

ORCHARD COTTAGE, HONEY HILL

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

Prepared on behalf of

Mr Kemball

ND1517lva



Placing development well

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Landscape and Visual Appraisal	
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1.0 Executive Summary

- i. LVIA Ltd were instructed to undertake a landscape and visual appraisal for a residential dwelling located at Honey Hill by Mr Kemball. The site and its surrounding landscape were assessed and a total of four viewpoints were selected to represent a variety of receptors in the surrounding area.
- ii. The aim of this report is to provide an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of a proposed development upon the receiving landscape, in line with current legislation and guidance. It comprises two main assessments, the first for landscape and the second for visual effects.
- iii. The assessment has been conducted in line with published best practice guidelines and includes a desk study; (review of local plan policies, published landscape character assessment and production of a computer generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)) and onsite observations.
- iv. The site is currently formed by scrubland which is enclosed by mature trees and understorey vegetation to the north, east, south and west. To the north, east and part of the south of the site are located existing dwellings that are accessed from Honey Hill. To the west along Hatch Ride are situated existing dwellings and the Heathlands Riding school. The site is relatively flat. Surrounding vegetation forms enclosure to the landscape both spatially and visually preventing all but short range views. The site falls within no areas of national designation related to landscape.
- v. Due to the existing local area, the proposed scheme would not be out of character with its surroundings when considered as part of the wider landscape with development of a similar nature in close proximity to the site to the north, east, south and partially to the west.
- vi. Mitigation measures have been suggested to aid the schemes visual blending with the existing environs.
- vii. Four viewpoints were considered and of these none were considered to be subject to material visual impacts.
- viii. With the implementation of a successful mitigation strategy, the overall impact on the landscape is considered to have a minor/negligible overall effect on the surrounding landscape character and a minor effect on the visual baseline. It should be considered that this type of development is not out of character within the receiving landscape.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1.1 LVIA Ltd were commissioned by Mr Kemball, to carry out a landscape and visual appraisal of the proposed development site located at Orchard Cottage, Honey Hill.
- 2.1.2 The brief was to assess the likely landscape and visual impact of the development and identify the degree of change over the existing use and site conditions.
- 2.1.3 The field survey was carried out during December 2024, and all viewpoints were chosen from publicly accessible vantage points.
- 2.1.4 Particular attention was paid to the potential views of receptors of high sensitivity, e.g. users of Public Rights of Way (PRoW).
- 2.1.5 Landscape and visual impact assessments can be defined as a mechanism by which the landscape can be assessed against its capacity to accommodate change. The aim of this report is to provide an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development upon the receiving landscape, in line with current legislation and guidance.

The Site

- 2.1.6 The site is accessed from Honey Hill and the proposals are for a residential dwelling with associated landscaping.
- 2.1.7 The site is currently formed by scrubland which is enclosed by mature trees and understorey vegetation to the north, east, south and west. To the north, east and part of the south of the site are located existing dwellings that are accessed from Honey Hill. To the west along Hatch Ride are situated existing dwellings and the Heathlands Riding school. The site is relatively flat. Surrounding vegetation forms enclosure to the landscape both spatially and visually preventing all but short range views. The site falls within no areas of national designation related to landscape.

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1.1 In conjunction with the landscape survey and assessment of the study area, a detailed visual survey has been undertaken in order to assess any potential visual impact of the development. In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the development will be and what can be done to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to describe a basis against which any change can be assessed.
- 3.1.2 As a matter of best practice the assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the advisory guidelines set out in the document - "Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition", published by The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment (2013).
- 3.1.3 The landscape assessment includes a baseline study that describes, and evaluates the existing landscape and visual resources, focusing on their sensitivity and ability to accommodate change.
- 3.1.4 The prime objective is to minimise the potential impact of the development by minimising the potential for visual impact wherever possible.
- 3.1.5 Information regarding the site and surroundings was gathered from Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs and on-site observations.
- 3.1.6 In order to assist in the assessment of the potential visual effects of any development, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been modelled. The computer ZTV is used as a working tool to inform the assessment team of the extent of the zone within which the proposed development may have an influence or effect on landscape character and visual amenity and the areas within which the study area together with site survey work should be concentrated. It should be noted that this is a topographical information based exercise with no account being taken of the potential effects of vegetation or buildings on views.
- 3.1.7 Landscape has two separate but closely related aspects; firstly is the impact on the character of the landscape which includes responses that are felt toward the combined effect of the development. The significance of this will depend partly on the number of people affected and also on the judgements about how much the changes will matter in relation to the human senses of those concerned. Secondly, visual impact, in contrast to landscape character, is perhaps less prone to being subjective. Visual impact may occur by means of intrusion and/or obstruction, where visual intrusion is impact on the view without blocking it and visual obstruction is impact on a view that would be hidden by the development.

