



Land north of Raleigh Drive,  
Claygate

## Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment and Green Belt Assessment

Prepared by  
CSA Environmental

on behalf of  
Claygate House Investments Ltd  
and MJS Investments Ltd

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 CSA Environmental has been appointed by Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd to undertake a landscape and visual impact assessment of the Land North of Raleigh Drive, Claygate (the 'Site'). The Site is currently situated within the Green Belt and this report also considers the Site's performance against the functions and purposes of the Green Belt.
- 1.2 The report accompanies an outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for access) for a residential development of up to 60 dwellings, together with open space, landscaping, and other associated infrastructure.
- 1.3 The Site comprises an area of land on the northern edge of the built up area of Claygate. The Site lies within the administrative area of Elmbridge Borough Council ('EBC'). The location and extent of the Site is shown on the Location Plan at **Appendix A** and on the Aerial Photograph at **Appendix B**.
- 1.4 This assessment describes the existing landscape character and quality of the Site and the surrounding area. The report then goes on to discuss the suitability of the Site to accommodate the development proposals, and the potential landscape and visual effects on the wider area.
- 1.5 A Proposed Illustrative Masterplan (contained in **Appendix F**) has been developed for the Site, which forms the basis of the consideration of the potential landscape and visual effects, and illustrates one way in which the proposals could come forward at the reserved matters stage. An Illustrative Landscape Strategy plan is also included with **Appendix G**.

### Methodology

- 1.6 This assessment is based on a site visit undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced Landscape Architect in October 2022. The weather conditions at the time of the visit was good and visibility was good.
- 1.7 In landscape and visual impact assessments, a distinction is drawn between landscape effects (i.e. effects on the character or quality of the landscape irrespective of whether there are any views of the landscape, or viewers to see them) and visual effects (i.e. effects on people's views of the landscape from public vantage points, including public rights of way and other areas with general public access, as well as effects from any residential properties). This report therefore considers the potential impact of the development on both landscape character and visibility. The methodologies for both the landscape and Green Belt

assessments utilised in this report, are contained in **Appendices J and K** respectively.

- 1.8 Photographs contained within this document (**Appendix C**) were taken using a digital camera with a lens focal length approximating to 50mm, to give a similar depth of vision to the human eye. In some instances images have been combined to create a panorama. The photographs within this report have been prepared in general conformance with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 06/19, as set out in the Methodology in **Appendix J**.

## 2.0 LANDSCAPE POLICY CONTEXT AND CHARACTER STUDIES

### National Planning Context

- 2.1 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'). Section 15 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 174 of the document states that the planning system should contribute to the protection and enhancement of the natural and local environment through, among other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, '... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)'. The paragraph also outlines that the planning system should recognise the, '...intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.'
- 2.2 Paragraph 176 notes that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.
- 2.3 In Section 13 'Protecting Green Belt Land' paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that the essential character of Green Belts is their openness and their permanence, with the fundamental aim of preventing urban sprawl. Paragraph 138 sets out the five purposes which Green Belt should serve:
- *' to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
  - *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
  - *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
  - *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
  - *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.'*
- 2.4 Paragraph 140 states that, 'Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans...'. Paragraph 143 (f) states that plans should, 'define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.'
- 2.5 The Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') adds further context to the policies contained in the NPPF. The guidance as relevant to this

assessment covers landscape and the natural environment, Green Belt and the design of new developments.

- 2.6 The National Design Guide (2019) has been produced as part of the PPG. It provides guidance to illustrate '... how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.'
- 2.7 Those sections of the NPPF and PPG relevant to this assessment are summarised in **Appendix E**.

### **Local Policy Context**

#### *Elmbridge Borough Adopted planning policies*

- 2.8 The current Local Plan for Elmbridge Borough comprises two parts: the Elmbridge Core Strategy (adopted 2011), which sets out the key planning policies for the Borough; and the Development Management Plan, which was adopted in 2015. The main landscape policies from these documents, relevant to the Site and this assessment are as set out below.
- 2.9 Policy CS14 – Green Infrastructure.
- 2.10 Policy CS15 – Biodiversity.
- 2.11 Policy CS17 – Local Character, Density and Design.
- 2.12 Policy DM2 – Design and Amenity
- 2.13 Policy DM6 – Landscape and Trees.
- 2.14 Policy DM17 – Green Belt (development of new buildings).
- 2.15 Policy DM21 – Nature Conservation and Biodiversity.

### **Elmbridge Borough Council Green Belt Boundary Review**

- 2.16 The Site is identified within the Elmbridge Borough Council Green Belt Boundary Review 2016 (extracts included at Appendix I) as lying within the southernmost part of Local Area 45, which also includes the fields to the north of the Site, the Elmbridge Eagles Rugby League Club and land extending up to the urban edge of Hinchley Wood between Littleworth Common and the railway line.
- 2.17 The Council subsequently produced a number of Green Belt Boundary Review documents in 2018 and 2019, to further refine the conclusions of the 2016 report, including an assessment of small sub-areas and their ability to accommodate potential development.

- 2.18 The Site is identified within the 2018 Sub Division Report as forming the majority of Sub Area 59, which also includes the formal gardens, swimming pool and part of the car park area to the immediate west of the Site. The report assesses each Sub Area against the first three Green Belt purposes, giving each a rating of between 0 (not meeting criterion) and 5 (meeting criterion strongly/very strongly). The report excludes an assessment of Green Belt purpose 4, as it was determined that the Borough does not contain or adjoin any historic towns or cores. Green Belt purpose 5 was also excluded from the assessment as it was determined that any such regeneration land would have been identified prior to reviewing Green Belt and therefore all Green Belt land achieves this purpose to the same extent.
- 2.19 Sub Area 59 is described as not lying at the edge of a distinct large built up area, scoring 0/5 against Green Belt Purpose 1 (checking unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas).
- 2.20 The Sub Area is described as forming a very small, less essential part of the gap between Claygate and Hinchley Wood, and is stated to be visually detached from the overall gap. The assessment states that development wraps around the southern, western and eastern edges of the Sub Area and that its removal from the Green Belt would not result in a reduction in the physical scale of the gap between settlements. The Sub Area scores 1/5 against Purpose 2 (preventing neighbouring towns from merging).
- 2.21 The Sub Area is described as having a weaker relationship to the wider countryside, comprising 19% built form including tennis courts, a swimming pool and clubhouse building. The Sub Area scores 1/5 against purpose 3 (assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment).
- 2.22 The assessment concludes that the removal of Sub Area 59 from the Green Belt is unlikely to impact on the performance of the surrounding Sub Areas, given its self-containment and severance from the Green Belt to the north. The northern boundary of the Sub Area, which comprises a well-established tree belt / hedgerow, is stated as being a 'stronger and more readily recognisable boundary for the Green Belt' than the existing Green Belt boundary, which cuts across areas of hard standing and structures. The Sub Area is stated as being recommended for further consideration. SA-59 was also assessed in the council's subsequent Green Belt Boundary Review 2019 – Assessment of Previously Developed Land.



- 2.23 The Site is subsequently identified (together with land to its immediate west) within the council's Green Belt Review 2019 – Minor Boundary Amendments (extracts of which are appended to this document), to be removed from the Green Belt, with the Council's study stating:

*"The Green Belt does not follow a logical or recognisable feature along the western boundary (cutting through a car park, part of the building etc.). It is recommended that it is relocated to remove the entirety of the curtilage of Claygate House, with the boundary running along the tree belt at its northern edge."*

- 2.24 Our own assessment of the Site's performance against the Green Belt purposes is set out in Section 5.17 of this report.

## 3.0 SITE CONTEXT

### Site Context

- 3.1 The Site is located to the north of Raleigh Drive, on the northern edge of the built up area of Claygate. The Site location and its immediate context are illustrated on the Location Plan and Aerial Photograph in **Appendices A** and **B**, and on the photographs contained within **Appendix C**.
- 3.2 The Site lies to the immediate east of the four storey apartments at Esher Park Gardens (formerly Claygate House offices). Large areas of hard standing used for car parking surround the buildings, with construction works taking place to the south of the building. This land to the west of the Site and south of Esher Park Gardens has planning consent for two different forms of residential development, including four storey and five storey built form. Construction of the consented 62 unit scheme of apartments has already commenced, and includes the redevelopment of the southern car park area.
- 3.3 The Site is bound to its southern and the majority of its eastern boundary by properties along Rythe Road and Raleigh Drive, with rear gardens backing onto the Site. These properties typically comprise large two storey semi-detached and detached houses, of an arts and crafts style architecture, many of which have had loft conversions, extending them to 2.5 storeys. Gardens to properties along Raleigh Drive are generally longer than those on Rythe Road, although all are well vegetated with tree cover.
- 3.4 To the north of the Site lie two fields which are grazed by horses and associated with Beazley's Farm, beyond which is a large area of woodland at Littleworth Common. The built up areas of Esher and Claygate both continue northwards either side of the Site, with the mainline railway also running on a broadly north south alignment, a short distance to the east of the Site.

### National Landscape Character

- 3.5 England's National Character Areas Profiles ('NCA') divide England into 159 distinct natural areas, defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, cultural and economic activity. The Site lies within the Thames Basin Lowlands (NCA Profile 114).
- 3.6 The Thames Basin Lowlands NCA is described as a low lying plain between the London suburbs of South Norwood and Hale on the Surrey / Hampshire border. The north east of the NCA is described as being

highly urban including parts of Greater London and its suburbs, with sparser settlement around Esher and Guildford in the west.

### **District Landscape Character**

#### *Surrey Landscape Character Assessment – Elmbridge Borough (2015)*

- 3.7 The Surrey Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken by Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA) in 2015 and is split into the various Districts within the County.
- 3.8 It divides the County into 21 landscape types, which are subdivided into landscape character areas (LCA). The Site does not lie within any of the identified LCAs and appears to have been included as part of the built up urban area.
- 3.9 The Site does however lie adjacent to the 'Lower Green to Weston Green and Littleworth Common' LCA UW6, which extends northwards encompassing land between the various built up areas.
- 3.10 The key characteristics of LCA UW6, are described as follows:
- *“Underlain by Claygate Member Sand, Silt and Clay, and London Clay Formation Clay and Silt solid geology.*
  - *A collection of areas which include Sandown Park Racecourse, areas of golf course, the wooded Littleworth Common, and other areas of common, plus sports pitches.*
  - *There are busy roads and railway, converging toward the centre of the area.*
  - *Sandown Park Racecourse and adjacent golf course are relatively private areas, but the majority of the remaining part of the area is a valuable recreational resource, with Open Access Land and public rights of way links. Esher railway station is adjacent to the area and connects to public rights of ways.*
  - *Significant areas are registered as Common Land, including Littleworth and Ditton Commons, and the edge of Weston Green Conservation Area is to the north. The commons are designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.*
  - *Parts of Littleworth Common have a sense of remoteness due to dense woodland which screens the surrounding urban areas. However, roads and other urban influences limit tranquillity elsewhere, despite that, the area provides both open and*

*enclosed green space as a contrast and relief to the surrounding Built Up Areas.”*

- 3.11 From our assessment and observations while on Site, we would agree with the Council’s assessment that the Site reads as part of the urban area rather than the wider landscape to the north, particularly as it historically formed part of the private grounds associated with the former Claygate House offices (now Esher Park Gardens apartments).

*Elmbridge Borough Landscape Sensitivity Study (2019)*

- 3.12 The Landscape Sensitivity Study was undertaken by ARUP on behalf of Elmbridge Borough Council in 2019 (extracts included at **Appendix H**). It was produced to inform the Borough’s growth options and spatial planning for the emerging Local Plan. The study also provides greater detail to support the strategic level Surrey Landscape Character Assessment.
- 3.13 The study identifies a series of ‘Landscape Units’ based on a combination of the Surrey LCAs and the Council’s Green Belt Boundary Review sub areas. The Site lies on the southern tip of the Landscape Unit UW6-A, which largely comprises the county level LCA UW6, as well as several areas of built form on the edges of the Sandown Park racecourse.
- 3.14 The key characteristics of Landscape Unit UW6-A closely align with those of the 2015 county level assessment for LCA UW6, although an additional characteristic is listed as follows:
- *“The Landscape Unit is largely surrounded by the built-up area. This, combined with extensive road infrastructure to the north, and dense woodland to the south, contributes to a strong sense of enclosure, and limits longer views and connection with the wider countryside.”*
- 3.15 The study assesses the overall Landscape Unit to have Moderate-High landscape sensitivity to residential and mixed use development, although it goes on to state that there is some variation in sensitivity owing to the existing influence of modern development. The subsequent Figure 53 shows two areas of Low-Moderate landscape sensitivity, in the northern and southernmost parts of the Landscape Unit, including land at the Site. It should be noted that there is no specific mention of the Site within this study, and it appears to have been grouped with the fields to the north despite it having a clear difference in character.

## Designations and Heritage Assets

- 3.16 The Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside Map ('MAGIC') and the Local Plan Proposals Map indicate that there are no designations covering the Site, although it lies within Green Belt.
- 3.17 As shown on the MAGIC Map and Local Plan Extract in **Appendix D**, there are few other designations lying within the wider context of the Site.
- 3.18 The Site does not lie within or adjacent to a Conservation Area. The nearest to the Site are within the built up areas of Claygate to the south east and Esher to the north west and there is no inter-visibility with any of these Conservation Areas and the Site.
- 3.19 There are no Listed buildings/structures within the Site or adjacent to its boundaries. The nearest to the Site is the Grade II Listed, Coal Tax Post to the north west and the Grade II Listed 'The Orchard' to the south. There is no inter-visibility between either of these Listed assets and the Site due to the intervening built form. Listed buildings within the wider vicinity of the Site are shown on the Designations and Local Plan Extract at **Appendix D**.

## Public Rights of Way & Public Access

- 3.20 There are no public rights of way crossing the Site or along its boundaries. There are various other public rights of way in the wider vicinity of the Site, which are illustrated on the OS Mapping on the Site Location Plan in **Appendix A**.

## Tree Preservation Orders

- 3.21 There are a number of trees along the northern, south western and south eastern boundaries of the Site, which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders. This was confirmed by viewing the Elmbridge Borough Council online mapping service on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

## 4.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND VISIBILITY

### Site Description

- 4.1 The Site comprises an area of grassland, which was historically associated with the former offices at Claygate House, together with a strip of land in the south leading to Rythe Road / Raleigh Drive. A former bowls green is located in the north west corner of the Site, although it has now been left to establish as a longer grass sward. A disused tennis court is also located in the south western corner of the Site, with both of these former facilities being previously associated with the former offices. A strip of land in the southernmost part of the Site extends to meet Rythe Road / Raleigh Drive, and includes a tarmac path.
- 4.2 The northern Site boundary comprises an outgrown native hedgerow with scattered mature hedgerow oak trees, and a chain-link fence, which separate the Site from the fields to the north.
- 4.3 The western Site boundary comprises closeboard fencing, which separates the Site from the adjacent car park associated with Esher Park Gardens and the construction works currently taking place. Two maintenance access gates are also located along this western boundary.
- 4.4 The southern Site boundary which backs onto the rear gardens on Raleigh Drive / Rythe Road comprises a series of trees / tree groups (including a row of poplar trees), and the rear garden fencing to adjacent properties. The strip of land extending southwards to Raleigh Drive / Rythe Road is bound on both sides by timber fencing to the adjacent properties, with a palisade fence and gate defining the southernmost boundary with Rythe Road / Raleigh Drive.
- 4.5 The eastern Site boundary is defined by a variety of mature trees / tree groups and the rear garden fencing of adjacent properties on Rythe Road. A shallow ditch also runs along this boundary.

### Topography

- 4.6 The topography of the Site is generally flat, with a very slight slope from south to north. There is a low point of approximately 17m Above Ordnance Datum ('AOD') on the northern Site boundary and a high point of approximately 19.5m AOD at the southern tip of the Site, adjacent to Rythe Road / Raleigh Drive.
- 4.7 The area immediately surrounding the Site lies at a very similar level and is relatively flat, as are much of the built up surrounding areas, with the adjacent parts of both Esher and Claygate generally lying at around 20-

25m AOD. The land locally rises to a highpoint of 52m AOD at Telegraph Hill to the north east, 50m AOD at Belvedere Hill to the west and of 45m AOD at The Warren to the north west.

