

Agricultural Assessment

In relation to

Bonhams Field,

Yapton

West Sussex

For and on behalf of Seaward Properties Limited

Contents	Page
1 Terms of Instruction	3
2 Qualifications	3
3 Location and Description	3
4 Soils and Topography	4
6 Farming Requirements	5
7 Summary and Conclusion	6

Appendices

- 1 – Site Plan
- 2 – Location Plan
- 3 – Agricultural Land Classification Plan
- 4 – Soilscales Plan
- 5 – Photographs

1. Terms of Instruction

- 1.1 Instructions were received from Mr Jonathan Quarrell of Seaward Properties Limited, Chichester to provide an Agricultural Assessment over an area of Bonhams Field, Yapton, West Sussex.
- 1.2 The scope of the work is to include the provision of an Agricultural Assessment in relation to the quality and the ability to farm the parcel of land, including all necessary research, surveys and the preparation of a report and documents required by Seaward Properties Limited in support of a change of use over the land.
- 1.3 A copy of the appointment is attached at Appendix 1.

2. Qualifications

- 2.1 The subject property was inspected by Naomi Quick MRICS RICS Registered Valuer and Charlotte Williams Graduate Surveyor on 13th September 2016.
- 2.2 Naomi Quick is a qualified rural surveyor based in Guildford, covering the South East region and has the appropriate knowledge and expertise to undertake this work.

3. Location and Description

- 3.1 The land is situated in the village of Yapton, fronting on to the B2233 which is the main road through the village and provides access to the A29 to the north and A259 to the south
- 3.2 The land that forms the subject of this report is shown on the attached Site Plan at Appendix 2 and extends to approximately 3.2 hectares (8 acres). The land is partly divided by a mature hedge and has road frontage to the B2233 and has two access points, one directly from the B2233 and another across a shared driveway to Elm Barns (just off the B2233).
- 3.3 From our inspection we did not see any evidence of mains services (water or electric) to the land.
- 3.4 The land sits as two parcels, partly divided by a mature hedge, with an opening at one end. The western boundary of the land is made up of mature hedges and trees with residential properties on the eastern boundary and farm buildings to the northern boundary. The southern boundary fronts the road.
- 3.5 There is direct road access to the smaller parcel via an unused wrought iron gate. The remainder of the land is also accessible from this access; however it is not practical for modern farm machinery. Additional access to the site is through a shared entrance with Elm Barn, which we are informed is restricted to agricultural access only.

- 3.6 There are a few residential properties which abut into the land. These are divided from the land by a large stone wall boundary.
- 3.7 From our inspection we would suggest the land has been utilised for hay crops and after a conversation with the land agent we understand that during the winter months the land is sublet for sheep grazing. We would suggest the land has not been used for intensive farming purposes for some years.
- 3.8 We understand that the land is currently farmed by a local tenant farmer who has registered the land with the Rural Payments Agency and receives an annual Basic Payment and additional Environmental Stewardship. We understand that the tenant predominantly farms an arable enterprise and this small section of grassland is of little benefit to the overall arable holding.
- 3.9 There are no buildings or structures on the land and our investigations show that no planning consent has been achieved for any agricultural buildings.

4. Soils and Topography

- 4.1 We have not seen any evidence of any topographical survey of the land but from our inspection we would suggest the land has a gentle sloping gradient towards the road which is slightly steeper in some places but predominantly level away from the road.
- 4.2 An Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) of England and Wales was devised in the 1960s and forms the basis for advice given by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). This delivered a suitable framework for determining the physical grade of land on a national, regional and local level. The land was divided into grades with Grade 1 being the best quality land and Grade 5 being the poorest quality. Approximately 50% of the land is classed as Grade 3 and this has now been split up into sub-grades namely 3A, 3B, 3C.
- 4.3 The ALC provides the framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations on agricultural use. These limitations can operate in a number of principle ways and they may affect the range of crops that can be grown, the consistency and level of the yield and furthermore the cost of obtaining that yield. The ALC system gives considerable weight to flexible cropping.
- 4.4 The principle physical factors influencing agricultural production are climate, site and soil. The main climatic factors are temperature and rainfall although account is taken of the exposure aspect and frost risk. The site factors in the classification system are gradient, micro-relief and flood risk.
- 4.5 The soil characteristics of particular importance include texture, structure, depth and stone content.

