



LANDSCAPE REVIEW OF PLANNING APPLICATION 26/01201/OUT

Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Landscape Review considers the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), the Design and Access Statement (DAS), the submitted parameter information and the Hook Neighbourhood Plan evidence. It focuses on the portion of the application Site within Hook Parish and on effects upon landscape character, public rights of way, locally identified views and the River Whitewater corridor.
- 1.2. The LVIA methodology is broadly recognisable as a GLVIA3-based approach, and the use of maximum parameter heights for the Zone of Theoretical Visibility and a 3 km study area are reasonable. Those sound elements do not resolve the following material shortcomings:
 - There is no detailed parish-level landscape character assessment for Hook. However, the LVIA could have defined a local Hook-side landscape receptor using the Hook Neighbourhood Plan, district and county character assessments and the Site baseline. Instead, the River Whitewater valley, Bassetts Mead and Hook's eastern countryside setting are considered only through broad character areas and the general surrounding landscape receptor.
 - The development would result in adverse effects on the landscape character of Hook's eastern countryside setting and the experience of PRoW users. No representative viewpoint is provided for Hook PRoWs 117/5/1 and 117/6/1, despite these routes being included as visual receptors.
 - The Composite Parameter Plan identifies the River Whitewater corridor only as 'Neighbourhood Green Spaces'. It does not distinguish the different open-space types, fix minimum buffers or identify the landscape measures relied upon as embedded mitigation. The SANG and riparian planting shown on the Illustrative Landscape Strategy are therefore not sufficiently secured.
 - The transition from the chalk-stream valley to built development is not adequately defined. Indicative levels and sections are needed to demonstrate that development platforms, roads, the school and playing fields would not introduce prominent engineered slopes, retaining structures or elevated built form close to the valley.
 - The DAS states that an outline lighting strategy will address the school and sporting and leisure uses, but that strategy has not been provided. It remains unclear whether the sports pitches would be floodlit or how lighting would affect the countryside edge, the River Whitewater corridor and other dark landscape features.
- 1.3. For the Hook part of the Site, the proposal has not demonstrated compliance with Policies HK5, HK7 and HK8 of the made Hook Neighbourhood Plan. The application should not be approved in its present form on landscape and visual grounds. The parameter plans and supporting information require amendment before the identified effects and proposed mitigation can be reliably assessed.



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- 1.4. Although parts of the Hook-side landscape are influenced by existing infrastructure and are of lower value than the Winchfield parkland, the River Whitewater valley, mature vegetation, PRowS and Hook's eastern countryside setting remain locally valued and susceptible to urbanising change. The proposed SANG is a positive design principle, but it would not avoid the adverse change to landscape character, rural outlook and PRow experience.
 - 1.5. A landscape-led response should secure the extent and character of the River Whitewater corridor, the transition to development, embedded mitigation, development heights and levels, retained views and limits on lighting at outline stage. The application should not be approved in its current form without the Hook-specific amendments and further information identified in the Landscape Review.



LANDSCAPE REVIEW OF PLANNING APPLICATION 26/01201/OUT

1. Introduction

Purpose and approach

- 1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Winchfield Parish Council (WPC) and Hook Parish Council (HPC) in response to planning application 26/01201/OUT. The application seeks outline permission, with all matters reserved except access, for a phased residential-led mixed-use development of up to 2,160 dwellings together with employment, local centre, community, education, green and blue infrastructure, Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) and associated works.
- 1 The Site extends across Winchfield and Hook parishes. This report reviews the submitted LVIA as a whole where necessary, but its assessment of the proposal itself is separated between the portion within Winchfield Parish and the review of the Hook portion.
- 1 The review is a technical appraisal of the submitted assessment and outline design framework. It considers whether the baseline properly captures the locally distinctive landscape; whether receptor value, susceptibility, magnitude and significance have been robustly judged; whether the visual evidence is representative; and whether the mitigation relied upon is sufficiently defined and secured at outline stage.
- 1 The review is not a wholesale re-performance of the applicant's LVIA. It tests the reliability of its conclusions against the submitted material and the made Winchfield Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) and the made Hook Neighbourhood Plan (HNP) and their supporting local evidence. Where this report identifies a different level or significance of effect, the judgement is explained by reference to the particular receptor and the nature of change.
- 1 The reference in the application documents to the version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in force when the application was prepared is not, in itself, a criticism. However, the NPPF published on 17 August 2026 applies to decision-making from the date of publication and is therefore relevant to the determination of this application. The proposal is assessed against the relevant landscape and design provisions of the 2026 NPPF in the conclusions.