### Visibility

- 4.8 An assessment of the visibility of the Site was undertaken and a series of photographs taken from public vantage points, rights of way and public highways. The viewpoints are illustrated on the Location Plan and Aerial Photograph contained in **Appendices A and B** and on the photographs in **Appendix C**.
- 4.9 The well vegetated Site boundaries and surrounding built form, limit views of the Site to the immediate surroundings. Views are possible from adjoining properties to the south and east, with vegetation generally filtering these views, and the recently converted apartments to the west, whose views are more open.
- 4.10 The following section describes representative views of the Site from public vantage points in the vicinity.
- 4.11 Heavily filtered views of the Site are possible from a handful of properties along Raleigh Drive which back onto the Site, with the remainder of views from these properties screened by dense intervening tree cover (reciprocal views at **photographs 3 & 8**).
- 4.12 Filtered and occasional framed views into the Site are possible from a number of properties on Rythe Road to the south and east of the Site, where gaps in the intervening tree cover allow (reciprocal views at **photographs 3, 6-8 & 10**). These views are generally limited to first floor windows, with views from ground level being screened by vegetation.
- 4.13 Open views across the Site are possible from east facing apartments at Esher Park Gardens to the immediate west, with the exception of ground floor views which are screened by closeboard fencing (reciprocal views at **photographs 2, 4 & 7-10**). Views from the private car park surrounding the apartments are restricted by intervening fencing, although views of the boundary trees above the fence line are possible (**photograph 20**).
- 4.14 A narrow framed view into the Site is possible at the junction of Rythe Road, Raleigh Drive and Loseberry Road, looking through the Site's security gate. The majority of the Site is however screened in this view by intervening built form. This framed view is also possible from Loseberry Road as it continues south, becoming increasingly narrowed by properties on either side of the road (**photograph 11**).
- 4.15 Views of the Site from Rythe Road to the east and south are largely

screened by intervening properties, associated garages and vegetation, with only occasional framed views of the trees within the Site being possible, through gaps between properties (**photographs 12-14**).

- 4.16 Views from Raleigh Drive to the south are well screened by intervening properties, with only occasional glimpsed views of the tops of the trees within the Site being possible (**photograph 15**).
- 4.17 Views from the common land at Hare Lane Green to the west of the Site look towards the intervening vegetation, which screens the Site from view (**photographs 16-17**).
- 4.18 Views are similarly screened from Littleworth Road by intervening vegetation to the south west and by the Esher Park Gardens apartment building to the west (**photographs 18-19**).
- 4.19 Views from Oaken Lane to the north of the Site, the adjacent common land and public footpath are all well screened by dense intervening vegetation (**photographs 21-22**). A heavily filtered glimpsed view of the poplar trees on the southern Site boundary is possible from the common land, although the view is not readily discernible (**photograph 21**).

#### **Landscape Quality, Value and Sensitivity**

- 4.20 The Site comprises a single grassland field, surrounded by residential development to the east, south and west including the large white apartment block of Esher Park Gardens. The Site's structural vegetation is confined to its boundaries and comprises a variety of mature trees and hedgerows. A tree survey has been carried out by Barton Hyett Associates which grades the trees and hedgerows on Site in terms of their arboricultural quality and life expectancy. The majority of trees are graded as being of Category A and B arboricultural quality and assessed as being of medium to high landscape quality, including some mature oak trees. The hedgerow to the northern Site boundary is graded as being of Category B quality and medium landscape quality.
- 4.21 The character of the Site comprises a fairly ordinary grassland field, on the edge of the built up area of Claygate. The housing which adjoin the Site to the south, east and west, in particular the large apartments block at Esher Park Gardens to the west, strongly influences the Site, giving it an urban fringe character. The densely vegetated northern Site boundary also separates the Site from the wider landscape to the north. Overall our assessment found the Site to be assessed as being of medium landscape quality.
- 4.22 The Site is not covered by any statutory designations for landscape character or quality and it does not lie within a Conservation Area. A



number of the trees to the eastern, northern and southern Site boundaries are covered by a TPO. The Site is not publicly accessible and public views of the Site are extremely limited due to its containment. Views are generally limited to a number of adjoining properties. The character of the Site is influenced by the surrounding built form in particular the Esher Park Gardens apartments and current adjacent construction works, and as a result could not be considered wild or tranquil. Overall the Site is considered to be of medium to low landscape value and we do not consider the Site to be, or form part of, a Valued Landscape.

- 4.23 Our assessment of the Site found the Site to be of medium to low landscape sensitivity, with a reasonably good ability to accommodate a sensitively designed development, which would not be out of place in this location. As set out in section 3.15 above, the council's own Landscape Sensitivity Study reaches a similar conclusion.

## 5.0 ABILITY OF THE SITE TO ACCOMMODATE DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 In the following section, the ability of the Site to accommodate the proposed development is considered, as well as the potential impacts on the character of the landscape and visual amenity.
- 5.2 The proposal is for an outline application (with all matters reserved except for access) for a residential development of up to 60 dwellings, together with open space, landscaping, and other associated infrastructure. Proposed access is to be taken off Rythe Road / Raleigh Drive to the south. The housing will be between two and three storeys, reflecting the surrounding context and providing a transition between the four storey apartments to the west and two / 2.5 storey houses to the south and east.
- 5.3 The Proposed Illustrative Masterplan forms the basis of the landscape and visual assessment, and is included in **Appendix F**, illustrating one way in which the proposed development could come forward at the reserved matters stage. An Illustrative Landscape Strategy is also included at **Appendix G**.
- 5.4 The key landscape principles used in developing the proposals are as follows:
- Retention of the existing landscape framework of hedgerow and tree lined field boundaries, ensuring the proposals are well integrated into the existing landscape;
  - Augmenting of the northern Site boundary with new tree and understorey planting, strengthening this as a new defensible Green Belt boundary;
  - Proposed building heights to be between two and three storeys, reflecting the surrounding context and providing a transition between the four storey apartments to the west and two / 2.5 storey houses to the south and east;
  - Creation of recreation opportunities within the Site proposals, including a generous area of amenity greenspace and children's play facilities; and
  - Provision of street trees throughout the new development, to break up the housing and assist in filtering views.

### Relationship to Existing Settlement

- 5.5 The Site is bound by the existing settlement edge of Claygate to the south, east and west and development at the Site would be very well

related to the existing settlement pattern. The proposed development has been sensitively designed to respond to the surrounding built form of four storey apartments to the west and two / 2.5 storey houses to the south and east. Proposed building heights will be between two and three storeys, providing a transition between the surrounding building form.

- 5.6 The proposals will also include a new area of public open space, including a new children's play space, as well as informal pedestrian routes around the eastern area of grassland, improving the recreational value of the Site for both new and existing neighbouring residents.

### **Visual Effects**

- 5.7 As set out in Section 3, the Site is very well contained by surrounding built form and well vegetated boundaries, resulting in very few views of the Site. The visual effects are summarised below and set out in full within the Effects Tables at **Appendix J**.
- 5.8 Views from properties on Raleigh Drive which back onto the Site will experience heavily filtered views of the new houses, with retained vegetation along the southern boundary filtering and in some cases screening views.
- 5.9 Properties on Rythe Road to the east and south of the Site will look across the new area of public open space in the east of the Site, towards the new houses. Retained boundary vegetation together with new tree planting within the open space will increasingly filter these views as it matures.
- 5.10 Views from the Esher Park Gardens apartments which currently overlook the Site and surrounding car park areas, will look towards the new houses in the west of the Site, which will be visible above the intervening boundary fence. New tree planting along the western edge of the Site will provide some filtering of these views.
- 5.11 Views from Rythe Road and Raleigh Drive will be largely restricted by the intervening existing properties, although occasional glimpsed views of the new houses may be possible through gaps between existing properties. The new access road junction into the Site will also be visible in near distance views from both roads.
- 5.12 Views from the northern section of Looseberry Road to the south and properties along it, will look towards the new access road junction into the Site, with a narrow framed view towards the new houses also being possible. These views will become increasingly narrowed as the road continues south.

- 5.13 The new houses will not be visible in views from Hare Lane Green and Littleworth Road to the east, by the intervening tree cover. Views from Littleworth Road further north will also be screened by the intervening Esher Park Gardens apartment block.
- 5.14 Views of the new houses will similarly be screened in views from Oaken Lane, the adjacent common land and public footpath, with dense intervening vegetation including woodland preventing any views.

### **Landscape Effects**

- 5.15 The landscape effects are summarised below and set out in full within the Effects Tables at **Appendix J**. As set out in Section 4, the Site is assessed as being of medium landscape quality and medium – low landscape value and sensitivity to the type of development proposed. The Proposed Illustrative Masterplan illustrates how the proposals have been sensitivity designed to include a generous area of open space in the eastern part of the Site.
- 5.16 The vast majority of the Site's existing trees and hedgerows to its boundaries will be retained as part of the proposals, although a single Category B tree and a Category B hedgerow on the eastern edge of the southern strip of land will require removal to facilitate the new access road. A small Category C ornamental cherry tree within the west of the Site will also require removal. These losses will be compensated for by substantial new tree planting throughout the development and to reinforce boundaries. New hedgerow and tree planting is also proposed along the new access road.
- 5.17 The character of the Site would clearly undergo some change, as the existing grassland is replaced with residential development. However, the new houses would not be out of character with the surrounding built form which adjoins it to the east, west and south. Furthermore the Site's densely vegetated northern boundary will provide a strong sense of separation from the wider countryside, ensuring that the effects on landscape character will be extremely localised.

### **Assessment of the Site's performance against Green Belt purposes**

- 5.18 As set out in Section 2, the Council's Green Belt Boundary Review found the Site (and land to its immediate west) to be performing weakly against the first three Green Belt purposes, with purpose 4 having been excluded from the Council's assessment on the grounds that the Borough does not contain any historic towns. The Site (and land to its immediate west) was subsequently identified to be removed from the Green Belt on the grounds that the existing Green Belt here does not follow a logical or recognisable boundary, recommending that the

boundary be redefined along the tree belt that forms the northern Site boundary.

5.19 For completeness, the following section sets out our assessment of the Site against purposes 1 – 4 of the Green Belt, as defined by paragraph 138 of the NPPF. The 5th purpose of the Green Belt is not considered, on the basis that this purpose is considered to apply equally to all areas within the Green Belt. The case with regard to very special circumstances for development within the Green Belt is set out in the Planning Statement.

1) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

5.20 The Site is indented into the existing built up area of Claygate which adjoins the Site along its eastern, western and southern edges. The Site is also contained to the north by the densely vegetated field boundary which physically separates it from the countryside beyond. As such, the Site plays no role in preventing unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas and is considered to make **no contribution** to this Green Belt purpose.

2) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another

5.21 Development of the Site would infill a small piece of Green Belt land on the northern edge of Claygate. The settlement of Claygate would not however extend any further north than it currently does and would not reduce the gap between Claygate and Hinchley Wood. The settlements of Claygate and Esher have already coalesced and development of the Site would infill land within the built up area, whilst maintaining the separation between these settlements to the north. Development of the Site would therefore not alter the existing situation, with Claygate and Esher having already coalesced, as have Claygate and Hinchley Wood. The Site is considered to make a **no contribution** to this Green Belt purpose.

3) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

5.22 The Site comprises a single grassland field on the northern edge of Claygate, with built form adjoining it on three sides. The Site is influenced by the adjoining urban edge, in particular the Esher Park Gardens apartments to the west, which overall gives the Site an urban fringe character. The Site is also separated from the wider countryside to the north by the densely vegetated northern field boundary. Although there would be a negligible degree of encroachment into the countryside at the Site itself resulting from the proposed development, there would be no encroachment into the wider countryside, beyond the Site. Overall the Site is considered to make a **relatively weak contribution** to this Green Belt purpose.

4) Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns

5.23 There are no Conservation Areas in proximity to the Site and as such development of the Site would not affect the setting or special character of any historic town. The Site is considered to make **no contribution** to this Green Belt purpose.

5.24 Overall, the Site is assessed as making a relatively weak - no contribution to the first four Green Belt purposes. The Site's performance against the first four Green Belt purposes is summarised in the table below. The Green Belt methodology used to inform this assessment is contained within **Appendix K**.

|   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas     | No contribution              |
| Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another       | No contribution              |
| Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment  | Relatively weak contribution |
| Purpose 4: Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns | No contribution              |

## 6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Site comprises an area of land on the northern edge of the built up area of Claygate. It comprises a single grassland field approximately 2.2 hectares in size.
- 6.2 The Site is indented into the existing northern edge of Claygate, adjoining existing two and 2.5 storey housing to the east and south at Rythe Road and Raleigh Drive respectively, and the four storey Esher Park Gardens apartments to the west. To the north of the Site are two fields grazed by horses beyond which is the wooded Littleworth Common.
- 6.3 The Site is visually well contained by the surrounding built form and well vegetated boundaries. Filtered views of the Site are possible from properties on Rythe Road and Raleigh Drive to the south and east and from the east facing apartments to the west. Views from elsewhere are generally screened, with only occasional glimpsed views of the Site's boundary trees (seen above and between the intervening houses) and near distance views of the southern strip of land and boundary fence / gate from adjoining roads to the south.
- 6.4 The Site is not covered by any statutory or non statutory designations for landscape character or quality, although it lies within the Green Belt. A number of the trees along the Site boundaries are also covered by a TPO. The interior of the Site is grassland, with structural vegetation (including some mature trees) confined to the boundaries. The character of the Site comprises a fairly ordinary grassland field which is heavily influenced by the surrounding built form, in particular the modern Esher Park Gardens apartments to the west. There is no public access to the Site, and views of the Site are generally limited to the surrounding properties, given the well contained nature of the Site. Overall the Site is assessed as being of medium landscape quality, and medium – low sensitivity and value.
- 6.5 As shown on the Proposed Illustrative Masterplan in **Appendix F**, the Site is proposed to be redeveloped for a new residential development of up to 60 dwellings, together with open space, landscaping, and other associated infrastructure. The proposals will retain the vast majority of the Site's existing boundary vegetation, with the exception of a Category B tree and Category B hedgerow along the new access road strip and a small Category C tree within the west of the Site. New planting is proposed throughout the Site in the form of native trees and hedgerow planting to strengthen the existing boundaries and within the eastern area of open space, which will compensate for the above losses. New tree planting is also proposed along the new roads through the Site and

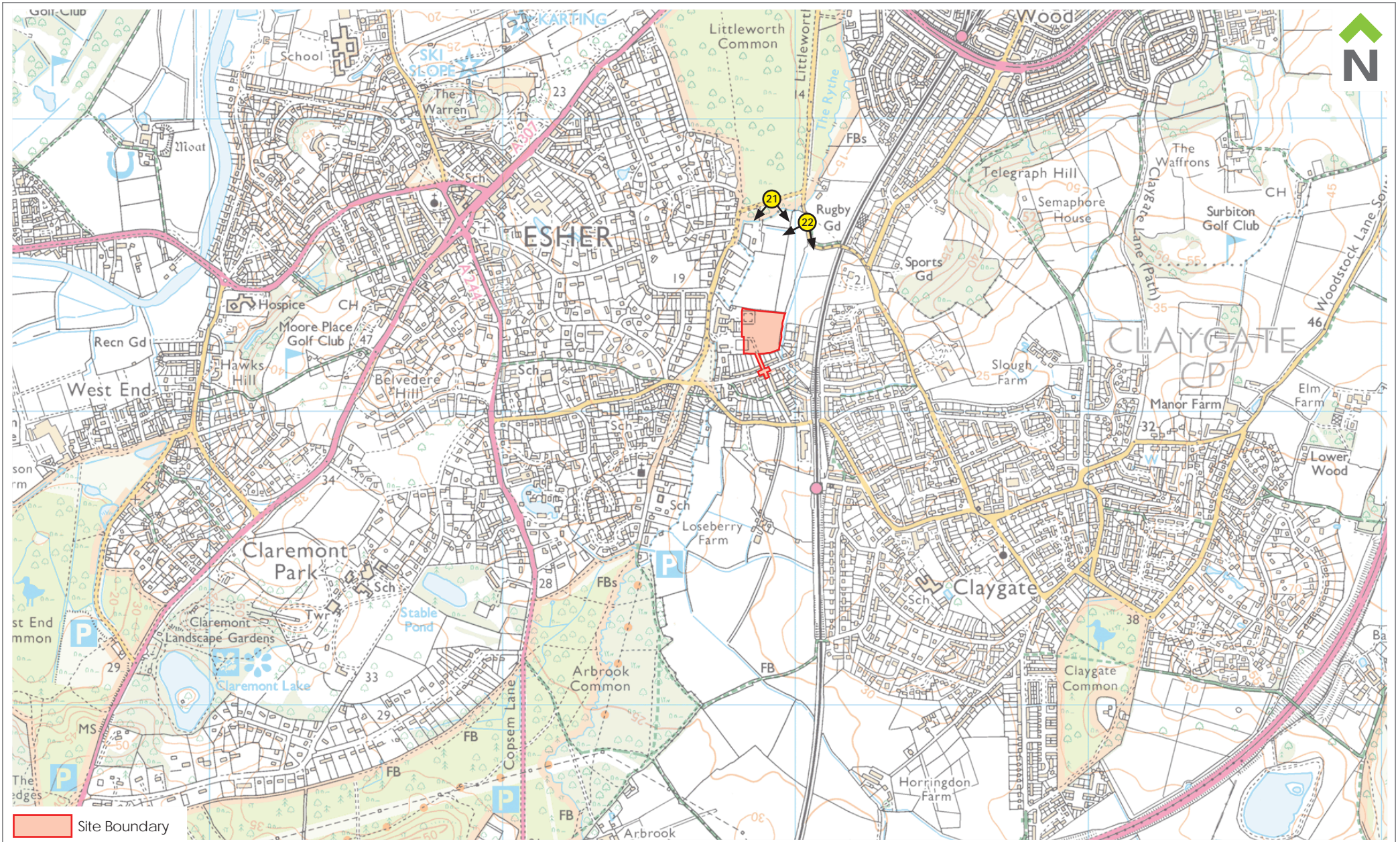
to plot frontages, as shown on the Illustrative Landscape Strategy at **Appendix G**.

