

Site Assessment Background Paper

Crowhurst Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

1. The Rother District Council Core Strategy confirmed through its rural strategy policy, RA1 that Crowhurst should seek to deliver 20 dwellings over the period up to 2028. Rather than allocate these dwellings in the second part of its Development and Site Allocation Document, it confirmed Crowhurst Parish Council could deliver these dwellings through its Neighbourhood Plan.
2. In the early stages of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation, Rother District Council confirmed that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) would be required to assess the impacts of the plan. The District Council also confirmed the scoping exercise undertaken in respect of its DASA plan would apply to the Neighbourhood Plan and advised upon the matters to be scoped into the SEA process.
3. In order to see the SEA as a thread running through the entirety of the plan, the relevant issues to be addressed through the SEA were considered at the start of the plan process and in relation to the site assessment process to ensure the sites that progressed through the process to be allocated were the most appropriate available sites.
4. This document sets out the approach to the Site Assessment Process and seeks to demonstrate the process in which sites have been considered and how the final sites have been chosen and how these have been chosen to minimise effects on the environment and maximise opportunities for enhancement.

Methodology

The initial stage- Identification of potential sites

5. Prior to the criteria being chosen, it was key that the approach to site selection took account of local views. It was apparent from residents' surveys that the rural character of the village was of paramount importance, as was ensuring access to the wider village in a safe manner. Furthermore, throughout the process the general view has been to promote smaller sites with a greater disbursement of the development rather than one large development, although there is recognition of needing and wanting new affordable housing within the village.
6. In order to fully examine the potential available land within the Parish for new development, a call for sites was held in Winter 2016/7. This was advertised locally and from this exercise 52 sites were put forward for potential development or protection, both by the respective landowners and third parties. An initial call for sites had also taken place during a village wide survey in the summer 2016. During the site assessment process, further land was put forward by landowners following site exhibitions and other engagement. Lastly, consideration of land not identified through the above process was reviewed on a plan basis by the planning consultant undertaking the initial site assessments to take account of any land that could be suitable and if there was land identified, further proactive engagement could be had with the registered owners. This process sought to identify land primarily for housing but also for other uses such as community uses but also areas which were considered important to protect for landscape or other reasons.
7. These sites were assessed alongside any other potentially available land, such as those identified in the Rother District Council SHLAA process in 2013 and any identified outside the call for sites process (those not put forward but identified by the assessor). In terms of the relevance to this process, 35 sites were put forward for housing development of which 15 were available and promoted by the owner.
8. In the first instance, every site was visited by Ashley Wynn MRTPI and the features, constraints and opportunities were recorded on a site assessment form, an example of which is attached as **Appendix 1** with the full extent of assessment forms available as background evidence. This initial visit included assessment of land use factors and suitability, as well as initial consideration of matters such as availability and deliverability, as in some case land had been put forward by persons other than the landowner.

9. In order to fully consider all potential sites, each site was assessed irrespective of the availability of the land in order that if a suitable site was identified, further discussions could then be had with the landowner to see if the land would be made available for potential development. The assessments for each site were then subject to a public exhibition whereby local residents were given the opportunity to comment on these conclusions and provide views in support or against the various sites.

The Selection Criteria

10. As mentioned previously, it was key that the approach to site selection took account of local views. The rural character of the village was of paramount importance, as well as ensuring access to the wider village in a safe manner. Smaller sites were preferred although more affordable housing within the village was also wanted. Having regard to the latter issue, the National Planning Policy Guidelines (NPPG) thresholds are relevant as schemes of 10 units and less will not deliver affordable housing on the allocated site. This was an important consideration in the construction of the criteria.
11. There is also a requirement that the site selection process took account of the strategic policies of the Rother District Council and that of the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Directive which seeks to integrate environmental considerations into plan making in order to promote sustainable development. Thus the criteria which were chosen to identify potential suitable sites encompassed the following factors:
 - a. SEA framework which had been created following the scoping/screening opinion provided by Rother;
 - b. The strategic policies of the Core Strategy, the parent policy document to the Neighbourhood Plan;
 - c. Evidence from the residents surveys;
 - d. National Planning Policy Guidelines and National Planning Policy Framework.
12. As expected the issues relevant to the aims and objectives of each of the above are relatively consistent with one another which would then feed into the site criteria against which each site would be considered. For example the SEA framework, the Core Strategy and local residents place significant emphasis on protection of landscape and biodiversity and so it follows that potential sites must be able to protect these identified interests. The NPPG

thresholds and local housing needs dictated an approach to prioritise affordable housing delivery on a site.

13. Each site was considered against the following criteria and for ease of reference the SEA objectives are referenced against each part of the criteria. Figure 1 below sets out the criteria.

	<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Compatibility with SEA Framework</u>
1 (D)	Potential to provide affordable housing and a mix of house types	Access and Housing
2 (E)	Adjacent to and within 1000m of the facilities of one part of the village such as the school, village hall, recreation ground and pub via a safe walkable route	Transport Access and Housing Air Quality/emissions
3 (D)	Within 1000m of the railway station	Access/Housing Air Quality/emissions
4 (E)	Development can secure a safe access to the site	Accessibility
5 (E)	Development should have low visual impact from viewpoints within the village	Landscape Heritage
6 (E)	Development should be low key in respect of wider landscape and respect local landscape and settlement character	Landscape Heritage
7 (E)	Can retain significant natural features such as trees and hedgerows and no significant loss is caused	Landscape Heritage Biodiversity Flood risk Air quality
8 (E)	Will have a low impact on Biodiversity and has potential to provide an enhancement to wildlife	Biodiversity
9 (E)	Will not impinge upon a flood zone or local water resources and that the site can manage its water resources without impact on other properties.	Flood Risk Water consumption
10 (E)	Development will maintain the character and setting of the historic environment of the village or any heritage assets	Landscape Heritage

Figure 1 Criteria for selecting sites

14. As seen in Figure 1, some of the parts are considered essential (E) and some desirable (D) and thus if a site were to fail on account of a desirable requirement, it would not automatically

be discounted. However, if a site were to be contrary to an essential criterion, it would not proceed to the next stage.

The Assessment

Stage One – Site Assessments

15. The first stage of the assessments was to consider the SHLAA sites which were considered by the District Council as part of the preparation for the Core Strategy and which led to the allocation of 20 houses to Crowhurst. There were 6 sites put forward by the SHLAA within the village including one green site (considered suitable), one amber site (potentially suitable) and four red sites (unsuitable sites). The SHLAA Plan and Table is attached as **Appendix 2**. Thus the green and amber site were taken forward for assessment under the NP Process. In terms of the red sites, one of the sites (CR1) was considered to be too small to be considered and the other three sites were significant areas of land to the east and west of the village (CR2-4) which the council considered to be representative of the AONB and would be harmful in landscape terms. Due to the extent of this land making up the majority of the surrounding land to the village, it was considered pertinent to investigate whether parts of this discounted land could be acceptable rather than the entirety of it as considered by the council. Some of the landowners, indeed submitted smaller parcels of land within these red sites and these sites were considered further on their individual merits notwithstanding they fell within a larger site discounted by the council.
16. Having regard to the evidence collated on each site (using the site assessment forms), each site was reviewed against the agreed criteria set out above. A matrix table is set out below which shows how sites were identified: green (acceptable or can be mitigated), amber (requires further investigation) and red (unacceptable). A summary of the Stage One site assessment is set out in the table attached as **Appendix 3**. As can be seen from this process, not one site gained an entire green rating as each site assessed required further investigation in respect of certain matters such as landscape, heritage or access. If a site gained an amber against an essential criteria, this did not discount the site from progressing to the next stage but a red rating on an essential rating did discount the site from progressing to stage two. In assessing the development against the relevant criteria, the rating given to each criterion was based on the author's professional judgement and experience and also having regard to the available evidence base available at that time. For example taking Landscape as an example, it was not considered proportionate to have a site specific landscape assessment undertaken by a landscape consultant for each site and thus the stage one assessment assessed sites

as to whether there was landscape harm or not and if so could this likely be mitigated having regard to the criteria. If the answer was there was no harm or yes it could potentially be mitigated, it would have an amber rating and could progress to the stage two subject to no red ratings on the other points. This meant, resources for site specific landscape and sensitivity assessment could then be directed towards sites with potential for development and to avoid a waste of valuable resources. This judgements were also reviewed by the NP Steering Group and sub task groups such as the land use task, environment and heritage task group and others to ensure local knowledge was taken into account as part of the overall assessment.