- 4.6 In Appendix 4 there is a copy of the Agricultural Land Classification of the area and it is evident that the soils fall into the Grade 1 category which is typical for the surrounding area. As you will see from Appendix 4 Grade 1 and Grade 2 soils form a large percentage of the farmed area to the South of the A27.
- 4.7 At the time of our inspection we did not see any evidence of any land drains benefiting the land.
- 4.8 An informal check of Soilscales has indicated that the land is freely draining slightly acidic soil with low fertility typically suited to arable and grassland. A copy of the Soilscales Plan is provided at Appendix 5.

5. Farming Requirements

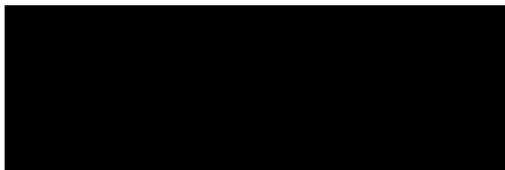
- 5.1 Within the surrounding farmed area the vast majority of agricultural land is now taken up into arable rotation, mostly used for salad crops, sweetcorn and potatoes, as well as traditional wheat and oil seed rape. The quality of the soils along the Chichester Coastal Plain are far superior to the soils to the north across the South Downs, and the dramatic change in farming practices over the last 10-15 years can be attributed to this.
- 5.2 It has become evident, from the reduction in Dairy Farms that the number of livestock units present on the Chichester Coastal Plain has decreased as arable has increased.
- 5.3 Coinciding with a greater shift towards arable farming, traditional farm machinery has changed, the size and efficiency of new agricultural machinery has increased dramatically, having a twofold effect – firstly fields must be larger and more conventionally shaped to maximise efficiency, and secondly, whilst farming enterprises are increasing in size modernisation is causing a decline in labour requirements. Smaller farms are integrated into larger farming enterprises by sale, shared-farming agreements or Farm Business Tenancies under the Agricultural Holdings Act 1995.
- 5.4 The land may have potential for livestock, however currently there is no stock fencing or water provisions nor any form of field shelter. The current tenant farmer is solely arable and we understand that occasionally the field is sublet for sheep grazing over the winter months.
- 5.5 As we have detailed in paragraph 3.1 the land benefits from two access points. We have not been provided with details of the shared access arrangements with Elm Barn but would imagine that the use of this access, across a residential property is not favourable by the local residents, particularly when considering the size of modern hay making equipment. The second access point, from the B2233 which does not appear to be utilised at present, would require large machinery to use a small access point off a relatively busy road between the villages of Yapton and Barnham, again not practical with modern machinery.
- 5.6 If the land were to be farmed for crop production, there is potential that the local residents and in particular the properties which adjoin the land, would have concerns

with regards to the application of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides to the crops. Whilst there are very strict guidelines related to the use and quantity of these sprays, there seems to be greater demand from local residents wanting to be aware of what is being applied to land, particularly when it is within a close vicinity to their property.

- 5.7 Furthermore, if within the rotation oil seed rape is grown, this crop seems particularly problematic with the increase of people suffering from allergies.

6. Summary and Conclusion

- 6.1 The subject land is above the national average in quality as defined by the Agricultural Land Classification; however it is not unexpected to be of this quality due to its location within the Chichester Coastal Plain. We feel that this parcel of land has significant limitations particularly due to its shape and size, limited access – due to size of gates and modern machinery, the location with the proximity to neighbouring housing.
- 6.2 We therefore conclude that the area of land, when considering all factors of a modern arable enterprise or stock management, that the land cannot profitably be cropped or grazed by the owner/occupier.



