

Landscape Visual Appraisal

Amendment to Design of Riverside South Portal Remenham, Berkshire

May 2026

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Project Number: 0772

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Introduction

Disclaimer

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Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Introduction

1.1: Bradley-Hole Schoenaich Landscape Architects have been instructed to undertake a review and update of the Landscape Character Assessment and Visual Appraisal carried out by Christopher Bradley Hole Landscape in July 2017, for the proposed developments at Strowdes Estate, Remenham, Berkshire. The Planning Reference of the Riverside Pavilion is 240832.

This document builds on and updates the Landscape Visual Appraisal carried out by Matthew Wigan Associates in November 2022 and Landscape Character Assessment and Visual Appraisal carried out by Christopher Bradley Hole Landscape in July 2017.

The Council Landscape Officer's comments on the previous applications confirmed that:

'Since this previous application there has been no change to the Core Strategy or Local Plan, however the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been updated with the current version issued in 2021. Also, since the previous approved application, the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment dated November 2019, has been updated and a draft Valued Landscapes Topic Paper dated January 2020, has been produced to support the Local Plan Update. In addition there is emerging Policy NE6 (Valued Landscapes) of the Proposed Submission Local Plan, which will potentially be adopted in 2026.

The Valued Landscapes Topic Paper identifies eleven Valued Landscapes throughout the Borough, one of which is the Chiltern Chalk Valued Landscape within which the application site is located. Now that this study has been undertaken to identify the various Valued Landscapes within the Borough, Paragraph 174(a) of the NPPF is relevant to this site and states that; development should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan).'

1.2: The Site is located within the Conway Estate, on the banks of the River Thames opposite Wargrave Road, south of Henley-on-Thames. It is accessed via a private route from the estate, with the proposed tunnel providing a direct connection to the riverside. The Site is well contained by undulating topography, dense vegetation, and mature woodland, including riparian planting along the riverbank. As

a result, the tunnel entrances (portals) are not visible from Wargrave Road, local footpaths, or nearby dwellings. The pavilion, positioned at the river's edge, is visible from the Thames Path on the opposite bank. The Site lies within the Thames River Valley landscape and forms part of the wider Chilterns setting.

The parkland in which this Site sits, has recently been brought back under active management.

The landscape brief seeks to integrate the pavilion and associated tunnel portals within a cohesive and enhanced riverside landscape setting, while reinforcing the functional and visual connection with the main estate.

Views from public rights of way and the public highway were assessed, both by desktop study and then by on-site testing in September and October 2025. The portals are not visible from publicly accessible locations due to intervening topography and vegetation. The pavilion is visible from the Thames Path on the opposite bank, however, views are filtered by riparian vegetation and the building appears recessive within the wider riverside landscape. Visibility was also considered in relation to the surrounding landscape context.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Introduction (Site location map - 7km)

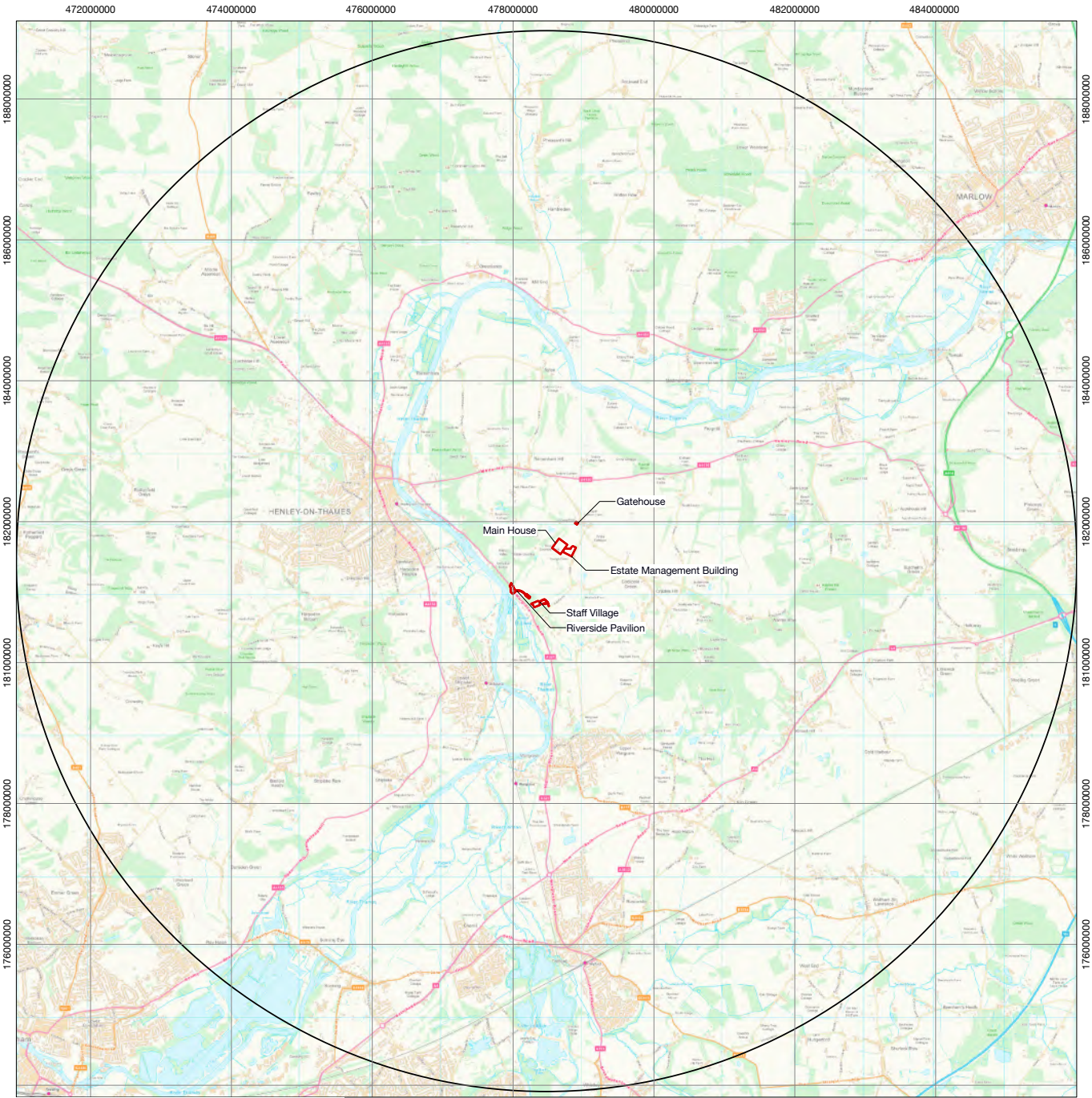


Figure 1 : Site Location and Study Area

Drawing notes

- Site Boundary
- 7km Buffer

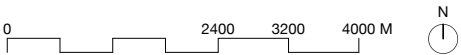


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Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Introduction (Site context map - 1km)



Figure 2 : Site Location and Context

Drawing notes

Estate Boundary

Other site boundaries

Application Site Boundary

1km Buffer

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Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Methodology

2.1: This appraisal considers two separate, but inter-linked issues as follows:

- Landscape Issues: The physical and cultural characteristics of the Site and its surroundings, and the landscape character of the local area; and
- Visual Issues: Views from visual receptors surrounding the Site and the amenity value of these views.

2.2: In considering these issues the standard industry guidance for good practice, on which the methodology adopted for this appraisal is based, includes the following guidance:

- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) 2013; and
- 'Landscape Character Assessment', the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) 2002.

The methodology adopted comprised a combination of desktop and field studies including the following:

- An overview of statutory plans and other data regarding relevant designations and planning policies for the area;
- A topographical analysis of the Site, using OS profile data, to establish the topography of the area and zone of theoretical visibility of the Site itself;
- An assessment of the landscape character of the Site, together with the sensitivity of the landscape to change. This includes the classification of the landscape into units of distinct and recognisable character;
- Identification of representative viewpoints and classifications of sensitivity;
- Consideration of the likely potential landscape and visual effects which might result from the proposed scheme options.

2.3: The visual analysis is based on views from external spaces within the public domain and not from inside buildings or private spaces. (Views from within the private grounds and from within the adjacent listed parkland are included for information only). Photographs were taken from selected viewpoints with a digital camera with the equivalent of a 50mm lens.

