

Cockpit Barn, Knowle Lane

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL STATEMENT

JUNE 2022 | DD578

FEBRUARY 2023 | Revision A





CONTENTS

Introduction	5
Site Context	7
Landscape Character	8
Visibility	10
Mitigation & Conclusion.....	22



-  Application site boundary
-  Borough/District boundary

INTRODUCTION

OUTLINE

This Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS) has been prepared by Deacon Design Ltd on behalf of Alderbury Homes Ltd for a residential development at Cockpit Barn, Knowle Lane, Fair Oak. The original study was undertaken early summer in 2022, with this update completed during February 2023 so that winter photography could be incorporated.

The statement summarises the key landscape characteristics and visual envelope associated with the site and local context that have been informed by desktop and field-based study. It outlines the key landscape and visual constraints and opportunities and proposes outline mitigation measures to address key sensitivities and inform the design.

The general study area for this statement is defined as approximately 1km from the site and is proportional to the development proposed on site and any material impacts beyond the study area are highly unlikely.

SITE LOCATION

The site is located to the north of the Junction of Knowle Lane and Durley Road, Fair Oak, at Cockpit Farm, west of Knowle Lane. The site is within the administrative boundaries of Eastleigh Borough, adjacent to the northern edge of Horton Heath and approximately 100m south east of Fair Oak.

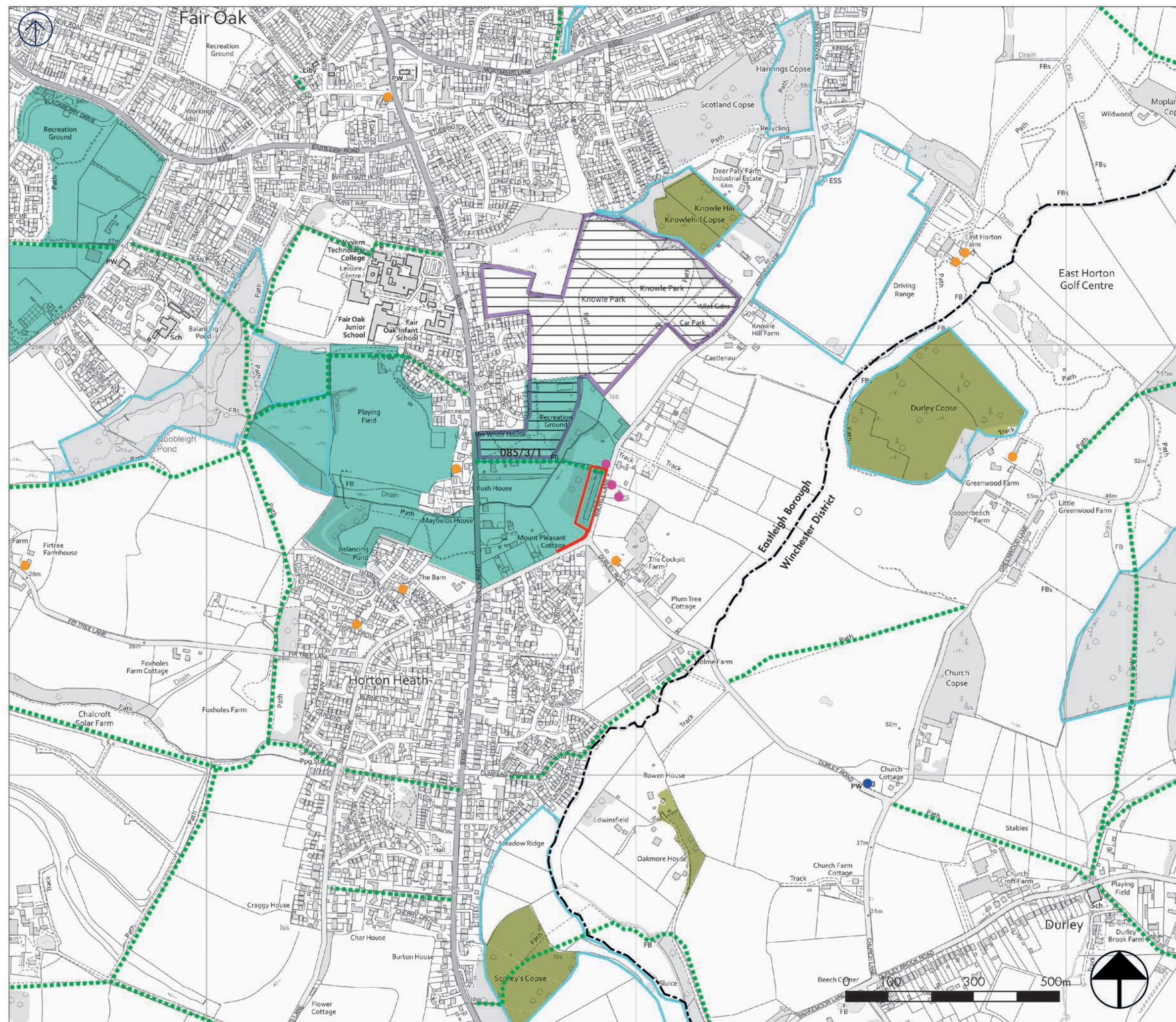
The site comprises a former agricultural unit in declining condition that has multiple vehicle access points on to Knowle Lane. The site boundary and adjoining land is well vegetated, so affords the large existing built-form visual enclosure from much of the wider landscape context.