Table 1: Landscape Quality (or Condition)

Landscape Quality (or Condition)	Typical Indicators
Very High	All landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are in local vernacular and materials. No detracting elements are evident
High	Most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Most buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Few detracting elements are evident
Medium	Some landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Some buildings are in local vernacular and materials and some detracting elements are evident
Low	Few landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Few buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Many detracting or incongruous elements are evident
Very Low	No landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are not in local vernacular and materials. Detracting or incongruous elements are much in evidence

Table 2: Landscape Value

Landscape Value	Typical Indicators
Very High	Areas comprising a clear composition of valued landscape components in robust form and health, free of disruptive visual detractors and with a strong sense of place. Areas containing a strong, balanced structure with distinct features worthy of conservation. Such areas would generally be internationally or nationally recognised designations, such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
High	Areas primarily containing valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition and lacking prominent disruptive visual detractors. Areas containing a strong structure with noteworthy features or elements, exhibiting a sense of place. Such areas would generally be national statutorily designated areas. Such areas may also relate to the setting of internationally or nationally statutory designated areas, such as AONB.
Medium	Areas primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. Such areas would generally be non-statutory locally designated areas such as Areas of Great Landscape Value.
Low	Areas containing some features of landscape value but lacking a coherent and aesthetically pleasing composition with frequent detracting visual elements, exhibiting a distinguishable structure often concealed by mixed land uses or development. Such areas would be commonplace at the local level and would generally be undesignated, offering scope for improvement.
Very Low	Areas lacking valued landscape components or comprising degraded, disturbed or derelict features, lacking any aesthetically pleasing composition with a dominance of visually detracting elements, exhibiting mixed land uses which conceal the baseline structure. Such areas would generally be restricted to the local level and identified as requiring recovery.

Table 3: Character Sensitivity

Character Sensitivity	Typical Indicators
Very High	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape susceptible to change and of high quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Small-scale landform/land cover/ development, human scale indicators, fine grained, enclosed with narrow views, sheltered. Manmade influence: Absence of manmade elements, traditional or historic settlements, natural features and 'natural' forms of amenity parkland, perceived as natural 'wild land' lacking in man-made features, land use elements and detractors Remoteness and Tranquillity: Sense of peace, isolation or wildness, remote and empty, no evident movement.
High	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium
Medium	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape of moderate susceptibility to change and of medium quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Medium-scale landform/land cover/ development, textured, semi-enclosed with middle distance views. Manmade influence: Some presence of man-made elements, which may be partially out of scale with the landscape and be of only partially consistent with vernacular styles. Remoteness and Tranquillity: some noise, evident, but not dominant human activity and development, noticeable movement.
Low	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low	Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape insusceptible to change and of low quality and condition. Scale and Enclosure: Large-scale landform/land cover/ development, Featureless, coarse grained, open with broad views. Manmade influence: Frequent presence of utility, infrastructure or industrial elements, contemporary structures e.g. masts, pylons, cranes, silos, industrial sheds with vertical emphasis, functional man-made land-use patterns and engineered aspects. Remoteness and Tranquillity: Busy and noisy, human activity and development, prominent movement.

Table 4: Landscape Visual Sensitivity

Landscape Visual Sensitivity	Typical Indicators
Very High	Visual interruption: Flat or gently undulating topography, few if any vegetative or built features. Nature of views: Densely populated, dispersed pattern of small settlements, outward looking settlement, landscape focused recreation routes and/or visitor facilities, distinctive settings, gateways or public viewpoints.
High	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium.
Medium	Visual interruption: Undulating or gently rolling topography, some vegetative and built features. Nature of views: Moderate density of population, settlements of moderate size with some views outwards, routes with some degree of focus on the landscape.
Low	Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low.
Very Low	Visual interruption: Rolling topography, frequent vegetative or built features. Nature of views: Unpopulated or sparsely populated, concentrated pattern of large settlements, introspective settlement, inaccessible, indistinctive or industrial settings.

Table 5: Definition of Magnitude of Landscape Impacts

Magnitude	Description
Large	Total loss of or major alteration to key valued elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements considered being prominent and totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be at a considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. Would cause a high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be out of scale with the landscape, and at odds with the local pattern and landform. Will leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality.
Small	Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. May not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape. Affect an area of recognised landscape character
Negligible	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Maintain existing landscape quality, and maybe slightly at odds to the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape.

3.1.8 'Material' landscape effects would be those effects assessed to be major or major/moderate and are indicated by shading in the following table.

Table 6: Significance of Landscape Effects

Magnitude	Sensitivity				
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Large	Major	Major	Major/ moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ minor
Medium	Major	Major/ moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ minor	Minor/ negligible
Small	Moderate	Moderate/ minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Minor/ moderate	Minor	Minor/ negligible	Negligible	Negligible

3.1.9 The prediction and extent of effect cannot always be absolute. It is for each assessment to determine the assessment criteria and the significance thresholds, using informed and well-reasoned professional judgement supported by thorough justification for their selection, and explanation as to how the conclusions about significance for each effect assessed have been derived, as noted in GLVIA 3rd edition para 2.23-2.26 and 3.32-36.

3.1.10 In order to determine the magnitude of impact for any critical viewpoints of the subject site, whether in the immediate locality or further afield, the assessment of visual impact takes into account the;

- Sensitivity of the views and viewers (visual receptor) affected;
- Extent of the proposed development that will be visible;
- Degree of visual intrusion or obstruction that will occur;
- Distance of the view;
- Change in character or quality of the view compared to the existing.