Principal documents reviewed

- Environmental Statement Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual (LVIA)
- ES Appendix 7.1: LVIA Assessment Methodology
- Environmental Statement Chapter 4: Description of the Development
- Design and Access Statement, including the site analysis and design principles
- Building Heights Parameter Plan LTW006-201-P, Rev C

- Composite Parameter Plan LTW006-204-P, Rev D
- Illustrative Landscape Strategy edp6792_d050d, Rev D
- National Planning Policy Framework, August 2026
- Winchfield Neighbourhood Plan, made January 2024
- Appendix A1: Winchfield Landscape Character Assessment
- Appendix A2: Winchfield's Key Views
- Winchfield Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Base, including Appendix D: Brenda Parker Way Landscape Report
- Hook Neighbourhood Plan (HNP), made February 2020

2. Review of the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Methodology

- 2.1. The submitted methodology generally follows the familiar GLVIA3¹ sequence of identifying receptor sensitivity, assessing magnitude of change and combining those judgements to determine effect. The use of the maximum building-height parameters for the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is the correct precautionary basis for an outline application (LVIA paragraph 7.2.3). A 3 km study area is also proportionate for the type and scale of development, provided the assessment includes the relevant receptors and the local character evidence within that area.
- 2.2. Methodology paragraph A7.6 states that assessment of the wider landscape resource requires assessment of the visibility of the proposal from adjacent landscape character areas. That formulation is too restrictive. Visibility can be relevant to how change is perceived, but a landscape effect is an effect upon landscape as a resource and may arise from direct loss, alteration of pattern, changed land use, severance, changed experiential qualities, or effects upon the relationship between landscape components. It does not require a view of the development from every affected area.
- 2.3. This matters here because the proposal would alter the structure and experiential character of the Winchfield landscape: former parkland would become urban development; the balance between openness and woodland enclosure would change; a dispersed settlement pattern would be replaced by a large, continuous development; and the rural context of public paths would be reduced. Those effects require assessment in their own right, rather than being filtered principally through visibility.
- 2.4. LVIA paragraph 7.2.19 acknowledges that some practitioners may find **Moderate** effects significant, but states that only effects of **Major/Moderate or above** will be treated as significant. No reasoned basis is provided for excluding all Moderate effects. This is especially problematic because Appendix 7.1, paragraph A7.29, expressly recognises that professional judgement may make a Moderate effect on a high or very high sensitivity receptor significant, with an explanation given in that case.
- 2.5. The two statements cannot be reconciled by simply applying a fixed matrix threshold. Significance is ultimately a professional judgement informed by the nature of the receptor and change. A Moderate effect may identify a highly sensitive local receptor experiencing a meaningful change, or a very large change to a less sensitive receptor. The appropriate approach is to decide significance case by case and explain the judgement. **The blanket threshold materially suppresses local significant effects in this LVIA, including effects on the Brenda Parker Way and locally valued views.**

¹ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment)

- 2 Paragraph 7.2.22 records public consultation, a site walkover with district councillors, pre-application meetings and a project website. It does not clearly demonstrate that the scope of the LVIA, including the viewpoint selection, was agreed with Hart District Council as competent authority. ES Chapter 4 also indicates that pre-application engagement was limited. This does not invalidate the assessment by itself, but it means the viewpoint set must be justified on its own merits. The omissions identified below are therefore material.
- 2 Paragraph 7.2.23 expressly states that night-time effects have not been assessed. A development of this scale would introduce an extensive new pattern of residential, highway, community and commercial lighting into a largely rural part of Winchfield and Hook. Without a night-time baseline, representative dusk/night viewpoints and an outline lighting envelope, the LVIA cannot establish the scale of change to dark skies, rural character or visual amenity, or demonstrate compliance with WNP Policy NE5 and HNP Policy HK8.
- 2 The LVIA appropriately refers to parameter plans for an outline application, but its residual conclusions go beyond what those plans secure. The development description identifies an average net density of approximately 40 dwellings (LVIA 4.2.4) per hectare and says terraces would be the most common house type, with the highest densities comprising three- to four-storey flats (LVIA 4.2.9). The DAS promotes 'gentle density' around centres, primary routes and key green spaces, with lower density at edges. Neither the Composite Parameter Plan nor the Building Heights Parameter Plan translates those broad statements into a Winchfield-specific density band or character-area control.
- 2 ES Chapter 4 confirms that the illustrative masterplan is subject to change at detailed design stage. The Illustrative Landscape Strategy is similarly illustrative. Yet LVIA paragraphs 7.2.24–7.2.25 and the Year 15 assessment assume the layout and mitigation planting shown in that illustrative material, successful establishment and continuing management. **Where planting is essential to reduce an effect, its location, minimum width, typology, density, height, management objective and relationship to the maximum built envelope must be fixed or otherwise secured.** Those matters are not adequately controlled by the parameter plans.
- 2 The result is an asymmetrical assessment: a maximum development envelope is used to establish visibility, but an optimistic illustrative landscape outcome is used to reduce residual effects. A robust outline LVIA should assess the worst-case combination permitted by the parameter plans, and should only credit mitigation that is embedded, defined and deliverable.