2.4: Where consideration is given to the likely potential

landscape and visual effects which might result from the proposed scheme options, the process of landscape and visual impact assessment is referred to. Whilst impact assessment is not carried out in this appraisal, the potential landscape and visual effects are considered with an understanding of the assessment process and include the following elements:

- The sensitivity of the affected landscape;
- The sensitivity of the visual receptor; and
- The nature and extent of the potential change that would occur.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy (2021)

3.1.1: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. In describing the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, paragraph 174 (a) states policies and decisions should be “protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

Regional Planning

Wokingham Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment 2019

3.1.2: The Site lies within the Thames River Valley. The northern area of the Site, connected with the Conway Estate, lies within the adjacent Remenham Wooded Chalk Slopes.

For the A1 'Thames River Valley' LCA, it states: The Thames River Valley has a strong character which is derived from the distinctive river channel with associated waterside habitats and the presence of picturesque and traditional settlements on the floodplain edge.

It is characterised by:

A flat alluvial floodplain dominated by a sinuous sweep of the River Thames and partly enclosed by steep chalk slopes. The area is characterised by large open arable fields, pasture, and areas of wetland and bankside woodland alongside the Thames and its tributaries. Small riverside settlements are clustered on the periphery, some of which have expanded away from the floodplain including Wargrave and Sonning. This is a popular recreational area, with the Thames navigation and the Thames Path national trail. There are views of and links to the Chilterns AONB.

In the 'Key Characteristics' section, it highlights the following relating to scenic quality and expands upon them in the text:

Dominated by the River Thames, the north of this area is defined by a pronounced sweeping meander; A flat floodplain landscape ranging from 30 to 40m AOD, dramatically accentuated and semienclosed by the steep, intermittently open and wooded, chalk landscapes of the Chilterns; Defined

geologically by a broad alluvial corridor with pockets of River Terrace; Large open geometric fields used for pasture close to the riverbank and increasingly for arable; Wetland character with fragments of semi-natural habitats; Influenced by adjoining formal parkland landscapes associated with large manor houses located on the adjoining chalk slopes of Remenham, Sonning and the Chilterns; Small nucleated and linear settlements clustered along the floodplain edge; Distinctive vernacular character typified by the use of warm red brick and flint particularly used in the floodplain villages; Popular recreational setting for rowing, canoeing and pleasure boating; Views of the landscape along the Thames and to the hills of the adjoining Chilterns AONB; Peaceful, picturesque and largely rural landscape with dark night skies, qualities that have inspired literary and artistic interest.

Other Related Designations and Environmental Considerations

Valued Landscapes Topic Paper January 2020

3.1.3: The Valued Landscape Topic Paper identifies the River Thames Valued Landscape as one of the areas within the study. It describes the area as:

The River Thames Valued Landscape centres on the River Thames which forms the northern boundary of the borough and the ancient boundary between the Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia. The River Thames arises in Lechlade, Wiltshire, has the largest water catchment of Britain's rivers and is the longest river entirely in England (215 miles, or 346 km). It passes through Oxford, Reading, Henley, Maidenhead and Windsor. The navigation starts at Lechlade near its source and continues to Teddington Lock in Richmond, where the river becomes tidal. Navigation in the tidal Thames continues to the Pool of London and onwards to the North Sea.

The Valued Landscape roughly follows the line of the flood plain but takes in higher ground where settlements, land use or features are intrinsically linked with the landscape of the river. The Valued Landscape's northern boundary is determined by the borough boundary for the purposes of the Borough's Local Plan Update. The River Thames Valued Landscape abuts the Chilterns Chalk and River Loddon valued landscapes to the east and south respectively.

Rarity – The Thames is Britain's largest river in terms of

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Planning Policy Context

catchment area (though not in terms of length or discharge). The landscape of the Thames main river is extremely rare and the landscapes of crossing points, particularly those like Sonning and Henley where the settlement is perched above the river on rocky outcrops (chalk in this case) are rarer still. The bridges at such road crossing are also a rare element, as are the Conservation Areas and listed buildings often found at such points.

The bridges over the Thames of the Great Western Railway (GWR) are of great historical significance and rarity; only one GWR bridge is an original Brunel bridge – built in 1840 (widened 1892) - at the confluence with the River Kennet at the western end of the part of the River Thames Valued Landscape that lies within the borough. The other rail bridge is at Wargrave, on the GWR's Henley branch line built in 1857, the bridge is an iron structure in contrast to I K Brunel's bridge which is built on skew having central elliptical arch with two round flood arches to either side.

In Wargrave and Remenham footpaths called 'Ferry Lane' approach the river affording views but no longer any crossing points. By definition all river crossings are both intimately associated with, and owe their being, to the riverine landscape but because of the size of the river and the history of the transport corridor these bridges, road and rail, are particularly important.

Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update : Proposed Submission Plan 2023-2040 (To be potentially adopted 2026)

Policy NE6: Valued Landscapes

3.1.4: This policy designates 13 specific areas within the borough as Valued Landscapes, recognised for their distinctive landscape character and special qualities. The Estate site lies within the Remenham Chalk Valued Landscape, one of the borough's designated areas of particular landscape importance.

Development within or affecting these landscapes must protect their distinctive features and character, having regard to key landscape attributes, including:

1. Landscape quality (condition)
2. Scenic quality
3. Rarity

4. Representativeness
5. Conservation interests
6. Recreation value
7. Perceptual aspects
8. Associations

Proposals will only be supported if they protect, and where possible, enhance or integrate with these valued characteristics. Development that would harm these qualities will only be permitted if the benefits clearly outweigh the harm.

The policy is informed by the Landscape Character Assessment and the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) to ensure decisions are based on an objective understanding of landscape value.

While these 13 areas are formally identified, the policy can also apply to other valued landscapes identified through future assessments or mechanisms.

Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Managing Development Delivery 2014 Policy TB21 (Landscape Character)

3.1.5: The Landscape Character Policy calls for:

1. Proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, including the landscape quality; landscape strategy; landscape sensitivity and key issues.
2. Proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

Public Rights of Way

3.2: The Thames Path in Henley-on-Thames is a fully signposted National Trail and public right of way, following the riverbank through the town, and connecting to surrounding settlements such as Lower Shiplake and Temple Island. In the vicinity of the Site, the Thames Path is located on the opposite bank of the River Thames, providing a public viewpoint towards the riverside landscape and the proposed development.

The Chiltern Way wraps around the north and east of the Estate Site, for a short extent, running directly beside the development. The Chiltern Way loops over the River Thames

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Planning Policy Context

and runs along the west bank of the river. To the south east, the PROW of Penny Lane crosses other public footpaths that cross Crazies Hill and head north west towards the Estate Site. Despite the proximity and number of public footpaths, views into the Estate Site are generally screened by intervening topography, mature hedgerows and woodland, with the exception of the Thames Path opposite the Site where limited views towards the riverside are available. (Refer Figure 3)

Tree Preservation Orders

3.3: There are no Tree Preservation Orders on the Site. An Arboricultural Report has been completed to assess any potential impact on trees adjacent to the Site during the works and construction process.

Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Listed Gardens and Scheduled Ancient Monuments

3.4: The Site is not within a Conservation Area.

3.5: There are a few listed buildings within the study area, all of which are listed Grade II, none of which have visibility of the Site. (Refer Figure 4)

3.6: The Site lies outside the Grade II* Registered Parks and Gardens of Park Place and Temple Combe. (Refer Figure 4)

Historic Setting

3.7: The first edition Ordnance Survey plan of 1895 (Refer Figure 5) shows the Site within its context to the south east of Park Place.

3.8: The area now known as Happy Valley is first recorded as a lane running through 'Begtrey Common', bordered to the north-west by pasture and a steep river escarpment leading to the main house grounds. To the south-east, it is similarly enclosed by a river cliff, beyond which farmland extends towards Weedon Hill. The lane forms a T-junction with the Henley to Wargrave Road, which follows the riverbank.