Naomi Quick MRICS

Bruton Knowles

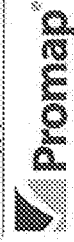
Appendix 1

Site plan

SITE PLAN: Land near Drove Lane, Yapton, West Sussex



Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2016. All rights reserved. Licence number 100021452, United States - 17500

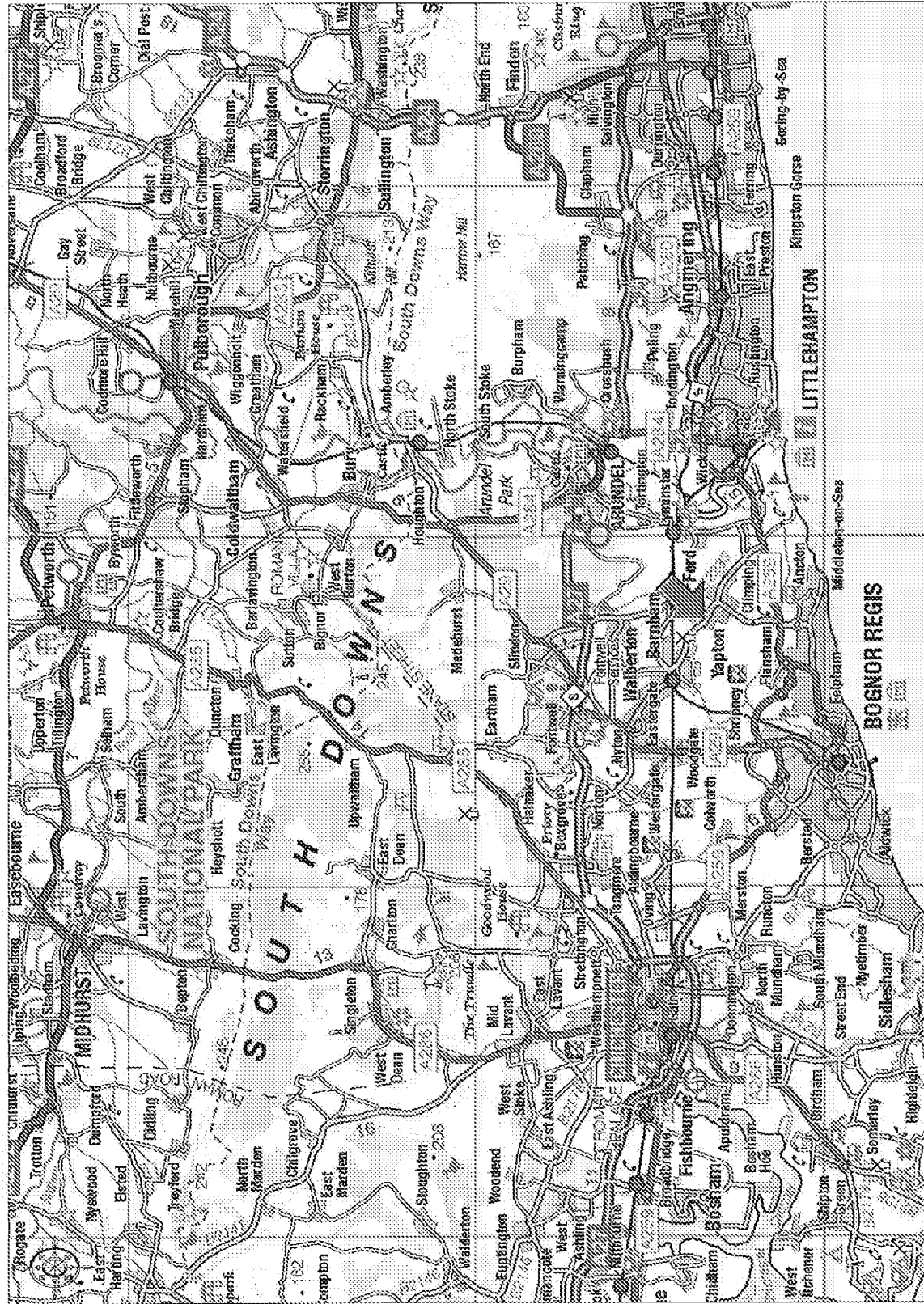