17. In summary the following sites did not progress to stage two for the following reasons;

Site and site ref	Reasons and justification for not selecting
Land at Craig Court (2)	Lack of available access, protrudes into landscape Impact on adjacent woodland
South of Broadfield (4)	High degree of landscape visibility and potential impact on setting of the Listed Church, could promote urban sprawl and erosion of important open landscape. Potential impacts on SSSI, Access and loss of hedgerow, cutting into bank. Discounted on landscape grounds
Stables (5)	Discounted as can only provide 1 unit
Land at Forge Cottage (6)	High visibility in wider landscape and would create a block of development detached from existing built form. Access would be difficult due to levels and would be highly prominent in setting of church.
Croucher Farm (7)	Access, landscape and availability issues and distance from village facilities and railway station
Land at Stonebridge Farm (8)	Site is a considerable distance from village and would be an isolated site, access along country lane and impact on landscape raised as significant concerns
Blacksmiths Yard (9)	Would have involved demolition of existing building which appears in good condition so likely not viable and in any case no willing land owner
Hill House Farm (10)	Remote site, accessibility and landscape harm
Land at Furnace Cottages (12)	Levels and size of site inappropriate for 6 units
Land at Pye Farm (19)	Remote from village and would have had landscape harm and no landowner support in any case
Land at Sampson Farm (20)	Access inadequate and visible from landscape and would cause landscape harm
Land at Adams Farm (21)	Remote from village, landscape harm

Land at Hunters Hill (22)	Remote site and would cause landscape harm
Land at Christian Healing Centre (23)	Out of character with landscape and settlement and access issues.
Land at Upper Wilting Farm (25)	Remote site and landscape harm
Land at Adams Farm Track (26)	Remote site and landscape harm
Land at Forewood (27)	Land is within the Fore wood SSSI and Ancient Woodland so would be unacceptable in principle
Land at Decoy Farm (29)	Site is isolated from village and set in a rural context where new strategic development would be unacceptable.
Land at Ballards Hill (31)	Highly visible in the landscape
Land at Coombe Dell (32)	Site considered to be potentially acceptable for development subject to investigation on access, density and layout. Site proceeded to Stage 2 of the site assessment process but the land became unavailable and withdrew from NDP process. Concerns also raised about affecting character of surrounding built environment.
Land at Upper Wilting (33)	Remote site, noise, air quality issues and landscape harm
Land to rear of Christian Healing Centre (36)	Access, landscape issues and no willing landowner and incompatible with existing use
Land adjacent to Old Post Office (39)	As part of assessment also considered land to the north which was potentially considered suitable in SHLAA. However, further work by Rother confirmed drainage and land stability issues and in relation to the wider land there are also landscape and heritage issues and a large part of land within Flood Zone 3. Furthermore, owners confirmed not available due to need for farm buildings so does not proceed.
Brakes Coppice (40)	Woodland and existing tourism use
Sites 45-49 Crowhurst Leisure Park	These sites were a combination of smaller sites or larger sites which has tourism policy restrictions at the current time. At this time, this would not be in conformity with the Rother DC tourism policies and the smaller sites would not be of a strategic scale.
Land between Brakes Coppice and Christian Healing Centre	Land is seen in a countryside context which would be detached from the settlement of the village. Access to the village would also be subject to walking on a unlit road which is currently 60mph.

Figure 2 Stage One rejected sites

18. In addition to the assessment against the site criteria which broadly assessed its suitability, each site was considered as to whether it was available and deliverable within the plan period. If a site did not have a willing landowner or there was no interest in development of the site, a site was also scored on whether it was available and deliverable. Had an unavailable site been acceptable, further discussions would have been held with the landowner but in this

case there were no sites that were acceptable so largely the matter of availability was immaterial. At the time the sites taken forward all had a willing landowner who had promoted the land for development and further discussions have been held with landowners which confirmed the original commitment to the land.

19. Following this Stage One assessment the approach and the identification of the sites to be taken forward was discussed at the public meeting on the 21st May 2017 and was subject of a further village survey held in July 2017. Thus, from the first stage, five sites were to be shortlisted:

- a. Land at Forewood Rise (combination of Sites 3 and 41)
- b. Land at Coombe Dell (Site 32)
- c. Land at Station Road (Site 1)
- d. Land adjacent to Railway Station (site 11)
- e. Land adjacent to Hye House (combination of site 34, 35, 36 and site 18)

20. The reasons for these sites being taken forward included their location abutting the village edge and being close to its facilities and the railway station. It was also considered, unlike the rejected sites, that there was the potential for any impacts to be mitigated. However, these sites would be subject to further assessment in respect of landscape impacts, access and other potential identified constraint as well as further discussions with the landowner regarding deliverability and viability.

Stage Two – Site assessments

21. Alongside the site specific assessments of the sites that proceeded to stage 2 for further assessment, consultants also undertook an assessment of the wider Landscape Character of the Parish along with a Heritage and Built Environment Assessment. These latter studies identified the specific character of the wider parish, and sought to identify views and areas which were important to the landscape character of the village. At this stage, following the publication of this document, the sites discounted on landscape grounds were reviewed against this document to ensure the stage one conclusions remained compatible with this new evidence. In summary, it was of the view, this evidence strengthened the decisions on stage one sites and this evidence informed the stage two approach to the site assessment process. This document would also form the evidence base for the sites and inform future development within the Parish.

22. Leading on from this master document, sites a, b, c and e, being outside the current development boundary, were subject to a detailed landscape assessment including landscape sensitivity assessment to identify whether the site could be developed without any adverse effects on landscape character and what, if any, mitigation was required to avoid any landscape effects. This study, produced by Huskisson Brown Associates confirmed all sites could accommodate some form of development without any harm, subject to a mitigation scheme which could be secured with a site specific policy. However, they confirmed the landscape sensitivity of each site;

- a. Land at Forewood Rise - Moderate Landscape Sensitivity
- b. Land at Coombe Dell - Low Landscape Sensitivity
- c. Land at Station Road - Moderate Landscape Sensitivity
- d. Land adjacent to Railway Station - not subject to landscape assessment
- e. Land adjacent to Hye House- Moderate Landscape Sensitivity

23. Having regard to the above, the preferences on landscape grounds would be the Hye House due to its non-AONB location, notwithstanding its sensitivity. However this did not perform as well in terms of the access and there remained ownership issues in respect of gaining access from Ballards Hill along Royal Oak Lane. Coombe Dell, which is a smaller infill site also performed well due to its central contained location. However, the Landscape Assessment did identify areas within each site that could be developed without harm to the wider landscape, subject to a mitigation strategy which could be secured by way of site specific criteria. This document is attached as **Appendix 4**.

24. Access was a key issue for many of the sites due to the rural context of Crowhurst and the nature of the surrounding road network. The other sites were sent to Ben Lenton of East Sussex County Council who confirms it appears most sites could achieve adequate visibility, albeit site b would need to remove significant hedgerow and foliage which is a feature of that area. Sites would have to provide a 4.8 metre carriageway into the site. His email is attached as **Appendix 5**.

25. In relation to the wider accessibility of the village, sites a, b, c and d are centrally located, and fulfil the criteria of abutting the village and being within 1000m of village facilities and the railway station. Sites a and b are also located on one of the main safe pedestrian footpath

routes within the village. Site e is within 1000m of the southern part of the village but is further from the railway station. Site d is adjacent to the railway station.

26. In terms of the other criteria, on the available evidence, none of the sites present any adverse impact to biodiversity, significant landscape features or the setting to any heritage assets, provided Plan policies and recommended landscape mitigation is carried out. Whilst Site d has a number of trees on the site, these were assessed by the District Council's tree officer who confirmed these should not act as a constraint to development.
27. Sites a, c, and e were large enough to deliver affordable housing on site having regard to the 11 unit threshold set out by the NPPG and so the size of the sites holds benefits in delivering one of the key aims of local people in delivering affordable homes in the area. Sites b and d would have been large enough to require a commuted payment for off-site provision which was not guaranteed to be spent within the village.
28. In the summer of 2017, meetings were held with landowners in respect of the availability and deliverability of the sites and landowners confirmed the land remained available for housing development. Sites where there is more than one landowner also confirmed they were happy to enter into a collaboration agreement to ensure land is developable in a coordinated manner. Thus at the time of the meeting, the sites remained available and deliverable.
29. Unfortunately, following the meeting Sites 34-36 (which were required for access to site 18 or 'e') was withdrawn from the process and thus effectively made site 18 undeliverable having no suitable access to the site. Furthermore, site b has become unavailable during the process and this will not proceed. Site b also had issues in relation to settlement character (criterion 6).
30. On account of the removal of the two sites from the process, it is considered the central location of the sites a and c, the lack of other constraints, the containment within the wider landscape, it is considered sites a and c should be taken forward as allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan for housing sites. This is subject to the boundaries of the sites being reduced to the areas identified by the Landscape Assessment as being acceptable for development subject to the implementation of the suggested landscape strategy. Site d has excellent accessibility to public transport and is located within a built environment of the village and so has limited landscape impact.

Conclusions

31. It is considered the land at Station Road and Land south of Forewood Rise should be taken forward for development along with the land adjacent to the Station Car Park. These sites are taken forward for allocation within the preferred strategy and will be subject to relevant policy criteria to ensure the matters identified during this site assessment are addressed by the policy. The reasons can be summarised below;