3.1.11 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as 'visual receptors'. For the purposes of a visual assessment the visual receptors would be graded according to their sensitivity to change.

Table 7: Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Receptor Sensitivity	Description
High	Occupiers of residential properties. Users of outdoor recreational facilities, including public rights of way, whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape Communities where the development results in changes in the landscape setting or valued views enjoyed by the community.
Medium	People travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars, on trains or other transport routes where higher speeds are involved and views sporadic and short-lived. People engaged in outdoor recreation where enjoyment of the landscape is incidental rather than the main interest.
Low	People at their place of work, Industrial facilities.

Table 8: Definition of Magnitude of Visual Impact

Magnitude	Description
Very Large	The development would result in a dramatic change in the existing view and/or would cause a dramatic change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would appear large scale and/or form the dominant elements within the overall view and/or may be in full view the observer or receptor. Commanding, controlling the view.
Large	The development would result in a prominent change in the existing view and/or would cause a prominent change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would form prominent elements within the overall view and/or may be easily noticed by the observer or receptor. Standing out, striking, sharp, unmistakeable, easily seen.
Medium	The development would result in a noticeable change in the existing view and/or would cause a noticeable change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would form a conspicuous element within the overall view and/or may be readily noticed by the observer or receptor. Noticeable, distinct, catching the eye or attention, clearly visible, well defined.
Small	The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or character of the view. The development would form an apparent small element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Visible, evident, obvious.
Very Small	The development would result in a barely perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or would form an inconspicuous minor element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Lacking sharpness of definition, not obvious, indistinct, not clear, obscure, blurred, indefinite.
Negligible	Only a small part of the development would be discernible and/or it is at such a distance that no change to the existing view can be appreciated. Weak, not legible, near limit of acuity of human eye.

Table 9: Significance of Visual Effects

Magnitude	Sensitivity		
	High	Medium	Low
Very large	Major	Major	Major/moderate
Large	Major	Major/moderate	Moderate
Medium	Major/moderate	Moderate	Moderate/minor
Small	Moderate	Moderate/minor	Minor
Very Small	Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

(Shaded areas show material effects)

4.0 Landscape Baseline

Landscape Baseline

- 4.1.1 The overall landscape character of the site and its surroundings can be determined as the result of the relationship between landform, land cover, landscape elements and climate.
- 4.1.2 An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment which was published by Natural England in 2014 offers five key principles of Landscape Assessment at paragraph 1.4. These are given as:
- Landscape is everywhere and all landscape and seascape has character;
 - Landscape occurs at all scales and the process of Landscape Character Assessment can be undertaken at any scale;
 - The process of Landscape Character Assessment should involve an understanding of how the landscape is perceived and experienced by people;
 - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide a landscape evidence base to inform a range of decisions and applications;
 - A Landscape Character Assessment can provide an integrating spatial framework – a multitude of variables come together to give us our distinctive landscapes.
- 4.1.3 The site falls within national character area (NCA) 129 – Thames Basin Heaths; as defined by Natural England in their nationwide assessment.
- 4.1.4 The key characteristics of the NCA are defined as (points of relevance to the site and its context are highlighted for clarity):
- Plateaux of Tertiary sands and gravels in the London Basin, with intervening river valleys floored by London Clay. In the far west, Chalk forms the Hampshire Downs escarpment and the river beds of the Kennet and Pang.
 - **High woodland cover, offering an array of colour in the autumn.** Conifers and large plantations on former heathland are dominant features in the east, while the west is scattered with small, semi-natural woodlands on ancient sites.
 - Acid, leached soils mean that farming on the plateaux is limited to rough pasture, and that alternative land uses (such as forestry, golf courses and horse paddocks) have emerged. Heather, gorse, oak and birch all thrive here. Arable land and improved pasture are found in the valleys, on alluvium.
 - Beyond the large areas of heathland and woodland, there is a patchwork of small to medium-sized fields with woods. The legacy of historic hunting forests includes veteran trees, ancient woods, ancient hedgerows and parklands. Historic meadows remain as fragments along watercourses.
 - Prehistoric earthworks such as barrows and hill forts mark promontories on the plateaux. Archaeology is well preserved on historic heathland. Mosaics of open heathland and grassland with scrub, secondary woodland and plantation. Valley bogs, ponds and streams enhance diversity. Large, continuous mosaics are found in the east: they include Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Chobham Common National Nature Reserve (NNR).

- Historic commons offer tranquillity and unenclosed views, while other rights of access are enjoyed across farmland, canals and down land. Ministry of Defence ownership restricts (but does not entirely prevent) public enjoyment.
 - ‘Churring’ nightjars, dragonflies and purple heather are all readily identified with heathland. The Thames Basin Heaths SPA protects internationally important populations of woodlark, nightjar and Dartford warbler.
 - Valley floors are wet with ditches, numerous watercourses, ponds, waterfilled gravel pits, reedbeds and carr. Historic features include mills, relict water meadows, and canals such as the River Wey Navigations.
 - 20th-century conurbations, including Camberley, sprawl along the Blackwater Valley, with associated roads (including the M3) dissecting heathland and woodland into blocks. Elsewhere, there are winding lanes and historic dispersed villages and farmsteads of traditional, locally-made brick and tile.
- 4.1.5 The NCA covers a relatively wide and diverse area. The site and its context exhibit very few of the key characteristics of the NCA, principally only that relating to the high woodland cover that surrounds the site. This lack of close representation is to be expected due to the relatively large scale of the character area.