**Prepared by Bruton Knowles,
for Identification Purposes Only**

Appendix 2

Location Plan

LOCATION PLAN: Land near Drove Lane, Yapton, West Sussex



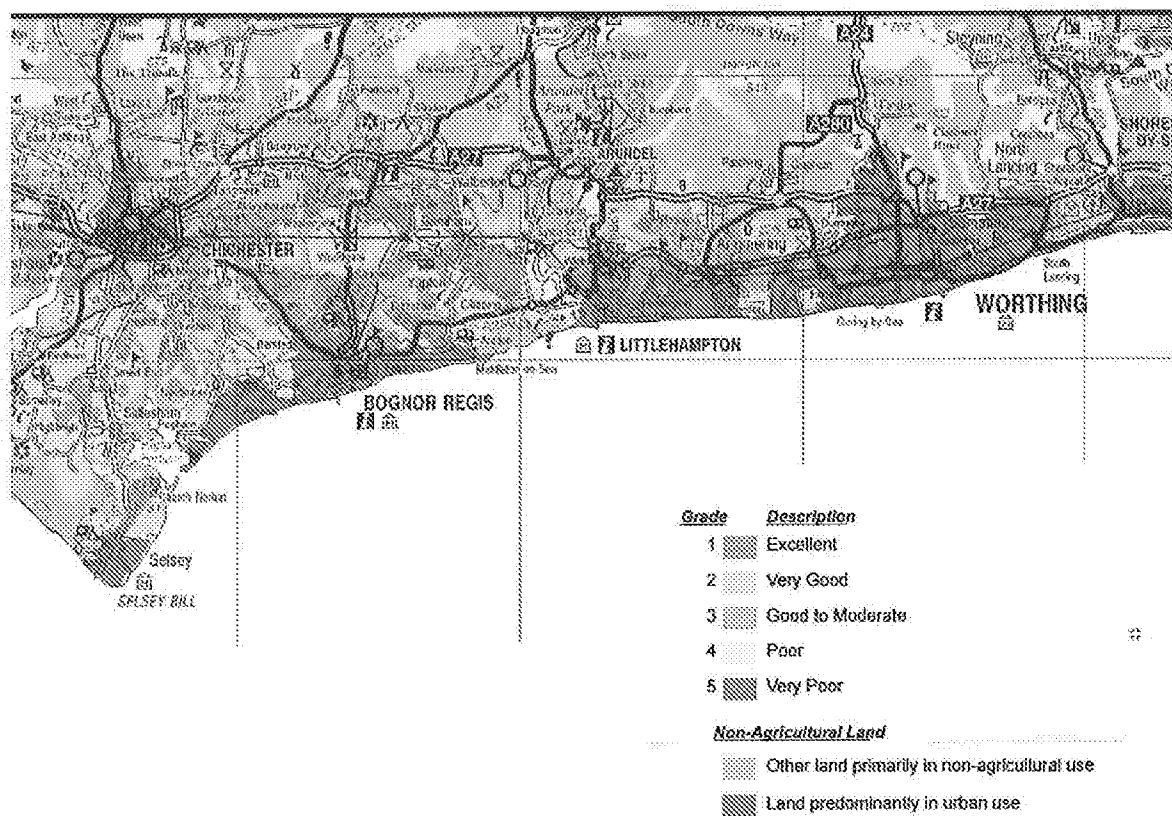
Ordnance Survey. © Crown Copyright 2016. All rights reserved. Licence number: 100024432. Printed Scale: 1:125000