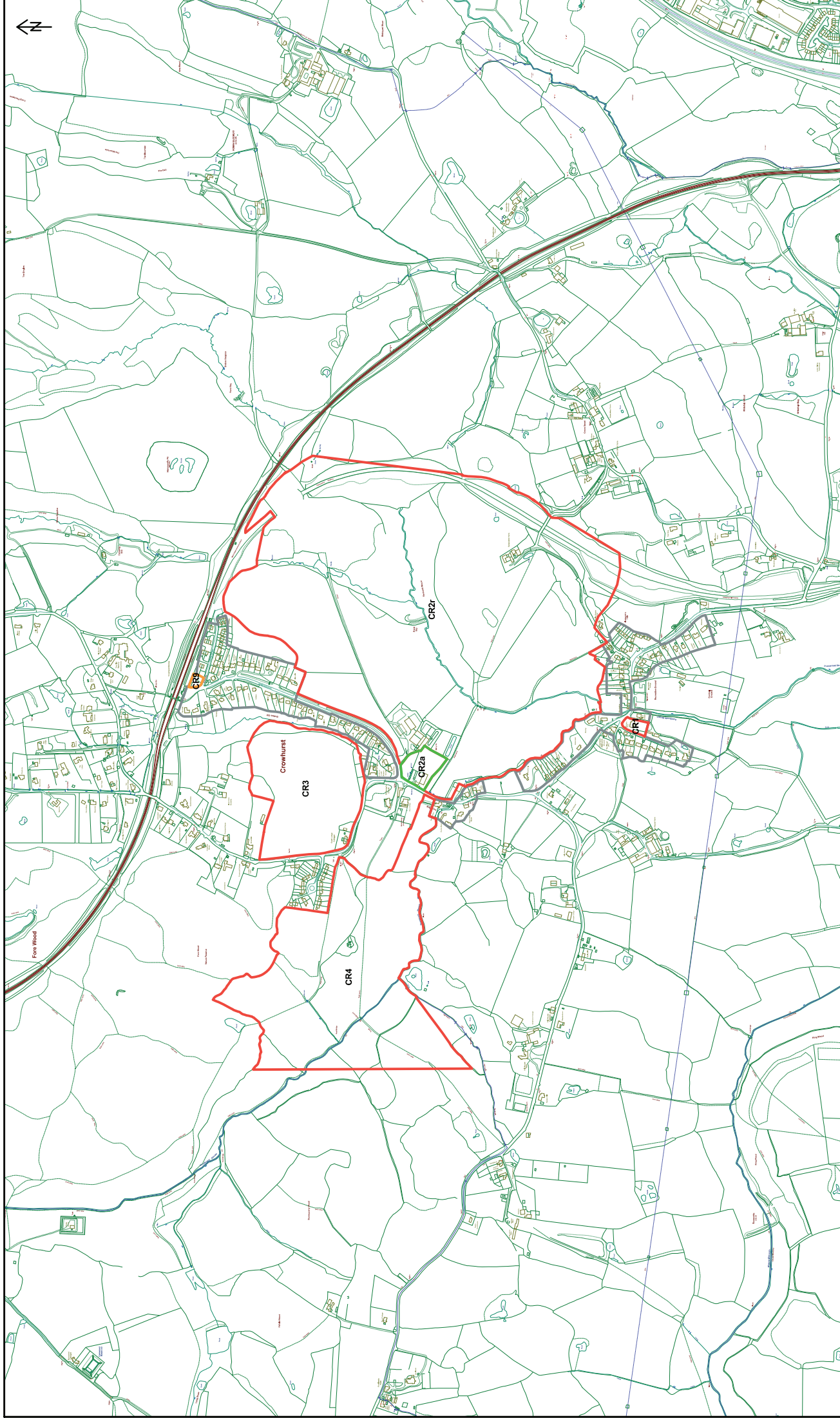
Site and site ref	Justification for selecting
Station Road (1) Known as Site C	Occupies a very central location which has footpath access and good access to the main parts of the village and the railway station. The allocated site is a reduced part of the original submitted land which has been assessed as being developable without any detrimental impacts subject to a landscape mitigation strategy and development being sensitively designed
Land south of Forewood Rise (3 and 41) Known as Site A	The site again occupies a very central location with good access to the central part of the village along a safe footpath route and also has good access to the railway station. Also, this site achieves a significant distance from the Fore Wood SSSI and the original submitted site has been reduced to an area considered to be developable without harm to the wider landscape character (informed by a landscape assessment – stage 2 of the site assessment process).
Land adjacent to railway station (11) Known as Site D	This site forms part of the former station land and thus although overgrown could be considered to be brownfield land. The land is covered with a number of trees but these have been assessed by Rother DC to be of low value and quality. Site is set within the built environment of the village and thus has little impact on the wider AONB landscape.

Appendix 1

Site Details	
Site Address	Site 7. Land between Crouchers Farm and Meadows
Site area	0.3ha
Current Use	Agricultural land including an existing building
Proposed Use	Housing
Owner promotion/Developer	Proposed by third party
Designations	None
Planning History	None
Any constraints	
Landscape	Land well screened from road by hedgerow and trees to the front of the site. Not in AONB. Adjacent to housing to the north. Located within Rother landscape category CR3 which states moderate capacity for new development. Visible from footpath to the south as very open boundary and glimpses can be seen through trees from the recreation ground. Land levels fall away from road and thus the site appears prominent from the south although may be opportunity to provide strategic landscaping to enclose site in the landscape.
Adjacent uses	Housing to the north and south although to the south is a farmstead which contains a listed building
Trees/Habitat	Hedgerow/trees to the boundary and grassland
Access	Existing field on dangerous corner. Edge of 30/60mph zone so 30mph would have to be extended southwards and safe means of access would have to be demonstrated. Lack of footpath access
Other environmental, i.e Flood Risk	Flood Zone 1- low risk of flooding Provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) due to prevent surface water flooding
Distance from the village core and railway station	Distance from school/church 1100m via 1066 route Pub-Recreation ground –480 no footpaths 1700m to station
Other	

Can any constraints be overcome?	<p>Landscape assessment as to whether impact can be mitigated and may require landscape strategy to mitigate effects.</p> <p>Access does not appear to meet industry standards and therefore further investigation would be required</p>
Availability	Site not promoted by developer or owner and thus site is not available.
Summary of site	<p>The site lies on the edge of the southern part of the village and is one of the few sites not located within the AONB. Site is relatively well screened from the road although it lies on higher ground and is open to the south, being visible from footpaths. Thus further assessment is required but it may be possible that a smaller development could reflect adjoining housing to the north and additional landscaping could be provided to the rear boundary. However, access is poor as on a dangerous bend and the majority of the site is on a 60mph stretch of road. The site would have to demonstrate access can be delivered in a safe manner. The site is a distance from the railway station and school although this means utilising the 1066 routes across the countryside.</p>
Recommendation	<p>Due to lack of uncertainty over availability, the site is not deliverable. However, even if were to change, concerns regarding access and pedestrian safety remain which do not support new housing on the site so should not be taken forward. However, if due to its non-AONB location, the Parish wish to explore this further, it is recommended further investigation into the access and landscape impact.</p>

Appendix 2



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BX1 Site Numbers (eg BX1)

- Green Site (see sites table for detail)*
- Amber Site (see sites table for detail)*
- Red Site (Rejected - see sites table for detail)

(*Sites are subject to more detailed investigations)

Broad Location

- Local Plan Allocations 2006
- Large Site Commitments (as at base date 01/04/2013)
- Development Boundary

Map Reference: TQ7512

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Crowhurst

ID	Site Name	Compliance with Core Strategy Policy	Total Residential Units	SHLAA Conclusions
CR2a	Land East of Station Road, Crowhurst	<p>AONB defined historic farmstead. ESCC Landscape Officer commented "This is an area of degraded landscape surrounding rather unsympathetic farm buildings. Development here could provide an enhancement in this AONB setting. It would need to respect the setting of the historic ruins of the Manor House."</p> <p>Several components considered suitable for this site (in liaison with Parish Council and ESCC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •New Village Hall/Community Hub with car park (on western frontage) – providing focal point for village (, (Ideally including shop, medical and youth facilities (compliant with policy CO1) •Residential (up to 15 dwellings) •Flood amelioration for Station Road – Detention Basin, possibly doubling as open space feature, derived from conclusions of ESCC Commissioned Study 2011 (In order to be compliant with EN6, EN7, IM2) <p>Environment Agency defined flood zones 2 and 3 mark the southern boundary of the site, with SFRA defined surface water issues on western sided of site. However, development of the site may offer potential to address the latter issue as well as issues of surface water flooding in surrounding area. Capacity of the surface water sewer network to cope with high flows is possible issue, awaiting Southern Water feedback. To be completed alongside the development of this site (in event of allocation), further investigative work is required (to be financed by developers and requiring permission of Network Rail). It will need to establish:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Size of retention basin pond (Aecom study illustrations suggest a scale that could be comfortably accommodated on northern section of the site). (ii) Feasibility of controlling height of Detention basin and making an attractive water feature (initial advice suggests that unless the outflow of the Detention basin pond could be controlled at a certain height, it would not make for an attractive feature as part of the public open space). <p>It would be the role of the developer, with Network Rail's permission, to implement off-site works and flood amelioration schemes.</p> <p>There are also heritage issues. Development will need to be mindful of the setting of listed buildings and ancient monuments on opposite side of Chapel Hill.</p> <p>Other Issues: Topography. Ground uneven, particularly at northern end. Culvert on site.</p> <p>Site is immediately adjacent bus stop and within walking distance of train station and school (Good compliance with policies OSS1, OSS4 and OSS5 in relation to the Crowhurst site options).</p>	Estimated 14	Suitable and developable, subject to more detailed investigations (green site).
CR9	Crowhurst Station / Craig Close	<p>Broadly compliant with Core Strategy policies, small site (just 0.1 hectare) that is already in the development boundary. Suitable for apartments given location adjacent to station – if studio and 2 beds for commuters then 6 to 9 possible. Feasibility of allocated parking within station (which is in same ownership), to be investigated which would increase potential of site.</p> <p>Possible obstacles on site relating to electricity sub station and/or former uses require further investigation. Appears to be small drainage stream on north side parallel with railway line.</p> <p>Trees on site. Tree officer advises "There are some large ash trees around the perimeter of the site and small scrubby trees in the centre. Although the ash trees are large and visually prominent in the area I do not consider that they are good enough specimens to merit protecting with a TPO. If the land were to be developed there should be some compensation for the loss of these large trees. This may include tree planting around the perimeter and boundary hedging. The trees could be several smaller species such as hawthorn or birch which would be more suitable for planting near a property or one larger specimen."</p> <p>Both Station Road and Craig Close are privately maintained. Station Road is a public footway and Craig Close is a private road. Unauthorised parking is problematic locally underlining importance of allocated parking for this development. The site is too far from the junction where it meets the public highway to have any concerns from a highway perspective. ESCC Highways recommend provide a suitable access 10-15m into Craig Close so that traffic properly enters Craig Close. Since access would be required across 3rd party land (Craig Close - not adopted highway) it remains unconfirmed that this is achievable.</p> <p>Suitable and with a reasonable prospect of coming forward. May be considered developable at a later stage pending resolution of above matters.</p> <p>Developers contributions should be sought towards village hall/hub, highways improvements (Policies IM2, TR3); and sites Development should consider measures to address surface water flooding issues in vicinity of Station Road (access route to this site), since development of this site will be a contributory factor and increase run-off (Policies EN6, EN7). More detail in relation to site CR2r. Ideally development would take place in parallel with CR2r in order to maximise scope to address identified problems.</p>	estimate 6 apartments	Suitable and developable subject to more detailed investigations, including of some key factors (amber site).