The river frontage extends from Henley Bridge to the Hennerton Backwater and was established as an important area of the Estate, with three areas assigned lot numbers in

the sales catalogue. A small outlet is shown adjacent to the wooded river edge. The first Lombardy poplar to be grown in England is reputed to have been raised along this frontage, possibly near the wooded area or at the location of a solitary tree identified on Lot 23 by the river. An ornamental tomb is also recorded as having been situated nearby in 1792.

This formed an important area of Conway's 18th-century landscape garden and continued to serve as an important destination for visitors through to the Edwardian period, with the bridge carrying Wargrave Road providing access to riverside walks and boathouses.

The majority of the riverside section is characterised by formal lawns and ornamental planting, which are of relatively low ecological value. To the east of the last Boat House, management is reduced and the vegetation becomes more semi-natural in character. The adjacent river cliff appears to support native woody vegetation, comparable to lowland beech and yew woodland. This area was not fully assessed due to limited access to the river cliff and uncertainty regarding land ownership.

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Landscape and Visual Planning Policy Context

(Public Rights of Way map - 1 km)



Figure 3 : Public Rights of Way

Drawing notes

- Application Site Boundary
- 1km Buffer
- ① Public Footpath
- ② Public Bridleway
- ③ Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT)

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Landscape and Visual Planning Policy Context

(Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens map - 1km)



Figure 4 : Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens

Drawing notes

- ▭ Application Site Boundary
- Listed Buildings
- 1km Buffer
- Registered Parks and Gardens

Image data sources

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Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape and Visual Planning Policy Context (Historic map)



Figure 5: One-Inch England and Wales Revised New Series - Henley on Thames 1872-1914

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character

National Character

4.1: The Character of England Map, divides the country into 159 distinct National Character Areas (NCAs), each representing a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, and cultural and economic activity that together define the character of England's natural environment.

4.2: Site lies within the updated NCA 110, **The Chilterns**. An extract of the NCA description is provided below:

- The chalk plateau is incised by parallel branching valleys gently shelving to the south-east into the London Basin. The large chalk aquifer is abstracted for water to supply London and its surrounds and also supports flows of springs, chalk streams and the River Thames.
- There are several chalk streams. Features associated with a history of modification include historic mills, watercress beds, culverts and habitat enhancements.
- The north-west-facing escarpment is an abrupt relief feature beside low-lying vales, breached notably by the Thames at the Goring Gap. The escarpment lowers northwards, terminating as distinct hills. The Chiltern ridge offers panoramic views.
- Within the Chilterns, views are enclosed within branching valleys, sunken routeways and extensive woodland and hedgerow-enclosed fields. There are hidden, tranquil pockets along single track lanes and rights of way.
- A mixture of arable, grassland and woodland and the numerous commons reflects the dominance of Grade 3 agricultural land. Ancient woodland has remained on extensive clay-with-flint deposits, while very steep slopes are rarely cultivated. There are, however, not inconsiderable areas of Grade 1 and 2 land that are associated with lower-lying areas and river valleys.
- Numerous parkland landscapes define large, historic estates. Designs by Humphry Repton and Lancelot 'Capability' Brown are represented, and the houses, follies and wooded features provide local landmarks.

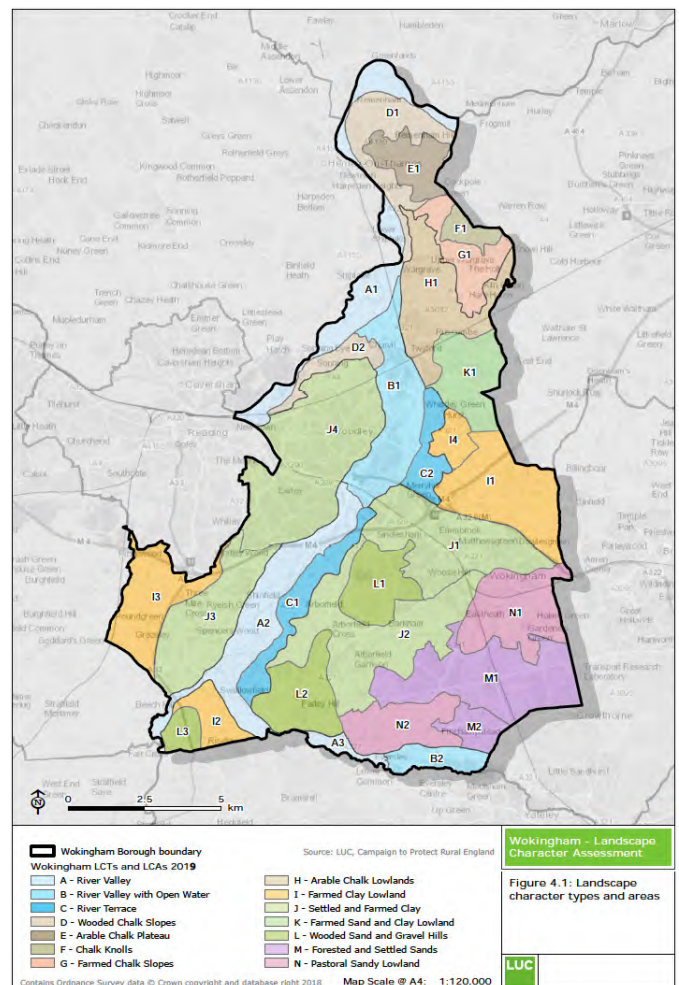


Figure 6: Wokingham Landscape Character Areas Map

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character

Regional Character

4.3: The Wokingham Landscape Character Study, identifies different landscape character areas in the district. The Site falls within the “A Thames River Valley” and “D Wooded Chalk Slope” character type.

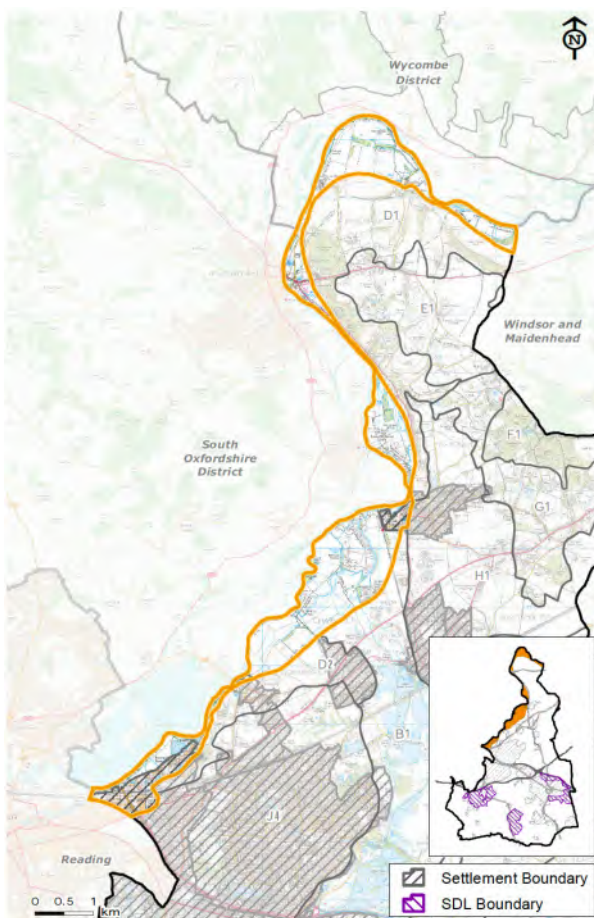


Figure 7: A1 Thames River Valley, Character Areas Map

The key characteristics of the A1 Thames River Valley are described as follows:

- Dominated by the River Thames, the north of this area is defined by a pronounced sweeping meander, becoming braided and branching further south around Charvil and Wargrave with faster flowing streams and interconnected drainage channels.
- A flat floodplain landscape ranging from 30 to 40m AOD, dramatically accentuated and semienclosed by the steep, intermittently open and wooded, chalk landscapes of the Chilterns and those within Wokingham borough. The floodplain becomes wider and more expansive in the south where the River Loddon joins the Thames to the west of Wargrave.
- Defined geologically by a broad alluvial corridor with pockets of River Terrace. The well drained and fertile soils support a mosaic of arable and pastoral land uses including wet meadows in flood-prone areas close to the river.
- Large open geometric fields used for pasture close to the riverbank and increasingly for arable. The fields are often undivided or divided by drainage channels or post and wire fences. Between Wargrave and Charvil there are horticultural polytunnels.
- Wetland character with fragments of semi-natural habitats (which support rare and important species such as Loddon Lily), including BAP priority habitat floodplain grazing marsh, lowland fen, and wet woodland as well as waterside features such as pollarded willows. Many of these habitats are recognised as LWS and the area is largely included in the Chilterns Escarpment and Loddon Valley Gravel Pits BOA.
- Influenced by adjoining formal parkland landscapes associated with large manor houses located on the adjoining chalk slopes of Remenham, Sonning and the Chilterns. Temple Island with its elegant romantic folly by James Wyatt is a particular landmark on this stretch of the Thames.
- Small nucleated and linear settlements clustered along the floodplain edge including hamlets, for example Aston and Remenham; and larger towns and villages, such as Wargrave and Sonning, which have expanded into adjoining character areas.
- Distinctive vernacular character typified by the use of warm red brick and flint particularly used in the floodplain villages including Remenham, and the conservation areas of Sonning, Wargrave and Henley Bridge.
- Popular recreational setting for rowing, canoeing and pleasure boating. Fishing, walking and cycling, along the banks with long-distance walking and running along the

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character

Thames Path National Trail. Supporting facilities include boatyards, boatsheds and towpaths. Other infrastructure such as locks and weirs are essential for the practical management of the river and its water levels and also enhance the setting for recreation.

- Views of the landscape along the Thames and to the hills of the adjoining Chilterns AONB. In some places views are focused along the river channel and framed by bankside vegetation, predominantly willow, particularly in the south. Around Wargrave Marsh the views become very open as the floodplain widens.
- Peaceful, picturesque and largely rural landscape with dark night skies, qualities that have inspired literary and artistic interest including Jerome K. Jerome in his famous 'Three Men in a Boat'.

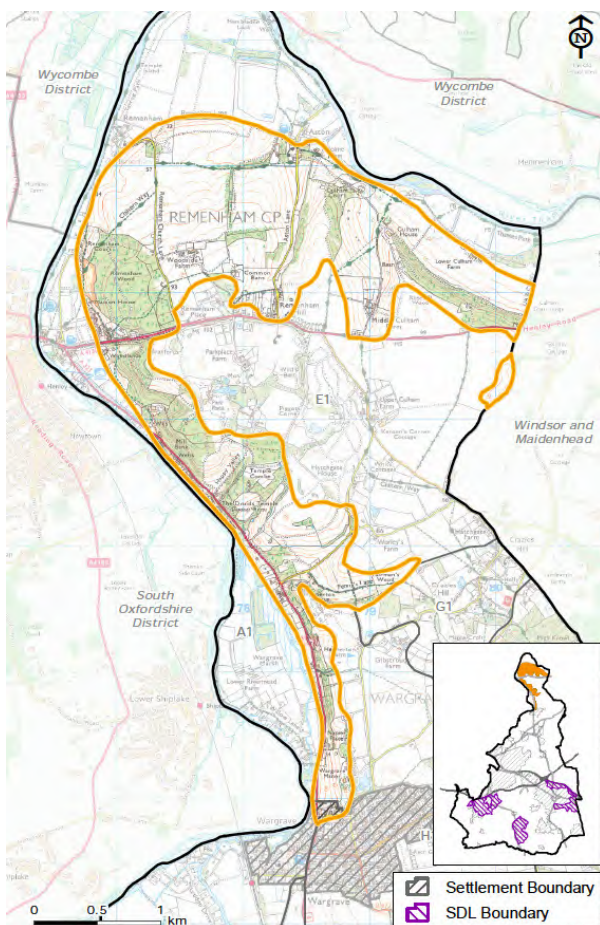


Figure 8: D1 Remenham Wooded Chalk Slope, Character Areas Map

The key characteristics of the D1 Remenham Wooded Chalk Slopes are described as follows:

- Dramatic chalk slopes and cliffs rising sharply from valley floodplain of the River Thames from 40m to 100m AOD. The steep valley sides dominate the landscape, with incised coombe valleys creating areas with a more intimate character. Localised areas of gravels overlie the dominant underlying Chalk Formations.
- Heavily wooded character created by woodlands blanketing the steepest slopes. The woodland is mostly BAP priority habitat lowland mixed deciduous woodland, and coniferous woodland blocks of varying shape. There are characteristic hanging valleys with BAP priority habitat beech and yew woodland. Many of the woods are designated as LWS and contain ancient woodland including Cannon Wood and Remenham Wood.
- Small pastoral fields in the west contrast with larger arable fields in the north. The arable fields tend to have no obvious boundaries or field divisions, while the pasture fields in the west are bounded by woodland.
- Areas of open grass pastures suggestive of 'downland' are predominantly grazed by sheep. Small areas of BAP priority habitat lowland calcareous grassland, designated as LWS (Happy Valley and Conways Bridge, Chalk Grassland Remenham, Grassland Slope Wargrave), found on the steepest valley slopes, support a number of restricted and rare grassland species.
- Formal parkland estates associated with large country houses on the chalk slopes overlooking the Thames e.g., Remenham Court (Grade II listed). Grazed pasture, lawns and parkland trees, including the Cedar of Lebanon avenues at Hennerton House, are distinctive features. The Grade II* Park Place and Temple Combe Registered Park and Garden covers much of this area south of the A4130. Culham Court, Grade II* and associated parkland occupies rolling slopes south of the Thames with views to the estate from the other side of the Thames Valley.
- Small hamlets, clustered on the floodplain edge, exhibit a consistent vernacular character, typified by warm polychromatic Reading brick, flint, and black weatherboarding. This character is evident in hamlets such as Aston and Remenham, and in the listed buildings

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character

of the Wargrave Conservation Area.

- Rural lanes and tracks, frequently sunken, are enclosed by steep banks and hedges, and wind up the dry valleys e.g., Remenham Church Lane. The A321 runs along much of the western boundary, and introduces noise and movement into an otherwise rural area.
- Limited access by footpath except for the promoted route of the Chilterns Way which runs along the lower slopes connecting to the Thames Path before climbing to Remenham Hill.
- Sense of peacefulness due to the intimate scale, limited settlement and remoteness of the landscape with a strong experience of 'dark skies'.
- Glimpsed picturesque views across the Thames Valley to the Chilterns AONB which can open out dramatically in places.

The landscape surrounding the Thames is essentially a flat floodplain, which in places shelves gently down to the river. The flatness and openness of this landscape contrasted dramatically with some of the most elevated and steepest land in the area, particularly in the north of the borough where the floodplain abuts the precipitously rising Remenham Wooded Chalk Slopes on the right bank and the strongly rolling hills of the Chilterns on the left. Where the River Loddon joins the River Thames, west of Wargrave, the floodplain opens up and is wide and expansive.

The area is partially wooded. The woodland is concentrated in linear belts following the watercourses or belts of trees marking property boundaries, often BAP priority habitat deciduous woodland with some conifers. The smaller drainage channels set within the pastures are sporadically punctuated with pollarded willows. Large species deciduous trees growing beside the river, add to the wooded character of the area.