Baseline character and landscape value

- 2.11. LVIA paragraphs 7.3.22–7.3.23 acknowledge the WPC Landscape Character Assessment² but reproduce only a short overview of LCA 1. They do not carry the detailed key characteristics into the receptor descriptions or impact judgements. In particular, the assessment underplays the locally heathy character at Shapley Heath, the historic woodland framework, the open former parkland, the estate features and listed lodges, the B3016 gateway, the ancient character of the Brenda Parker Way, and the dispersed settlement pattern.
- 2.12. Paragraph 7.3.47 assigns the surviving historic landscape character only medium value at a local level. **That judgement is not convincing for the Winchfield portion.** The local assessment explains that most of LCA 1 once formed part of the Winchfield House Estate and that remnant parkland patterns remain integral and legible. The open pasture, field boundaries, coppices, trackways and relationship with listed estate features give the landscape time depth and distinctiveness beyond an ordinary urban-fringe site.

² Winchfield Landscape Character Assessment (Michelle Bolger Expert Landscape Consultancy, April 2021)

- 2 The Brenda Parker Way Landscape Report³ is particularly important and appears not to have informed the LVIA. It identifies the path's visible setting, its mature treed and partly sunken form, its ancient look and feel, its varied sequence of enclosure and outward views, and the contribution made by both the Winchfield parkland to the east and Hook farmland to the west. It concludes that the study area around the path is of high landscape value, with particularly high cultural heritage, distinctiveness, recreation and scenic values.
- 2 Unlike Winchfield, there is no detailed parish-level landscape character assessment for Hook. The Hook Neighbourhood Plan nevertheless provides relevant local evidence. It identifies the eastern part of the Parish as being characterised by a low-lying, gently undulating landform, wooded watercourses, thick hedgerows, mature trees, irregular fields and a high density of public access. These characteristics are directly relevant to the River Whitewater corridor and the countryside forming the eastern setting of Hook.
- 2 It is accepted that parts of the western Site are more open and less intact than the remnant parkland farther east. The railway, A30, overhead power lines and historic loss of field boundaries reduce landscape condition and scenic quality in places. However, condition is only one component of landscape value. The River Whitewater, its floodplain, wooded watercourses, recreational access, relationship with Bassetts Mead and the role of the land in the rural setting of Hook give rise to greater landscape value.
- 2 For completeness, and to provide a consistent assessment across the Site, the LVIA could have defined a local landscape character receptor for the Hook side, informed by the Hook Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant county and district landscape character assessments and the Site-specific baseline. This could have encompassed the River Whitewater valley, Bassetts Mead Country Park and the countryside forming the eastern setting of Hook, while recognising that landscape value, condition and susceptibility vary across this area. Instead, effects are considered through broad district and county character areas and the general “surrounding landscape” receptor. This does not adequately identify the particular local sensitivity of the river-valley and settlement-edge landscape or provide an equivalent level of assessment to that undertaken for Winchfield LCA 1.

Viewpoints and visual receptors

- 2.17. The viewpoint set does not adequately represent all relevant receptors or the way the landscape is experienced in motion. The following omissions should be addressed (Figure 1):
- PRoW 107/29/1, Hartley Wintney (Viewpoint 1): A relevant elevated/longer-distance public receptor from which the development may be perceived; absent from the submitted set.
 - PRoW 178/23/1, Odiham (Viewpoint 2): The proposal is visible from this route, indicating a wider landscape influence greater than the LVIA's Negligible Year 15 conclusion.
 - Brenda Parker Way (Viewpoint 3): Viewpoints are concentrated only on the Neighbourhood Plan Key Views and do not provide sufficient intermediate views to record the sequential open/enclosed experience through the Site.
 - Totters Lane (Viewpoint 4): No representative viewpoint is included despite the route being assessed as a visual receptor.
 - Winchfield PRoW 254/501/1 (Viewpoint 5) : No representative view along the route/SANG context tests development remaining visible in the background or the effect of the proposed 30 m motorway woodland buffer.