Existing Cockpit Farm building



Knowle Lane



-  Application site boundary
-  Borough/District boundary
-  Settlement gap
-  Ancient woodland
-  Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)
-  Knowle Park
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Grade II* Listed Buildings
-  Grade II Listed Buildings
-  Tree Preservation Orders near the site

SITE CONTEXT

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

There are no landscape designations within the site or the study area (approximately 1km from the site boundary).

NATURE CONSERVATION DESIGNATIONS

There are no nature conservation designations within the site, however, four Ancient Woodlands are located within the study area, including Knowlehill Copse to the north, Durley Copse to the east, Scorey Copse to the south and a small Ancient Woodland near Oakmore House. None of those Ancient Woodland has a potential to be physically affected by the construction and operation of the proposed development.

Several Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) are located within the study area (but none within the site itself). The nearest SNCI is Knowle Park to the north of the site.

There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) within the site and three TPO in close proximity to the northern and north eastern site boundary.

HERITAGE ASSETS

There are no heritage assets within the site and few of them within the study area. They include one Grade II* Listed Building at Durley Road, south east of the site and several Grade II Listed Buildings within the study area. The nearest Grade II Listed Building is located approximately 100m to the south east of the site along Durley Road. There are no Conservation Areas of Scheduled Monuments within the study area.

OTHER DESIGNATIONS

The site is located on the edge of a Settlement Gap between Horton Heath and Fair Oak, which a planning designation aimed to prevent the coalescence of settlements and protect their character / identity.

There are several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the study area. Whilst no PRoW crosses the site, PRoW no. 085/3/1 is adjacent to the site's northern boundary and connects Knowle Lane with Botley Road to the west. There is no site visibility from any other PRoW within the study area.



Knowle Park



PRoW no. 085/3/1

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Review of published landscape character assessments in combination with field-based site studies informs our understanding of key attributes that contribute to the local and wider landscape setting.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS

The site is set within the following National and Borough Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) and/or Landscape Character Types (LCTs):

- National Character Area (NCA) 128: South Hampshire Lowlands
- LCT Lowland Mosaic, Small Scale
- LCA 8: Knowle Hill Farmland and Woodland

NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA

The site is entirely located within the National Character Area (NCA) 128 South Hampshire Lowlands. There are few key characteristics of the NCA 128 directly relevant to the site due to its localised nature. The most site-relevant key characteristics of this NCA are as follows:

- Low-lying, undulating plain abutting the chalk downs to the north and the coastal plain and Southampton Water to the south. An underlying geology of open marine, estuarine and freshwater Tertiary gravels. Soils over much of the area are heavy and clayey with localised pockets of more freely draining soils on higher land.