Local character

4.4: The Site is located within gently undulating landform that falls towards the River Thames, with Wargrave Road situated on the opposite bank. The landscape is characterised by dense woodland and riparian vegetation, which provide strong enclosure.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character

(Landscape Character Map - 1km)

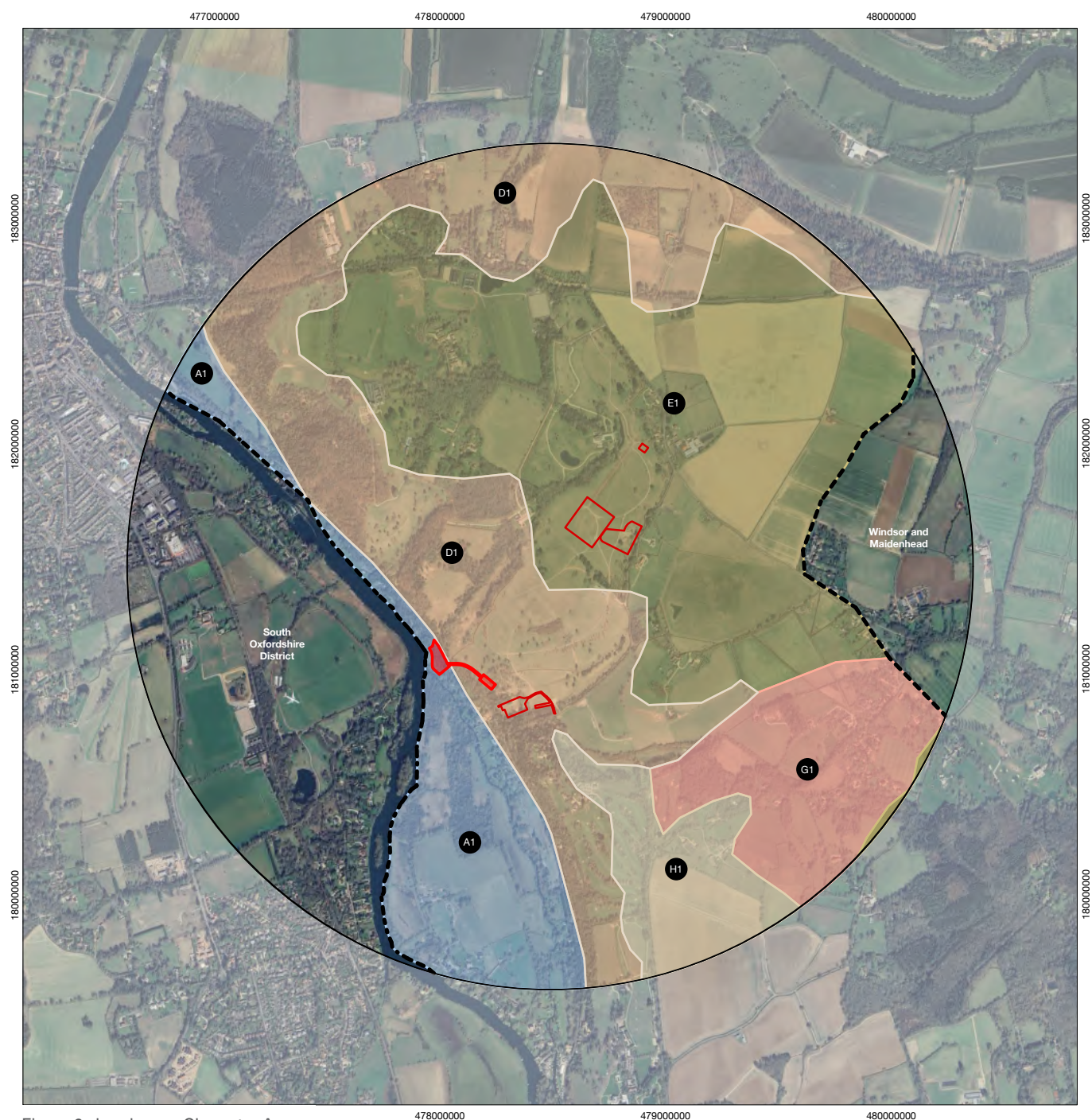


Figure 9 : Landscape Character Areas

Drawing notes

 Application Site Boundary	A1 Thames River Valley	D1 Remenham Wooded Chalk Slopes	G1 Hare Hatch Farmed Chalk Slopes
 1km Buffer	 Wokingham Borough boundary	E1 Remenham Arable Chalk Plateau	H1 Wargrave-Twyford Arable Chalk Lowlands

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Landscape Appraisal - Character



Figure 10 : Local character image 1

The workings of the river, beside Marsh Lock and Wier
Private dwellings are nestled into the hillside.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character

Estate Site Character Analysis



Figure 11 : Aerial of site area

4.5: The northern part of the Estate is situated on the edge of the chalk plateau, while the southern section occupies one of the chalk slope folds typical of this part of the Thames Valley corridor. The grounds of Strowdes Estate form a linear strip of parkland that broadens toward the south.

The Estate rises to approximately 103m AOD in the north, sloping southward to around 55m AOD near the A321, with the proposed development located on the plateau at roughly 93m AOD. The grounds are largely enclosed by mature boundary hedgerows and the rising terrain to the west. The upper section near the Culham Lane entrance is more open to the west and subdivided by estate railings adjoining the Hamilton Estate. The central section, where the development site is situated, is defined by recent plantations. The lower southern grounds are well-treed, featuring mature parkland specimens such as cedar, lime, and oak. A circular surfaced track gently descends to the south before looping back to the generally flatter middle section of the park.

A tall, well-maintained beech hedge defines the entire eastern boundary. The southern boundary comprises a heavily wooded belt running parallel to the A321, while the western edge is formed by the rising terrain of Temple Combe, planted with ash, oak, and lime. The elevated topography limits views into the Temple Combe valley, and there is no intervisibility with the western extent of the Registered Park. The estate is generally well managed, with neatly maintained grass and grounds.

The Estate is traversed by a meandering, unmetalled driveway with a series of loops.

At its southern extent, the Estate transitions towards the River Thames, where the landform falls more steeply and is characterised by dense woodland and riparian vegetation, creating a well-contained and visually cohesive riverside setting.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



Figure 12 : Viewpoints showing the site character

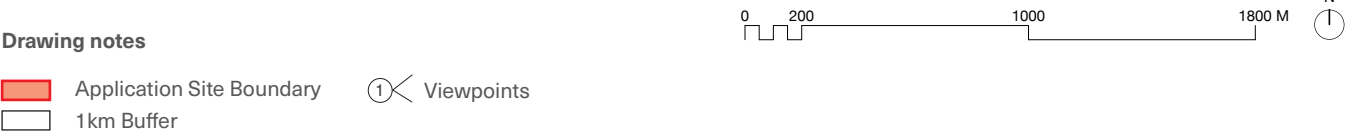


Image data sources

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Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View south towards the river along adjacent Wargrave Road
No view possible.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View from Thames Path on Marsh Lock and Wier.
Potentially a glimpsed view from the lock.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View from Thames Path moving northwards (site is located well to the right of this viewpoint)
No views possible due to tall grasses and dense vegetation.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View from Thames Path moving southwards (site on right)

A possible view from the path screened by tall grasses and dense vegetation.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View from Thames Path

A view from the area of land directly opposite the site.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View from Thames Path

A view from the area of land directly opposite the site.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View from Thames Path towards River Thames

A view from the path and the meadow. Extensive vegetation in the foreground.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View from Thames Path access point

Potentially a glimpsed view from the path and the meadow. Extensive vegetation in the foreground.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View south Thames Path along adjacent Bolney Road
No view possible.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Character



View from South-Western train travelling from Shiplake to Henley-on-Thames
No view possible.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Proposal

The Development Proposal

4.6: The proposal seeks to introduce a pavilion structure along the River Thames, north portal and south portal, positioned in close proximity to the existing boat house within the same estate.

The pavilion, with a height of 3.40 metres, is designed as a lightweight riverside structure elevated on stilts and raised by 530mm compared with the consented scheme to respond to flood risk and ensure resilience to fluctuating water levels. Two portal structures, the South Portal with a height of 4.615 metres and the North Portal head wall with a height of 7.15 metres, will provide connections between the main estate and the pavilion, reinforcing the relationship between the riverside setting and the wider Estate. The elevated form of the pavilion minimises ground disturbance and maintains the openness of the riverside landscape, allowing floodwaters to pass beneath the structure while preserving visual permeability.

LA London Architects plans and sections (May 2026) illustrate the proposed massing, levels, and immediate site context. The proposal has been carefully positioned to sit alongside the existing boat house, respecting the established character and setting of the Thames frontage.

The proposals form part of a wider Proposed Landscape Masterplan, including enhanced riverside planting, strengthened boundary vegetation, and native grassland which support visual integration and biodiversity.