ID	Site Name	Compliance with Core Strategy Policy	Total Residential Units	SHLAA Conclusions
CR1	Land at Florida, Woodlands Way, Crowhurst	No, not suitable for allocation, although within the development boundary already so possibly may come forward in any event as windfall. ESCC Highways concerns, so compliance issues with Policy TR3. The northern section of Crowhurst provides more of a village centre and, this site is relatively far from services causing possible conflict with policy OSS4. Surface water flooding issues. No indication of owner commitment.	N/a	Not suitable (red site)
CR2r	Land East of Station Road, Crowhurst	Majority of this large site has significant AONB landscape character issues, contrary to Policy EN1. Environmental constraints across the wider site include flood zones, Ancient Woodland, SNCI, ASA, Footpaths, BAP habitats (Ghyll woodland, wet woodland and sandstone outcrops). Multiple Historic AONB field boundaries. Issues with policies, including OSS1, OSS4, OSS5, RA1, RA2, EN2, EN5 and EN7.	N/a	Not suitable (red site)
CR3	Land East of Forewood Rise, Crowhurst	No, several policy issues identified. Raised ground with AONB landscape visually exposed (Policy EN1). Imposing over setting of area of historic character immediately to south comprising ASA, listed buildings (Policy EN2). Rural character, accessed via country lane (Policy TR3). Issues with policies RA1, RA2, OSS1, OSS3, OSS4 and OSS5.	N/a	Not suitable (red site)
CR4	Land west of Forewood Rise, Crowhurst	No, Environmental factors and relationship to development boundary rule out development. Very rural character, accessed via country lane. AONB, Flood plain, GPZ Zone 3, SNCI, SSSI, setting of listed buildings. Adjacent BAP habitats (Ghyll woodland and wet woodland). AONB Historic field boundaries across site. Issues with policies, including OSS1, OSS3, OSS4, OSS5, RA1, RA2, EN1, EN2, EN5, EN7, TR3.	N/a	Not suitable (red site)
			Estimated Total (New Sites): 20	

Appendix 3

			Criteria												
Site no	Address	Available	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Community response (+ -)	Comments	Proceed to next stage
1	Land east of Station Road												32+	Potentially suitable site subject to further assessment in relation to access and landscape impacts	Proceed to further assessment
2	Land Craig Close												4+	No access available	Does not proceed due to access issues and landscape
3	Land adj Forewood Rise												2+	Potentially smaller area of site could be suitable away from SSSI but needs further assessment and is reliant on other land for access	Proceed to further assessment
4	Land south of Broadfield												9-	Visible in a number of views and could lead to sprawl between parts of the village. Heritage and ecology issues	Should not proceed
5	Stables												3-	Only suitable for 1 property so not suitable for the NP Process	Should not proceed
6	Land adj to Forge Cottages												3-	Visible in a number of views and could lead to sprawl between parts of the village and could impact upon setting of Church, difficulties with change of levels and access	Should not proceed
7	Land adj Crouchers Farm												0	Dangerous access (which would require a large part of the hedgerow to be removed and is located on the 60mph part and does not have safe access	Should not proceed
8	Land at Stonebridge Farm												3-	remote site	Should not proceed
9	Land at Blacksmiths Field												2	Existing sheltered accommodation and owner has indicated it is not available	Should not proceed

Site no	Address	Available	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Community reponse (+ -)	Comments	
10	Land at Hill House Farm												6-	remote site	Should not proceed
11	Land adj to Station Car Park												12+	Centrally located site and identified in SHLAA but issues regarding access	Should proceed for further assessment
12	Land adj to Furnace Cottage												3-	Levels and size of site make it unsuitable for 6 units	Should not proceed
18	Land to rear of Plough PH												2-	Has no access without reliance on other parties and therefore access and landscape impacts should be undertaken. To be considered in combination with sites 34 and 35. Not AONB	Should proceed for further assessment
19	Land adj Pyes Farm												2-	remote site	Should not proceed
20	Land at Sampsons Lane												6-	Very visible in the landscape from public footpaths and access is poor	Should not proceed
21	Land adj Adams Farm												4-	remote site	Should not proceed
22	Land at Hunters Hill												0=	remote site	Should not proceed
23	Land opp Christian Healing Centre												6+	Quite a prominent site which relates to open countryside rather than the settlement	Should not proceed
25	Land at Upper Wilting Farm												4-	remote site	Should not proceed
26	Land at Adams Farm Track												6-	remote site	Should not proceed
27	Land adj to the Fore Wood												8-	Land is located within or adjacent to the SSSI so inappropriate on ecological grounds	Should not proceed
29	Land at Decoy Farm												1-	remote site	Should not proceed

Site no	Address	Available	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Community reponse (+ -)	Comments	
31	Land at Ballards Hill												5-	Very visible in the landscape and relates to open countryside	Should not proceed
32	Land at Coombe Dell												18+	Centrally located site which could be suitable but requires further assessment in relation to landscape and access	Should proceed for further assessment
33	Upper Wilting Farm and New Road												2-	remote site	Should not proceed
34	Landscape Cottages												3+	Individually unsuitable due to size but could provide access to site 18 and therefore should be considered in combination with this larger site	Should proceed for further assessment
35	Landscape Studio												3+	Individually unsuitable due to size but could provide access to site 18 and therefore should be considered in combination with this larger site	Should proceed for further assessment
36	Land to rear of Christian Healing centre												4-	Land does not relate to the village and access would have to be taken through the healing centre and this would unlikely to be suitable	Should not proceed
39	Land between Old Post Office and Station Road												6-	Considered along with land to the north which in the Rother SHLAA originally considered part of this to be a potentially suitable site. However, since that time Rother raised concerns regarding surface water, drainage and land stability. Also other concerns regarding heritage and landscape impact, and owner has confirmed land is not available. Other parts of the land is flood 3 so unsuitable	Should not proceed for further assessment
40	Brakes Coppice												8-	remote site in a wooded context which makes access or development difficult	Should not proceed

Site no	Address	Available	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Community reponse (+ -)	Comments	Proceed to next stage
41	Field south of Forewood Rise												15+	Due to the levels and screening to the south, it could be a potentially suitable site although its access and layout need further investigation along with landscape and access assessment. Should be considered in combination with Site 3	Should proceed for further assessment together with Site 3
45	Land adj Cricket Pitch, Crowhurst Park													Land outside Parish	Should not proceed
46	Crowhurst Park - Pelham Gates												1	Rother strategic policies at this time would prohibit change of use of holiday lets to dwellings so not suitable to proceed at this stage	Should not proceed at this stage
47	Crowhurst Park Dairy buildings													Likely to be limited to 1-2 unit so unsuitable for NP allocation	Should not proceed
49	Crowhurst Park- Mansion Building													Likely to be limited to less than 6 units so unsuitable for NP allocation	Should not proceed
51	Land between Brakes Coppice and Christian Healing Centre													Landscape impact due to its detachment from the village and access would be walking along an unlit 60mph zone	Should not proceed

Appendix 4

3 LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY & CAPACITY ASSESSMENT



3.0 METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT

3.1 Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment is a systematic process for assessing:

- *Landscape Sensitivity* - the relative robustness/vulnerability of a landscape to a specific type of development based on judgements about landscape character sensitivity and visual sensitivity. It is the combination of the distinctive characteristics (including cultural and natural/ecological factors, condition and aesthetic characteristics) and visual sensitivity
 - *Landscape Capacity* - the relative ability of the landscape to accommodate different amounts of change or development of a specific type without significant effects on its landscape and visual character, or significantly compromising the landscape values associated with it.
- 3.2 The approach to assessing landscape sensitivity and capacity used in this report has been informed by published guidance including:
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England, Oct 2014
 - Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity, The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002
 - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition, The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, April 2013

3.3 The focus for the assessment is on 4 selected sites for small scale residential development. The sites have been selected by Crowhurst Parish Council following earlier site availability and assessment work.

Assessment process and judgements

3.4 Our approach and the main stages for the assessment are set out below:

- *Stage 1: Desktop analysis*
Building on the character assessment set out in Section 1 of this report, a review of aerial photography, detailed mapped information, relevant landscape planning policy and published landscape studies for each identified site was made.
- *Stage 2: Site survey and analysis*
Field survey verified and refined the desk based work. This included inspecting views from public roads, rights of way and other public viewpoints (within the parish boundary), to define visual/aesthetic characteristics, tranquillity, condition, and relationship between the site, its contribution to its LCA area and adjacent LCAs within the parish.
- *Stage 3: Assessment*
The sites were assessed against a set of defined criteria to establish overall landscape sensitivity and landscape capacity. These findings are illustrated on a series of tables and provide a transparent and comparative assessment between the sites.
- *Stage 4: Mitigation*
Drawing upon the findings of the assessment work, consideration was given to opportunities for mitigation and enhancement that could be designed into any potential development.
- *Stage 5: Concept Landscape Strategy*
For each site a Concept Landscape Strategy illustrates a framework for how residential development could be accommodated. Mitigation measures are also indicated.

Overall Landscape Sensitivity

- $$\text{Overall Landscape Sensitivity} = \text{Visual Sensitivity} + \text{Landscape Character Sensitivity}$$

- **Landform** – areas with a very varied/complex land form or strong topographic features e.g. strongly rolling landform may be more able to contain the visual impact of development but are likely to be more sensitive to residential development in landscape terms when compared with those with a simple, predominantly flat landform.

- Landscape scale and pattern – areas with a complex, intimate and small scale, irregular field pattern are likely to be more sensitive to disruption of field pattern by development, compared with a simple, more uniform or fragmented field pattern.
- Landscape condition/quality – based upon judgements about the physical state of the landscape, and about its intactness from visual, functional and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements which make up character in any one place.
- Contribution to the landscape setting of the settlements - settlements with particularly distinctive landscape settings in terms of a combination of key component character features eg rivers, landform, tree groups/ woodlands, landmark buildings, experienced in key views approaching or leaving the settlement or are experienced as an attractive backdrop from within the settlement are more likely to be sensitive to development that could erode/ or lead to the loss of these settings

- **Settlement edge quality/condition** – landscapes with existing harsh, abrupt and unattractive settlement edges are likely to be less sensitive to housing development compared to those with an attractive or muted settlement edge such as that provided by open spaces or small scale historic buildings, or by an existing strong green edge, such as woodland and hedgerow belts.