³Winchfield Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2037, Appendix D, The Evidence Base

- Hook PRow 117/5/1 (Viewpoint 6): No representative viewpoint is included despite the route being assessed as a visual receptor.
- Hook PRow 117/6/1: No representative viewpoint is included despite the route being assessed as a visual receptor.

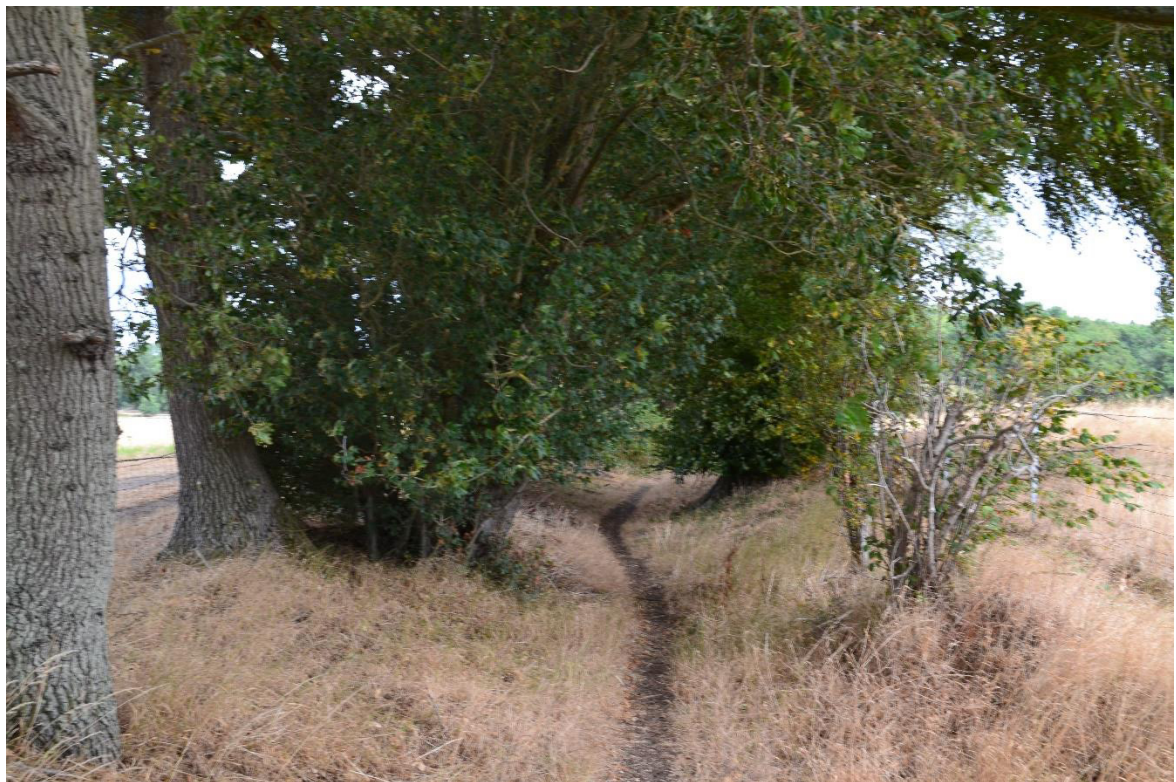
2.18. The missing views are not merely a presentational gap. They affect the understanding of the development's spread, the loss of rural outlook, increased visual disturbance and the consequences for landscape character. A thorough assessment should include winter (where possible) and summer photography, verified wirelines or photomontages where appropriate, and a route-based narrative for the Brenda Parker Way and other affected PRowS.