- 6.6 The proposed development would be very well related to the existing surrounding housing and would not appear out of character in this location. Retained and enhanced boundary vegetation will provide a strong level of containment to the new housing, separating it from the countryside to the north.
- 6.7 There will be very few opportunities for views of the new housing, which will generally be limited to the adjoining residential properties on Rythe Road and Raleigh Drive to the east and south and residents at the Esher Park Gardens apartments to the west. In all cases, retained vegetation together with new tree planting will filter these views as it matures.
- 6.8 In relation to Green Belt, the Site is assessed as making very little - no contribution to the first four Green Belt purposes, and was identified within the Council's own Green Belt Boundary Review as an area recommended for removal from the Green Belt. The case for very special circumstances for development within the Green Belt is set out in the Planning Statement.
- 6.9 Overall the Site is considered to be capable of being developed, in line with the landscape principles set out above, without resulting in material effects on the visual amenity of the area or the wider landscape character beyond that of the Site.



## **Appendix A**

Site Location Plan



 Site Boundary



Dixies Barns, High Street,  
Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT

t 01462 743647  
e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk  
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

**Project** Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate

**Drawing Title** Site Location Plan

**Client** Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd

**Date** October 2022

**Scale @ A4** NTS

**Drawn** GD

**Drawing No.** CSA/3230/101

**Rev** D

**Checked** BS

## **Appendix B**

Aerial Photograph



 Site Boundary



Dixies Barns, High Street,  
Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT

t 01462 743647  
e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk  
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

|               |  |            |              |             |              |
|---------------|--|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Project       | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Date       | October 2022 | Drawing No. | CSA/3230/101 |
| Drawing Title | Aerial Photograph                                      | Scale @ A4 | NTS          | Rev         | F            |
| Client        | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn      | GD           | Checked     | BS           |

## **Appendix C**

Photosheets

Property on Raleigh Drive

Property on Rythe Road



Photograph 1 View from within the southern most part of the Site looking north.

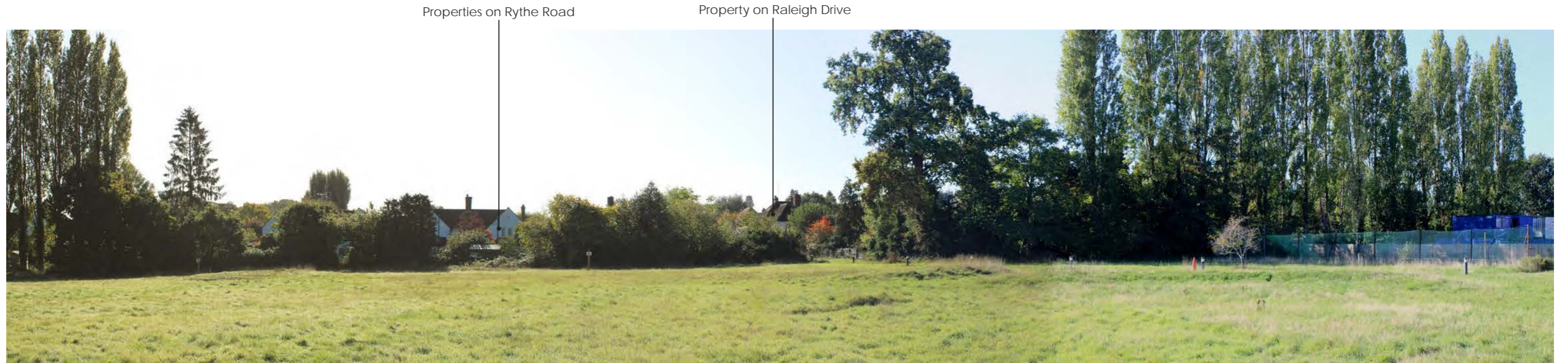
Esher Park Gardens

Northern Site boundary



Photograph 2 View from within the southern part of the Site looking north

|   |                          |  |                                 |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
|  |                          | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                                 |  |
|   |                          | <b>Project</b> Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate   | <b>Drawing No.</b> CSA/3230/102 |  |
| <b>Drawing Title</b> Photosheets  | <b>Date</b> October 2022 |  |                                 |  |
| <b>Client</b> Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                  | <b>Drawn</b> GD          | <b>Checked</b> BS  | <b>Rev</b> D                    |  |



**Photograph 3** View from within the Site looking south towards the residential properties on Raleigh Drive/Rythe Road.



**Photograph 4** View from within the Site looking east towards Esher Park Gardens.

|   |                          |  |                                 |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
|  |                          | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                                 |  |
|   |                          | <b>Project</b> Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate   | <b>Drawing No.</b> CSA/3230/102 |  |
| <b>Drawing Title</b> Photosheets  | <b>Date</b> October 2022 |  |                                 |  |
| <b>Client</b> Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                  | <b>Drawn</b> GD          | <b>Checked</b> BS  | <b>Rev</b> D                    |  |

Northern Site boundary



Photograph 5 View from within Site looking north towards northern boundary of Site.

Eastern Site boundary

Properties on Rythe Road



Photograph 6 View from within Site looking east towards eastern boundary of Site.

|   |  |  |            |       |
|---|--|--|------------|-------|
|  |  | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |            |       |
| Project   | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102   |            |       |
| Drawing Title   | Photosheets  | Date October 2022  |            |       |
| Client  | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn GD   | Checked BS | Rev D |



Northern Site boundary

Properties on Rythe Road

Esher Park Gardens



**Photograph 7** View from north western corner of Site looking south east across Site.

Properties on Rythe Road

Eastern Site boundary

Property on Raleigh Drive

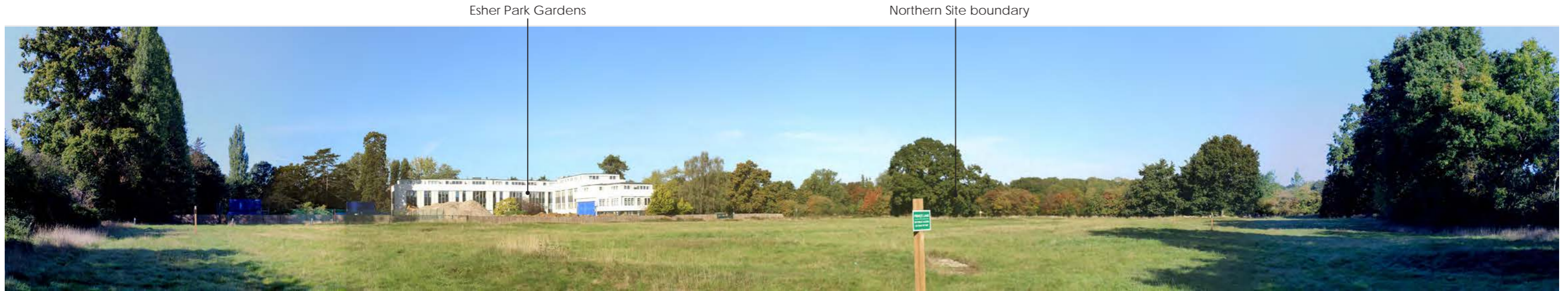
Esher Park Gardens

Northern Site boundary



**Photograph 8** View from north eastern corner of Site looking south west across Site.

|   |                          |  |                                 |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
|  |                          | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                                 |  |
|   |                          | <b>Project</b> Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate   | <b>Drawing No.</b> CSA/3230/102 |  |
| <b>Drawing Title</b> Photosheets  | <b>Date</b> October 2022 |  |                                 |  |
| <b>Client</b> Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                  | <b>Drawn</b> GD          | <b>Checked</b> BS  | <b>Rev</b> D                    |  |



**Photograph 9** View from south eastern corner of Site looking north west across Site.



**Photograph 10** View from south western corner of Site looking north east across Site.

|   |                   |  |                          |  |
|---|-------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
|  |                   | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                          |  |
|   |                   | Project Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102 |  |
| Drawing Title Photosheets   | Date October 2022 |  |                          |  |
| Client Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                         | Drawn GD          | Checked BS   | Rev D                    |  |

Properties on Raleigh Drive      Approximate extent of the Site      Properties on Loseberry Road



Panorama 11 For context only



Photograph 11

View from Loseberry Road looking north west towards Site.

Visualisation Type 1  
 Planar projection  
 75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
 11.10.2022, 10:07  
 Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
 HfoV 40°  
 Looking direction: north west

|   |                   |  |                          |  |
|---|-------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
|  |                   | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                          |  |
|   |                   | Project Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102 |  |
| Drawing Title Photosheets   | Date October 2022 |  |                          |  |
| Client Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                         | Drawn GD          | Checked BS   | Rev D                    |  |

Approximate extent of the Site

Rythe Road

Properties on Rythe Road



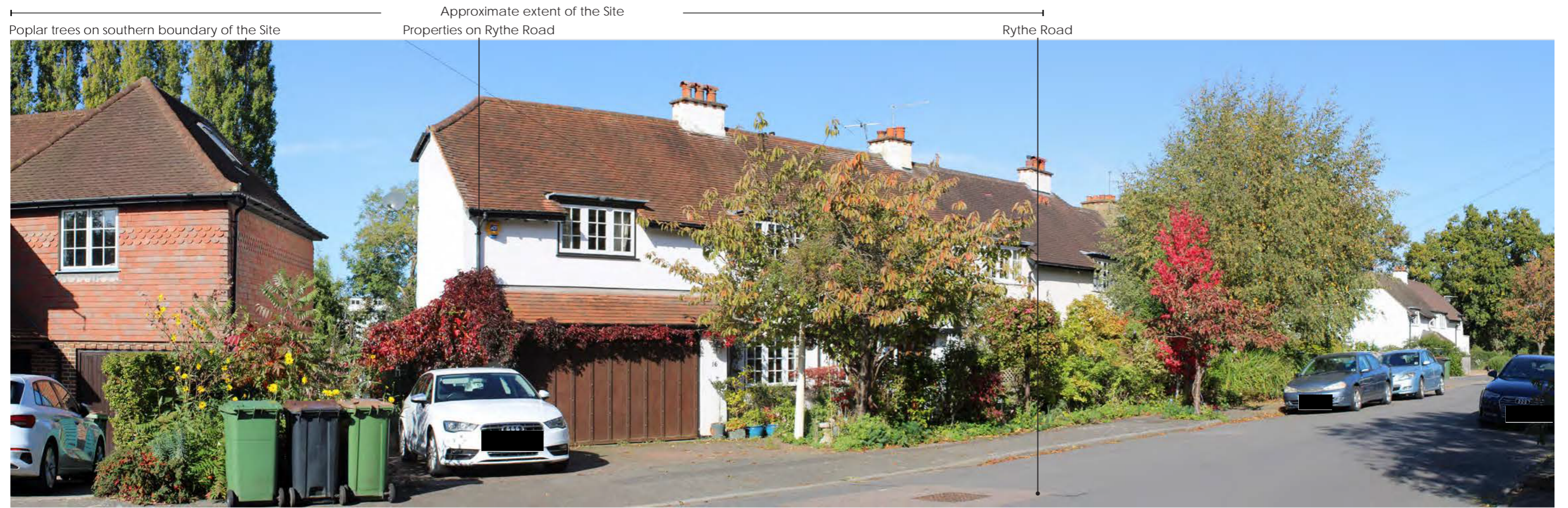
Photograph 12 View from Rythe Road looking south west.

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
11.10.2022, 10:22  
Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: south west

**CSA**  
environmental

Dixies Barns, High Street,  
Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT  
t 01462 743647  
e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk  
w csaenvironmental.co.uk

|               |  |             |              |         |    |     |   |
|---------------|--|-------------|--------------|---------|----|-----|---|
| Project       | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Drawing No. | CSA/3230/102 |         |    |     |   |
| Drawing Title | Photosheets  | Date        | October 2022 |         |    |     |   |
| Client        | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn       | GD           | Checked | BS | Rev | D |



**Photograph 13** View from Rythe Road looking north west towards Site.

Visualisation Type 1  
 Cylindrical projection  
 48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
 11.10.2022, 10:24  
 Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
 HfoV 90°  
 Looking direction: north west

|   |  |  |            |       |
|---|--|--|------------|-------|
|  |  | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |            |       |
| Project   | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102   |            |       |
| Drawing Title   | Photosheets  | Date October 2022  |            |       |
| Client  | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn GD   | Checked BS | Rev D |

Trees on the southern Site boundary

Rythe Road

Approximate extent of the Site

Properties on Rythe Road



Photograph 14 View from Rythe Road looking west.

Visualisation Type 1  
 Cylindrical projection  
 48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
 11.10.2022, 10:27  
 Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
 Hfov 90°  
 Looking direction: west

|   |                          |  |                                 |  |
|---|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
|  |                          | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                                 |  |
|   |                          | <b>Project</b> Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate   | <b>Drawing No.</b> CSA/3230/102 |  |
| <b>Drawing Title</b> Photosheets  | <b>Date</b> October 2022 |  |                                 |  |
| <b>Client</b> Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                  | <b>Drawn</b> GD          | <b>Checked</b> BS  | <b>Rev</b> D                    |  |

Properties on Raleigh Drive

Approximate extent of the Site

Raleigh Drive



Photograph 15 View from Raleigh Drive looking north east.

Visualisation Type 1  
 Cylindrical projection  
 48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
 11.10.2022, 10:28  
 Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
 HfoV 90°  
 Looking direction: north east

|   |                 |  |                                 |  |
|---|-----------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
|  |                 | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                                 |  |
|   |                 | <b>Project</b> Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate   | <b>Drawing No.</b> CSA/3230/102 |  |
| <b>Drawing Title</b> Photosheets  |                 | <b>Date</b> October 2022   |                                 |  |
| <b>Client</b> Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                  | <b>Drawn</b> GD | <b>Checked</b> BS  | <b>Rev</b> D                    |  |

Littleworth Road

Poplar trees on the southern Site boundary

Hare Lane Green

Approximate extent of the Site



Panorama 16 For context only



Photograph 16

View from Littleworth Road looking north east.

Visualisation Type 1  
 Planar projection  
 75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
 11.10.2022, 10:32  
 Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
 HfoV 40°  
 Looking direction: north east



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 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk  
 w csaenvironmental.co.uk

|               |  |             |              |         |       |
|---------------|--|-------------|--------------|---------|-------|
| Project       | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Drawing No. | CSA/3230/102 |         |       |
| Drawing Title | Photosheets  | Date        | October 2022 |         |       |
| Client        | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn       | GD           | Checked | BS    |
|               |  |             |              |         | Rev D |



Littleworth Road

Hare Lane Green

Approximate extent of the Site



Panorama 17 For context only



Photograph 17

View from Littleworth Road looking north east.

Visualisation Type 1  
 Planar projection  
 75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
 11.10.2022, 10:45  
 Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
 HfoV 40°  
 Looking direction: north east

|   |          |  |                          |  |
|---|----------|--|--------------------------|--|
|  |          | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                          |  |
|   |          | Project Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102 |  |
| Drawing Title Photosheets   |          | Date October 2022  |                          |  |
| Client Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                         | Drawn GD | Checked BS   | Rev D                    |  |

Approximate extent of the Site

Littleworth Road

Esher Park Gardens



Photograph 18 View from Littleworth Road looking north east.

Visualisation Type 1  
 Cylindrical projection  
 48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
 11.10.2022, 10:43  
 Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
 HfoV 90°  
 Looking direction: north east

|   |  |                                 |              |
|---|--|---------------------------------|--------------|
|  | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |                                 |              |
|   | <b>Project</b> Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate   | <b>Drawing No.</b> CSA/3230/102 |              |
| <b>Drawing Title</b> Photosheets  | <b>Date</b> October 2022   |                                 |              |
| <b>Client</b> Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd                  | <b>Drawn</b> GD  | <b>Checked</b> BS               | <b>Rev</b> D |

Approximate extent of the Site  
Esher Park Gardens

Littleworth Road



Photograph 19 View from Littleworth Road looking south east.

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
11.10.2022, 10:42  
Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: south east

|   |  |  |            |       |
|---|--|--|------------|-------|
|  |  | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |            |       |
| Project   | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102   |            |       |
| Drawing Title   | Photosheets  | Date October 2022  |            |       |
| Client  | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn GD   | Checked BS | Rev D |

Esher Park Gardens car park

Trees on the northern Site boundary

Approximate extent of the Site

Properties on Rythe Road

Esher Park Garden



Photograph 20 View from Esher Park Gardens car park looking south east towards Site.

Visualisation Type 1  
 Cylindrical projection  
 48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
 11.10.2022, 10:37  
 Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
 HfoV 90°  
 Looking direction: south east

|   |  |  |            |       |
|---|--|--|------------|-------|
|  |  | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |            |       |
| Project   | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102   |            |       |
| Drawing Title   | Photosheets  | Date October 2022  |            |       |
| Client  | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn GD   | Checked BS | Rev D |

Poplar trees on the southern Site boundary



**Photograph 21**

View from Littleworth Road looking south.