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- General visibility- the relative degree to which development is likely to be visible from the wider landscape or from within an area in terms of available public views;

- ## Overall Landscape Sensitivity Rankings

- | Overall Landscape Sensitivity | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Landscape Character Sensitivity | High | High | High | High | High | High |
| | Moderate-High | Moderate-High | Moderate-High | Moderate-High | Moderate-High | Moderate-High |
| | Moderate | Moderate | Moderate | Moderate | Moderate-High | Moderate-High |
| | Low-Moderate | Low-Moderate | Low-Moderate | Moderate | Moderate-High | Moderate-High |
| Low | Low | Low-Moderate | Low-Moderate | Low-Moderate | Moderate-High | Moderate-High |
| | Low-Moderate | Low-Moderate | Low-Moderate | Low-Moderate | Moderate-High | Moderate-High |
| Visual Sensitivity | | | | | | |

Landscape Capacity

3.9 The landscape capacity of each site to accommodate residential development was assessed. This took into account the overall sensitivity of the landscape, and considered the perceptions/values attached to the landscape (against defined criteria) and through exercising professional judgement in terms of the capacity assessment definitions below.

Landscape Capacity

=

Overall Landscape Sensitivity

+

Landscape Value

Landscape Value Criteria

- Landscape value is concerned with the relative value that is attached to different landscapes.
- Perceptual aspects/qualities (eg scenic beauty, sense of place, tranquillity, wildness, rurality).
 - Contribution to High Weald AONB and its setting.
 - Conservation interests - the presence of features of wildlife, archaeological, historic and cultural interest that can add value to the landscape, as well as having high value in their own right.

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY						
OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low
	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate
	Low	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate
LANDSCAPE VALUE						
		Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High

Landscape Capacity Rankings

The following assumptions have been made:

- This report considers only criteria relating to landscape character and visual amenity. Development of sites may be unfeasible for other reasons beyond the scope of this study, for example in connection with access, drainage or ecological issues.
- The assessment considers the sensitivity and capacity of the landscape to accommodate small-scale residential development, assuming that buildings would be mainly 2-2 1/2 storey of a scale and mass commensurate with the local context.
- Landscape Concept Plans and mitigation strategies are intended to reinforce and enhance local landscape character and visual amenity. Recommendations are made regarding principles of potential development for a site to help provide guidance in identifying the most suitable locations and layouts for future development.

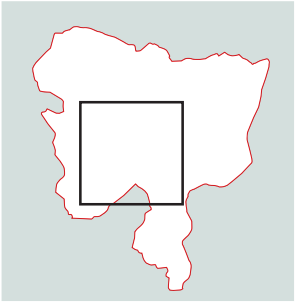
CAPACITY ASSESSMENT RANKING	DEFINITION
Negligible/Low	Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are highly vulnerable to development. Development would be likely to result in significant detrimental effects on the character of the landscape as a whole and should generally be avoided, unless on a very small scale.
Low-Moderate	Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunities to accommodate development without detrimental effects.
Moderate	Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. Although the landscape has some ability to absorb development, it is likely to cause some change in character. Care would be needed in locating development. It may be able to be accommodated in some parts of the area eg 'rounding off of a settlement' or in 'infill sites'. May be suitable for small settlement extensions, assuming appropriate mitigation.
Moderate-High	Few of the key characteristics of the landscape are vulnerable to change. The landscape is likely to be able to accommodate residential development with only minor-moderate adverse change in character taking account of appropriate mitigation. May potentially be a need to take account of/to ensure care with locating development in relation to specific characteristics/factors eg settlement separation/settings.
High	Key characteristics and the overall character of the landscape would not likely to be adversely affected by development. The landscape is likely to be able to accommodate development without significant adverse change in landscape character, taking into account appropriate mitigation. May be areas that are suitable for larger urban extensions.

CAPACITY ASSESSMENT - SITE COMPARATIVE TABLE

- Low-Moderate**
Site A - Powdermill Valley Northern Slopes
Site C - Central Crowhurst
Site E - Hye House Ridge
- Moderate**
Site B - Forewood Lane



Site Location Plan



Key Plan

SITE A - POWDERMILL VALLEY NORTHERN SLOPES

Landscape Character Sensitivity

This area's gently undulating topography, largely undisturbed field pattern, and good landscape condition, with filtered settlement edge, makes an important contribution to the distinctive rural landscape setting of Crowhurst village, point to an overall **Moderate-High** landscape character sensitivity.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	
Topography/landform	Simple, large scale predominantly flat.	Simple, large to medium scale, predominantly flat to mildly undulating.	Complex topographical variation.	Very complex with strong topographical variety.
Landscape scale/pattern	Simple large scale pattern, and/or very fragmented, disturbed land cover.	Largely simple, with some disturbance, or mostly fragmented land cover and land use.	Varied pattern with some intricacy. Largely undisturbed and coherent land historic land use pattern.	Intricate, varied pattern undisturbed, consistent patterns of land cover and historic layout.
Landscape condition/intactness	Poor	Poor to fair	Fair	Good
Character contribution to the landscape setting of the settlements.	No contribution, ie no identifiable landscape setting	Partial/minor contribution from landscape features/green spaces.	Moderate contribution from landscape features and green spaces.	Important contribution from landscape features and green spaces.
Condition/quality of the settlement edge.	Harsh, abrupt and unfiltered settlement edge.	Occasional filtered edge but predominantly abrupt.	Variable edge, some historic but modern larger scale also evident.	Variable edge, some modern influence but predominantly well filtered into landscape.

Visual Sensitivity

This area is highly visible from the 1066 Bexhill Link (PRoW 5a) which crosses the site as well as from PRoW 6a which runs along the lower slopes south of the site. The site is a component of wider unobtrusive views across the rural landscape and contributes towards a **Moderate-High** visual sensitivity ranking.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY			
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH	
General Visibility	This area is well contained by existing features - buildings, trees, landform. Low level of visibility.	Occasional views of/ across the area where gaps in existing features allow. Low-moderate level of visibility.	Some visibility of/ across the area from the surrounding landscape. Moderate level of visibility.	The area is a component of wider, longer landscape views of/ across the area. The area is a major component of wider landscape views. High level of visibility.
Views and Landmarks	No views of natural and built landmarks. Cluttered skyline character.	Limited, partial views of natural/built landmarks but there may also be a relatively developed cluttered skyline.	Area from which there are some wider views containing natural/built landmarks, but there may also be some intrusive elements.	Some important views to the wider landscape and of natural/built landmarks are available, and any more intrusive elements are not particularly prominent.
Visual Receptors	Public views are experienced by a small number of public receptors or by a larger number of receptors with a passing interest in their visual environment eg motorists on local transport routes.	Occasional public views from PRoW routes and local transport routes.	Some public views for visitors and from PRoWs. Some visibility from transport routes.	Frequent public views for visitors enjoying the landscape and from PRoWs. Public views are experienced by a high number of visitors to the landscape and/or locally important PRoW. Visibility from major transport routes.

Overall Landscape Sensitivity

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low
	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low
	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low	Low
	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
VISUAL SENSITIVITY					
High					
Moderate-High					
Moderate					
Low-Moderate					
Low					

Landscape Value Criteria

The site is located within the High Weald AONB and to the south of Fore Wood which is an area of Ancient Woodland, and has a SSSI and SNCI designation contributing to a **Moderate-High** landscape value. Forewood Rise housing development along the site's eastern edge begins to affect the tranquility of the area but overall the site has a strong sense of place.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY				
	LOW	MODERATE			HIGH
Perceptual aspects/qualities (eg scenic beauty, sense of place, tranquillity, wildness, rurality)	Not tranquil, much human activity. Lack of a distinctive sense of place or scenic beauty.	Limited tranquillity, with significant human detractors from rural/natural qualities. Limited perception of a sense of place.	Some human activity affecting tranquillity and/or some features that contribute to a sense of place.	Relatively tranquil and/or a strong sense of place with some scenic features.	Tranquil and remote in character, with few human influences. Very distinctive sense of place.
Contribute to the setting of the High Weald AONB and its special qualities.	No contribution. No relationship with the AONB.	Slight contribution. Limited, distant setting to the AONB.	Moderate contribution. Middle distant setting to the AONB.	Moderate-Major contribution. Close distant setting to the AONB, with boundaries adjoining	Substantial contribution. Setting is within the AONB.
Conservation interests: presence of features of wildlife, archaeological, historic and cultural interest that can add value to the landscape, as well as having value in their own right.	Not present. Lack of local or statutory designations within the area or adjacent.	Slight contribution from a few undesignated features of interest. Lack of statutory designations within the area or adjoining.	Some features of interest. Some local designations cover the area or are immediately adjacent. Statutory designation in the vicinity.	A number of features of interest. Statutory designations and their settings affect parts of the area.	Statutory/Local designations and their settings affect a high proportion of the area.

Landscape Capacity Ranking

Low/Moderate

Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunities to accommodate development without detrimental effects.