Viewpoint 1 - PRow 107/29/1, Hartley Wintney



Viewpoint 2 - PRoW 178/23/1, Odiham



Viewpoint 3 - Brenda Parker Way



Viewpoint 4 - Totters Lane



Viewpoint 5 - Winchfield PRoW 254/501/1



Viewpoint 6 - Hook PRoW 117/5/1

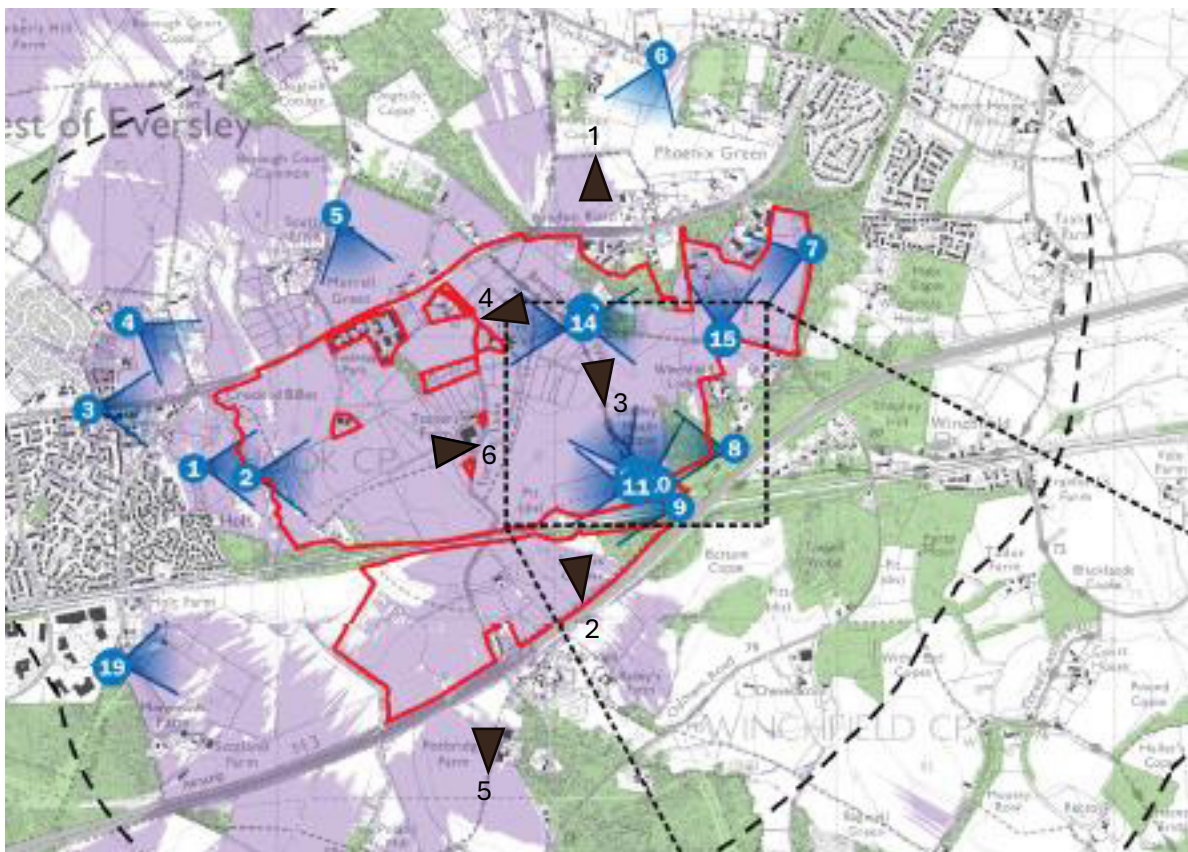


Figure 1 - Additional viewpoints location

Landscape effects

- 2 The submitted assessment does not adequately evaluate effects on the specific qualities of the local Winchfield LCA. It tends to aggregate the district-level character areas and to place considerable weight on the retention or addition of vegetation. That approach understates the change from rural former parkland to a substantial urban neighbourhood.
- 2 The following table summarises the main issues identified in the assessment of residual (Year 15) landscape effects.

Receptor	Submitted conclusion	Review conclusion
Surrounding landscape	Year 15: Moderate adverse	Should be considered significant as existing neighbourhood plan evidence demonstrates the landscape is of considerable value.
Wider landscape	Year 15: Minor Adverse	Understated. Visibility from omitted routes and the scale of local character change warrant a receptor-specific reassessment.
Landscape character areas	Year 15: Minor adverse for Hart district LCAs	Too general. District-scale effects may be limited, but Winchfield LCA 1 requires separate assessment and would experience a major adverse and significant local effect.
PRoW network	Year 15: Major beneficial	Not credible as a judgement of landscape experience. Connectivity may improve, but existing rural routes would lose outlook, remoteness and historic context; access benefits do not cancel adverse experiential effects.

- 2 For **Winchfield LCA 1**, development would occupy a substantial part of the character area and replace a defining component, open former parkland, with urban form. The landscape would no longer be described in the same way: development would cease to be limited and dispersed, the relationship between parkland and coppices would be disrupted, and the rural transition at the Parish edge would be substantially weakened. In this local context, the magnitude is high and the effect should be assessed as Major adverse and significant.
- 2 Topography is treated as a landscape receptor and as a factor affecting visibility, but the detailed layout, earthworks, road gradients, finished ground levels and finished floor levels are not fixed. It is therefore unclear how a low or otherwise limited magnitude of change to topography can be concluded. At outline stage, the assessment should use a reasonable worst-case levels envelope and identify the controls necessary to prevent excessive cut, fill, retaining structures or elevated built form. Without those controls, both the topographic and visual conclusions are premature.

