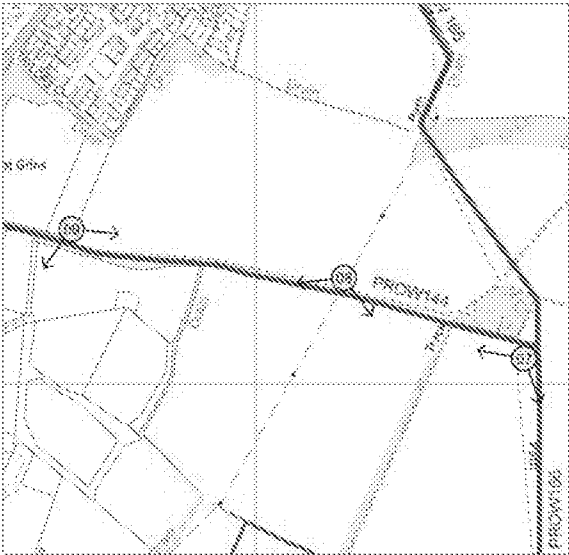
View location

Visual description	Oblique partial views of the major part of the Site, screened by intervening hedgerow and filtered through trees adjacent to the eastern Site boundary
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be partially visible through intervening trees and above intervening hedgerow
Proposed mitigation	Additional tree planting to northern boundary of the Site to further filter or screen and soften potential views of Proposed Development

PROW 144

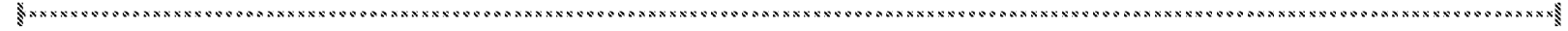


View 08
Location: PRow 144 - looking south



View location

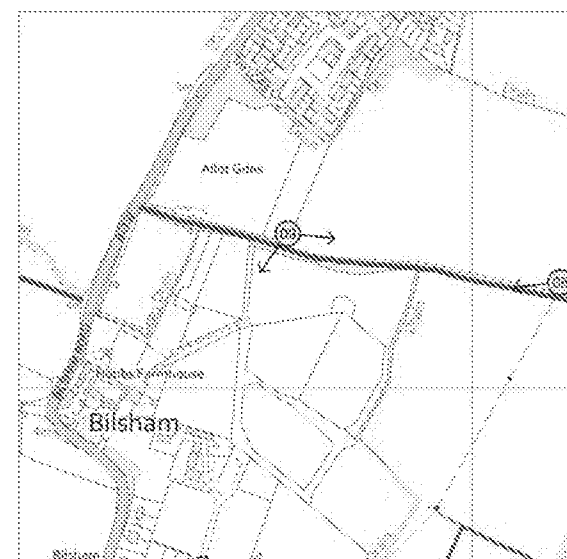
Visual description	Oblique partial view of the major part of the Site, screened by hedgerow vegetation along the northern boundary of the Site
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be partially visible above intervening hedgerow vegetation
Proposed mitigation	Additional tree planting to northern boundary of the Site to further filter or screen and soften potential views of Proposed Development



PROW 144



View 09
Location: PRow 144 - looking southeast



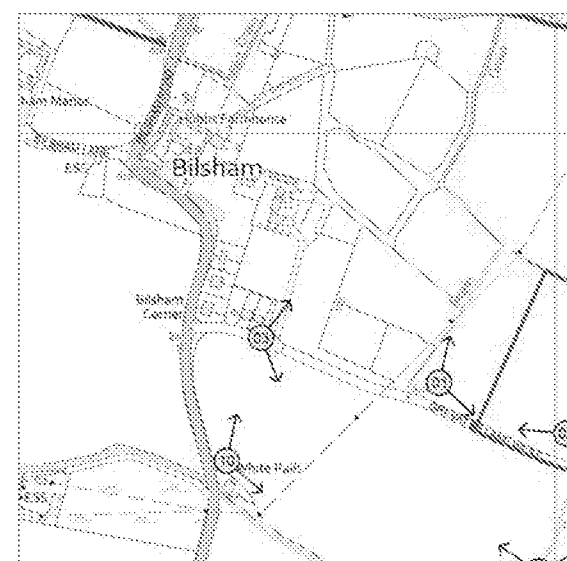
View location

Visual description	Oblique partial view of the major part of the Site, filtered through trees and hedgerow vegetation along PRow 144 and screened by intervening hedgerow adjacent to the western Site boundary
Potential impact	Proposed built form could be partially visible above intervening vegetation, with potential filtered views through hedgerow and tree canopies in winter
Proposed mitigation	Additional tree planting to western boundary of the Site to further filter or screen and soften potential views of Proposed Development

APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF SITE



View 10
Location: B2132 at White Rails - looking northeast



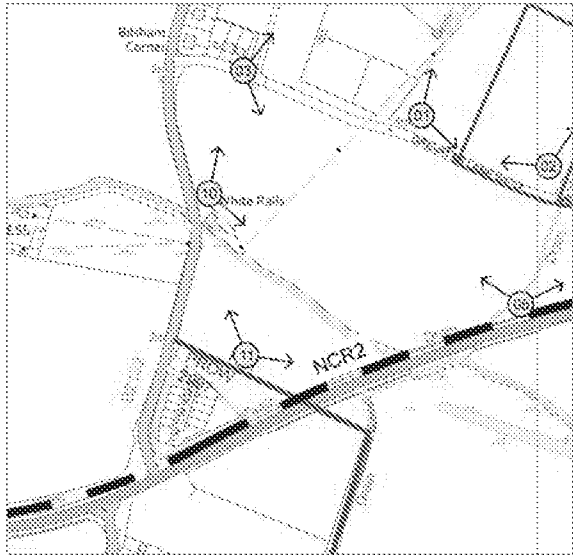
View location

Visual description	Direct view of the major part of the Site from north side and rear of residential properties, partially screened by hedgerow vegetation
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be largely visible to the east of existing hedgerow vegetation
Proposed mitigation	Proposed built form set back from Grevatt's Lane West behind a landscaped buffer, to reduce the massing of built form from this location and to soften and filter views. Additional screen planting to the foreground on other land within the applicant's control

APPROXIMATE EXTENT OF SITE



View 11
Location: PRow 2997 - looking north



View location

Visual description	Oblique partial view of the major part of the Site, above intervening field boundary vegetation
Potential impact	Proposed built form would be partially visible above intervening vegetation, with potential filtered views through hedgerow in winter
Proposed mitigation	Proposed built form set back from Grevatt's Lane West behind a landscaped buffer, to reduce the massing of built form from this location and to soften and filter views. Additional screen planting to the foreground on other land within the applicant's control

3.4 Conclusions and proposed mitigation

There are no high sensitivity receptors within the study area.

Views from medium sensitivity receptor National Cycle Route 2, to the south, are intermittently open but oblique and otherwise screened by roadside vegetation. Views from other medium sensitivity receptors, public rights of way to the north and south of the Site, have some partial direct or oblique views of the Site and Proposed Development would potentially be partially visible from a number of these locations. Residents of White Rails would have direct partial views from the side and rear of the two properties. Intervening vegetation, comprising of hedgerow and trees, provides varying degrees of filtering and screening of potential views from these receptors.

Low sensitivity receptors, public highways to the immediate south (Grevatt's Lane West) and to the further south (A259 Grevatts Lane) have some open views of the Site and Proposed Development would be fully visible from these locations. Other potential views are screened by intervening vegetation and built form.

Proposed mitigation to reduce visual impact:

- Set built form back from Grevatt's Lane West, behind a landscaped buffer, to reduce visual impact on views from the south and to focus development in areas of higher containment.
- Protect, extend and enhance existing boundary hedgerow and trees as characteristic landscape features which function as wildlife habitat and connect with wider green infrastructure.
- Strengthen visual containment of the Site, through tree and hedge planting, to filter and screen potential views of built form from public rights of way and other sensitive receptors.
- Provide an attractive landscape setting to the Proposed Development to enhance visual amenity for users, provide a high quality experience for mourners, and assist in integrating built form within the wider landscape.
- Retain the characteristic sense of openness between the Site and the wider landscape where appropriate through creation of framed and filtered views.



Figure 4: Visual Mitigation and Enhancement Plan

RECEPTORS	VISUAL MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENT
 Listed building	 Existing trees (offsite) to be protected
 Residential settlement	 Existing hedgerow to be retained and enhanced
 Public Right of Way	 Landscaped buffer (min 46m) to public highway
 National Cycle Route	 Avenue planting of specimen conifers to create dignified approach
 Public highway	 Additional native planting to strengthen boundary screening
	 Native planting to screen views
	 Intervisibility retained where appropriate to maintain open character and visual amenity