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY						
OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low
	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate
	Low	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate
	Low	Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
LANDSCAPE VALUE						

SITE B - FOREWOOD LANE

Landscape Character Sensitivity

This is an existing residential site consisting of a single house within garden plot. It is well filtered into the area's settlement pattern and the well-wooded boundary provides some contribution to the character area, resulting in a **Low-Moderate** landscape character sensitivity.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY			
	LOW	MODERATE		HIGH
Topography/landform	Simple, large scale predominantly flat.	Simple, large to medium scale, predominantly flat to mildly undulating.	Complex topographical variation.	Very complex with strong topographical variety.
Landscape scale/pattern	Simple large scale pattern, and/or very fragmented, disturbed land cover.	Largely simple, with some disturbance, or mostly fragmented land cover and land use.	Varied pattern with some intricacy. Largely undisturbed and coherent land cover. Some historic land use pattern.	Intricate, varied pattern undisturbed, consistent patterns of land cover and historic layout.
Landscape condition/intactness	Poor	Poor to fair	Good	Very good
Character contribution to the landscape setting of the settlements.	No contribution, ie no identifiable landscape setting	Partial/minor contribution from landscape features/green spaces.	Moderate contribution from landscape features and green spaces.	Substantial contribution to setting from very distinctive landscape features and green spaces at the edge of/on the approaches to the settlements.
Condition/quality of the settlement edge.	Harsh, abrupt and unfiltered settlement edge.	Occasional filtered edge but predominantly abrupt.	Variable edge, some historic but modern larger scale also evident.	Soft porous settlement edge filtered into historic landscape pattern.

Visual Sensitivity

The site is well contained by the existing vegetation and railway line along the northern boundary. There are no PROW within the vicinity of the site. Public views of the sites western boundary of the site are experienced by a small number of receptors along Forewood Lane. This contributes to **Low** visual sensitivity.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY			
	LOW	MODERATE		HIGH
General Visibility	This area is well contained by existing features - buildings, trees, landform. Low level of visibility.	Occasional views of/across the area where gaps in existing features allow. Low-moderate level of visibility.	Some visibility of/across the area from the surrounding landscape. Moderate level of visibility.	The area is a component of wider, longer landscape views of/across the area. Moderate-high level of visibility. Extensive views of/across the area. The area is a major component of wider landscape views. High level of visibility.
Views and Landmarks	No views of natural and built landmarks. Cluttered skyline character.	Limited, partial views of natural/built landmarks but there may also be a relatively developed cluttered skyline.	Area from which there are some wider views containing natural/built landmarks, but there may also be some intrusive elements.	Some important views to the wider landscape and of natural/built landmarks are available, and or major gateway views available from across the area. Distinctive panoramic views, including prominent natural/built landmarks, and/or major gateway views available from across the area.
Visual Receptors	Public views are experienced by a small number of public receptors or by a larger number of receptors with a passing interest in their visual environment eg motorists on local transport routes.	Occasional public views from PROW routes and local transport routes.	Some public views for visitors and from PROWs. Some visibility from transport routes.	Frequent public views for visitors enjoying the landscape and from PROWs. Public views are experienced by a high number of visitors to the landscape and/or locally important PROW. Visibility from major transport routes.

Overall Landscape Sensitivity					
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low	Very Low
	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low	Very Low	Very Low
VISUAL SENSITIVITY					
VISUAL SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low	Very Low
	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low	Very Low
	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low	Very Low	Very Low

Landscape Value Criteria

The site is situated within the Fore Wood Lane settlement area immediately adjacent to the railway line which limits the tranquillity of the area. The site is located within the High Weald AONB and in the vicinity of Fore Wood, an area of Ancient Woodland/SSSI/SNCI designation which contributes to **Moderate** landscape value.

Landscape Capacity Ranking

Moderate

Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. Although the landscape has some ability to absorb development, it is likely to cause some change in character. Care would be needed in locating development. It may be able to be accommodated in some parts of the area eg 'rounding off of a settlement' or in 'infill sites'. May be suitable for small settlement extensions, assuming appropriate mitigation.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY				
	LOW	MODERATE			HIGH
Perceptual aspects/qualities (eg scenic beauty, sense of place, tranquillity, wildness, rurality)	Not tranquil, much human activity. Lack of a distinctive sense of place or scenic beauty.	Limited tranquillity, with significant detractors from rural/natural qualities. Limited perception of a sense of place.	Some human activity, affecting tranquillity and/or some features that contribute to a sense of place.	Relatively tranquil and/or a strong sense of place with some scenic features.	Tranquil and remote in character, natural beauty with few human influences. Very distinctive sense of place.
Contribute to the setting of the High Weald AONB and its special qualities.	No contribution. No relationship with the AONB.	Slight contribution. Limited, distant setting to the AONB.	Moderate contribution. Middle distant setting to the AONB.	Moderate-Major contribution. Close distant setting to the AONB, with boundaries adjoining.	Substantial contribution. Setting is within the AONB.
Conservation interests: presence of features of wildlife, archaeological, historic and cultural interest that can add value to the landscape, as well as having value in their own right.	Not present. Lack of local or statutory designations within the area or adjacent.	Slight contribution from a few undesignated features of interest. Lack of statutory designations within the area or adjoining.	Some features of interest. Some local designations cover the area or are immediately adjacent. Statutory designation in the vicinity.	A number of features of interest. Statutory designations and their settings affect parts of the area.	Statutory/Local designations and their settings affect a high proportion of the area.

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY						
OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Negligible/Low
	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate
	Low	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate
LANDSCAPE VALUE						
Low Moderate Moderate-High High						

SITE C - CENTRAL CROWHURST

Landscape Character Sensitivity

This area's gently undulating topography, largely undisturbed field pattern, and good landscape condition, with relatively filtered settlement edge, makes an important contribution to the distinctive rural landscape setting of Crowhurst village, point to a **Moderate-High** landscape character sensitivity.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY		
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
Topography/landform	Simple, large scale predominantly flat.	Simple, large to medium scale, predominantly flat to mildly undulating.	Complex topographical variation.
Landscape scale/pattern	Simple large scale pattern, and/or very fragmented, disturbed land cover.	Largely simple, with some disturbance, or mostly fragmented land cover and land use.	Varied pattern with some intricacy. Largely undisturbed and coherent land historic land use pattern.
Landscape condition/intactness	Poor	Poor to fair	Good
Character contribution to the landscape setting of the settlements.	No contribution, ie no identifiable landscape setting	Partial/minor contribution from landscape features/green spaces.	Important contribution from landscape features and green spaces.
Condition/quality of the settlement edge.	Harsh, abrupt and unfiltered settlement edge.	Occasional filtered edge but predominantly abrupt.	Variable edge, some historic but modern larger scale well filtered into landscape.

Visual Sensitivity

The site is highly visible from the PRoW 8a which crosses through the site as well as from the 1066 Country Walk - Bexhill Link (PRoW 17a) which runs outside the site along the lower slopes to the south with many receptors of moderate-high sensitivity. The site is a component of a wider landscape with views across the valley. This contributes to a **Moderate-High** visual sensitivity.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY		
	LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
General Visibility	This area is well contained by existing features - buildings, trees, landform. Low level of visibility.	Occasional views of/ across the area where gaps in existing features allow. Low-moderate level of visibility.	The area is a component of wider, longer landscape views of/ across the area. Moderate-high level of visibility.
Views and Landmarks	No views of natural and built landmarks. Cluttered skyline character.	Limited, partial views of natural/built landmarks but there may also be a relatively developed cluttered skyline.	Area from which there are some wider views containing natural/built landmarks, but there may also be some intrusive elements.
Visual Receptors	Public views are experienced by a small number of public receptors or by a larger number of receptors with a passing interest in their visual environment eg motorists on local transport routes.	Occasional public views from PRoW routes and local transport routes.	Frequent public views for visitors enjoying the landscape and from PRoWs. Some visibility from transport routes.

Overall Landscape Sensitivity

	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low	Low-Moderate
VISUAL SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate

Landscape Value Criteria

The site is located within the High Weald AONB and within the vicinity of the Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monument within Crowhurst Historic Village. The open field character contributes to a sense of place with some human activity affecting the tranquillity towards the west of the site. This contributes to **Moderate** landscape value.

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY				
	LOW	MODERATE			HIGH
Perceptual aspects/qualities (eg scenic beauty, sense of place, tranquillity, wildness, rurality)	Not tranquil, much human activity. Lack of a distinctive sense of place or scenic beauty.	Limited tranquillity, with significant human detractors from rural/natural qualities. Limited perception of a sense of place.	Some human activity affecting tranquillity and/or some features that contribute to a sense of place.	Relatively tranquil and/or a strong sense of place with some scenic features.	Tranquil and remote in character, natural beauty with few human influences. Very distinctive sense of place.
Contribute to the setting of the High Weald AONB and its special qualities.	No contribution. No relationship with the AONB.	Slight contribution. Limited, distant setting to the AONB.	Moderate contribution. Middle distant setting to the AONB.	Moderate-Major contribution. Close distant setting to the AONB, with boundaries adjoining.	Substantial contribution. Setting is within the AONB.
Conservation interests: presence of features of wildlife, archaeological, historic and cultural interest that can add value to the landscape, as well as having value in their own right.	Not present. Lack of local or statutory designations within the area or adjacent.	Slight contribution from a few undesignated features of interest. Lack of statutory designations within the area or adjoining.	Some features of interest. Some local designations cover the area or are immediately adjacent. Statutory designation in the vicinity.	A number of features of interest. Statutory designations and their settings affect a high proportion of the area.	Statutory/Local designations and their settings affect a high proportion of the area.

Landscape Capacity Ranking

Low/Moderate
Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunities to accommodate development without detrimental effects.

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY						
OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low
	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate
	Low	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate
	Low	Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
LANDSCAPE VALUE						

Landscape Character Sensitivity

The site is highly visible from the PRoWs which are present within Powdermill Valley (1066' Country Walk - Bexhill Link and PRoW 13b) and PRoW 15) and PRoW 13b which runs along the ridge south-west of the site. The site is a component of wider landscape with unobtrusive views across a rural landscape. This contributes to a **Moderate-High** visual sensitivity.