Sub-Regional Character

- 4.1.6 The Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (November 2019) has been produced to provide detailed information about character at the sub-regional level.
- 4.1.7 The site falls within landscape character type (LCT) M: Forested and Settled Sands. The LCT is described as being characterised by the underlying acidic sandy Camberley Sand and Windlesham Formation, giving rise to a densely wooded area with mixed woodland and coniferous plantations. Low-density modern linear and estate development are arranged on long linear rides through the woodland. Heathland and wetland habitats, combined with numerous footpaths make these areas popular for recreation.
- 4.1.8 The site partially reflects this description, as the wooded character and development that sits near to the site boundary are noticeable.
- 4.1.9 The LCT M is further subdivided into landscape character areas (LCA). The site falls within LCA M1: Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands. A summary of the LCA is given as:

An elevated plateau characterised by its densely wooded context, which creates a strong sense of enclosure. The woodland is varied with semi-natural areas and forestry plantation interspersed with heathland. Low density settlement is arranged along linear rides or in the settlements of Finchampstead (north) and part of Crowthorne. Away from areas of settlement, the landscape has a remote character, although it is still accessible due to numerous footpaths.

The eastern boundary of this area is defined by the borough boundary, although the character area extends into Bracknell Forest District. The northern and western boundaries broadly follow the edge of the woodland or settlement and changes in the underlying geology, from sands to clay and river terrace deposits. To the south the boundary is defined by the transition to the more open and topographically varied character of M2: Finchampstead Ridges Forested and Settled Sands and N2: Finchampstead Pastoral Sandy Lowland.

4.1.10 The site clearly exhibits the strong sense of enclosure formed by the dense woodland that is described and the local settlement can be clearly felt.

4.1.11 The key characteristics of the LCA are defined as (points of relevance to the site and its context are highlighted for clarity):

- An elevated landscape rising to 90m AOD, comprising a shelving plateau, underlain by acidic sands. The infertile sandy soils influence land cover and ecological character.
- **Large swathes of interconnected forestry and woodland dominate the area**, which has little farmland. These consist of large coniferous plantations as well as mixed woodlands with sandy heaths. Stands of Scots Pine and exotic species are particularly distinctive.
- A number of large lakes, including Longmoor Lake, King's Mere and Queen's Mere, originally excavated in late 19th century for brick making, now form a focus for recreation.
- The underlying heathland character typifies areas of woodland clearings such as California Park and adjacent to roads.
- Rich semi-natural habitats associated with the poorly draining acidic soils including BAP priority habitat lowland heathland and lowland dry acid grassland. Large acidic lakes or meres are surrounded by wetland and wet woodland; Longmoor Bog and Heath Lake are nationally important SSSIs.
- Long straight roads such as Nine Mile Ride (which originated as historic 'rides' created through the historically open landscape of the Royal Forest of Windsor) give a strong linear character to the landscape. Characterised by roadside rhododendron 'hedges' and occasional colourful patches of gorse and heather.
- The locally listed historic park at Ravenswood, which originated as a medieval deer park within the Royal Forest of Windsor.
- Strong settlement character, with a **low density pattern of detached houses** lining the historic rides, which have provided a framework for settlement. Residential properties of relatively unremarkable post-war and modern suburban character in a variety of styles.
- Good public accessibility including formal parks such as California Country Park, LNR (including Longmoor Bog and Heath Lake) and areas of open access Forestry Commission land (such as Gorrick Plantation) connected by a network of bridleways and footpaths.
- Localised area of remoteness within woodlands and smaller areas of pasture, mire and heath, which provide a sense of tranquillity.
- **A highly enclosed landscape** created by the often continuous swathes of dense woodland, except for framed views along the rides.

4.1.12 The site and its context exhibit very few of the key characteristics, principally only those relating to the views being enclosed and channelled by woodland and by the relatively low density settlement pattern of detached dwellings.

4.1.13 The Topic Paper Valued Landscapes (January 2020) was produced by Wokingham Borough Council to identify 11 areas of valued landscape within the borough. The site falls within the boundary of the Forest and Rides area.

4.1.14 The site does not compare well when evaluated against the criteria outlined in box 5.1 of the GLVIA, which is commonly used to ascertain if a landscape is 'valued'. This could stem from the larger area's lack of fine granularity in considering the overarching characteristics, leading to a situation where areas not deemed 'valued' are overshadowed by the designation by default.

Landscape Sensitivity

4.1.15 The site is currently formed by scrubland which is enclosed by mature trees and understorey vegetation to the north, east, south and west. To the north, east and part of the south of the site are located existing dwellings that are accessed from Honey Hill. To the west along Hatch Ride are situated existing dwellings and the Heathlands Riding school. The site is relatively flat. Surrounding vegetation forms enclosure to the landscape both spatially and visually preventing all but short range views. The site falls within no areas of national designation related to landscape.