Visualisation Type 1  
Planar projection  
75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
11.10.2022, 11:06  
Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
Hfov 40°  
Looking direction: south

|   |  |  |            |       |
|---|--|--|------------|-------|
|  |  | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |            |       |
| Project   | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102   |            |       |
| Drawing Title   | Photosheets  | Date October 2022  |            |       |
| Client  | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn GD   | Checked BS | Rev D |

Approximate extent of the Site

Oaken Lane



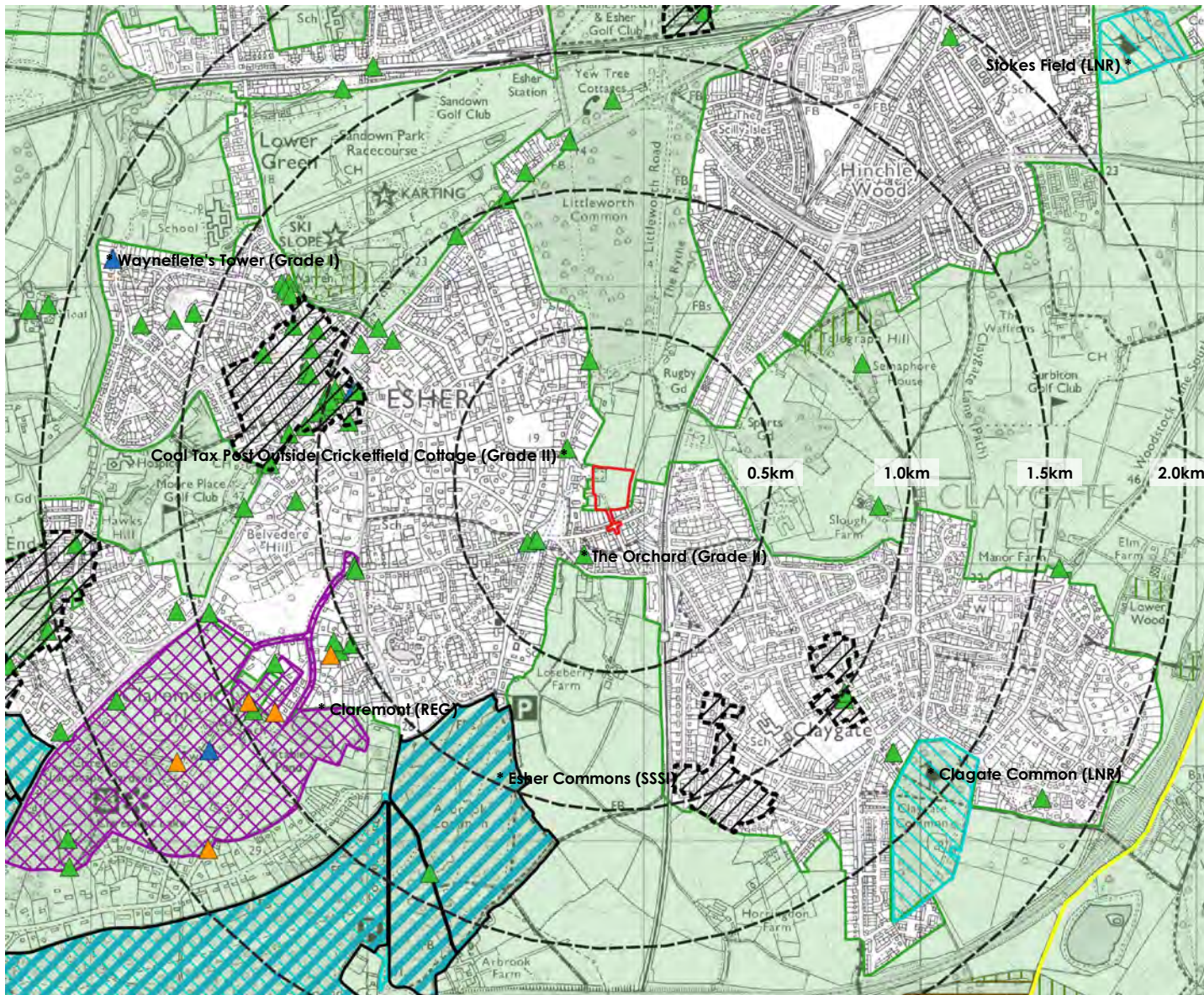
Photograph 22 View from Oaken Lane, looking south west.

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
11.10.2022, 11:00  
Canon EOS 2000D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: south west

|   |  |  |            |       |
|---|--|--|------------|-------|
|  |  | Dixies Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT<br>t 01462 743647<br>e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>w csaenvironmental.co.uk |            |       |
| Project   | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | Drawing No. CSA/3230/102   |            |       |
| Drawing Title   | Photosheets  | Date October 2022  |            |       |
| Client  | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | Drawn GD   | Checked BS | Rev D |

## **Appendix D**

Designations and Local Plan Extract



### Legend

- Site Boundary
- District Boundary
- Green Belt

### Designations

#### Heritage

- Conservation Areas

#### Listed Buildings

- ▲ I
- ▲ II\*
- ▲ II
- Scheduled Monuments (SM)
- Registered Parks and Gardens (REG)

#### Ecology

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Ancient Woodland
  - Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
  - Ancient Replanted Woodland
  - Local Nature Reserves (LNR)



Dixies Barns, High Street,  
Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT

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|                      |  |              |                |                    |              |
|----------------------|--|--------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| <b>Project</b>       | Land north of Raleigh Drive, Claygate                  | <b>Date</b>  | October 2022   | <b>Drawing No.</b> | CSA/3230/109 |
| <b>Drawing Title</b> | Designations and Local Policy Extract Plan             | <b>Scale</b> | Refer to scale | <b>Rev</b>         | -            |
| <b>Client</b>        | Claygate House Investments Ltd and MJS Investments Ltd | <b>Drawn</b> | CC             | <b>Checked</b>     | BS           |



## **Appendix E**

### National Landscape Policy Context

## 1.0 APPENDIX E – NATIONAL LANDSCAPE POLICY CONTEXT

### National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

- 1.1 National policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') and those parts relevant to this assessment are summarised below.
- 1.2 Paragraphs 10 and 11 of the NPPF state that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be applied in relation to both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 1.3 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF states that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for, among other elements, the '*(d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.*'
- 1.4 Section 12 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should support the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Paragraph 127 states that '*... design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics.*' Paragraph 128 requires local authorities to prepare design guides and codes which act as a framework to reflect local character and design preferences to create high quality designed places which are beautiful and distinctive.
- 1.5 Paragraph 130 states that planning policies and decisions, should ensure that developments, amongst others:
- '*will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
  - '*are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and effective landscaping;*
  - '*are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change...*'
- 1.6 Paragraph 131 highlights the importance of new and retained trees to the character and quality of urban environments, with appropriate species choice for the location and the needs of all users.
- 1.7 Paragraph 132 states that the design quality should be integral to the evolution and assessment of proposals, and paragraph 134 goes on to state that poorly

designed development should be refused, particularly where it does not follow local or government design guidance.

1.8 Section 15 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 174 of the document states that the planning system should contribute to the protection and enhancement of the natural and local environment through, among other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, '*... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)*'. The paragraph also outlines that the planning system should recognise the, '*... intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.*'

1.9 Paragraph 175 highlights that plans should:

*'... distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.'*

1.10 Paragraph 180 notes that in the process of determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply several principles. Among these, the paragraph notes that, '*(c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists*'.

1.11 In Section 13 'Protecting Green Belt Land' paragraph 137 of the NPPF states that the essential character of Green Belts is their openness and their permanence, with the fundamental aim of preventing urban sprawl. Paragraph 138 sets out the five purposes which Green Belt should serve:

- '*to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- '*to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- '*to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- '*to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- '*to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.'*

- 1.12 Paragraphs 140 to 142 outline the national planning policy relating to the definition of Green Belt boundaries. Paragraph 140 states that, *'Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans...'*. Paragraph 143 outlines the elements that should be considered when defining Green Belt boundaries. Paragraph 143 (f) states that plans should, *'define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.'*
- 1.13 Paragraph 147 and 148 deal with inappropriate development, which is by definition deemed to be harmful in the Green Belt. These paragraphs state that only in very special circumstances should inappropriate development be approved, and these circumstances will not be considered to exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt and any other harm is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
- 1.14 Paragraph 176 notes that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The paragraph goes on to state that planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Applications for development should include an assessment of potential detrimental effects on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and should show the extent to which these could be moderated. The paragraph also notes that development within the setting of a designated area *'... should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated area.'*
- 1.15 Paragraph 177 states that *'... permission should be refused for major development...'* within the National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty apart from where exceptional circumstances and public interest can be demonstrated. Such applications will require assessments of the need for the development, other options for the location of the development outside the designated area and any detrimental effects on the environment, landscape and recreational opportunities.
- 1.16 The definition of 'major development' for the purposes of paragraphs 176 and 177, is noted as being a matter for the decision maker, and should be considered in terms of its *'...nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area is designated or defined.'*

## Planning Practice Guidance

- 1.17 The Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') as relevant to this assessment covers landscape and the natural environment, the design of new developments, and Green Belt. The PPG may be out of date in its reference to NPPF paragraph numbers, and where this is the case, the latest paragraph number has been included in the text in square brackets.
- 1.18 Paragraph 001 (ID 26-001-20191001) of the Design: process and tools section sets out the purpose of the guidance, which aims to explain the process and tools that can be employed to achieve well-designed places. The guidance refers to paragraph 130 [134] of the NPPF which relates to ensuring good design, and states that the section should be read in conjunction with the National Design Guide (published Oct, 2019), which it notes should be used in both plan-making and decision making. Ten good design characteristics are identified in the National Design Guide, and these are set out as follows in the PPG:
- Context
  - Identity
  - Built form
  - Movement
  - Nature
  - Public places
  - Uses
  - Homes and buildings
  - Resources
  - Lifespan.
- 1.19 Paragraphs 006 and 007 deal with masterplans, stating that they should be site specific and should '*... set the vision and implementation strategy for a development...* '. Paragraph 006 notes that they may need to be accompanied by other technical reports including landscape assessment and proposals for securing biodiversity net gain.
- 1.20 The Natural environment section of the guidance aims to explain the key issues to consider in relation to the implementation of policies to protect and enhance the natural environment, including local requirements.
- 1.21 Paragraph 004 defines Green Infrastructure, while in paragraph 005 it explains its importance as a natural capital asset that provides multiple benefits, including enhanced biodiversity, landscapes and urban cooling. In paragraph 006 the guidance sets out the planning goals green infrastructure can assist in achieving, and these are:
- *Building a strong, competitive economy;*

- *Achieving well-designed places;*
- *Promoting healthy and safe communities;*
- *Mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change;*
- *Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.*

1.22 The final paragraph (008) in the green infrastructure sub-section notes that:

*'Green infrastructure opportunities and requirements need to be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals, as an integral part of development and infrastructure provision, and taking into account existing natural assets and the most suitable locations and types of new provision.'*

1.23 Within the Biodiversity, geodiversity and ecosystems section, the topic of net gain has been included. Paragraph 020 describes net gain as '*... an approach to development that leaves the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. Net gain is an umbrella term for both biodiversity net gain and wider environmental net gain.*'

1.24 In the Landscape section of the guidance, paragraph 036 refers to that part of paragraph 170 [174] of the NPPF which deals with the recognition of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside in local plans, and the need for strategic policies to '*... provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.*' Paragraph 036 goes on to note that:

*'Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed. Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures, such as appropriate design principles and visual screening, where necessary. The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully.'*

1.25 Paragraph 041 of the Landscape section deals with the approach to development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It notes that their status as landscapes of the highest quality has to be reflected in the design and location of all development in these areas, and refers to the considerations for development as set out in paragraph 172 [176] of the NPPF. Development in the setting of one of these protected landscapes is covered in paragraph 042, which states that, where important long views from or to the designated landscapes are identified, or where the land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary, a sensitive

approach which takes potential impacts into account will be needed to avoid significant harm.

1.26 The Green Belt section of the guidance under paragraph 001 notes that judging the openness of Green Belt land depends upon the circumstances of the case. The guidance notes that there are a number of factors to consider, and sets out three examples which include, but are not limited to:

- *openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;*
- *the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and*
- *the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation.*

1.27 Paragraph 002 deals with compensatory measures which local planning authorities should require in relation to the remaining Green Belt land when land is released for development. It notes environmental improvements to the quality and accessibility of the remaining land should be informed by landscape, biodiversity or recreational need and by identified opportunities in local strategies and could include:

- *New or enhanced green infrastructure;*
- *Woodland planting;*
- *Landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);*
- *Improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital;*
- *New or enhanced walking and cycling routes; and*
- *Improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision.*

1.28 Paragraph 003 states that in order to secure compensatory improvements, early engagement with landowners and other interest groups once land has been identified for release will be required.

### **National Design Guide**

1.29 The National Design Guide (2019) provides guidance to illustrate '*... how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.*'

1.30 The guidance identifies ten good design characteristics and the following are of most relevance to landscape and visual assessment (our emphasis):

- Context is described as *'... the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.'* The Guide goes on to state that,

*'An understanding of the context, history and cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments. It means they are well grounded in their locality and more likely to be acceptable to existing communities. Creating a positive sense of place helps to foster a sense of belonging and contributes to well-being, inclusion and community cohesion.'*

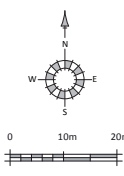
- The identity or character of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them. *It is not just about the buildings and how a place looks, but how it engages with all of the senses. Local character makes places distinctive. Well-designed, sustainable places with a strong identity give their users, occupiers and owners a sense of pride, helping to create and sustain communities and neighbourhoods.*
- Nature contributes to the quality of a place, and to people's quality of life, and it is a critical component of well-designed places. *Natural features are integrated into well-designed development. They include natural and designed landscapes, high quality public open spaces, street trees, and other trees, grass, planting and water.'*

1.31 The National Model Design Code (July, 2021) expands upon the ten characteristics of good design providing an overarching framework for design.



## **Appendix F**

Proposed Illustrative Masterplan



Proposed Illustrative Masterplan  
Raleigh Drive, Claygate

22071 / SK08A

Scale 1:500 @ A1 September 2022

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OSP Architecture, Broadmeade House, Farnham Business Park, Weydon Lane, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 9JF Tel: 01252 267878 www.osparchitecture.com

## **Appendix G**

### Illustrative Landscape Strategy

### 1. Retained Landscape Framework

The Site benefits from an established landscape framework of mature trees and hedgerows and these will be retained to contribute to filtering views towards the new housing from the surrounding area, and to respect the local character of the Site. This existing planting will be enhanced with new native trees and thicket planting to fill gaps in the existing vegetation and to enhance habitat provision and foraging opportunities for local wildlife. The northern boundary in particular will be strengthened to provide a strong separation between the new housing and the Green Belt land to the north. An indicative species palette is included below:

**Native Tree Planting:**  
 Quercus robur - Oak  
 Acer campestre - Field maple  
 Carpinus betulus - Hornbeam

**Native Thicket Planting:**  
 Corylus avellana - Hazel  
 Crataegus monogyna - Hawthorn  
 Prunus spinosa - Blackthorn  
 Rosa canina - Dog Rose



### 2. Residential Landscaping

A variety of planting across the new residential area will achieve a high-quality landscape design and help to integrate the new development into the existing landscape framework. The proposed planting will reflect the character of the area and provide an attractive place to live while softening the built form throughout the development. Native hedging will be used alongside the development edge where it adjoins the new open space. Within the development area a more ornamental palette of trees and shrubs will be used to provide seasonal interest and colour. Proposed planting will be easily maintained and complement the setting of the new residential development. An indicative planting palette is set out below:

#### Hedge Planting

|                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Species</b>         | <b>Common Name</b> |
| Carpinus betulus       | Hornbeam           |
| Osmanthus x burkwoodii | Burkwood Osmanthus |
| Viburnum tinus         | Laurastinus        |

#### Ornamental Shrub Planting

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Species</b>                                 | <b>Common Name</b>               |
| Eurynymus japonicus                            | Eurynymus 'Jean Hugues'          |
| Ceanothus 'Blue Mound'                         | California Lilac                 |
| Escallonia 'Apple Blossom'                     | Escallonia                       |
| Hebe 'Midsummer Beauty'                        | Shrubby Veronica                 |
| Lavandula angustifolia 'Hidcote'               | English Lavender 'Hidcote'       |
| Lonicera nitida 'Lemon Beauty'                 | Box Honey-suckle                 |
| Mahonia media 'Winter Sun'                     | Oregon Grape 'Winter Sun'        |
| Rosmarinus officinalis 'Miss Jessop's Upright' | Rosemary 'Miss Jessop's Upright' |

#### Herbaceous

|                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Species</b>                | <b>Common Name</b>     |
| Dryopteris filix-mas          | Male fern              |
| Geranium macrorrhizum 'Album' | Cranesbill 'Album'     |
| Pulsatilla vulgaris           | Pasque flower          |
| Rudbeckia fulgida 'Goldsturm' | Coneflower 'Goldsturm' |
| Verbena bonariensis           | Argentinian Vervain    |

#### Specimen grasses

|                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Species</b>   | <b>Common Name</b> |
| Carex pendula    | Pendulous Sedge    |
| Luzula sylvatica | Great Wood-rush    |



### 3. Children's Play Space

A Local Area for Play (LAP) will be included within the eastern area of new public open space, providing doorstep play facilities for younger children within the new community. The play space will focus on natural play, with timber play equipment, boulders and/or logs, complementing the naturalistic surroundings of the open space. The play space will be enclosed with hedging, providing a secure well overlooked space with seating for parents / guardians.