- Well-wooded farmed landscape (particularly to the east of Southampton), characterised by ancient woodland.
- Mixed agricultural landscape dominated by pasture with small pockets of horticulture and arable.
- An intimate and enclosed field pattern with many small and irregular fields generally bounded by mixed-species hedgerows or woodland.
- The more rural hinterland is characterised by small, loosely clustered or dispersed settlements, intermixed with isolated farmsteads.

REGIONAL/LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

As set out in the Hampshire County Council Integrated Character Assessment 2011, the site is located within the Lowland Mosaic, Small Scale LCT. This LCT has the following key identifying characteristics and boundary definitions:

- Low lying silty clay, but not sandy soils, that are seasonally wet and waterlogged in parts but also with better drained areas.
- The soils support predominantly permanent pasture land use.
- Less marginal farmed areas than the lowland mosaic medium scale and lowland mosaic heath associated types.
- Often small enclosures, small areas of woodland and undulating topography which produces the sense of a small scale landscape.

- Associated mostly with small chalk fed streams apart from where they border the New Forest perambulation where they are more acidic.
- Generally, high to very high density of dispersed small farmsteads and hamlets and associated with nucleated spring line settlements in the south and north Hampshire lowlands.
- Small semi natural and ancient woodland copses and hedges of varying character.
- Frequently a high density of public rights of way and winding lanes.
- Varying periods and types of enclosure but generally small scale but has some of the earliest enclosures out of all the lowland mosaic types – perhaps indicating less marginal and richer soils.
- Particular association with hamlets and villages of medieval and Saxon origin often associated with wood and wood clearance.

On the Borough Level, the site is located within the Area 8: Knowle Hill Farmland and Woodland, which is characterised by:

- Enclosed undulating valley landform and ridge
- Varied pattern of field sizes and cultivation
- Clusters of buildings and small fields along lanes
- Views across valley to wooded horizons north and east
- Urban influence in the western edge

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Landscape Character Assessment for Eastleigh Borough 2011 states under Landscape Sensitivity that 'The landscape is predominantly rural, bounded by the urban edge of Fair Oak and Horton Heath. It has a varied landform and vegetation structure, and is attractive without being of particular distinctiveness. It has amenity value with much land being publicly accessible from Knowle Lane and the nearest residential areas. It has local wildlife value.' In terms of visual sensitivity 'the mosaic of developed land, woodland and mixture of field enclosure types limits intervisibility within the character area. The character is complicated further by the undulating landform and prominent woodland set on a ridge with views out.'

SITE CHARACTER

The existing built-form is in declining condition and deemed a detractive element of existing landscape character. The scale and condition of fencing, disused machinery around the building are similarly negative components of character. The site vegetation is characterised by a combination of perimeter hedgerow trees and a wooded area to the northern part of the site, where the sloping topography falls towards the existing Public Right of Way. This maturing vegetation comprises a range of native species, which are in need of management to improve biodiversity and diminishing screen density due to loss of understorey vegetation.



Vegetation along Knowle Lane screens views from the east and south



The site is in poor condition



Vegetation and topography screen views from the north and west



Enclosed character of the site along Knowle Lane in summer months

VISIBILITY

The following pages provide a representation of views from Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and other public locations surrounding the site where the viewers tend to seek an appreciation of the landscape setting.

Key visual receptors that may be able to obtain views from publicly accessible viewpoints into the site include:

- Users of PRoW no 085/3/1;
- Visitors to Knowle Park;
- Visitors to The Lapstone pub;
- Road users (Knowle Lane, Botley Road, Durley Road);
- Local residents.

The previously described designations attribute an increased landscape value to the wider landscape context. The emphasis of the study looked at publicly accessible locations for viewpoints where the site may influence the experience and enjoyment of the landscape.

VIEWS TOWARDS THE SITE

PRoW users experience no views of the site when passing via the southerly edge of Knowle Park due to intervening vegetation. Upon passing the existing watercourse bridge, users may experience views of the site, which are filtered by

existing trees and then subsequently screened by metal panel fencing.