4.1.16 Road noise can be heard within the site from nearby roads, such as Honey Hill and the B3430 and existing adjacent residential development that sits around the site has some very limited visual interconnectivity with the site which is heavily filtered by the well wooded landscape fabric.

4.1.17 The area contains some features of landscape value but lacks a coherent composition. The landscape elements within the area are commonplace at the local level and are of varying quality. There is frequent presence of manmade elements and road noise and human activity is noticeable. Frequent vegetative and built features create enclosure. The site sits within a similar urban form of dwellings situated within large gardens.

4.1.18 Due to the context formed by the receiving landscape, the susceptibility to change is considered to be medium and the value is considered to be medium. The overall sensitivity of the landscape is considered to be medium.

4.1.19 The proposal would be consistent with the current landscape character of the site and its surrounding context. With a successful mitigation strategy, the proposal would further integrate with its setting.

5.0 Visual Baseline

Limits to study Area

- 5.1.1 The limits to the study area have been determined by the visual envelope of the development site. This area has been adopted as the main study area, as it surrounds the site and may be considered likely to be most impacted by physical change.
- 5.1.2 In order to assist in the assessment of the potential visual effects of any development, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been modelled. The computer ZTV is used as a working tool to inform the assessment team of the extent of the zone within which the proposed development may have an influence or effect on landscape character and visual amenity and the areas within which the study area together with site survey work should be concentrated. It should be noted that this is a topographical information based exercise with no account being taken of the potential effects of vegetation or buildings acting as a visual barrier. The ZTV is shown in Figure 3: Zone of Theoretical Visibility.
- 5.1.3 The initial study area was set to a radius of approximately 2.5km from the centre of the site (approximately N51°23'03, W00°48'27) on the basis that at this distance, this form of development, when seen by the human eye, would be hardly discernible or not legible.
- 5.1.4 Viewpoints have been detailed in table 10: Viewpoint Details which outlines location and rationale for selection.

Table 10: Viewpoint Details

No	Location	Distance (km) and direction of view	Northing	Westing	Sensitivity of Visual Receptor
1	Honey Hill	0.01, W	51°23'02	00°48'24	Medium – Road users
2	Hatch Ride	0.01, E	51°23'02	00°48'35	High - users of byway
3	Hatch Ride	0.01, NE	51°23'02	00°48'32	High - users of byway
4	Hatch Ride	0.01, N	51°23'00	00°48'28	High - users of byway

Views to the site

- 5.1.5 It is clear that, despite the study area being potentially visible from a wide variety of locations, at varying distances and from a limited number of private and public areas, the visual envelope is actually quite limited.
- 5.1.6 The visibility of the site is dependent on a range of factors, including location of viewpoint, distance of view, the angle of the sun, time of year and climatic conditions. Of equal importance will be whether the site is seen completely or in part of the skyline, where land provides a backcloth and where there is a complex foreground or an expansive landscape surrounding the view. The aspect of dwellings and whether it is a main view or one from a secondary window less frequently used is also a consideration.
- 5.1.7 A photographic study of the site has been undertaken. The viewpoints are at varying distances from the site and have been selected to represent potential views seen by the most sensitive receptors from around the site.
- 5.1.8 The site visit has been undertaken during the summer months when vegetation has its foliage and is acting as dense visual barriers. In months when vegetation has lost its foliage, it will act as less dense visual barriers.
- 5.1.9 The sensitivity of most of the local receptors is assessed as either high or medium as shown in table 7: Visual Receptor Sensitivity.
- 5.1.10 For the field assessment, a Canon EOS 500D camera with an 18-55mm lens was used, set at 35mm focal length. This is in line with best practice as shown in the Visual Representation of Development Proposals technical guidance note issued by the Landscape Institute (Technical Guidance Note 06/19).
- 5.1.11 The site was visited on the 4th of December 2024; the weather was overcast and clear.

Viewpoint 1: View from Honey Hill



Vp1	Panoramic View (Distance 0.01km looking west)	
Baseline Description	This is a view from Honey looking west towards the proposed site. The nearby B3430 is busy and vehicular noise and movement is clear in the area. Mature trees follow the road and sit on a grass verge on either side which forms enclosure to potential longer range views of the landscape. An existing dwelling and its rear curtilage fencing that sits to the south of the site can be partly seen enclosed by woodland. Telegraph poles form manmade elements with a vertical emphasis following the road.	
Predicted change	From this viewpoint, the proposals will sit within the site and will be perceptible where an access is formed between trees from Honey Hill. The change will be evident but will not affect the current quality or character of the view. This is in most part due to the vegetation that is situated in the foreground forming visual barriers to all but heavily filtered potential views.	
Type of effect	The introduction of the proposal would form no change to the quality of the present environment.	
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in a perceptible change in the view that would be evident to an observer but that would not affect the current quality or character of the view.	
Assessment	Sensitivity	Medium – Road users
	Magnitude	Small
Significance of Effect		Moderate/minor – Not a material change