### 4. Public Open Space and Recreational Routes

The proposals include a generous area of public open space in the east of the Site designed to provide an attractive landscape setting to the new housing development. The open space will be laid out to have a semi-natural character, with native tree planting and long, species rich grassland and thicket planting to reinforce the structure of the Site boundaries. The open space will retain existing grassland where possible, enhancing this with wildflower meadow grassland. Recreational mown paths will be provided through the open space and provide an attractive walking route between northern and southern parts of the development.



- Site Boundary
- Existing trees / Vegetation
- Native Tree Planting
- Street Tree Planting
- Small Ornamental Tree Planting
- Native Thicket Mix
- Native Hedge Planting
- Ornamental Hedge Planting
- Ornamental Shrub / Herbaceous / Grass Planting
- Wildflower Meadow Grass
- Amenity Grass
- Soft Planting
- Timber Seat
- Specimen Shrub Planting
- Local Area of Play (LAP)

|  |              |         |         |
|--|--------------|---------|---------|
| Site   | Client       | Scale   | Date    |
| Phase  | Project      | Drawn   | Checked |
| No   | Issue        | By      | By      |
| Revisions  |              |         |         |
| <b>PLANNING</b>  |              |         |         |
| <b>CSA</b><br>environmental  |              |         |         |
| Dixes Barns, High Street,<br>Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT                    |              |         |         |
| T 01462 743647<br>E csawell@csaenvironmental.co.uk<br>W csaenvironmental.co.uk |              |         |         |
| Project Land north of Raleigh Drive,<br>Claygate                               |              |         |         |
| Title Illustrative Landscape Strategy  |              |         |         |
| Client Claygate House Investments Ltd<br>and MJS Investment Ltd                |              |         |         |
| Scale  | 1:500 @ A1   | Drawn   | CC      |
| Date   | October 2022 | Checked | BS      |
| Drawing No.  | CSA/22/01/04 | Rev.    | -       |

## **Appendix H**

Extract from Elmbridge Borough Landscape Sensitivity Study

Elmbridge Borough Council  
Elmbridge Borough Landscape Sensitivity Study:  
Final Report | January 2019

# Elmbridge Borough Landscape Sensitivity Study

**Final Report**



ARUP

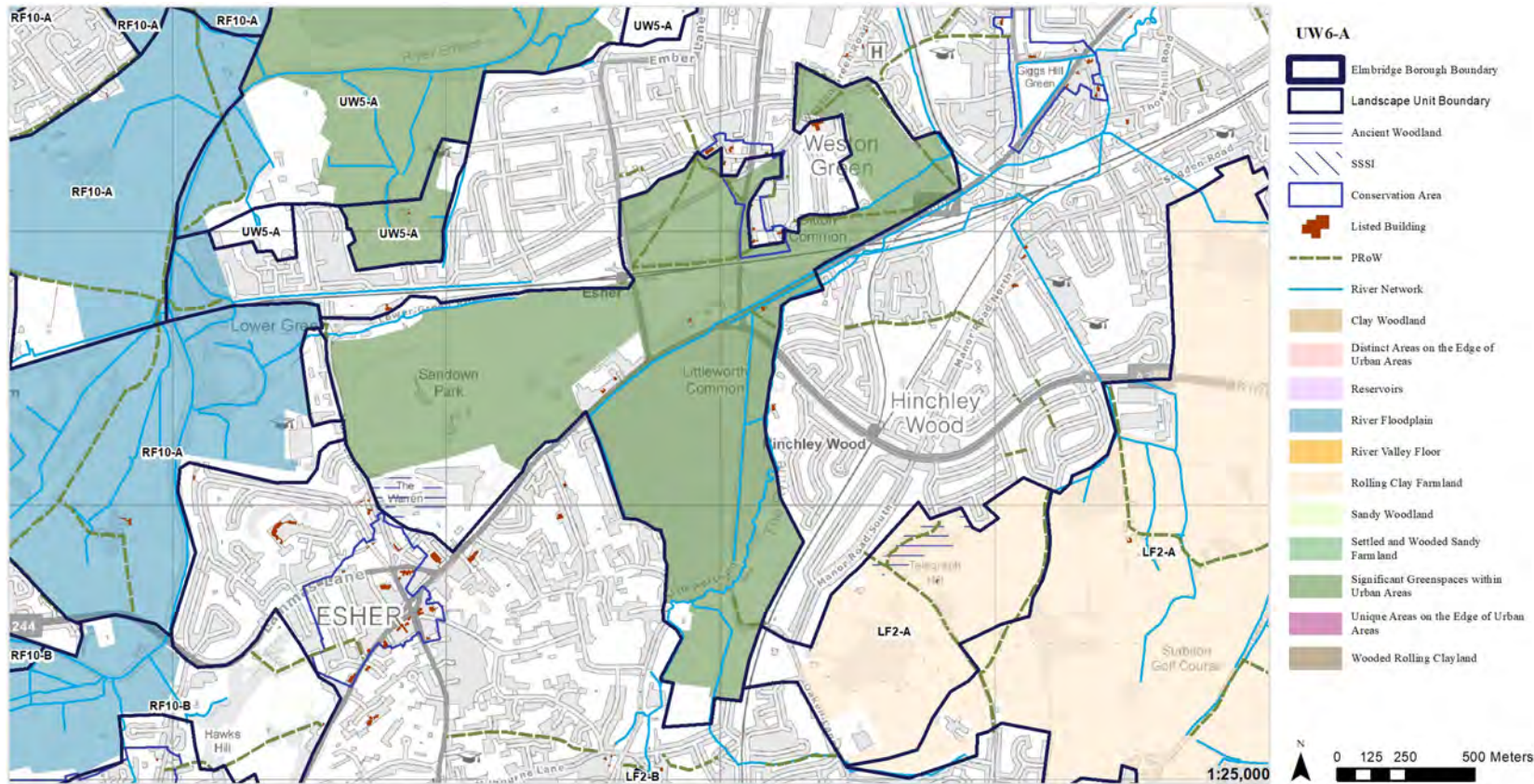
Ove Arup & Partners Ltd

13 Fitzroy Street, London, W1T 4BQ, United Kingdom

[www.arup.com](http://www.arup.com)

## Landscape Unit UW6-A

The Landscape Unit falls within the Lower Green to Weston Green and Littleworth Common Landscape Character Area and covers 192ha of wooded common, recreational land uses and the Sandown Park Race Course, within the urban area to the north-east of Esher. The South Western Main Line and A307 pass east-west and the A309 north-south through the Landscape Unit. The boundary of the Landscape Unit closely aligns with the GBBR Local Areas 45, 49, 52, 60, 61, 63, 65, and 66 and encompasses Recommended Sub Areas 29 and 36.



**Figure 52:** Location plan for Landscape Unit UW6-A

Contains Ordnance Survey data.  
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### Key Characteristics of UW6-A

The key characteristics outlined below are based on those identified in the Surrey Landscape Character Assessment for the Lower Green to Weston Green and Littleworth Common character area, of which UW6-A is a broadly typical representation.

- A collection of areas which include Sandown Park Racecourse, areas of golf course to the north and south, sports pitches, the wooded Littleworth Common, and other areas of common land to the north-east.
- A number of busy roads converge at a roundabout towards the centre of the Landscape Unit, including the Portsmouth Road (A307) and the Kingston Bypass (A309). The Waterloo to Guildford railway line crosses the northern part of the Landscape Unit.
- Sandown Park Racecourse and adjacent golf course are relatively private, but much of the rest of the area forms a valuable recreational resource, with Open Access Land and public rights of way links in the northern part of the Landscape Unit. Esher railway station is adjacent to the area and connects to public rights of way.
- The Landscape Unit is largely surrounded by the built-up area. This, combined with extensive road infrastructure to the north, and dense woodland to the south, contributes to a strong sense of enclosure, and limits longer views and connection with the wider countryside.
- Significant areas of the Landscape Unit are registered as Common Land, including Littleworth and Ditton Commons, which are also designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. The north-eastern part of the Landscape Unit also includes a small part of the Weston Green Conservation Area, and adjoins

Esher Conservation Area to the south-west. A small patch of ancient woodland is located in the south-eastern corner of the Landscape Unit.

- Parts of Littleworth Common have a sense of remoteness due to dense woodland which screens the surrounding urban areas. However, roads and other urban influences limit tranquillity elsewhere. Overall, the area provides both rural and semi-urban green space as a contrast and relief to the surrounding Built Up Areas.

### Landscape Value Indicators

The following are assets and qualities relating to the Landscape Unit that indicate landscape value, as defined in GLVIA3:

- The Landscape Unit displays many of the 'key positive landscape attributes' identified within the 2015 Surrey Landscape Character Assessment. These include:
  - Almost entirely enclosed by urban areas, areas of open landscape provide significant outdoor amenity for the surrounding population.
  - Areas of high biodiversity value and potential, such as the commons.
  - Provide visual and physical break of rural or natural open character within the Built-Up Area.
- Littleworth and Ditton Commons are valued for their ecological interest, due to heathland, acid grassland and secondary woodland habitats, reflected in their designation as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. These areas of common land are also valued as a recreational resource by local communities.
- The rural character and sense of tranquillity in some

parts of the Landscape Unit, resulting from the generally intact condition of woodland, mature tree field boundaries and the hedgerow network.

- Recreational value of the Public Rights of Way network, which provide access from settlements to local open spaces including woodlands, sports and recreation opportunities and areas of ecological and historic value. Informal footpaths within the woodlands contribute to this recreational offer.



## Assessment of Landscape Susceptibility

Table 32 describes the assessment of landscape susceptibility for UW6-A.

| Low Susceptibility  | Low-Medium Susceptibility | Medium Susceptibility | Medium-High Susceptibility | High Susceptibility |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Physical and Natural Character</b> - The Landscape Unit is assessed as having a Medium-High Susceptibility to change in terms of its physical and natural character by virtue of the following:<br>The Landscape Unit displays little intricacy in regard to landform. However, the landscape consists of a varied collection of areas which include Sandown Park Racecourse, wood pasture and parkland associated with Thames Ditton and Esher Golf Course (photo 1), the wooded Littleworth Common, and other areas of common land and sports pitches to the north-east. The golf course and Littleworth Common are designated sites of nature conservation importance which and would be vulnerable to change. The landscape is generally intact, however some areas to the north-east are less so, locally reducing susceptibility in this regard.   |                           |                       |                            |                     |
|   |                           |                       | Medium-High Susceptibility |                     |
| <b>Settlement Character and Edge Conditions</b> - The Landscape Unit is assessed as having a Medium-High Susceptibility to change in terms of its settlement character and edge conditions due to the following:<br>Littleworth Common and the mature landscape associated with Thames Ditton and Esher Golf Course strongly contribute to the setting of the settlement edges of Esher and Thames Ditton respectively and are important areas of accessible open land in proximity to urban areas. These landscapes also contribute to the perceived sense of separation from neighbouring settlements and busy road and rail infrastructure passing through the Landscape Unit. Sandown Park in the west is relatively private and enclosed by fencing, and therefore contributes little to the scenic qualities of adjacent settlement edges, however its large scale contributes to the perceived gap between settlements, and acts as a buffer between Esher and the South Western Main Line. Weston Green in the north-east is heavily influenced by adjacent residential properties and while it is an important recreational resource, would be less susceptible to development by virtue of its eroded condition that diminishes its contribution to the setting of settlement in this area. |                           |                       |                            |                     |
|   |                           |                       | Medium-High Susceptibility |                     |
| <b>Cultural and Historic Character</b> - The Landscape Unit is assessed as having a Medium-High Susceptibility to change in terms of its cultural and historic character in light of the following:<br>There are a number of historic assets within the landscape, notably The White Lady Milestone Scheduled Ancient Monument in the centre of the Landscape Unit and a key landmark in the form of The Warren in Sandown Park. Some areas are identified as having High Archaeological Potential within Sandown Park, a number of listed buildings including the Grade II listed gates and railings along Portsmouth Road and the Weston Green Conservation Area (noted that its special character lies within the setting of the village on to the common) that partially falls within the northern extents of the Landscape Unit (photo 2). The cultural and historical associations attached to Sandown Park Race Course, which opened in 1875, further increases susceptibility in this regard.   |                           |                       |                            |                     |
|   |                           |                       | Medium-High Susceptibility |                     |
| <b>Perceptual Character and Landscape Experience</b> - The Landscape Unit is assessed as having a Medium Susceptibility to change in terms of perceptual character and landscape experience by virtue of the following:<br>Parts of Littleworth Common have a sense of remoteness due to dense woodland which screens the surrounding urban areas. Roads and other urban influences limit tranquillity elsewhere, however the area provides both open and enclosed green space as a contrast and relief to the surrounding Built Up Areas.  |                           |                       |                            |                     |
|   |                           | Medium Susceptibility |                            |                     |
| <b>Visual Character</b> - The Landscape Unit is assessed as having a Medium Susceptibility to change in terms of visual character by virtue of the following:<br>The heavily enclosed landscape of Littleworth Common affords minimal intervisibility with the wider landscape by virtue of its densely wooded character (photo 3). Thames Ditton and Esher Golf Club in the north have a higher degree of intervisibility with views across the golf course and areas of wood-pasture and parkland habitat. However, belts of mature woodland generally screen surrounding development. Sandown Park in the west affords an even greater degree of intervisibility due to its large, open scale and gently sloping landform. Belts of trees along busy roads and the South Western Main Line prevent views between adjacent parts of the Landscape Unit. Strategic view 2 'Surrey Hills from Hampton Court', also identified in the Thames Landscape Strategy, falls within the eastern part of the Landscape Unit, increasing susceptibility in this regard.  |                           |                       |                            |                     |
|   |                           | Medium Susceptibility |                            |                     |
| <b>Skyline Character</b> - The Landscape Unit is assessed as having a Medium-High Susceptibility to change in terms of skyline character by virtue of the following:<br>Skylines in the north and south of the Landscape Unit are more susceptible to change in light of their prevailing natural character, formed by either dense woodland canopies overhead or mature belts of woodland in the backdrop of views. Skylines in the west have a lower susceptibility to change due to the presence of development associated with Sandown Park Racecourse which is prominent in skylines in this location (photo 4).   |                           |                       |                            |                     |
|   |                           |                       | Medium-High Susceptibility |                     |

Table 32: Assessment of landscape susceptibility to change from residential and mixed-use development

**Photo 1**



“wood-pasture and remnant parkland associated with Thames Ditton and Esher Golf Course”

**Photo 2**



“Weston Green Conservation Area (noted that its special character lies within the setting of the village on to the common) that partially falls within the northern extents of the Landscape Unit”

**Photo 3**



“The heavily enclosed landscape of Littleworth Common affords minimal intervisibility with the wider landscape by virtue of its densely wooded character”

**Photo 4**



“Skylines in the west have a lower susceptibility to change by virtue of the presence of development associated with Sandown Park Racecourse which forms a prominent element of the skyline in this location”

### Evaluation of Landscape Value

The Landscape Unit is assessed as having **Borough** landscape value due to the following:

- The generally intact condition of the landscape.
- The rural qualities of parts of the Landscape Unit resulting from the maturity of landscape features (Littleworth Common), contributing to a sense of wildness, and providing relief from surrounding Built-Up Areas.
- The Landscape Unit's representativeness of wider landscape character as described in the key characteristics in the Surrey LCA (with the exception of the race-course at Sandown Park).
- The presence of conservation designations including extensive areas of Common Land designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, a small part of the Weston Green Conservation Area and proximity to areas of historic value in adjacent Landscape Units.
- The recreational value attached to the Landscape Unit, supporting a range of sports and recreational uses, serving the wider communities in Elmbridge. The connected Public Right of Way network provides access to valued and historic areas of Common Land.

### Evaluation of Landscape Susceptibility

Taking account of the assessment of landscape susceptibility in **Table 32** above, the Landscape Unit is assessed as having an overall landscape susceptibility rating of **Medium-High** to change arising from residential and mixed-use development.

This judgement has been reached due to the historic associations attached to the landscape along with the large extents of woodland and historic common land which would be vulnerable to change. The Landscape Unit also performs an important function in buffering nearby settlements from busy infrastructure. Localised areas in the north-east of the Landscape Unit are less susceptible to change due to the influence modern development already has in the landscape.

### Overall Landscape Sensitivity

Taking account of the assessment of landscape value and susceptibility above, the Landscape Unit is assessed as having a **Moderate-High** overall sensitivity to change arising from residential and mixed-use development, by virtue of the historic value attached to areas of the Landscape Unit, the recreational value attached to large areas of common land and open access land and its associated natural character. A high degree of care would be needed in considering the location, design and siting of even small amounts of change within the landscape.

A variation in landscape sensitivity is apparent in the fields to the north-east of the Landscape Unit where the landscape is assessed as having a **Moderate-Low** sensitivity to change arising from residential and mixed-use development, due to the lower value attached to the landscape and existing influence of modern development in this area.