Visitors to Knowle Park do not experience views of the site due to a combination of intervening vegetation and the rolling contextual topography.

Partial site views may be experienced from the rear garden and car park of the Lapstone Pub. These are partially screened by intervening trees. The offsite context of these views is diminished by a variety of sub-divisional field fencing, stockpiled materials, ad hoc structures and storage containers that are not identified components of character in the published landscape character assessments.

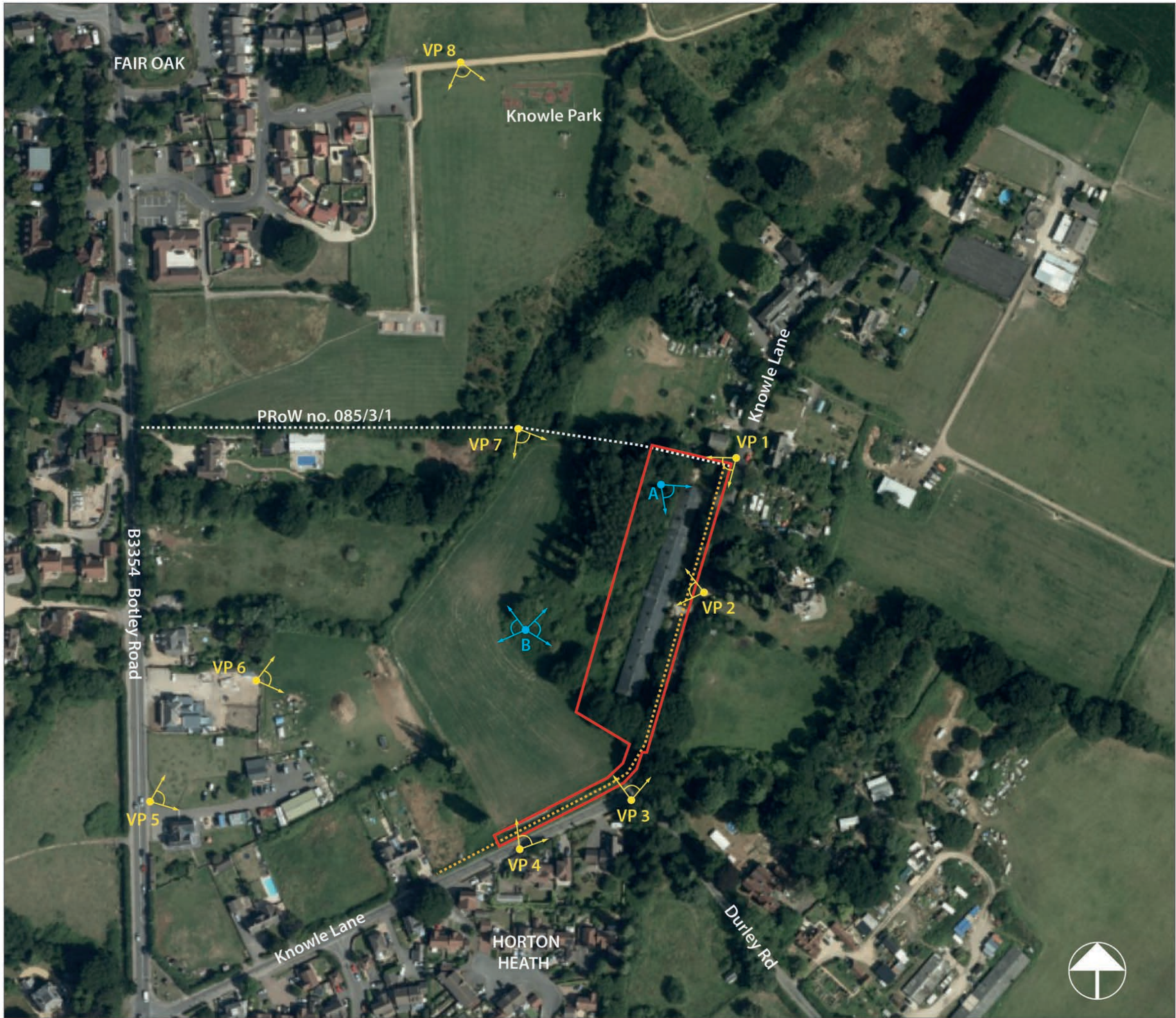
Road users emerging from Durley Road, or travelling along short sections of Knowle Lane and Botley Road may experience site views that are filtered by the existing perimeter hedgerow trees.