Viewpoint 2: View from Hatch Ride – 0.01km looking east



Viewpoint 3: View from Hatch Ride – 0.01km looking north east



Viewpoint 4: View from Hatch Ride – 0.01km looking north



Vps 2, 3 & 4		Panoramic Views	
Baseline Description	These are views from Hatch Ride looking towards the site. Hatch Ride is surrounded by woodland which forms enclosure to views of the wider landscape. Views of fencing that forms the site boundary can be seen set within the woodland along the route. Some heavily filtered views into the site are available of a scrubby field that is enclosed by further vegetation. The amount of intervisibility with the site varies along the route due to the relatively dense intervening vegetation and fencing.		
Predicted change	From these viewpoints, the proposals will sit to the north of the byway beyond the vegetative filter. The change will be perceptible in some views and will be evident through the vegetation that is to be retained along the route of the footpath from the section that sits close to the site boundary.		
Type of effect	The introduction of the proposal would form no change to the quality of the present environment.		
Magnitude of Change	The development would result in a perceptible change that would be evident to an observer but that would not affect the current quality or character of views.		
Assessment	Sensitivity	High – Users of byway	
	Magnitude	Small	
Significance of Effect		Moderate – Not a material change	

6.0 Characteristics of Proposal

- 6.1.1 The proposed development is for a residential dwelling with associated landscaping with access from Honey Hill.
- 6.1.2 The construction of building elements, together with associated traffic, parking, lighting and security fencing can temporarily but substantially change the landscape character of an area and impact upon its existing visual and/or recreational amenity.
- 6.1.3 In order to minimise potential impacts, together with the optimum benefit for landscape character and visual amenity the proposals should provide environmental enhancement and make a positive contribution to the landscape, not only of the development itself, but to its wider setting. This should include visual barriers as close to the viewer as possible. Its principal objectives are to:
- Minimise views from residential areas
 - Assist visual integration of the development
 - Provide an internal site landscape structure and enhance internal road corridors
 - Reinforce the opportunity to maintain wildlife corridors at the site boundaries.
- 6.1.4 The initial construction phase will give rise to temporary, short term impacts. Any modifications or extensions that occur from time to time in the future will also give rise to this short term construction impact.
- 6.1.5 The site and its context has an overall weighted medium landscape sensitivity. This conclusion was reached in line with the definitions of landscape impact shown in tables 1 to 4 within this document.
- 6.1.6 The scale and nature of the proposal and its juxtaposition to other built form will have an overall weighted landscape impact that could be considered small as they are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the existing landscape. This conclusion was reached in line with the definitions of landscape impact shown in table 5 within this document.
- 6.1.7 The overall weighted level of landscape effect can be considered minor (i.e. not a material change).
- 6.1.8 The visual impact and the significance of the impacts of the development on the open countryside have been assessed as potentially moderate (i.e. not a material change) without mitigation from viewpoints that follow Hatch Ride to the south.
- 6.1.9 The visual change from the local landscape is generally localised and limited due to the mature vegetation that sits in the surrounding landscape and the similar setting of the receiving landscape.
- 6.1.10 Measures have been recommended to further reduce these impacts and these are located in section 7.0: Mitigation.

7.0 Mitigation

7.1.1 Mitigation measures would include:

- Management and retention of the native tree and hedgerow planting that sits around and within the site boundary;
- Additional ornamental planting within the residential frontage to encourage year round interest and pollinators;
- The height of the dwelling (8.410m) has been designed to reflect that of the surrounding dwellings;
- Built form set back from boundaries to allow continued growth of the boundary and site vegetation;
- The use of materials for the external envelope of the buildings which minimise potential visual intrusion and follow the local vernacular to aid visual blending.

7.1.2 With suitable mitigation measures, the development will have a minor visual impact and a minor/negligible character impact (i.e. not a material change).

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1.1 The scale and nature of the development and its juxtaposition to other existing residential development and the receiving settlement fringe will have a medium landscape character sensitivity and the magnitude of change is small; therefore resulting in a level of landscape effect of minor (i.e. not a material change).
- 8.1.2 The visual effects are generally localised and limited due in most part to dense intervening mature vegetation between the viewer and site, the topography in the area and the similar setting of the proposed scheme formed by local residential dwellings.
- 8.1.3 For the proposed site and the surroundings during construction, an increase of delivery vehicles and people travelling to the works can be expected. These effects will be short lived however and will not require mitigation during the construction process.
- 8.1.4 The viewpoints assessed showed that although the site is at least partly visible from all of the four assessed, none of the assessed views can be considered subject to a material change.
- 8.1.5 The majority of receptors in the local area can be considered of a high or medium sensitivity (users of byway and road users). The visual impact of the development on the open countryside has been assessed, at worst case scenario, as moderate (i.e. not a material change) from viewpoints 2, 3 and 4 that sit along a section of Hatch Ride close to the site's southern boundary. Other viewpoints offer limited views of the site due in most part to mature vegetation acting as visual barriers.
- 8.1.6 With suitable mitigation measures, the development will have a minor visual impact and a minor/negligible landscape impact (i.e. not a material change).