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	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY			
	LOW	Moderate	HIGH	
General Visibility	This area is well contained by existing features - buildings, trees, landmark. Low level of visibility.	Occasional views of/ across the area where gaps in existing features allow. Low-moderate level of visibility.	Some visibility of/ across the area from the surrounding landscape. Moderate level of visibility.	The area is a component of wider, longer landscape views of/ across the area. Moderate-high level of visibility.
Views and Landmarks	No views of natural and built landmarks. Cluttered skyline character.	Limited, partial views of natural/ built landmarks but there may also be a relatively developed cluttered skyline.	Area from which there are some wider views containing natural/ built landmarks, but there may also be some intrusive elements.	Some important views to the wider landscape and of natural/ built landmarks are available, and any more intrusive elements are not particularly prominent.
Visual Receptors	Public views are experienced by a small number of public receptors or by a larger number of receptors with a passing interest in their visual environment eg motorists on local transport routes.	Occasional public views from ProW routes and local transport routes.	Some public views for visitors and from ProWs. Some visibility from transport routes.	Public views are experienced by a high number of visitors to the landscape and/ or locally important ProW. Visibility from major transport routes.

Overall Landscape Sensitivity						
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	High	High	High	High	High	High
	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate-High
	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	High
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	Low	Low	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Moderate	High
	Low	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Moderate	High
VISUAL SENSITIVITY						

Landscape Value Criteria

The site is located outside the High Weald AONB and makes a moderate contribution to its setting. It is situated close to Hye House Listed Building and south of Chapel Hill Woods. These factors contribute towards **Moderate** landscape value.

Landscape Capacity Ranking

Low/Moderate

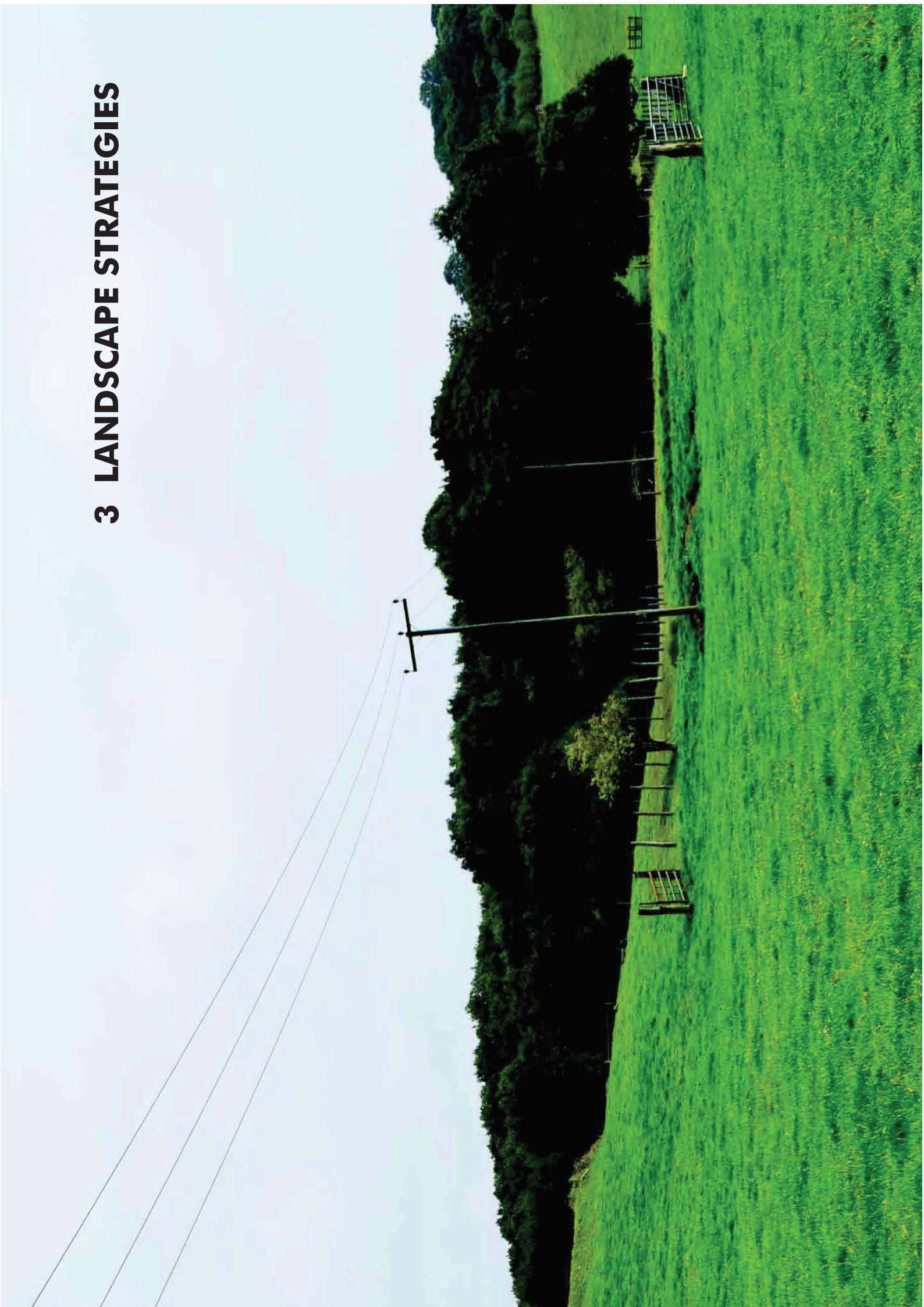
Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunities to accommodate development without detrimental effects.

LANDSCAPE CAPACITY						
OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY	High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low	Negligible/Low
	Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Negligible/Low
	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Low-Moderate	Low-Moderate
	Low	High	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate	Low-Moderate
LANDSCAPE VALUE						
	Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate-High	Moderate	Moderate-High	High

	DEGREE OF SENSITIVITY				
	LOW	MODERATE			HIGH
Perceptual aspects/qualities (eg scenic beauty, sense of place, tranquillity, wildness, rurality)	Not tranquil, much human activity. Lack of a distinctive sense of place or scenic beauty.	Limited tranquillity, with significant human detractors from rural/natural qualities. Limited perception of a sense of place.	Some human activity, affecting tranquillity and/or some features that contribute to a sense of place.	Relatively tranquil and/or a strong sense of place with some scenic features.	Tranquil and remote in character, natural beauty with few human influences. Very distinctive sense of place.
Contribute to the setting of the High Weald AONB and its special qualities.	No contribution. No relationship with the AONB.	Slight contribution. Limited, distant setting to the AONB.	Moderate contribution. Middle distant setting to the AONB.	Moderate-Major contribution. Close distant setting to the AONB, with boundaries adjoining.	Substantial contribution. Setting is within the AONB.
Conservation interests: presence of features of wildlife, archaeological, historic and cultural interest that can add value to the landscape, as well as having value in their own right.	Not present. Lack of local or statutory designations within the area or adjacent.	Slight contribution from a few undesignated features of interest. Lack of statutory designations within the area or adjoining.	Some features of interest. Some local designations cover the area or are immediately adjacent. Statutory designation in the vicinity.	A number of features of interest. Statutory designations and their settings affect parts of the area.	Statutory/Local designations and their settings affect a high proportion of the area.



3 LANDSCAPE STRATEGIES



SITE A - POWDERMILL VALLEY NORTHERN SLOPES LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Capacity Assessment Ranking: Low-Moderate
Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunities to accommodate residential development without detrimental effects.

Landscape Strategy

- Maintain open area of countryside across western slopes to protect rural edge to ancient woodland and maintain tranquil characteristic of the valley and village setting.
- Some capacity for small scale development to be located on the lower south facing slopes south of the existing development.
- Route of 1066 Country Walk-Bexhill Link to be protected and any development would need to be sensitively designed to respect this rural path.
- Any development to provide connections to existing PRoW to increase permeability and create a countryside route to the village.
- Landscape buffer along countryside boundary to provide strong soft edge to help filter development into the existing landscape pattern and create habitat linkages.
- New development to reflect rural village and farmstead characteristics through use of vernacular architecture, detailing, layout and scale, avoiding suburbanisation.

Site A

Existing trees (Indicative)