**Figure 53:** Landscape sensitivity rating for UW6-A

Contains Ordnance Survey data.

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## **Appendix I**

Extract from Elmbridge Borough Green Belt Boundary Review

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# Shaping Elmbridge A New Local Plan

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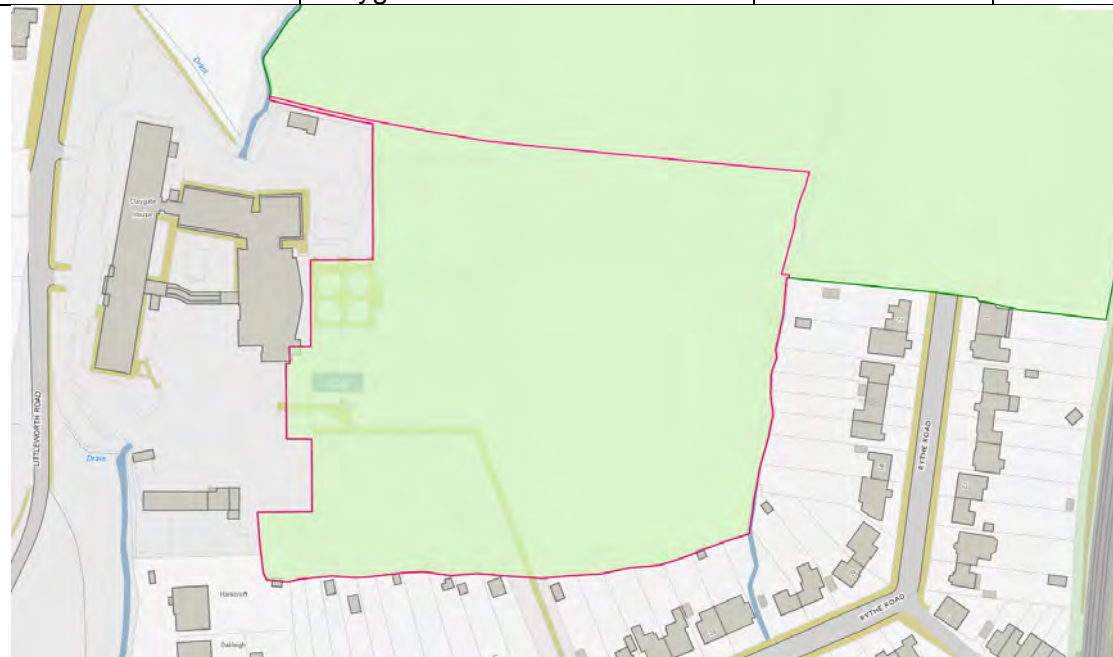
**Green Belt Boundary Review – Minor Boundary  
Amendments**  
June 2019



**Elmbridge**  
Borough Council  
*... bridging the communities ...*

---

|                 |  |                    |    |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|----|
| <b>Location</b> | Land rear of Claygate House,<br>Claygate | <b>Tile No(s).</b> | 99 |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|----|



|                                   |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Assessment and description</b> | <b>Key:</b><br><b>Area proposed to be removed from the Green Belt:</b> <span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; vertical-align: middle;"></span> | <b>Copyright Notes :</b><br>Crown Copyright. All Rights Reserved<br>Elmbridge Borough Council LA 100024882 2015<br>© Aerial Photography - Cartographic Engineering 2015<br>Historic Mapping © and database right Crown Copyright and<br>Landmark Information Group Limited (all rights reserved) 2015<br>Digital Map Data © Bartholomew (2015) |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|

The Green Belt does not follow a logical or recognisable feature along the western boundary (cutting through a car park, part of the building etc.). It is recommended that it is relocated to remove the entirety of the curtilage of Claygate House, with the boundary running along the tree belt at its northern edge.

This amendment would result in a greater area of land having the potential for redevelopment. However, this recommendation is concerned with having the Green Belt follow a logical boundary which it currently does not.

Area size: 2.44ha



## **Appendix J**

Effects Tables and Methodology for Landscape and Visual Assessment

## METHODOLOGY FOR LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- M1 In landscape and visual impact assessment, a distinction is normally drawn between **landscape/townscape effects** (i.e. effects on the character or quality of the landscape (or townscape), irrespective of whether there are any views of the landscape, or viewers to see them) and **visual effects** (i.e. effects on people's views of the landscape, principally from public rights of way and areas with public access, but also private views from residential properties). Thus, a development may have extensive landscape effects but few visual effects if, for example, there are no properties or public viewpoints nearby. Or alternatively, few landscape effects but substantial visual effects if, for example, the landscape is already degraded or the development is not out of character with it, but can clearly be seen from many residential properties and/or public areas.
- M2 The assessment of landscape & visual effects is less amenable to scientific or statistical analysis than some environmental topics and inherently contains an element of subjectivity. However, the assessment should still be undertaken in a logical, consistent and rigorous manner, based on experience and judgement, and any conclusions should be able to demonstrate a clear rationale. To this end, various guidelines have been published, the most relevant of which, for assessments of the effects of a development, rather than of the character or quality of the landscape itself, form the basis of the assessment and are as follows:
- 'Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment', produced jointly by the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Landscape Institute (GLVIA 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 2013); and
  - 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment', October 2014 (Christine Tudor, Natural England) to which reference is also made. This stresses the need for a holistic assessment of landscape character, including physical, biological and social factors.
  - 'Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations', Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02/21

### LANDSCAPE/TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS

- M3 Landscape/townscape quality is a subjective judgement based on the condition and characteristics of a landscape/townscape. It will often be informed by national, regional or local designations made upon it in respect of its quality e.g. AONB. Sensitivity relates to the inherent value placed on a landscape / townscape and the ability of that landscape/townscape to accommodate change.

Landscape sensitivity can vary with:

- (i) *existing land uses;*
- (ii) *the pattern and scale of the landscape;*
- (iii) *visual enclosure/openness of views, and distribution of visual receptors;*
- (iv) *susceptibility to change;*
- (v) *the scope for mitigation, which would be in character with the existing landscape; and*
- (vi) *the condition and value placed on the landscape.*

- M4 The concept of landscape/townscape value is considered in order to avoid consideration only of how scenically attractive an area may be, and thus to avoid undervaluing areas of strong character but little scenic beauty. In the process of making this assessment, the following factors, among others, are considered with relevance to the site in question: landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations.
- M5 Nationally valued landscapes are recognised by designation, such as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('AONB') which have particular planning policies applied to them. Nationally valued townscapes are typically those covered by a Conservation Area or similar designation. Paragraph 174 of the current NPPF outlines that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes '*...in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan*'.
- M6 There is a strong inter-relationship between landscape/townscape quality, value and sensitivity as high quality/value landscapes/townscapes usually have a low ability to accommodate change.
- M7 For the purpose of our assessment, landscape/townscape quality, value and sensitivity is assessed using the criteria in Tables LE1 and LE2. Typically, landscapes/townscapes which carry a quality designation and which are otherwise attractive or unspoilt will in general be more sensitive, while those which are less attractive or already affected by significant visual detractors and disturbance will be generally less sensitive.
- M8 The magnitude of change is the scale, extent and duration of change to a landscape arising from the proposed development and was assessed using the criteria in Table LE3.
- M9 Landscape/townscape effects were assessed in terms of the interaction between the magnitude of the change brought about by the development and the quality, value & sensitivity of the landscape resource affected. The landscape/townscape effects can be either beneficial, adverse or neutral. Landscape effects can be direct (i.e. impact on physical features, e.g. landform, vegetation, watercourses etc.), or indirect (i.e. impact on landscape character as a result of the introduction of new elements within the landscape). Direct visual effects result from changes to existing views.
- M10 In this way, landscapes/townscapes of the highest sensitivity, when subjected to a high magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to give rise to 'substantial' landscape/townscape effects which can be either adverse or beneficial. Conversely, landscapes of low sensitivity, when subjected to a low magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to give rise to only 'slight' or neutral landscape effects. Beneficial landscape effects may arise from such things as the creation of new landscape features, changes to management practices and improved public access. For the purpose of this assessment the landscape/townscape effects have been judged at completion of the development and in year 15. This approach acknowledges that landscape/townscape effects can reduce as new planting/mitigation measures become established and achieve their intended objectives.

### **VISUAL EFFECTS**

- M11 Visual effects are concerned with people's views of the landscape/townscape and the change that will occur. Like landscape effects, viewers or receptors are categorised by their sensitivity. For example, views from private dwellings are generally of a higher sensitivity than those from places of work.

- M12 In describing the content of a view the following terms are used:
- No view - no views of the development;
  - Glimpse - a fleeting or distant view of the development, often in the context of wider views of the landscape;
  - Partial - a clear view of part of the development only;
  - Filtered - views to the development which are partially screened, usually by intervening vegetation - the degree of filtering may change with the seasons;
  - Open - a clear view to the development.
- M13 The sensitivity of the receptor varies according to its susceptibility to a particular type of change, or the value placed on it (e.g. views from a recognised beauty spot will have a greater sensitivity). Visual sensitivity was assessed using the criteria in Table VE1.
- M14 The magnitude of change is the degree in which the view(s) may be altered as a result of the proposed development and will generally decrease with distance from its source, until a point is reached where there is no discernible change. The magnitude of change in regard to the views was assessed using the criteria in Table VE2.
- M15 Visual effects were then assessed in terms of the interaction between the magnitude of the change brought about by the development and also the sensitivity of the visual receptor affected.
- M16 As with landscape effects, a high sensitivity receptor, when subjected to a high magnitude of change from the proposed development, is likely to experience 'substantial' visual effects which can be either adverse or beneficial. Conversely, receptors of low sensitivity, when subjected to a slight magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to experience only 'slight' or neutral visual effects, which can be either beneficial or adverse.
- M17 Unless specific slab levels of buildings have been specified, the assessment has assumed that slab levels will be within 750mm of existing ground level.

#### **MITIGATION AND RESIDUAL EFFECTS**

- M18 Mitigation measures are described as those measures, including any process or activity, designed to avoid, reduce and compensate for adverse landscape and/or visual effects resulting from the proposed development.
- M19 In situations where proposed mitigation measures are likely to change over time, as with planting to screen a development, it is important to make a distinction between any likely effects that will arise in the short-term and those that will occur in the long-term or 'residual effects' once mitigation measures have established. In this assessment, the visual effects of the development have been considered at completion of the entire project and at 15 years thereafter.
- M20 Mitigation measures can have a residual, positive impact on the effects arising from a development, whereas the short-term impact may be adverse.

#### **ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS**

- M21 The assessment concisely considers and describes the main landscape/townscape and visual effects resulting from the proposed development. The narrative text demonstrates the reasoning behind judgements concerning the landscape and visual effects of the proposals. Where appropriate, the text is supported by tables which summarise the sensitivity of the views/landscape/townscape, the magnitude of change and describe any resulting effects.

## **CUMULATIVE EFFECTS**

- M22 Cumulative effects are *'the additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together.'*
- M23 In carrying out landscape assessment it is for the author to form a judgement on whether or not it is necessary to consider any planned developments and to form a judgement on how these could potentially affect a project.

## **ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY (ZTV)**

- M24 A ZTV map can help to determine the potential visibility of the site and identify those locations where development at the site is likely to be most visible from the surrounding area. Where a ZTV is considered appropriate for a proposed development the following methodology is used.
- M25 The process is in two stages, and for each, a digital terrain model ('DTM') using Key TERRA-FIRMA computer software is produced and mapped onto an OS map. The DTM is based on Ordnance Survey Landform Profile tiles, providing a digital record of existing landform across the UK, based on a 10 metre grid. There is the potential for minor discrepancies between the DTM and the actual landform where there are topographic features that are too small to be picked up by the 10 metre grid. A judgement will be made to determine the extent of the study area based on the specific site and the nature of the proposed change, and the reasons for the choice will be set out in the report. The study area will be determined by local topography but is typically set at 7.5km.
- M26 Different heights are then assigned to significant features, primarily buildings and woodland, thus producing the first stage of an 'existing' ZTV illustrating the current situation of the site and surrounding area. This data is derived from OS Open Map Data, and verified during the fieldwork, with any significant discrepancies in the data being noted and the map adjusted accordingly. Fieldwork is confined to accessible parts of the site, public rights of way, the highway network and other publicly accessible areas.
- M27 The second stage is to produce a 'proposed' ZTV with the same base as the 'existing' ZTV. The proposed development is introduced into the model as either a representative spot height, or a series of heights, and a viewer height of 1.7m is used. Illustrating the visual envelope of the proposed development within the specific site.
- M28 The model is based on available data and fieldwork and therefore may not take into account all development or woodland throughout the study area, nor the effect of smaller scale planting or hedgerows. It also does not take into account areas of recent or continuous topographic change from, for instance, mining operations.

## **VISUALISATION TYPE METHODOLOGY**

- M29 The photographs and visualisations within this report have been prepared in general conformance with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 06/19. The 'types', as set out within the Guidance, comprise the following:
- Type 1 - annotated viewpoint photographs;
  - Type 2 - 3D wireline / model;
  - Type 3 - photomontage / photowire;
  - Type 4 - photomontage / photowire (survey / scale verifiable).
- M30 Photographs were taken with a digital camera with a lens that approximates to 50mm, to give a similar depth of view to the human eye. In some cases images have been

joined together to form a panorama. The prevailing weather and atmospheric conditions, and any effects on visibility are noted. Images are displayed at the most appropriate size, taking into account the published guidance, legibility at A3 paper size, and context (which is often shown for illustrative purposes only), and allows for enlarged scale printing if required.

- M31 The Guidance Note advocates a proportionate and reasonable approach, which includes professional judgement, in order to aid informed decision making.
- M32 The determination of the suitable Visualisation Type to aid in illustrating the effects of the scheme, has been determined by a range of factors as set out below, including the timing of the project, the technical expertise, and costs involved.
- M33 Where it is deemed suitable or necessary to utilise the Visualisation Types set out within the Guidance Note, the table below has been used to determine which Visualisation Type is most appropriate to the project, unless otherwise specified within the report.
- M34 The table below (based on Table 1 within the Guidance Note) sets out the intended purpose and user of the report, and the Likely Level of Effect. The Likely Level of Effect is based on Tables LE4 and VE3 in this methodology, and takes into consideration the type and nature of the proposed development, as well as the sensitivity of the host environment and key visual receptors. The Likely Level of Effect is based on an initial consideration of the landscape and visual effects of the project as a whole, and the subsequent assessment may conclude a lesser or higher level of overall effect, once completed. Table VMT also provides an indication as to the appropriate Visualisation Type, noting that it is not a fixed interpretation and that professional judgement should always be applied.
- M35 Additional photographs (which do not conform to any Type) may be included to illustrate the character of the landscape/townscape, or to illustrate relevant characteristics, for example the degree and nature of intervening vegetation, or reciprocal views from residential properties.

| Table VTM  |  | VISUALISATION TYPE METHODOLOGY   |            |             |          |             |
|--|--|--|------------|-------------|----------|-------------|
|  |  | Type 1   | Type 2     | Type 3      | Type 4   |             |
| <b>User, Purpose, and Likely Level of Effect</b> | <b>A</b>   | Evidence submitted to most Public Inquiries, most planning applications for EIA development accompanied by Landscape and Visual ES Chapters.   |            |             |          |             |
|  |  | Neutral  | Negligible | Slight      | Moderate | Substantial |
|  | <b>B</b>   | Planning applications for most non-EIA development accompanied by LVIA/LVA, where there are concerns about landscape and visual effects and effective mitigation may be required. Some Landscape and Visual ES Chapters. |            |             |          |             |
|  |  | Neutral  | Negligible | Slight      | Moderate | Substantial |
| <b>C</b>   | Planning applications where the character and appearance of the development is a material consideration, but where a LVIA/LVA may not be required. |  |            |             |          |             |
|  | Neutral/Negligible/Slight  |  | Moderate   | Substantial |          |             |
| <b>D</b>   | To inform the iterative process of assessment and design with client, and/or pre-application consultations with the competent authority.           |  |            |             |          |             |
|  | Neutral/Negligible/Slight/Moderate   |  |            | Substantial |          |             |