9.0 Appendices

Figure 1: Ordnance Survey Map

Figure 2: Aerial Photograph

Figure 3: Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Figure 4: Viewpoint Location Plan

Figure 5: Designation Plan



LEGEND



Site boundary



For ordnance survey map legend, refer to:
<https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/docs/legends/25k-raster-legend.pdf>

Scheme: Orchard Cottage, Honey Hill

Drawing: Ordnance Survey Plan

Figure No: 1

LVIA Ltd Ref: ND1517

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





LEGEND



Site boundary



Image supplied by Google Maps
<https://maps.google.co.uk/>
 Accessed 11/12/24

Scheme: Orchard Cottage, Honey Hill

Drawing: Aerial Photograph

Figure No: 2

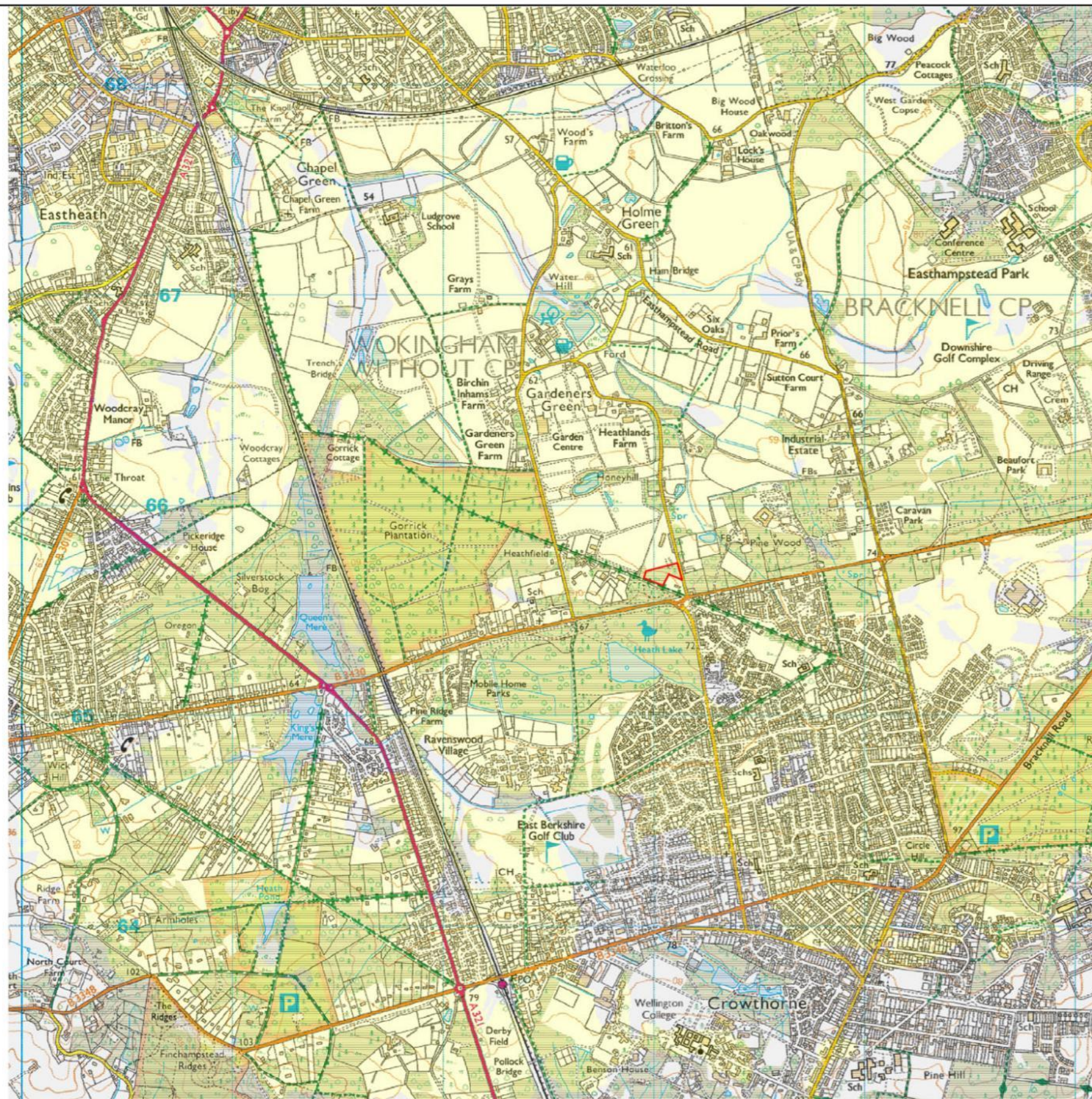
LVIA Ltd Ref: ND1517

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





LEGEND



Site boundary

Zone of theoretical visibility



Yellow wash - Potential view



Grey wash - No potential view

NB: Viewshed analysis run with 1.6m viewer height and buildings at a 8.410m height with mapinfo and represents surface topography, without taking into account potential visual barriers in the form of trees, hedgerows, woodland, buildings and other manmade elements.