Visual effects

2.23. The following table summarises the main residual (Year 15) visual assessment issues.

Receptor/viewpoint	Review finding
Residents at Winchfield/Hurst	The LVIA's Major/Moderate and significant adverse conclusion is agreed.
VP7 — B3016 gateway	Sensitivity is understated. This is a shared vehicle/cycle route, a locally identified key view and an important approach into Winchfield. A Moderate adverse effect should be treated as significant in this specific context.
VP8 — Old Potbridge Road	Sensitivity should be higher because the location is used by pedestrians/cyclists and forms a locally identified view. The conclusion that the residual effect is not significant is nevertheless accepted.
Totters Lane	The Moderate adverse, not significant conclusion is accepted, subject to a representative viewpoint being provided.
Brenda Parker Way	The proposed planting does not adequately mitigate the change. Built development and enclosing planting would both alter the valued balance of enclosure and outward rural views. The effect remains Major adverse and significant at Year 15.
VP15 — Winchfield Footpath 1	The change from a rural to urban context is fundamental. The submitted Moderate conclusion is too low; the effect should be reassessed as at least Major/Moderate adverse and significant.
VP2 - Users of the non-designated footpath along the River Whitewater	The Year 15 conclusion appears dependent upon the establishment of SANG and riparian planting shown on the illustrative Landscape Strategy. As these mitigation measures are not secured through the parameter plans, they cannot be relied upon and the residual visual effect could be greater.

LVIA review conclusions

2 The individual shortcomings are mutually reinforcing. The local baseline is incomplete; some receptor sensitivities are too low; Moderate effects are automatically treated as not significant; key route experiences and viewpoints are missing; and residual effects are reduced using an illustrative mitigation outcome that is not secured. The LVIA therefore does not provide a reliable basis for concluding that effects upon Winchfield's landscape and visual receptors would be acceptable.

3. Review of the proposal within Winchfield Parish

The landscape-led approach design test

- 3 A landscape-led design process should begin with the landscape's structure, value, susceptibility and capacity for change, and should use that evidence to decide where development can be accommodated, at what density and height, with what relationship to landform, vegetation, heritage and views. It should then secure those decisions through the parameter plans and design controls.
- 3 The current proposal does not pass that test for Winchfield. The DAS and parameter framework largely apply site-wide principles to a landscape that the local evidence identifies as distinctive and historically layered. The result is not simply a need for more planting around an otherwise fixed quantum and distribution of development. The analysis should have influenced the location and extent of built development itself and would reasonably have produced a different spatial response in Winchfield.

Incomplete constraints and opportunity analysis

- 3 The DAS site constraints plan (pg.14) does not adequately map several locally important constraints identified in Figure 16 of the Winchfield Landscape Character Assessment and in the Key Views and Brenda Parker Way evidence. These include:
 - Shapley Hill, the Parish high point at approximately 98 m AOD, and the arc of higher ground that affects visibility and enclosure;
 - the sandy formation and heathy character associated with Shapley Heath;
 - the network of historic and ancient woodland that encloses the landscape and provides habitat;
 - Shapley Ponds Copse;
 - the mapped extent and legible pattern of remnant **Winchfield House parkland**;
 - the high-value study area and visible setting identified by the Brenda Parker Way Landscape Report; and
 - the full set of locally identified key views and the sequential relationships between them.
- 3 Because these matters are not properly mapped and weighted at the outset, they do not shape the development envelope in a transparent way. The omission is then carried into the landscape character discussion on DAS page 18, which relies principally on broader district character areas and does not reflect the full local LCA 1 description.

Parameter plans and outline control

- 3.5. The Composite Parameter Plan LTW006-204-P identifies broad development and green infrastructure zones, movement routes and retained/diverted PRowS. It does not define the landscape character of buffers to the Brenda Parker Way, other PRowS or the B3016; minimum buffer dimensions linked to visual objectives; structural planting typologies; landscape openings that must be retained; character areas; density bands; or positive frontage requirements.
- 3.6. The Illustrative Landscape Strategy shows extensive planting and open space, but is not one of the plans that fixes detailed layout and remains subject to change. It cannot safely be treated as embedded mitigation without corresponding controls. In particular, a general symbol for proposed trees does not establish whether planting would screen, filter, frame or retain a view, nor whether it would be sufficiently dense and wide to perform the function assumed by the LVIA.

- 3 This distinction is critical at outline stage. If an effect is only acceptable because of structural planting, a development setback, a reduced building height or an open view corridor, that requirement must be secured now. It should not be left to a future reserved matters submission after the principle and maximum envelope have been established.