Notable buildings

Listed buildings

Ancient woodland/SSSI/SNCI

PRoW

LCA 1a
Fore Wood Nature Reserve

LCA 1b
Fore Wood Lane Settlement

LCA 2a
Powdermill Valley Farmland

LCA 2b
Crowhurst Historic Village

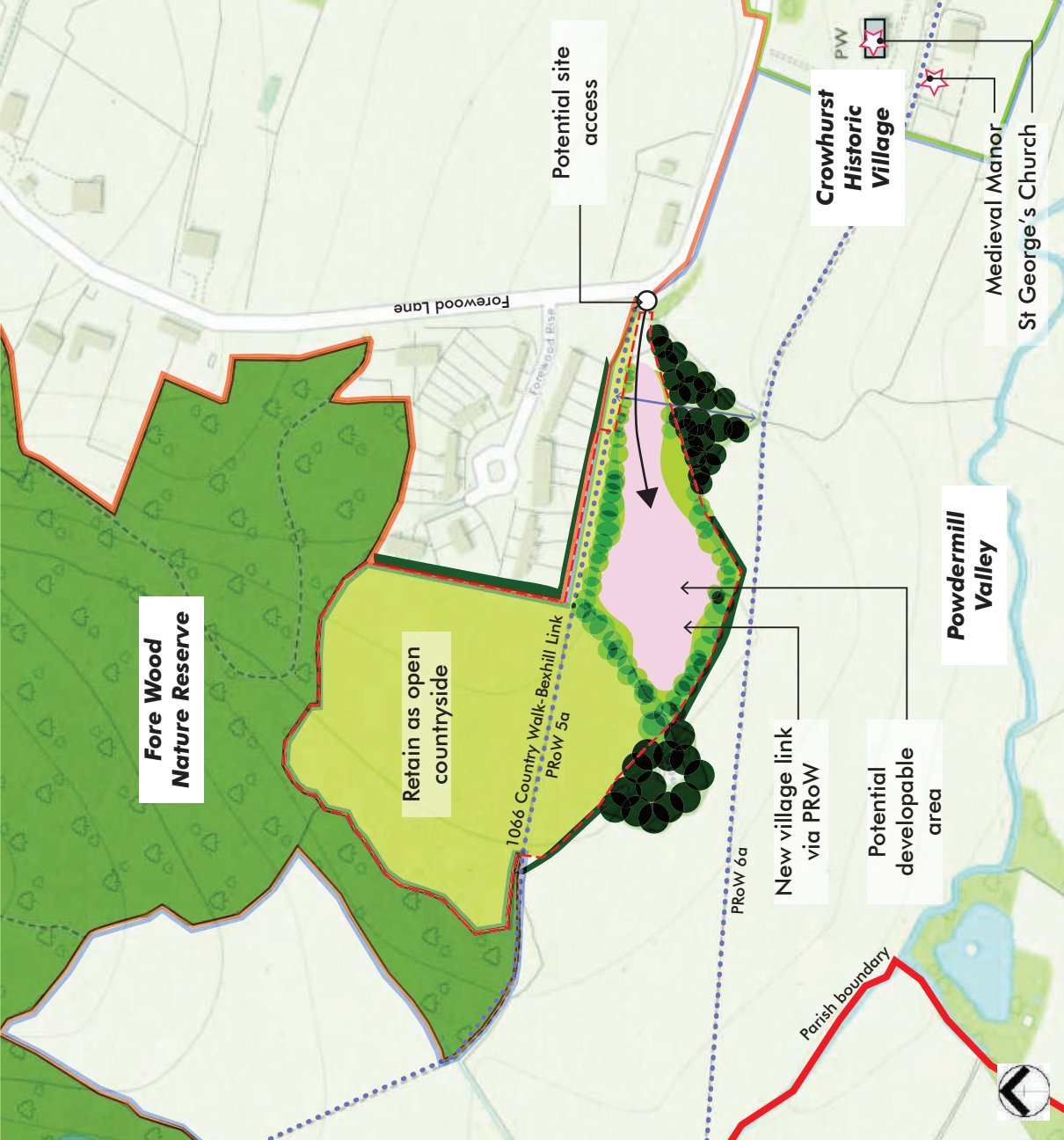
Potential developable residential area (approx. 0.67ha)

Access

Open countryside

Landscape buffer

Amenity Landscape



SITE B - FOREWOOD LANE LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Capacity Assessment Ranking: Moderate

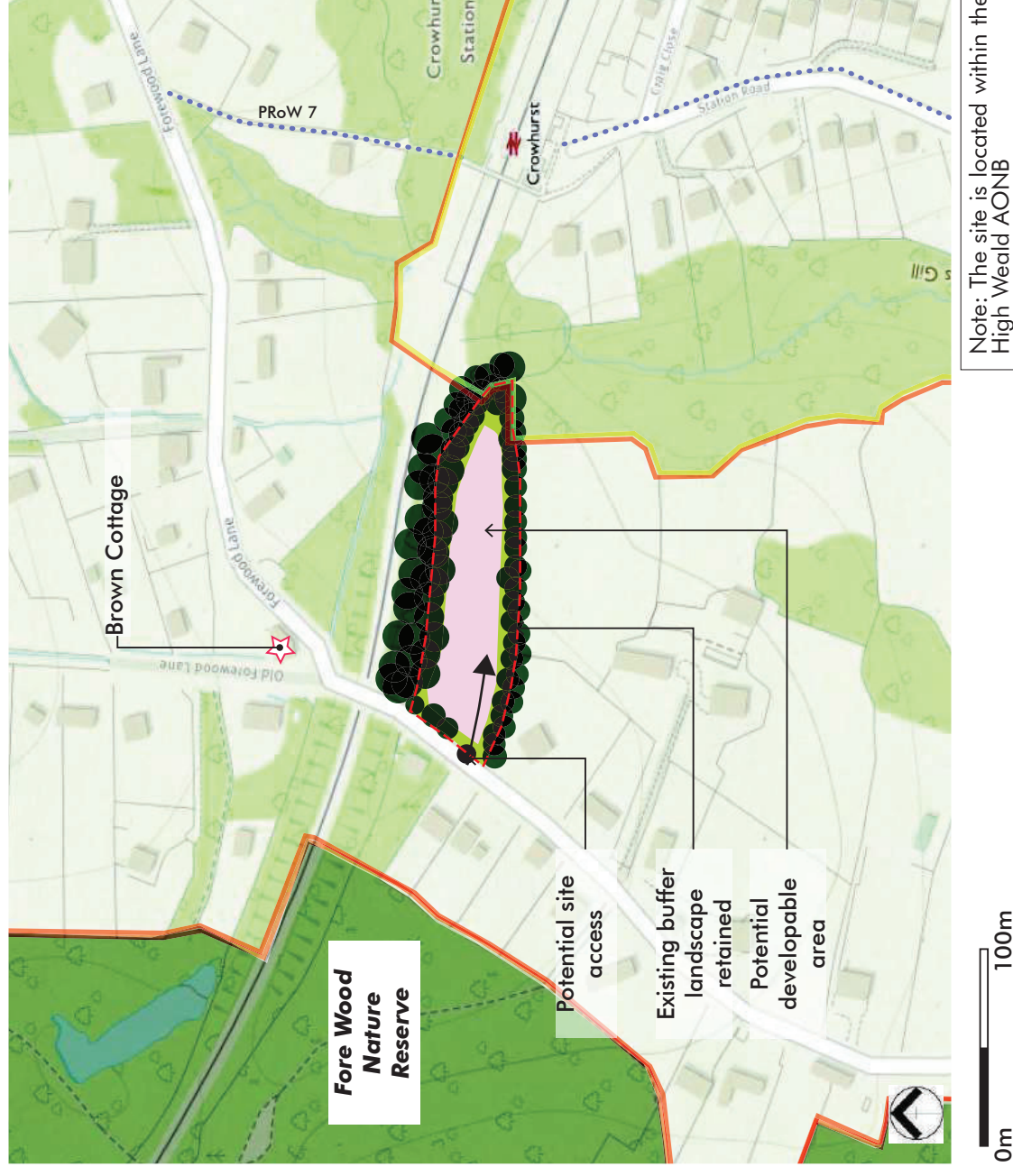
Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. Although the landscape has some ability to absorb development, it is likely to cause some change in character. Care would be needed in locating residential development. It may be able to be accommodated in some parts of the area eg 'rounding off of a settlement' or in 'infill sites'. May be suitable for small settlement extensions, assuming appropriate mitigation.

Landscape Strategy

- Retain existing boundary vegetation which provides a well-wooded enclosed landscape with new development contained within.
- Existing entrance off Forewood Lane may need to be improved/widened to provide suitable access.
- Manage/maintain existing trees and vegetation for ecological enhancement.
- Existing bungalow and garage to be removed.
- New development to reflect rural village and farmstead characteristics through use of vernacular architecture, detailing, layout and scale, avoiding suburbanisation.

Key

-
- Legend:
- Site B
 - Existing landscape buffer (indicative)
 - Listed buildings
 - Ancient woodland/SSSI/SSNCI
 - PRoW
 - LCA 1a Fore Wood Nature Reserve
 - LCA 1c Station Road Settlement
 - LCA 1b Fore Wood Lane Settlement
 - Potential developable residential area (approx. 0.4ha)
 - Access



Note: The site is located within the High Weald AONB

SITE E - HYE HOUSE RIDGE LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Capacity Assessment Ranking: Low-Moderate

Positive key characteristics, overall character and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. There may be some limited opportunities to accommodate residential development without detrimental effects.

Landscape Strategy

- Potential to integrate development into wooded slopes by creating woodland belt along the southern boundary and augmenting boundary planting to rest of site.
- Retain existing features such as hedgerow boundaries, trees and pond.
- Any new development to reflect rural village and farmstead characteristics through use of vernacular architecture, detailing, layout and scale, avoiding suburbanisation.
- Careful consideration must be given to the potential impact of the development and any associated highways improvements on the setting of Hye House.
- Low key vehicular entrance to the development sited along well-wooded farm track.
- Approach road may need improvements/widening.

Key

- Site E
- Existing trees (Indicative)
- Notable buildings
- Listed buildings
- AONB boundary
- PRoW
- LCA 2a Powdermill Valley Farmland
- LCA 2c Plough Inn Settlement Area
- LCA 2d Southern Powdermill Valley Farmland
- LCA 4a Watermill Valley Farmland
- Potential developable residential area (approx. 0.7ha)
- Access
- Landscape buffer provision



Note: The site is located outside the High Weald AONB boundary.

Appendix 5

Hi Ashley

Apologies for the delay in getting back to you on this.

With regards to the site marked on the attached plan, please see my comments below:

A – Forewood Lane is subject to a 30 mph speed limit. Appropriate visibility splays (2.4m x 43m) are achievable either side of the access. The carriageway on Forewood Lane is relatively narrow and the access width and radii would need to take this into account to ensure larger vehicles are able to enter and leave the site in a safe and convenient manner.

B - In order to appropriate visibility splays (2.4m x 43m) significant hedgerow and foliage would need to be removed. The carriageway on Forewood Lane is narrow and the access width and radii would need to take this into account to ensure larger vehicles are able to enter and leave the site in a safe and convenient manner.

C – The location of the new access is not specified; however, with some removal of hedgerow a suitable access with appropriate visibility splays (2.4m x 43m) could be provided.

D – It is presumed that the site would be accessed via Craig Close. A suitable access could be provided; however, the Craig Close/Station Road junction and carriageway may need to be widened to ensure that two-way traffic and larger vehicles (refuse etc) can be accommodated.

E – A suitable access off Royal Oak Lane could be provided; however, the road is particularly narrow and as a result any increase in its use without improvements would be a concern.

I appreciate that the above comments are quite vague; however, it is difficult to provide more detailed comments without knowing the exact access location and the number of dwellings proposed. In most instances a suitable access with appropriate visibility could be provided; however, most of the roads in this area are relatively narrow and this may be a limiting factor in determining the number of dwellings that could be accommodated.

I hope that this is helpful

Regards

Ben

Ben Lenton
Development Control Transport
East Sussex County Council