Residents within dwellings in proximity to the site who may experience views include Yew Tree Cottage to the north and a small number of dwellings on the adjacent site of Knowle Lane. These dwellings sit within well vegetated curtilages, so views are likely to be limited to upper storey windows that are orientated facing towards the site and filtered by the trees.

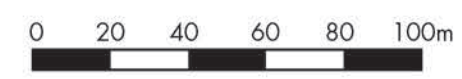
Following recent correspondence with the Easteigh Borough Council's Landscape Consultant, we have revisited the previously submitted viewpoints and took photographs in January 2023 to demonstrate site's visibility in winter. These new photographs are presented in this revised report alongside summer views for ease of comparison.

Whilst site visibility is slightly increased due to reduced foliage, these views demonstrate that the site continues to be well screened even in winter months.

The most noticeable change is experienced by road users, who experience better views of the existing shed and other structures within the site, yet their views of the site remain to be filtered and relatively limited. At the same time, these views demonstrate that the potential benefit of reinforced boundary planting which would also provide additional screening in winter months.



-  Application site boundary
-  Proposed footpath
-  Viewpoints
-  Site photographs



VIEWPOINTS



VP01 - Knowle Lane at existing PRow



VP01 - winter view

VIEWPOINTS



VP02 - Knowle Lane near proposed site access



VP02 - winter view

VIEWPOINTS



VP03 - Durley Rd Knowle Ln junction



VP03 - winter view

VIEWPOINTS



VP04 - Knowle Ln near proposed path exit



VP04 - winter view

VIEWPOINTS



VP05_B3354 Botley Rd



VP05 - winter view

VIEWPOINTS



VP06 - Lapstone car park



VP06 - winter view

VIEWPOINTS



VP07 - PRoW 085_3_1 east of stream bridge



VP07 - winter view

VIEWPOINTS



VP08 - Knowle Park Play Area



VP08 - winter view

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Site View A - North west corner of the site



Site View B - looking east

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



Site View B - looking west

MITIGATION & CONCLUSION

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

The application comprises 6no dwellings with an associated access from Knowle Lane. The existing three access ways will be reduced to a single access via the central frontage position. The proposed dwellings are positioned to respect the existing sloping site topography and to minimise impact on the existing site vegetation. Proposed removal of the two unused access gates at the NE and SE site corners enable opportunity for native understorey & hedgerow infill planting for screening benefit.

A permissive route for pedestrians is also proposed for the benefit of future residents and the local community. This route will link the existing Public Right of Way, southwards via the application site and parallel with Knowle Lane and emerging beyond the corner junction with Durley Road where there is scope to cross over the lane to join the existing footway.

MITIGATION/LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

The existing perimeter hedgerows and small woodland area to the NE, NE and SW site boundaries will be retained and protected during construction of the proposed development.

Enhancement mitigation will focus on the improvement of screening beneath the existing mature trees, so that the understorey and hedgerow layer is much denser and more

species-diverse. This will be achieved by gapping up planting in combination with sensitive landscape management (e.g. laying & coppicing where suitable, and selective removal of declining vegetation to create opportunity for new planting to improve the age-species diversity.

The southerly aspect of the site boundaries will be mitigated with a generous buffers of native tree and shrub planting. Once established, these will contribute a substantial screen for the relatively short distance views from a limited section of Botley Road (B3354). The planting will contribute linking habitat benefit and contribute biodiversity gain for the local green infrastructure network.