Density, height and character areas

- 3.8. The stated average density of 40 dwellings per hectare is not, by itself, a meaningful landscape control. The DAS's references to '*gentle density*' and lower-density edges are qualitative and the housing mix does not explain the spatial distribution of density. The illustrative aerial material in the DAS also indicates substantial built form close to rural edges.
- 3.9. The Building Heights Parameter Plan allows development of up to three storeys across extensive parts of the Site. A broadly uniform maximum does not respond to the dispersed, low-rise settlement pattern of Winchfield, the former parkland, rural outlook or sensitive approaches and paths. DAS paragraph 5.5 discusses the character of Hook, Odiham and Hartley Wintney but **does not establish how Winchfield's character has informed height, typology or density.**
- 3.10. The reference in DAS Section 9.3 to distinct neighbourhoods is not translated into enforceable character areas. For the Winchfield portion, the framework should identify a specific character area with a materially lower and more varied density, lower building heights at sensitive edges and on higher ground, generous plot and street proportions, a dispersed or woodland-contained grain where appropriate, and a clear relationship between frontage, open space and retained rural views.

Historic landscape and remnant parkland

- 3 The design principles state that historic landscape features identified through desk study and field survey would be retained, including field boundaries, trackways, hydrological features, built elements and veteran trees. Retention of individual components is welcome but does not retain the historic landscape as a system. Much of the Winchfield portion is remnant parkland whose value derives from openness, field pattern, coppice enclosure, estate associations and its relationship with Winchfield House and the listed lodges.
- 3 Building across that parkland would remove or urbanise the relationships that make the historic pattern legible. The harm is therefore not answered by retaining selected trees and boundaries within development. It should have influenced the extent of the development envelope, and the LVIA should recognise that the resulting land-use change cannot be offset by new planting.

Green and blue infrastructure

- 3 The green and blue infrastructure strategy does not provide sufficient detail about planting character, density, species palettes, establishment standards or long-term management outcomes. There is also no reliable distinction between planting intended for ecological connectivity, amenity, landscape structure, screening, filtering, or view framing. These functions may require quite different design responses.
- 3 More planting is not automatically beneficial. Along the Brenda Parker Way, dense planting could enclose the route and remove the outward glimpses that are part of its documented character. Along PRow 254/501/1, the proposed 30m woodland buffer to the M3 may provide some separation from the motorway, but it would also materially alter the present rural and open path experience. That adverse change needs to be assessed and the planting designed from the character evidence, not credited as generic mitigation.

Public rights of way and the Brenda Parker Way

- 3 The proposal may create additional routes and connections, but that access benefit must be assessed separately from the effect upon the character and visual amenity of existing routes. It is not reasonable to describe the existing PRoW network as experiencing a Major beneficial landscape/visual effect simply because connectivity or surfacing may improve.
- 3 Within Winchfield, users of the Brenda Parker Way presently experience an ancient treed route with a varied sequence of enclosure, gaps and views to a rural landscape on both sides. The east side is especially valuable for its association with the former Winchfield House Estate and the field-and-coppice pattern. The development would replace much of that visible rural context with housing and would use new planting to contain or screen it. The path may remain physically present, but its character and purpose as a countryside route would be fundamentally changed.
- 3 The mitigation claim that views from the PRoW would be '*enhanced*' is therefore unsupported. A more appropriate objective would be to safeguard the path's ancient form, retained tree canopy, rural setting, outward view sequence and sense of transition. That would require a substantially different development setback and edge treatment, tested through sequential views and secured by parameters.

Key views and gateways

- 3 The DAS states that built form has been located and sized to avoid or minimise intrusion into key views. The current parameters do not demonstrate that outcome. Maximum heights are broadly applied; view corridors and positive rural frontages are not fixed; and the illustrative masterplan does not control whether housing would face and positively address open space or present rear boundaries and service edges.
- 3 The B3016 view near North Lodge is both a locally identified key view and an important gateway into Winchfield. Its value lies in the relationship between the listed lodge, wooded estate edge and open former parkland. Urban development in that view would change the identity of the approach. That locally important effect should be treated as significant even if its matrix label is Moderate.
- 3 The same principle applies to views from the Brenda Parker Way and Winchfield Footpath 1. Screening may reduce the visibility of buildings over time, but it may also remove the open rural setting that gives the view value. The design response should conserve the composition and experience, not merely conceal development.

Dark skies

- 3 The absence of a night-time assessment is a material design gap. The Winchfield part of the scheme requires an outline lighting strategy that identifies maximum illuminance and colour temperature, protected dark corridors, limits on column height and upward light, controls at rural and woodland edges, and representative night-time visualisations. Until those matters are assessed and secured, compliance with WNP Policy NE5 has not been demonstrated.