Table LE 1

LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE QUALITY AND VALUE

|   | Very High  | High   | Medium   | Low   |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Description of Landscape/Townscape Quality and Value</p> | <p><b>Landscape Quality:</b> Intact and very attractive landscape which may be nationally recognised/designated for its scenic beauty. e.g. National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or World Heritage Site.</p> <p><b>Townscape Quality:</b> A townscape of very high quality which is unique in its character, and recognised nationally/internationally, e.g. World Heritage Site</p> <p><b>Value:</b> Very high quality landscape or townscape with Statutory Designation for landscape/townscape quality/ value, e.g. National Park, World Heritage Site, Registered Park or Garden. Contains rare elements or significant cultural/historical associations.</p> | <p><b>Landscape Quality:</b> A landscape, usually combining varied topography, historic features and few visual detractors. A landscape known and cherished by many people from across the region. e.g. County Landscape Site such as a Special Landscape Area.</p> <p><b>Townscape Quality:</b> A well designed townscape of high quality with a locally recognised and distinctive character e.g. Conservation Area</p> <p><b>Value:</b> High quality landscape/townscape or lower quality landscape with un-fettered public access, (e.g. commons, public park) or with strong cultural associations. May have important views out to landmarks/designated landscapes and few detracting features. May possess perceptual qualities of tranquility or wildness.</p> | <p><b>Landscape Quality:</b> Non-designated landscape area, generally pleasant but with no distinctive features, often displaying relatively ordinary characteristics. May have detracting features.</p> <p><b>Townscape Quality:</b> A typical, pleasant townscape with a coherent urban form but with no distinguishing features or designation for quality.</p> <p><b>Value:</b> An ordinary landscape/townscape of local value which may have some detracting features. No recognised statutory designations for landscape/townscape quality. A landscape which may have limited public access and/ or have pleasant views out, or be visible in public views.</p> | <p><b>Landscape / Townscape Quality:</b> Unattractive or degraded landscape/townscape, affected by numerous detracting elements e.g. industrial areas, infrastructure routes and un-restored mineral extractions.</p> <p><b>Value:</b> Landscape/townscape generally of lower quality. A landscape with limited public access, no designations or recognised cultural significance. Limited public views.</p> |

Table LE 2

LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE SENSITIVITY

|                            | Very High   | High  | Medium   | Low   |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Description of Sensitivity | <p>A landscape/townscape with a very low ability to accommodate change such as a nationally designated landscape.</p> | <p>A landscape/townscape with limited ability to accommodate change because such change may lead to some loss of valuable features or elements. Development of the type proposed could potentially be discordant with the character of the landscape/townscape.</p> | <p>A landscape/townscape with reasonable ability to accommodate change. Change may lead to a limited loss of some features or characteristics. Development of the type proposed would not be discordant with the character of the landscape/townscape.</p> | <p>A landscape/townscape with good ability to accommodate change. Change would not lead to a significant loss of features or characteristics, and there would be no significant loss of character or quality. Development of the type proposed would not be discordant with the landscape/townscape in which it is set and may result in a beneficial change.</p> |



**Table LE 3 LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE**

|  | Substantial   | Moderate | Slight | Negligible | Neutral |
|--|---|----------|--------|------------|---------|
| <b>Description of the Change predicted</b> | Total loss of or significant impact on key characteristics, features or elements                            |          |        |            |         |
|  | Partial loss of or impact on key characteristics, features or elements                                      |          |        |            |         |
|  | Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements   |          |        |            |         |
|  | Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements |          |        |            |         |
|  | No loss or alteration of key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements                     |          |        |            |         |

**Table LE 4 LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS**

|                                  | Substantial   | Moderate | Slight | Negligible | Neutral |
|----------------------------------|---|----------|--------|------------|---------|
| <b>Description of the Effect</b> | <p>The proposals will alter the landscape/ townscape in that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will result in substantial change in the character, landform, scale and pattern of the landscape/townscape;</li> <li>• are visually intrusive and would disrupt important views;</li> <li>• are likely to impact on the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting;</li> <li>• will impact a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape;</li> <li>• cannot be adequately mitigated.</li> </ul> |          |        |            |         |
|                                  | <p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• noticeably change the character, scale and pattern of the landscape/townscape;</li> <li>• may have some impacts on a landscape/townscape of recognised quality or on vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements.</li> <li>• are a noticeable element in key views;</li> <li>• not possible to fully mitigate.</li> </ul>   |          |        |            |         |
|                                  | <p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• do not quite fit the landform and scale of the landscape/townscape and will result in relatively minor changes to existing landscape character;</li> <li>• will impact on certain views into and across the area;</li> <li>• mitigation will reduce the impact of the proposals but some minor residual effects will remain.</li> </ul>  |          |        |            |         |
|                                  | <p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/townscape;</li> <li>• development may occupy only a relatively small part of the Site;</li> <li>• maintain the majority of landscape features;</li> <li>• incorporates measures for mitigation to ensure the scheme will blend in well with the landscape/townscape and mitigates any loss of vegetation.</li> </ul>   |          |        |            |         |
|                                  | <p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain existing landscape/townscape character;</li> <li>• has no impact on landscape features, such as trees, hedgerows, watercourses, etc.;</li> <li>• utilises a highly degraded landscape or brownfield site.</li> </ul>  |          |        |            |         |

**Footnote:**

1. Each level (other than neutral) of change identified can be either regarded as 'beneficial' or 'adverse'. The above table relates to adverse landscape effects, however where proposals complement or enhance landscape character, these will have a comparable range of beneficial landscape effects.

Table VE 1

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

|                                    | High   | Medium   | Low   |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <p>Description of the Receptor</p> | <p>Residential properties with predominantly open views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from ground and first floors and from two or more windows of rooms mainly in use during the day.</p> <p>Users of Public Rights of Way in sensitive or generally unspoilt areas.</p> <p>Predominantly non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside.</p> <p>Views from within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Park, World Heritage Site or Conservation Area and views for visitors to recognised viewpoints or beauty spots.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with predominantly open views where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of the countryside - e.g. Country Parks, National Trust or other access land etc.</p> | <p>Residential properties with partial views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from first floor windows only, or an oblique view from one ground floor window, or may be partially obscured by garden or other intervening vegetation.</p> <p>Users of Public Rights of Way in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views or where the purpose of that recreation is incidental to the view e.g. sports fields.</p> <p>Schools and other institutional buildings, and their outdoor areas.</p> <p>Users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside, whether motorised or not.</p> | <p>People in their place of work.</p> <p>Users of main roads or passengers in public transport on main routes.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views and where the purpose of that recreation is unrelated to the view e.g. go-karting track.</p> |

| Table VE 2                          |   | VISUAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE |          |        |            |         |
|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------|--------|------------|---------|
|                                     |   | Substantial                | Moderate | Slight | Negligible | Neutral |
| Description of the Change predicted | Large and dominating changes which affect a substantial part of the view.   |                            |          |        |            |         |
|                                     | Clearly perceptible and noticeable changes within a significant proportion of the view.   |                            |          |        |            |         |
|                                     | Small changes to existing views, either as a minor component of a wider view, or smaller changes over a larger proportion of the view(s). |                            |          |        |            |         |
|                                     | Very minor changes over a small proportion of the view(s).  |                            |          |        |            |         |
|                                     | No discernible change to the view(s).   |                            |          |        |            |         |

| Table VE 3                 |   | VISUAL EFFECTS |          |        |            |         |
|----------------------------|---|----------------|----------|--------|------------|---------|
|                            |   | Substantial    | Moderate | Slight | Negligible | Neutral |
| Description of the Effects | The proposals would have a significant impact on a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, or less damage (or improvement) to a view from a highly sensitive receptor, and would be an obvious or dominant element in the view. |                |          |        |            |         |
|                            | The proposals would impact on a view from a medium sensitive receptor, or less harm (or improvement) to a view from a more sensitive receptor, and would be a readily discernible element in the view.                              |                |          |        |            |         |
|                            | The proposals would have a limited effect on a view from a medium sensitive receptor, but would still be a visible element within the view, or a greater effect on a view from a receptor of lower sensitivity.                     |                |          |        |            |         |
|                            | The proposals would result in a negligible change to the view but would still be discernible.   |                |          |        |            |         |
|                            | No change in the view.  |                |          |        |            |         |

**Footnote:**

1. Each level (other than neutral) of change identified can be either regarded as 'beneficial' or 'adverse'.

## LANDSCAPE/TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS

| Direct effects on landscape features | Quality & Sensitivity | Existing Conditions   | Impact and Mitigation   | Magnitude of Change | Effect Year 1    | Effect Year 15    |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Trees</b>                         | Medium - High         | A number of mature and semi mature trees (including oaks and poplars) are located along the boundaries of the Site and are graded in the accompanying tree survey report as being of Category A and B quality. Several of the trees to the eastern, northern and southern Site boundaries are covered by a TPO. | <p>The vast majority of the Site's boundary trees will be retained within the proposals (including all of those covered by a TPO), with development set back from the boundaries of the Site. A Category B tree within the southern strip of land will require removal to facilitate the new access, and a small Category C ornamental tree will require removal in the west of the Site.</p> <p>Substantial new tree planting is proposed throughout the scheme, including street tree planting to the internal roads and native tree planting to the boundaries and eastern area of open space.</p> | Slight              | Slight adverse   | Slight beneficial |
| <b>Hedgerows</b>                     | Medium                | A mature native hedgerow lines the northern Site boundary and a semi mature native hedge also lines the eastern edge of the southern strip of land. Both hedgerows are graded as Category B quality within the tree survey report.  | <p>The northern boundary hedgerow will be retained within the proposals, however the hedgerow within the southern strip of land will require removal to facilitate the new access road.</p> <p>New hedgerow planting is proposed along both sides of the new access road, where space allows, within the new open space and to plot frontages.</p>  | Moderate            | Moderate adverse | Slight adverse    |
| <b>The Site (grassland field)</b>    | Medium                | The Site comprises a single grassland field and a disused tennis court in the south western corner.   | The Site will be converted from a grassland field to a residential development with new areas of public open space. The new built form will be focused in the central and western parts of the Site, with the eastern part remaining undeveloped and planted with native trees and wildflower grassland.  | Substantial         | Moderate adverse | Moderate adverse  |

|  |  |  |  |                            |                                |                       |
|--|--|--|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Public footpaths   | n/a  | There is no public access to the Site and no public footpath cross or lie adjacent to the Site.  | n/a  | n/a                        | n/a                            | n/a                   |
| <b>Indirect effects on landscape / townscape character</b> | <b>Quality &amp; Sensitivity</b>                   | <b>Existing Conditions</b>   | <b>Impact and Mitigation</b>   | <b>Magnitude of Change</b> | <b>Effect Year 1</b>           | <b>Effect Year 15</b> |
| <b>The Site</b>  | Medium (quality)<br><br>Medium – low (sensitivity) | The Site comprises a single grassland field with mature vegetation to its boundaries, surrounded by residential development on three sides. Its character is fairly ordinary, and it is heavily influenced by the surrounding built form, in particular the Esher Park Gardens apartments to the west. | The character of the Site would clearly undergo change although the new housing would not be out of character in this location. Retention and enhancement of the Site's established landscape framework, together with new landscaping within the new housing area and to the new semi natural open space will enhance the Site's landscape structure and minimise effects on the wider landscape. | Substantial                | Moderate – substantial adverse | Moderate adverse      |
| <b>Townscape character of neighbouring area</b>            | Medium   | The townscape character of the built up area surrounding the Site comprises a mixture of traditional 2 and 2.5 storey semi detached housing to the south and east (including some large arts & crafts style properties) and the modern white 4 storey apartments at Esher Park Gardens to the west.    | The proposals have been sensitively designed with the surrounding context in mind with a mixture of 2 and 3 storey traditional houses, and provide a transition between the 4 storey apartments to the west and the semi detached houses to the south and east. New tree planting throughout the scheme will also mature to create a well landscaped scheme.                                       | Slight                     | Slight adverse                 | Slight adverse        |
| <b>Landscape character of the wider area</b>               | Medium – high                                      | Land to the north of the Site forms part of the Surrey LCA UW6 and the Elmbridge UW6-A Landscape Unit, which comprises common land, enclosed fields, Sandown Racecourse, golf course and sports pitches, forming a stretch of greenspace between the surrounding built up areas.                       | The new housing at the Site will be very well contained from the wider landscape to the north by the retained and enhanced, densely planted northern Site boundary. This together with new public open space and landscaping throughout the scheme will minimise the effects on the wider landscape.   | Negligible                 | Negligible adverse             | Negligible adverse    |

| Other Effects             |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Cumulative impacts</b> | <p>There are two consented schemes for residential development within the car park area to the immediate west of the Site and south of the Esher Park Gardens apartments. Both schemes would result in an increase in the built up context to the Site, although in the same way as the proposals at the Site, they would be well contained from the wider landscape to the north.</p> <p>We are not aware of any other significant developments, which are approved or allocated, within the vicinity of the Site which would affect this assessment.</p>   |
| <b>Lighting</b>           | <p>The Site comprises an area of grassland and is currently unlit. There is street lighting to the adjoining roads at Rythe Road and Raleigh Drive to the east and south of the Site. There is also background lighting to properties along these streets, and to the four storey apartments at Esher Park gardens to the west.</p> <p>The proposal is for a new residential development with associated street lighting and background lighting to properties. The development is not anticipated to give rise to any abnormal lighting effects and will result in a limited increase in lighting levels which will be seen in the context of the neighbouring street lighting and background lighting to properties.</p> |
| <b>Construction Phase</b> | <p>There will be temporary landscape and visual effects arising from the construction phase of the scheme. These will include, amongst other things, stock piling of materials, temporary hoardings/fencing and vehicle and plant movements, both on Site and on the surrounding road network. It is not anticipated that the scheme will give rise to any abnormal landscape or visual effects above those that would be expected from a development of this nature. It is anticipated that the extent and timing of these effects will be controlled through a Construction Management Plan.</p>   |

## VISUAL EFFECTS

| Views   | Sensitivity | Existing Conditions  | Proposals and mitigation  | Magnitude of Change | Visual Effect Year 1 | Visual Effect Year 15 |
|---|-------------|--|---|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Raleigh Drive (Photograph 15)</b>                        | Low         | Views from this road to the south west of the Site are largely screened by the intervening properties. Occasional glimpsed views of the trees within the Site are possible, through gaps between the built form. A narrow framed view into the south of the Site is also possible at the junction with Rythe Road and Littleworth Road, through the boundary fence & gate.             | The new houses will be screened in views from this road by intervening built form and vegetation. Near distance views of the new access road junction into the Site will however be possible.   | Slight              | Slight adverse       | Slight adverse        |
| <b>Rythe Road (Photograph 12-14)</b>                        | Low         | Views of the Site are largely screened from this road by intervening properties, with only glimpsed views of the Site's vegetation seen where gaps between properties allow. Occasional glimpsed views of the Esher Park Gardens apartments are also possible through these gaps. A narrow framed view into the south of the Site is also possible at the junction with Raleigh Drive. | The new houses will be largely screened by intervening properties, with only occasional glimpsed views of the roofs of new houses possible, through gaps between properties. Near distance views of the new access road junction into the Site will also be possible from the short section of road to the south of the Site. | Slight              | Slight adverse       | Slight adverse        |
| <b>Loseberry Road (Photograph 11)</b>                       | Low         | A framed view of the southern Site boundary fence & gate is possible in near distance views from this road, becoming increasingly narrowed as the road continues southwards.   | Near distance views will look toward the new access road junction into the Site, with a narrow framed view towards the new house also possible.   | Slight              | Slight adverse       | Slight adverse        |
| <b>Littleworth Road (Photographs 18-19)</b>                 | Medium      | Views of the Site from this road to the west are screened by intervening tree cover and the apartment building at Esher Park Gardens.  | The new houses will not be visible, with intervening tree cover and the Esher Park Gardens apartments screening views.  | Neutral             | Neutral              | Neutral               |
| <b>Hare Lane Green (Photographs 16-17)</b>                  | High        | Views from this common land look towards the tree cover along the eastern edge of the green, which screens views of the Site.  | The new houses will not be visible, with intervening tree cover screening views.  | Neutral             | Neutral              | Neutral               |
| <b>Oaken Lane, adjacent common land and public footpath</b> | High        | Views towards the Site from the common land and public footpath are generally well screened by dense intervening vegetation. A heavily filtered, glimpsed view of the poplar trees on the southern boundary of the   | The new houses will not be visible, with dense intervening vegetation screening views.  | Neutral             | Neutral              | Neutral               |

|  |        |   |  |             |                     |                                |
|--|--------|---|--|-------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| (Photographs 21-22)  |        | Site is possible although the view is not readily discernible.  |  |             |                     |                                |
| <b>Residential Views</b>   |        |   |  |             |                     |                                |
| <b>Properties on Raleigh Drive (reciprocal views at Photographs &amp; 8)</b>   | High   | Views from the majority of properties which back onto the Site are well screened by dense intervening tree cover, with occasional heavily filtered views of the eastern part of the Site possible from a handful of upper floor windows.  | Heavily filtered views of the new houses will be possible from a handful of properties, although the retained southern boundary vegetation will restrict the extent of these views.  | Slight      | Slight adverse      | Slight adverse                 |
| <b>Properties on Rythe Road (reciprocal views at Photographs 3, 6-8 &amp; 10)</b>  | High   | A number of properties which back onto the Site to the south and east have filtered first floor views over the Site. Intervening tree cover screens the remainder of views, including those from ground floor windows.  | Filtered views across the new open space in the east of the Site toward the new houses will be possible from a number of properties, where retained boundary vegetation allows. New tree planting to reinforce the southern and eastern Site boundaries and within the new open space will further filter views as it matures. | Moderate    | Moderate adverse    | Moderate – slight adverse      |
| <b>Properties at Esher Park Gardens (reciprocal views at Photographs 2, 4, 7-10 &amp; 20)</b>  | High   | Open views across the Site are possible from first, second and third floor, east facing apartment windows, with ground floor views and those from the surrounding car park areas, restricted by boundary closeboard fencing.  | Open views towards the new housing will be possible from east facing apartments and the adjoining peripheral car park areas. New tree planting along the western edge of the Site will provide some filtering of views as it matures.  | Substantial | Substantial adverse | Substantial – moderate adverse |
| <b>Properties on Littleworth Road</b>  | Medium | Views from properties on Littleworth Road to the north west are screened by intervening vegetation including that along the northern Site boundary.   | The new houses will not be visible from properties on Littleworth Road, with intervening vegetation preventing views.  | Neutral     | Neutral             | Neutral                        |
| <b>Properties on Loseberry Road</b>  | Medium | Oblique views towards the southern strip of land at the Site and the boundary fence & gate are possible from a handful of nearby properties. The remainder of the Site is screened in these views by intervening properties, although the Site's boundary trees are partially visible above the built form. | Oblique views of the new access road junction into the Site will be possible from a number of nearby properties. The new houses will not be visible, due to the intervening properties and the oblique nature of views.  | Slight      | Slight adverse      | Slight adverse                 |
| <b>Seasonal Variation</b>  |        |   |  |             |                     |                                |
| The above assessment is based upon an appraisal of early autumn views when vegetation was largely in leaf, although it also takes into account likely seasonal variation. Views within winter months will be less screened, in particular from adjoining properties on Rythe Road and Raleigh Drive, although views will still be filtered in their nature given the density of the boundary vegetation. |        |   |  |             |                     |                                |



## **Appendix K**

### Methodology for Green Belt Assessment

# GREEN BELT METHODOLOGY

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## Approach

The purpose of this review is to consider the performance of Green Belt land at the Site against the Green Belt purposes identified in the NPPF. The assessment is focused on Green Belt purposes and does not consider other factors which may affect the potential suitability of the site for development, e.g. transport and sustainability.