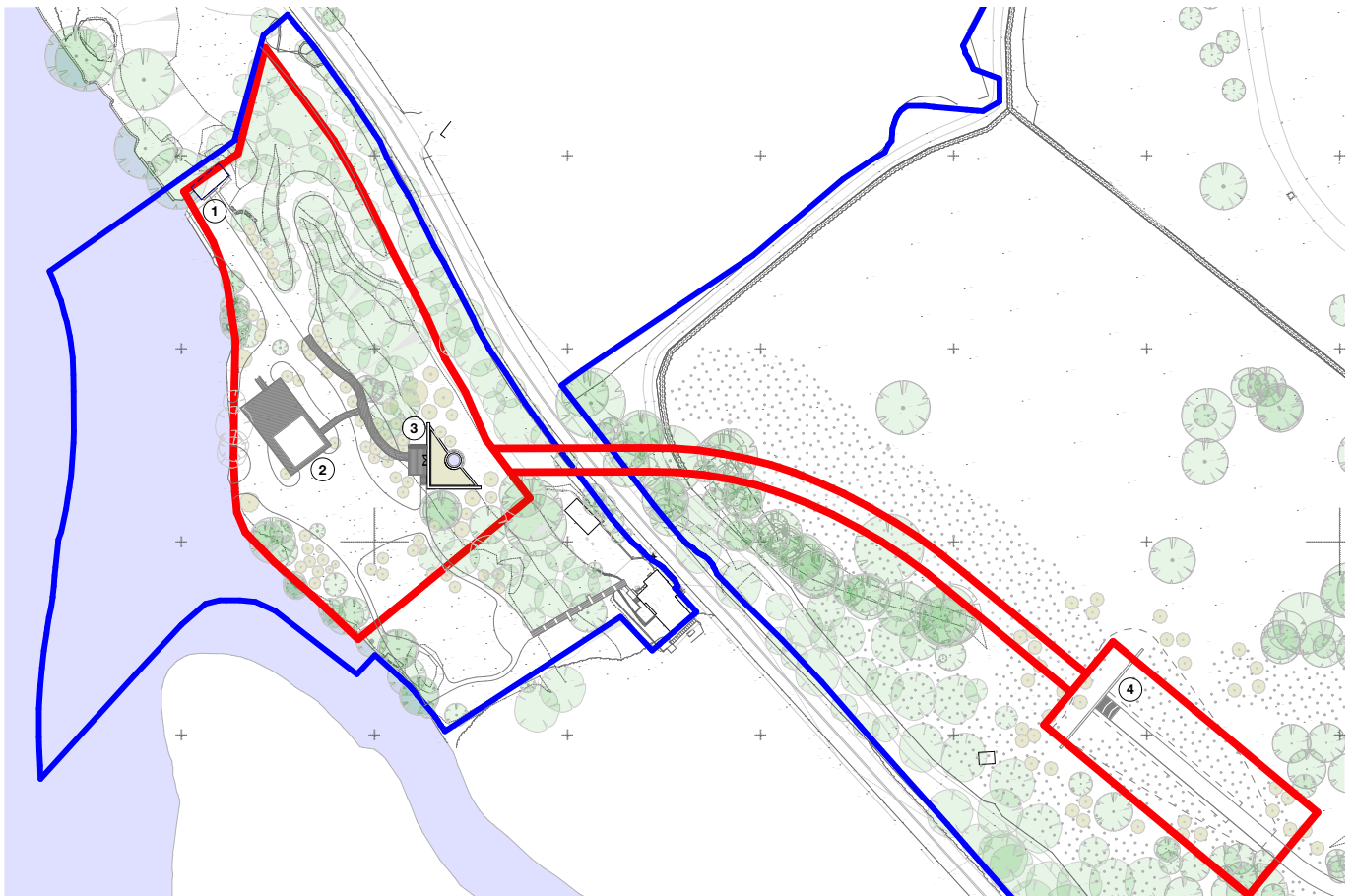


Figure 13 : Proposed Plan, May 2026

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Proposal

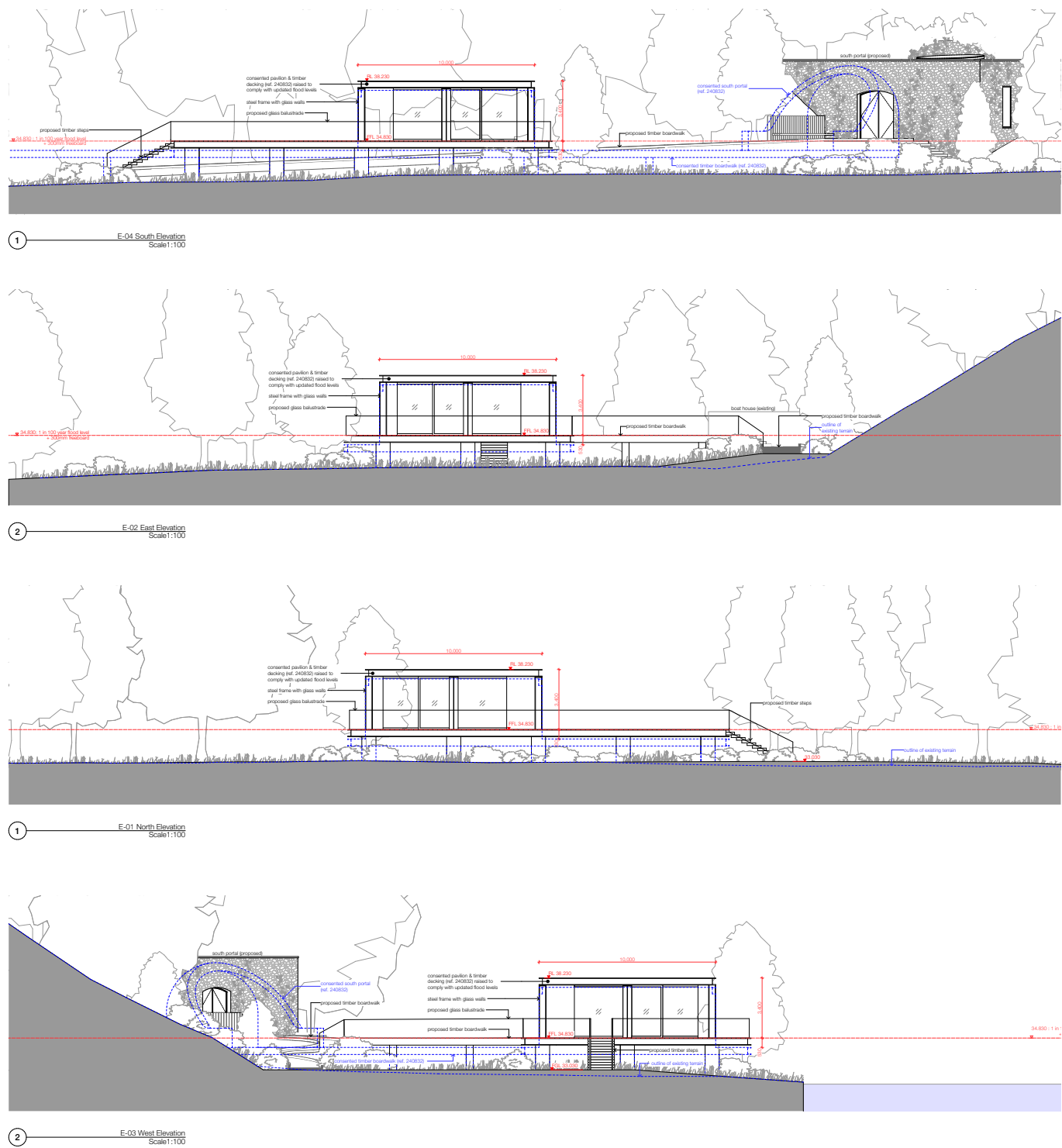


Figure 14 : Proposed Elevations and Sections - Riverside Pavilion, May 2026

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Landscape Appraisal - Proposal