Scheme: Orchard Cottage, Honey Hill

Drawing: Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Figure No: 3

LVIA Ltd Ref: ND1517

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





LEGEND



Site boundary



Viewpoint location

Zone of theoretical visibility



Yellow wash - Potential view



Grey wash - No potential view

NB: Viewshed analysis run with 1.6m viewer height and buildings at a 8.410m height with mapinfo and represents surface topography, without taking into account potential visual barriers in the form of trees, hedgerows, woodland, buildings and other manmade elements.



Scheme: Orchard Close, Honey Hill

Drawing: Viewpoint Location Plan

Figure No: 4

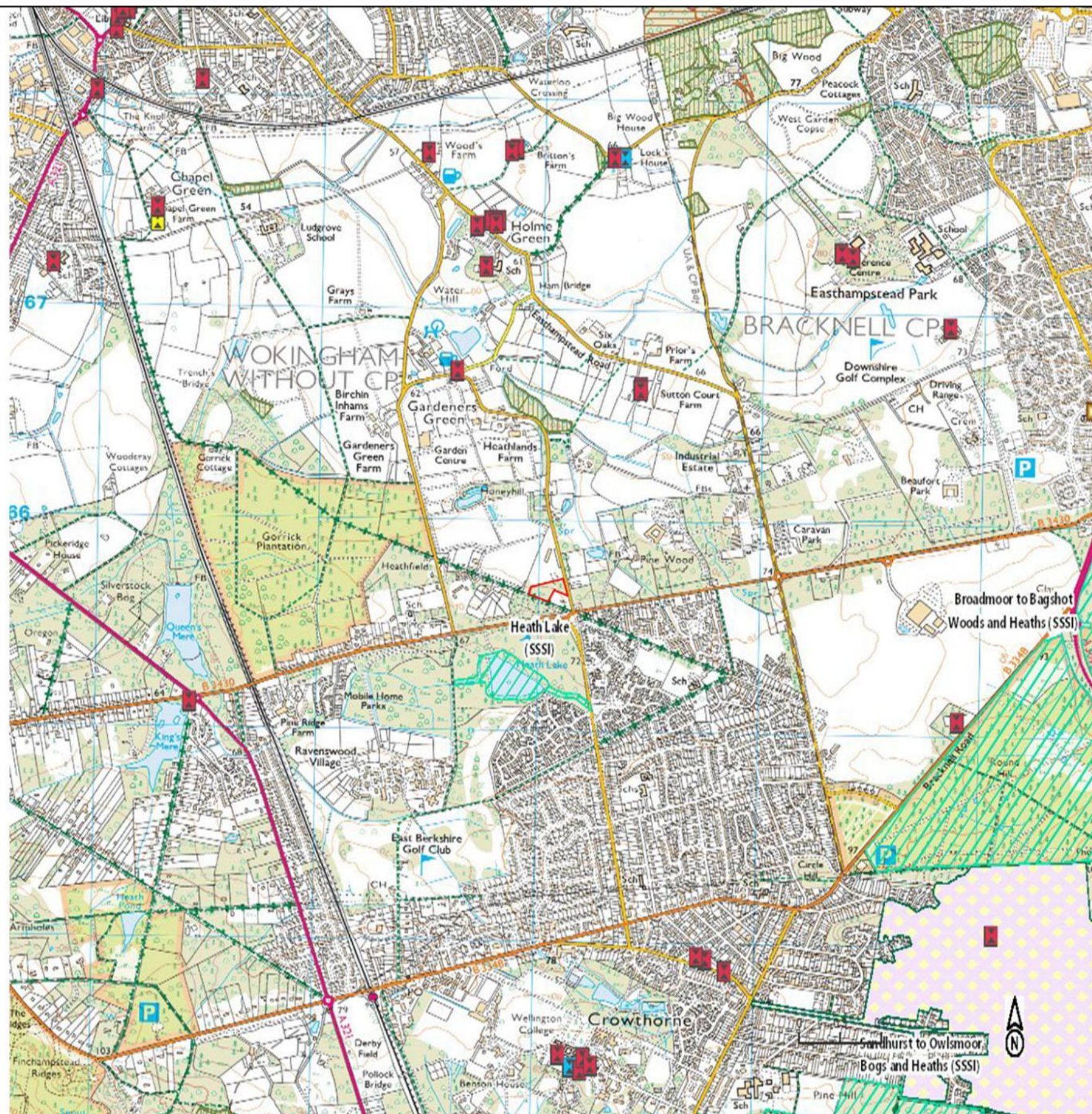
LVIA Ltd Ref: ND1517

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





LEGEND



Site Boundary

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)

Scheduled Monuments (England) - points

Listed Buildings (England)

I

II

II*

Registered Parks and Gardens (England)

Ancient Woodland (England)

Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland

Ancient Replanted Woodland



Scheme: Orchard Cottage, Honey Hill

Drawing: Designations Plan

Figure No: 5

LVIA Ltd Ref: ND1517

Scale: NTS@A3

Drawn: SC

Checked: JPF





Placing development well

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LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT | GREEN BELT ANALYSIS
PROJECT MANAGEMENT | EXPERT WITNESS | LANDSCAPE DESIGN & PLANNING
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