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

This Landscape and Visual Statement has reviewed the physical landscape features, landscape character and effects on local visual amenity. Subsequent winter view photography undertaken in early 2023 do not alter the original conclusions regarding site visibility. Recommendations for enhanced perimeter mitigation planting are indicated within the updated landscape plan.

The site is located on the edge of a Settlement Gap between Horton Heath and Fair Oak. The proposed development comprises the replacement of an existing large scale built-form with 6no dwellings that are similarly placed, so there will

The site exhibits few key components of the published landscape character assessments. Existing vegetation and the sloping site topography will be retained and enhanced by the development proposal.

Site visibility from the surrounding landscape is very limited due to the undulating local topography and well vegetated context. There is only one Public Right of Way in proximity to the site that will experience filtered views of the proposed development, which can be mitigated by native planting.

The low visibility and the nature of the proposed development sympathetic to the adjacent uses result in a generally low impact of the proposals on the surrounding landscape and visual amenity of people living in or visiting the local area.

The proposed development will contribute to the local character by replacement of a large, poor quality building with a small scale residential development that is sympathetic in design to the local context. The proposed scheme will include the addition of landscape features within the site that will mitigate existing views from the south west.

Whilst the change within the site will be apparent, the perception of changes to landscape character outside the site will be minimal and limited to a very small geographical area due to effective screening contributed by existing landscape features along its boundaries.



Proposed native woodland tree & shrub species to be planted for view screening mitigation & biodiversity benefit:

- Specimen trees (ranging spec of 8-10 to 14-16cm girth) to include a range of locally prevalent native hedgerow species
- Oak, Field Maple & Alder, with a few Rowan, Birch, Lime & Hornbeam
- Hedgerow underplanting transplants to establish a dense understorey screen shall include Hawthorn, Hazel, Blackthorn, Guelder Rose, Elder & Honeysuckle

Small wetland habitat to include a supporting habitat edge of native marginal & semi-aquatic species (Including Brooklime, Flowering Rush, Iris, Marsh Marigold & Water Violet):

- Annually manage by cutting back only partial areas on rotation to help maintain species diversity.
- Leave arisings for 3-5 days at the side of the pond to dry out before removing to a licensed green waste facility or by composting at a sufficient distance for re-use within gardens.
- Stacked log piles within the adjoining planting will contribute excellent hibernaculum for amphibians, reptiles & invertebrates to complement the wetland habitat.

Species-rich grassland area for biodiversity complement to the adjoining native habitat

Proposed Permissible Footpath link for resident & local community usage. Supplementary native tree planting (Oak, Field Maple & Lime specimens will extend the verdant landscape character further alongside Knowle Lane for additional screening benefit.

Proposed drainage attenuation for triple stage treatment reduction of sediment, nitrates & phosphates that will also contribute biodiversity benefit as wetland habitat for amphibians, reptiles & invertebrates

Southern Boundary Vegetation retained & enhanced with proposed understorey shrub planting to comprise native hedgerow species of Hawthorn, Hazel, Blackthorn, Elder & Guelder Rose for screening mitigation & linking habitat benefit

Existing trees retained & new native planting is to be managed as woodland habitat for screening density & biodiversity gain:

- Improve age-species diversity by selective thinning every 5 years to remove any declining specimens for space to replant / regenerate native tree growth.
- Annually enhance shrub & field layer understorey by: rotational coppicing, selective reduction of dominant species and replanting for species diversity.
- Install bat / bird boxes & keep felled arisings neatly stacked as log hibernacula for reptiles, amphibians & invertebrates.

Existing Public Footpath retained, with a permissible link southwards via the site perimeter for wider community benefit

Proposed permissible footpath link from the existing Public Right of Way, via the site & parallel with Knowle Lane. Existing field gate access to be infilled with native hedgerow shrubs, including 3no Oak / Field Maple specimens for screening benefit.

Existing boundary trees alongside Knowle Lane to be retained & enhanced with native understorey planting for screening mitigation & linking habitat

Site Access

Knowle Road



info@deacondesign.co.uk