## Stage 1: Desk Based Assessment

An initial desk-based assessment was undertaken to identify any absolute/primary constraints which would prevent development at the site. Whilst these factors are unrelated to the function or performance of the Green Belt, land in these locations is not considered suitable for housing.

As part of the desk based assessment the following sources of information were consulted:

- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside ('MAGIC') mapping;
- Adopted Local Plan Policies Maps;
- Aerial Photography; and
- Ordnance Survey Mapping.

Absolute constraints are constraints which would preclude development, and are as follows:

- Flood Zone 3;
- National and International Ecological Designations
- Site of Special Scientific Interest;
- Special Protection Area;
- Special Area of Conservation;
- Ancient Woodland;
- Statutory Landscape designations e.g. AONB and National Park;
- Registered Park and Garden; and
- Scheduled Monument.

Primary constraints pose a substantial obstacle to development and these include:

- Non-statutory Ecology Designations;
- Local wildlife Site and Local Nature Reserve;
- Area of publicly accessible open land e.g. country park;
- Presence of strong, permanent existing Green Belt Boundaries – e.g. Major highway infrastructure can present a strong boundary to prevent sprawl and encroachment on the countryside; and
- Local landscape designations.

## Stage 2: Evaluation

The Site and the effect of the proposed development on it were assessed against the national Green Belt purposes using the methodology set out below.

## Assessment Methodology

The NPPF sets out the five purposes for including land within the Green Belt:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

The NPPF does not attach a hierarchy to the Green Belt purposes and it is assumed that each purpose is of equal importance. In addition, neither the NPPF nor the National Planning Policy Guidance provides direction on how to assess the performance of Green Belt parcels. The most relevant non-policy guidance in relation to Green belt Assessment is published by the Planning Advisory Service ('PAS', Planning on the Doorstep: the Big Issues – Green Belt [2015]). This methodology has therefore been informed by this guidance, and by past experience and relevant examples.

The following assessment methodology considers the first four Green Belt purposes. The fifth purpose has not been included, as it is considered that if the Green Belt achieves this purpose, then all Green Belt land performs this function to the same extent. This is supported by the PAS guidance, which states that the application of this purpose is unlikely to distinguish differences in contribution to Green Belt.

In order to assess the performance of the Site against each of the four Green Belt Purposes, a five point scale has been used.

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Strong Contribution</b>            | Land makes a significant contribution to this purpose and should remain in the Green Belt. |
| <b>Relatively Strong Contribution</b> | Land performs well against this purpose.   |
| <b>Moderate Contribution</b>          | Land performs moderately well against this purpose.  |
| <b>Relatively Weak Contribution</b>   | Land makes some contribution to this purpose.  |
| <b>Weak / No Contribution</b>         | Land makes little or no contribution to this purpose.                                      |

### Green Belt Boundaries

An important part of the assessment of the performance of any site in relation to the Green Belt purposes, is consideration of the effectiveness of the existing Green Belt boundaries. The NPPF states that boundaries should be defined 'clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent'.

The following features are considered most likely to fulfil this requirement:

- Major transport infrastructure, motorways, main trunk roads and railways;
- Landscape features including woodland blocks and bands and watercourses; and
- Topography such as ridgelines.

Where these features are absent secondary boundaries could include field hedgerows or minor roads/private roads.

Where Green Belt boundaries follow the rear of existing housing at the periphery of the settlement, these can lack visual containment and result in a poor relationship between the edge of settlement and the adjoining land parcel. Where such situations exist, consideration should be given to whether an improved boundary could be provided through planned expansion.

When considering the performance of a site against the Green Belt purposes, the presence of alternative, durable boundaries can help reduce the perception of sprawl, countryside encroachment and loss of separation. In addition, release of land will typically form part of a planned extension, and consideration should be given to whether new appropriate Green Belt boundaries can be created.

### **Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas**

National Planning Policy does not define what constitutes a large built up area. For the purpose of this methodology large built up areas have been defined with reference to the Local Planning Authorities settlement hierarchy, typically this will include main urban areas and local service centres. Villages or settlements washed over by the Green Belt are not normally included within this definition.

In relation to sprawl, the PAS guidance notes: '...is development that is planned positively through a local plan, and well designed with good masterplanning, sprawl?'

All Green Belt land which adjoins a large built up area plays some role in preventing further expansion of the urban area. The degree to which Green Belt land prevents sprawl however is dependent on the relationship between the Green Belt parcel and the existing urban edge and its containment from the wider countryside. In this sense this purpose is closely related to the third Green Belt purpose. If a land parcel is well contained by logical physical and visual boundaries it will be more effective at preventing sprawl. Locations where land, and existing boundaries play an important role in containing the edge of the settlement, and there are no alternative boundaries which would provide a similar function, make an important contribution to containing sprawl.

In addition, the perception of sprawl can be reduced/mitigated by providing a suitable landscape framework/masterplan. Accordingly, whilst areas may perform this function strongly, there may be scope to accommodate development sensitively which mitigates the perception of sprawl. In addition, in locations where the perception of sprawl is already evident, there may be scope to provide alternative boundaries which provide a more robust edge to the Green Belt.

The following factors are of relevance:

- The degree to which the land parcel is associated with the existing urban area/wider countryside. Parcels which are adjoined on more than one side by urban development, or are indented into the urban edge (infill) are likely to perform weakly against this function. Similarly, landform and landscape features can provide a strong degree of separation between the urban area and/the wider countryside;
- The degree to which the existing Green Belt boundary is well defined and provides containment to the urban area; and
- The presence, or absence of other physical/landscape boundaries which could provide containment to potential urban expansion.

The following table sets out the criteria against which this purpose has been assessed:

| <b>Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Strong Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing boundary with urban area well defined by established and robust landscape/ physical feature which strongly contains the existing urban area;</li> <li>• Little/no relationship with the established pattern of development and strong relationship to the wider countryside;</li> <li>• Landform may provide separation between the urban edge and the wider landscape;</li> <li>• No logical alternative boundaries which would contain built development;</li> <li>• Expansion would result in a substantial intrusion into the wider landscape and would be poorly contained and/or would result in ribbon development.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Relatively Strong Contribution</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing boundary with urban area well defined by established landscape/physical feature which contains the existing urban area;</li> <li>• Poor relationship with the established pattern of development and strong relationship to the wider countryside;</li> <li>• Landform may provide some separation between the urban edge and the wider countryside;</li> <li>• Alternative boundaries which would contain built development are less well defined;</li> <li>• Development could result in ribbon development and would be poorly related to the main built-up area;</li> <li>• Expansion would result in a significant intrusion into the wider landscape and would be poorly contained.</li> </ul>                            |
| <b>Moderate Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing boundary with urban area follows a logical landscape/physical feature and provides some containment to the urban area;</li> <li>• Some relationship with the established pattern of development which may have a visible presence along one or more sides;</li> <li>• Landform plays little role in separating the urban edge and the wider countryside;</li> <li>• Alternative boundaries may be present which could provide a redefined edge to the Green Belt, although may require additional strategic landscaping which could be provided as part of a planned extension;</li> <li>• Expansion would result in some intrusion on the wider countryside but would be better related to the existing urban area.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Relatively Weak Contribution</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land may be physically and visually related to the existing urban area and be perceived as part of/closely related to it;</li> <li>• Existing boundary may be poorly defined and alternative boundaries may exist, or there is an opportunity to create a more robust edge to the urban area;</li> <li>• Landform may assist in separating the land parcel from the wider countryside;</li> <li>• Expansion in this area would relate to the existing settlement pattern and would have little impact on the perception of sprawl.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Weak / No Contribution</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The land parcel is effectively indented (infill) into the existing urban area and plays little/ no role in the countryside setting of the adjoining urban area;</li> <li>• It is largely contained by built development and may be perceived as part of the existing settlement envelope;</li> <li>• Land parcel is unrelated to an existing urban area and plays no role in preventing sprawl.</li> </ul>   |

## **Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another**

The NPPF specifically refers to preventing the merging of towns, not the merging of towns with smaller settlements, or the merging of small settlements with each other. Despite this, the methodology recognises the role that Green Belt plays in maintaining the setting and settlement pattern hierarchy within the District / Borough. In addition, the cumulative erosion of the separation of smaller settlements can impact on the perceived separation of larger settlements. This assessment therefore considers the separation between the main urban areas but also their relationship to other smaller settlements of significance.

The nature and size of an existing gap are important considerations in determining the role that a land parcel plays in maintaining separation between settlements. The PAS guidance however states that when assessing this purpose, 'A 'scale rule' approach should be avoided. The identity

of a settlement is not really determined just by the distance to another settlement; the character of the place and of the land between must be taken into account.'

In determining the function that a land parcel plays in maintaining separation between neighbouring settlements the following factors are of relevance:

- Intervisibility between settlements;
- The role of landform and land cover in maintaining separation;
- The effect of development on the transition between settlements; and
- The individual character and setting of the settlements.

The following table sets out the criteria against which this purpose has been assessed:

**Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another**

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Strong Contribution</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The land parcel occupies the physical gap/or the majority of the gap between the main settlements and any reduction in the existing gap would result in coalescence or the perceived coalescence of these towns.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Relatively Strong Contribution</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development would result in a significant reduction in the physical and visual separation between the settlements;</li> <li>• Development may be readily apparent in views from the adjoining settlement edges and from the approaches along the principle routes between settlements, resulting in a significant reduction in the perceived separation between the settlements;</li> <li>• Development could significantly impact on the separation between a main settlement and a smaller settlement resulting in a noticeable erosion of the separation of main settlements.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Moderate Contribution</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land parcel forms part of a wider gap between neighbouring settlements;</li> <li>• Limited intervisibility between settlements, and landform and land cover play some role in maintaining a sense of separation;</li> <li>• Development may encroach on views from sections of the intervening highway network;</li> <li>• Development would result in some reduction in the gap between a main settlements and smaller settlements and there may be a cumulative erosion in the separation between main settlements.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Relatively Weak Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The land parcel forms part of a wider gap;</li> <li>• Landform and/or land cover prevent intervisibility and would preserve a sense of separation;</li> <li>• May be limited impact on separation with a smaller settlement, but separate identity would remain;</li> <li>• Development in this location would not result in actual or perceived coalescence but there may be some reduction in the physical extent of the gap.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Weak / No Contribution</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The land parcel forms part of a much wider land parcel between settlements and makes little/no contribution to maintaining separation between settlements; or does not lie between two towns/smaller settlements.</li> </ul>  |

### **Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment**

In respect of safeguarding countryside from encroachment the PAS guidance makes the following statement: "The most useful approach is to look at the difference between urban fringe – land under the influence of the urban area - and open countryside, and to favour the latter in determining which land to try and keep open, taking into account the types of edges and boundaries that can be achieved".

All open land at the edge of settlement plays some role in protecting the countryside from encroachment. In order to assess the role that a land parcel plays in safeguarding countryside it is important to understand the degree to which it displays characteristics of the countryside. This should be distinguished from a judgement about landscape quality/condition which is not a Green Belt consideration.

An assessment of the role of a parcel in meeting this purpose should consider its existing land-use, its relationship to the wider landscape and the degree to which it is influenced by the adjoining urban area.

A planned urban extension on the periphery of a settlement is likely to encroach on the wider

countryside. Any consideration of this purpose should assess the ability of the land parcel to accommodate change and its impact on the wider countryside.

The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Degree to which a land parcel displays rural characteristics;
- Current land use and does it display urban fringe characteristics;
- Its relationship to the wider rural landscape and the degree to which it forms a component of this landscape;
- Its proximity to built development and the extent to which this influences the character of the land parcel.

A site which has a strong rural character and few visual detractors; forms an integral part of the wider rural landscape; and is visually and physically linked to the wider countryside will perform this purpose strongly. A site which is closely related and influenced by existing development will perform less well. The assessment also takes into account the presence of existing boundary features which would minimise the impact of future growth on the character of the wider countryside.



| <b>Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b> |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Strong Contribution</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site has an un-spoilt rural character with few visual detractors and is visually and physically connected to the wider rural hinterland;</li> <li>• Contains no built development within the site, apart from that of a rural character;</li> <li>• There is an absence of established boundaries which would reduce encroachment on the wider countryside;</li> <li>• The existing urban edge follows a logical and robust boundary which limits the perception of encroachment and provides containment to the urban area.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Relatively Strong Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The land parcel has a predominately rural character and forms a component of the wider rural landscape;</li> <li>• There is limited development within the site and it is predominately of a rural character;</li> <li>• Physical or visual boundaries are largely absent and development would encroach on the character of the wider landscape;</li> <li>• The existing urban edge is well defined but development maybe visible at the edge of the Green Belt.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Moderate Contribution</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a perception of encroachment from the urban edge and the parcel has a semi-rural character;</li> <li>• The area may contain a number of urban fringe land-uses/buildings, however remains largely green field;</li> <li>• Existing landscape/topographic features reduce the link between this area and the wider countryside and provide some visual and physical containment.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Relatively Weak Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The land parcel is heavily influenced by the adjoining urban edge;</li> <li>• The land is largely urban fringe, and may contain some built development;</li> <li>• The land parcel relates more strongly to the urban area than the wider countryside;</li> <li>• May contain degraded land and there are opportunities for enhancement.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Weak / No Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land parcel is very closely related to the built edge and is largely divorced from the wider countryside. Land exhibits few rural characteristic and is semi-urban in character.</li> </ul>   |

#### Purpose 4: To Preserve the Setting and Special Character of Historic Towns

The fourth NPPF purpose is specifically aimed at protected the setting and special character of historic ‘towns’, and does not refer to smaller settlements which may have a historic character. The PAS guidance notes that in reality this purpose will relate to very few settlements, as in most cases there is more recent development between the historic core and the edge of town.

Whilst Green Belt plays a role in protecting the setting of historic towns it also maintains the setting of smaller settlements which have an acknowledged historic character. In most cases these settlements will have a designated historic core which lies within an identified Conservation Area. Although it is not the function of Green Belt to preserve the historic setting of these smaller

settlements, where relevant reference to nearby heritage assets is made within the main report.

The following factors have been taken into consideration:

- Conservation Area Appraisals and guidance;
- Visual relationship between historic core and wider countryside;
- Views to landmark buildings in historic core; and
- Extent to which historic core is contained by built development/extends to edge of the settlement.

| <b>Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b> |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Strong Contribution</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a strong visual/physical relationship between the land parcel and the designated historic asset;</li> <li>• There are views from the historic asset towards the site which would be a visible component within the wider landscape;</li> <li>• The site would be visible in the foreground in key views towards the historic assets from public vantage points;</li> <li>• The land parcel identifies key characteristics identified in a Conservation Area Appraisal which contribute to the landscape setting of the area.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Relatively Strong Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a visual relationship between the site and the historic asset;</li> <li>• There are some views from the historic asset to the site;</li> <li>• The land parcel contains characteristics identified in a Conservation Area Appraisal which contribute to the landscape setting of the area.</li> <li>• The existing urban edge is well defined but development maybe visible at the edge of the Green Belt.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Moderate Contribution</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are some views of parts of the historic asset from the site and from the neighbouring area, but the relationship is interrupted by intervening development;</li> <li>• The site plays a limited role in providing a landscape setting for the historic settlement.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Relatively Weak Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site is separated from the historic asset by more recent built development and/or there is no visual connection between them;</li> <li>• The historic asset is inward looking and the surrounding landscape makes little contribution to its landscape setting.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Weak / No Contribution</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site is separated from the asset by significant built development, and or there is no visual relationship and the site makes no contribution to the landscape setting of the historic settlement.</li> </ul>   |



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