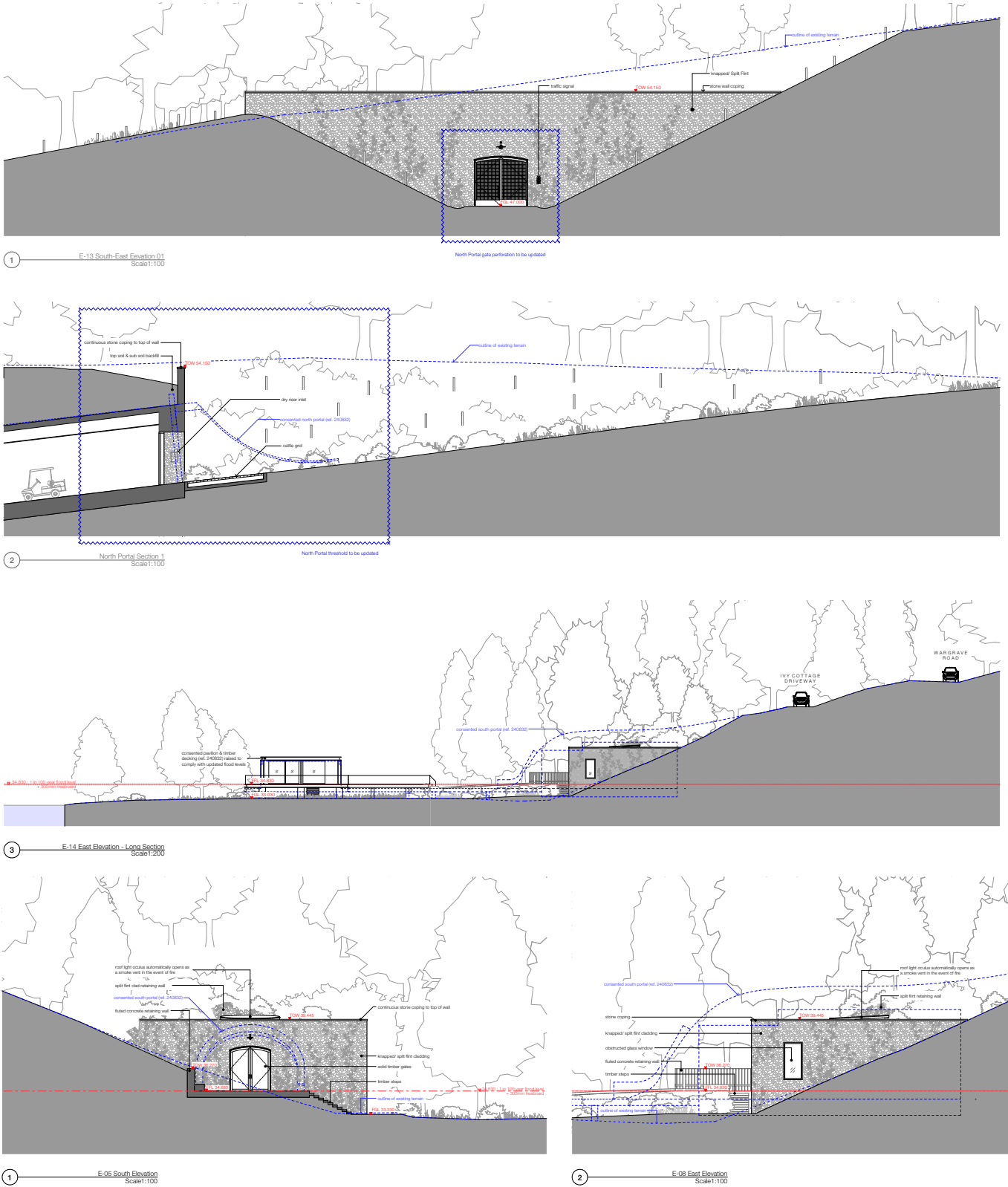


Figure 15 : Proposed Elevations and Sections - North and South Portal, May 2026

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Likely Landscape and Visual Effects

5.1: The proposed development comprises a riverside pavilion connected by a tunnel, extending from the North Portal within the Conway Estate to the South Portal on the opposite side of Wargrave Road, forming the southern node of the tunnel. The proposal is supported by a Landscape Masterplan, with the structures designed to sit lightly within the riverside landscape.

5.2: The visual appraisal draws upon a series of representative viewpoints selected from the surrounding areas of the Site. To support this assessment, a topographical analysis was undertaken using Ordnance Survey (OS) base mapping to establish an approximate Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). This analysis indicates the relative potential visibility of the Site from surrounding locations, without accounting for the screening effects of vegetation or built structures. Consequently, it serves to highlight areas where notable visual effects could arise, thereby guiding the focus of field investigations.

The desk study identified several public locations with potential views of the Site. Fieldwork confirmed that, while local topography and vegetation largely screen views from Wargrave Road and the surrounding area, the Site is visible from the opposite bank of the River Thames, including from the Thames Path.

The Thames Path runs along the opposite bank of the River Thames, providing relatively open views across the water toward the Site. The foreground is defined by the river channel, with the near bank framed by riverside vegetation and existing tree cover. The Site is set within a well-vegetated riverside landscape, where mature trees and dense planting form a strong visual backdrop. Within this context, the pavilion is visible but appears filtered through vegetation, with its form partially perceived against the surrounding landscape framework.

Fieldwork was undertaken while trees were in full leaf. While this is not the optimal season for assessing maximum visibility, it is considered that seasonal reduction in foliage during winter months may slightly increase the degree of intervisibility from the Thames Path. However, the overall level of visibility and the perceived relationship of the pavilion within the riverside landscape would remain largely unchanged.

The Site is visible from the Thames Path on the opposite bank of the River Thames, which forms the primary publicly accessible viewpoint. From these vantage points, views are experienced across the water and are partially filtered by intervening riverside vegetation along both banks. The pavilion is perceived within this context as a small-scale, lightly expressed element set within the wider riverside landscape, with no evidence of significant visual intrusion or dominance.

Landscape Analysis and Evaluation

5.3 There is limited visual connection between the Site and the wider landscape character area, with visibility primarily confined to the immediate riverside context, including the Thames Path. Construction activities are expected to give rise to temporary adverse noise effects in close proximity to the Site. However, these effects would diminish with distance and would not materially affect the wider landscape character due to the localised extent of visual and acoustic influence.

The proposed development would not result in any landscape impacts on the Registered Parks and Gardens of Park Place and Temple Combe.

5.4: Visual Analysis and Evaluation

- The Site is generally well screened by topography and existing vegetation, although it remains visible from the Thames Path on the opposite bank of the River Thames, and also from passing boats which may be using the river.
- The Site is generally not visible from public footpaths or Wargrave Road due to intervening vegetation and topography. However, it is visible from the Thames Path on the opposite bank, where views of the pavilion are possible.
- Nearby private dwellings, including Hamilton House and Hamilton Farm, have no views of the Site.
- The Site is not visible from Registered Parks and Gardens of Park Place and Temple Combe due to intervening topography and vegetation.

Lighting

5.4: The sensitivity of light levels and night-time visibility is addressed by information provided in other documentation.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Likely Landscape and Visual Effects

Landscape Consideration of the Valued Landscape Topic Paper 2019

5.5: The Valued Landscapes Topic Paper identifies eleven Valued Landscapes across the Borough, including the Chiltern Chalk Valued Landscape, within which the application site is situated. Following the completion of this study, Paragraph 174(a) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is applicable to the site. This paragraph advises that development should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological importance, and soils, in a manner proportionate to their statutory designation or recognised quality within the development plan.

The Wokingham District Landscape Character Assessment (WDLCA, 2004) provides valuable insight into landscape sensitivity through its evaluation of the re-creatability of key landscape elements. Notably, it highlights a range of nationally important features that contribute to the area's distinct character. These include areas of ancient woodland, remnants of chalk grassland, the historic parklands and gardens of Park Place and Temple Combe, the striking local landform, and the perceptual qualities of remoteness and tranquillity. The WDLCA also recognises the intervisibility between the landscape and the River Thames identified as a Valued Landscape and, of particular significance, its relationship with the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The principal management objective for the Strowdes Estate is the long-term protection, restoration, and enhancement of the associated parkland landscape. This approach will ensure the continued enrichment of the site's biodiversity, reinforce its landscape character and scenic quality, and contribute positively to the overall value and integrity of both the Registered Park and the wider Valued Landscape.

Areas along the riverside slopes will be managed to enhance habitat diversity and strengthen the ecological value of the site. Site perimeter hedging and planted embankments are proposed to support biodiversity, provide visual integration, and reinforce the landscape structure within the riverside setting.