Prepared by Bruton Knowles,
for Identification Purposes Only

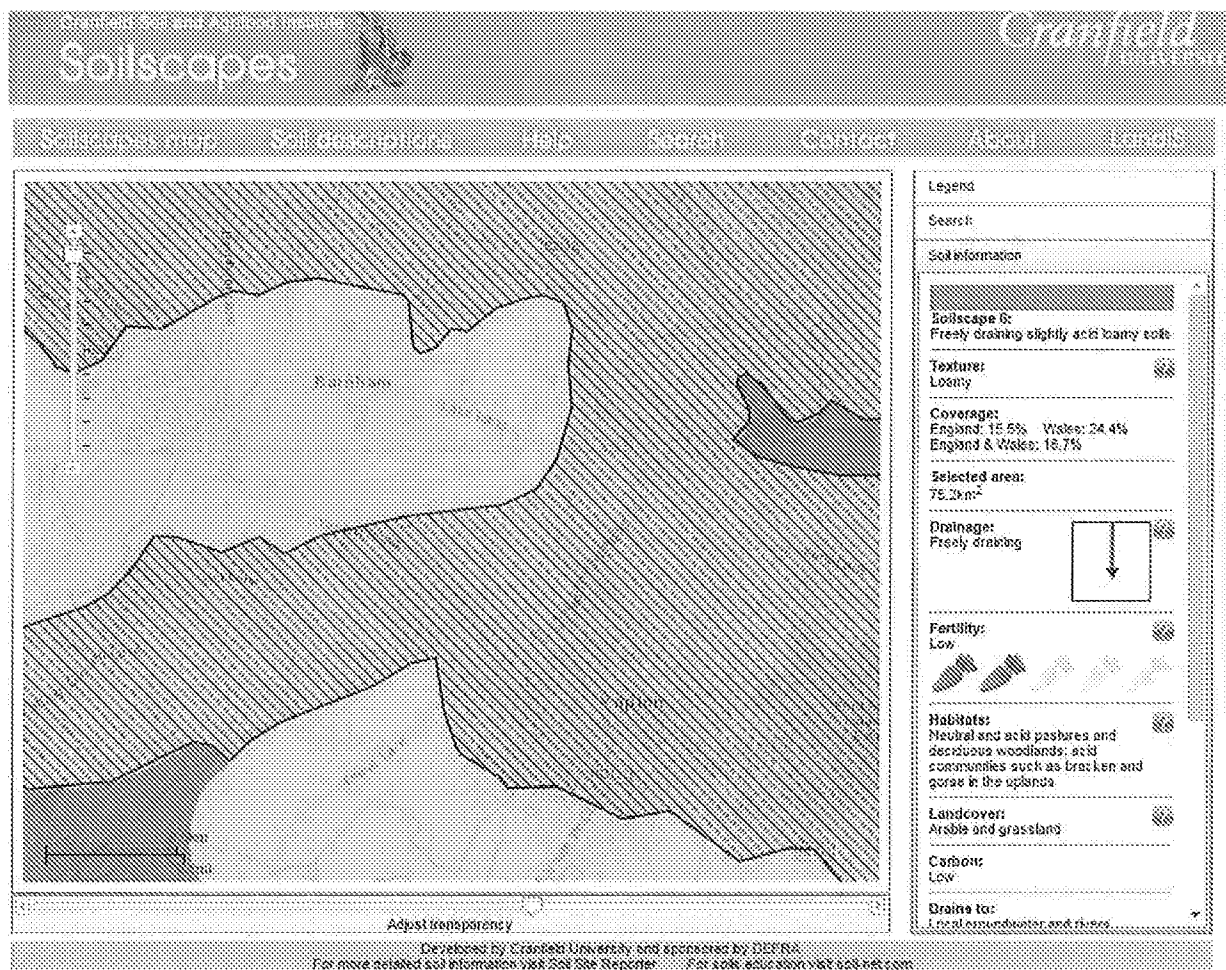
Appendix 3

Agricultural Land Classification Plan



Appendix 4

Soil Scape Plan

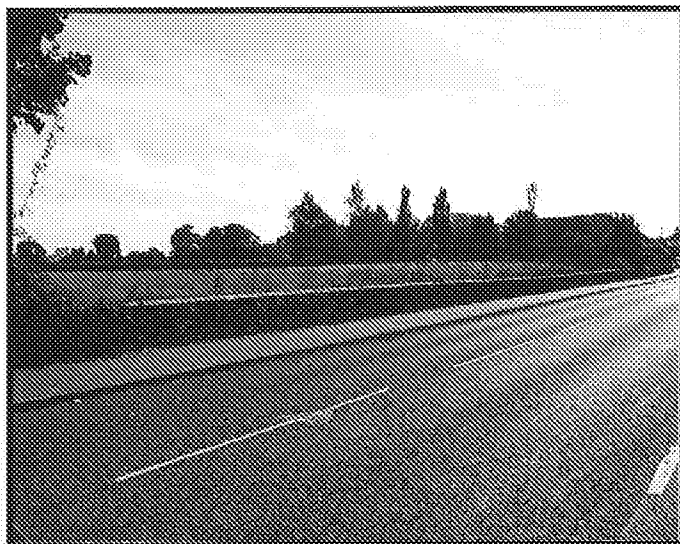


Appendix 5

Photographs

PHOTOGRAPHS

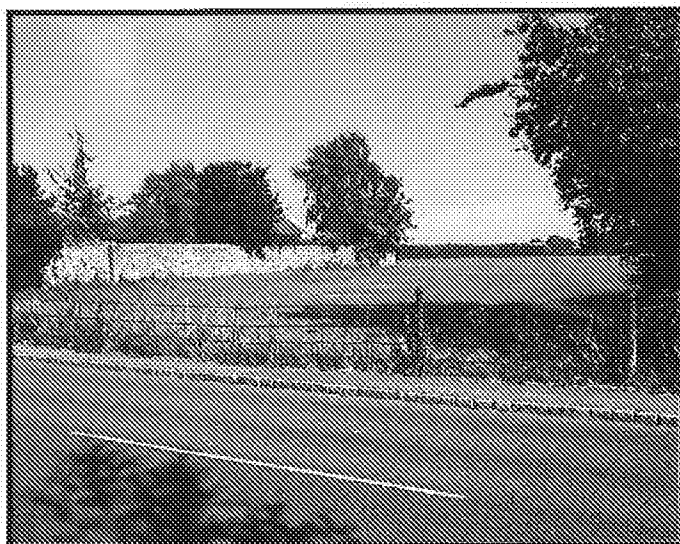
Bonhams Field, Yapton, West Sussex



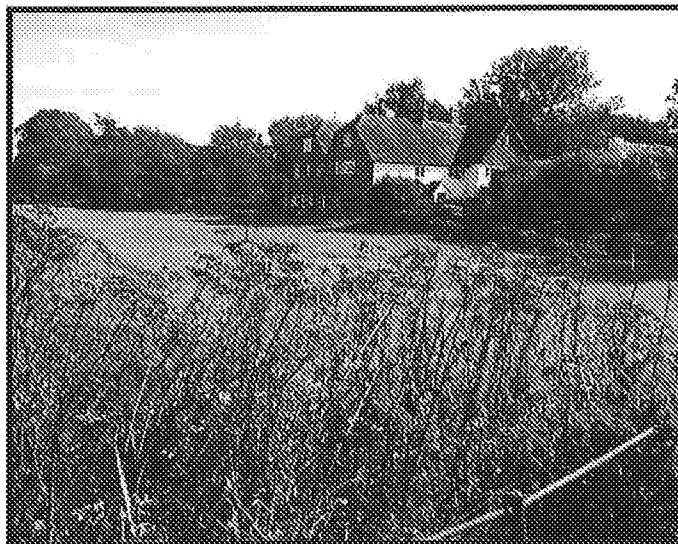
Road frontage, larger parcel



Road frontage, larger parcel



Road frontage, smaller parcel



Road frontage, smaller parcel, residential

PHOTOGRAPHS

Bonhams Field, Yapton, West Sussex



Smaller parcel, view towards road



Houses surrounded by subject land



Larger parcel, mature hedge division visible



Larger parcel, view towards central houses