The visual appraisal found that the Site is generally not visible from Wargrave Road due to local topography and dense vegetation, except for a brief glimpsed view from the footpath Thames path along the river opposite the Site.

On the plateau, the WDLCA (2004) highlights the importance of the flat landform, openness, and long views, which have been key considerations in the scheme's design.

The existing landscape is characterised by a well-vegetated riverside setting, comprising areas of grassland interspersed with mature trees, woodland, and riparian planting along the River Thames. Existing vegetation provides a strong framework and visual containment to the Site. Additional planting, including perimeter hedging and planted embankments, will reinforce this structure and enhance integration with the surrounding landscape. The proposed pavilion is positioned at the river's edge, while the portals are set within the undulating landform and enclosed by dense vegetation, ensuring the development remains visually contained and does not detract from the wider landscape character. The South Portal structure has been designed to have minimal intrusion into the adjoining landscape.

All of the characteristics are recognised in the most recent Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (2019). However, an additional consideration is the intervisibility between this landscape and the Bowsey Hill Valued Landscape, which contributes to the area's wider visual and contextual relationship. Another often overlooked but important aspect is the influence of the underlying chalk geology and calcareous soils, which strongly shape the landscape's character and ecological potential.

There is no direct intervisibility between the Strowdes Estate and the Bowsey Hill Valued Landscape.

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Likely Landscape and Visual Effects

IN SUMMARY:

The north portal development is contained within the existing wooded landscape and will not affect the openness of the lower parkland to the north.

The riverside development sits low in the landscape and is contained by the adjacent cliffs. It is largely screened by dense woodland, although brief glimpsed views are available from the Thames Path on the opposite bank to the south-west, and also from passing boats which may be using the river.

The introduction of the pavilion and associated connections to the existing boathouse reflects the incremental evolution of historic estates, where new elements are added in response to changing functional requirements. This approach also supports the continued use and enhancement of the existing boathouse as a heritage asset within the riverside setting.

The proposed Landscape Masterplan will safeguard and enhance the Valued Landscapes, aligning with the requirements of NPPF Paragraph 174(a).

Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Likely Landscape and Visual Effects

(Topography - 1km)

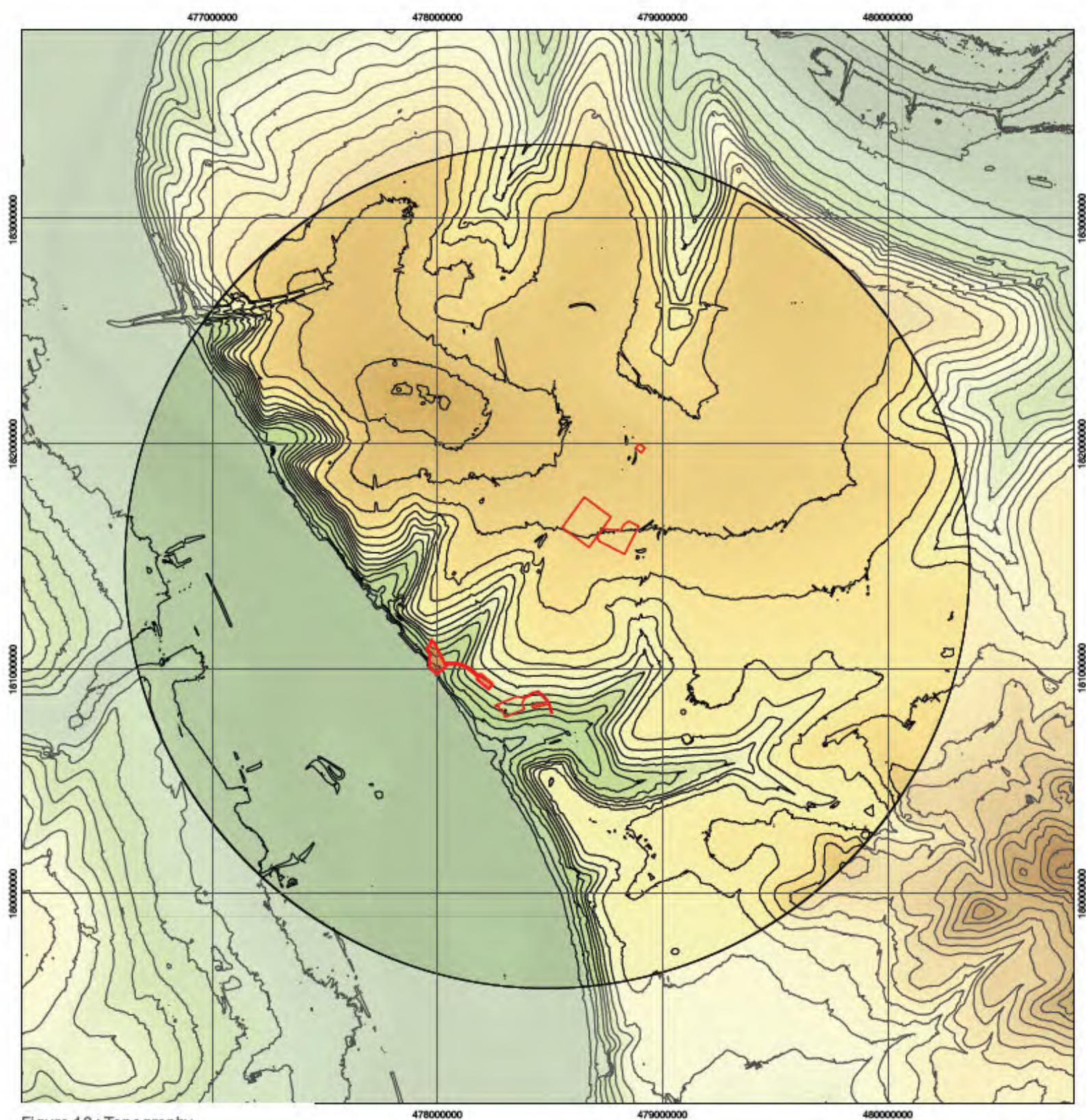


Figure 16 : Topography

Drawing notes

 Application Site Boundary	 Contour	 220m	 134.28m	 68.98m	 22.04m
 1km Buffer		 183.26m	 89.38m	 40.4m	 <20m

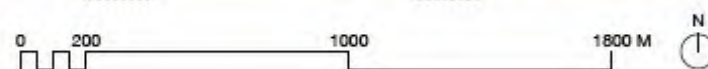


Image data sources

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Riverside Pavilion Landscape Visual Appraisal

Conclusion

6.1: The landscape visual appraisal has been made in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition.

6.2: This application comprises the following:

- A riverside pavilion connected by a tunnel, extending from the North Portal within the Conway Estate to the South Portal on the opposite side of Wargrave Road.

Baseline Conditions

6.3: The surrounding landscape is characterised by undulating ground with localised changes in contour, falling towards the River Thames to the south-east. The Site is enclosed by local topography and well-vegetated, hedged boundaries, and lies within the Wokingham Valued Landscape.

6.4: The Site is not directly visible from Wargrave Road, with any potential glimpsed views screened by dense vegetation, mature trees, and intervening topography.

6.5: Views of the pavilion are available from the Thames Path. However, these are experienced within the context of the existing riverside landscape. The structure is perceived against a backdrop of mature vegetation and established riverside character, which limits its visual prominence.

6.6: Although the pavilion is visible from the opposite bank, it does not give rise to adverse landscape or visual effects. The scale, materiality, and siting of the building ensure that it integrates with the riverside setting, appearing recessive within views and maintaining the overall character of the landscape.

6.7: The sighting of the proposed pavilion and tunnel portals ensures that they sit well within the silhouette of the surrounding heavily wooded landscape of chalk cliffs and mature trees.

6.8: The Site is extremely well screened by local topography and vegetation.

CONCLUSION

We conclude that the development does protect and enhance the Valued Landscape in accordance with NPPF 174 (a) and the Wokingham Borough Council Landscape Value Topic Paper 2019.

The proposed buildings will be well integrated within the grounds of Stowdes Estate and the riverside landscape. The proposed Landscape masterplan will give rise to a significant improvement in the quality of the historic parkland, increasing the bio-diversity value of the setting, and protecting the distinctive features and character of the landscape setting.

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