Impact on Winchfield Parish conclusions

- 3.22. **The proposal as presented is inappropriate to the distinctive landscape character of Winchfield.** The LVIA materially underestimates the effects upon the local character area, remnant historic parkland, the Brenda Parker Way, other PRoWs and locally important views. The DAS and parameter plans do not demonstrate that the constraints have shaped the development envelope, and they do not secure the mitigation relied upon.

- 3.23. A genuinely landscape-led process would have resulted in a different distribution, scale, density, height and edge treatment of development within Winchfield. The application should not be approved in its current form.
- 3.24. The following table identifies conflicts with the relevant Neighbourhood Plan landscape-related policies.

NE2 — Protection of key views	The parameters do not safeguard or respond positively to all relevant key views. Sensitivity is understated and the visual evidence does not demonstrate avoidance or acceptable mitigation.
NE5 — Dark skies	No night-time LVIA or adequate outline lighting envelope is provided, so effects upon rural character, biodiversity and visual amenity have not been demonstrated to be acceptable.
BE4 — Development design considerations	The parameter framework does not adequately reflect Winchfield's character, scale, density and generally low-rise form. Extensive three-storey maxima are inconsistent with the policy's two-storey expectation for new dwellings.

- 3.25. These conflicts reflect the concerns recorded during preparation of the WNP about major development **changing the character of the area, loss of village identity, coalescence, conservation of heritage, and protection of wildlife and the natural environment**. Those concerns are borne out by the present outline design and assessment.

- 3.26. The **NPPF** published on 17 August 2026 is also a material consideration which applies to decision-making from the date of publication (Annex A, par.1). Although the application and LVIA were prepared against the previous Framework, the application must now be determined having regard to the 2026 national decision-making policies.
- 3.27. Policy DP3(1) requires development proposals to ‘*respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting)*’ so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings. DP3(2)(e) and (g) also require built form to establish an appropriate pattern of buildings and spaces, enhance views into and out of a scheme where appropriate, and create a visually attractive, distinctive and characterful identity. DP3(3) directs refusal, in the absence of clear justification, where a proposal conflicts with these principles or with explicit design standards in the development plan, and requires ‘*substantial weight*’ to be given to compliance with relevant development plan policies when design quality is assessed.
- 3.28. For the reasons set out in this review, **the proposal does not satisfy Policy DP3**. The DAS and parameter plans do not demonstrate a design response founded on Winchfield's history, local landscape character, remnant parkland, settlement pattern or key views. The broadly applied building-height envelope, absence of a defined Winchfield character area and lack of secured density and edge parameters mean that **integration with the particular context has not been demonstrated**. The resulting loss of rural and historic landscape character would weaken, rather than establish or maintain, a distinctive sense of place. No clear justification is provided for that conflict.
- 3.29. Policy N2(1)(a) requires development proposals to consider the environmental qualities of the land, including landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and to identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced. N2(1)(d) requires existing natural features of visual, historic or nature-conservation value to be conserved and enhanced where possible, with appropriate landscaping used to integrate development into its surroundings. The retention of individual trees and boundaries, together with proposed new green infrastructure, does not address the wider loss of former parkland, rural openness, historic landscape pattern, key views and the rural setting of the Brenda Parker Way. Moreover, the planting upon which the LVIA relies remains illustrative and is not sufficiently defined by the controlling parameters to demonstrate the integration required by Policy N2.
- 3.30. Policy N3(1)(c) requires provision for the long-term maintenance of existing and newly planted trees, while Policy DP4 requires design quality to be considered throughout the evolution, assessment and delivery of development. DP4 also requires the local planning authority to ensure that conditions refer to clear and accurate plans and that design quality is not materially diminished between permission and completion. These policies reinforce the need for the landscape measures essential to acceptability, including structural planting, setbacks, retained view corridors and rural-edge controls, to be clearly established at outline stage rather than left solely to an illustrative strategy or subsequent reserved matters.
- 3.31. Policy L3 requires efficient use of land, but this is expressly linked to securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places and must be read with Policy DP3 and the other policies of the Framework. The issue identified in this review is not that an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare is necessarily unacceptable across the whole Site. It is that the application does not establish how density, height and built form would vary spatially in response to the materially different landscape conditions within Winchfield. Efficient use of land does not remove the requirement for a context-responsive design or justify a broadly uniform development envelope across sensitive rural edges and former parkland.
- 3.32. The 2026 NPPF therefore reinforces the conclusions of this review. In landscape and design terms, the proposal **conflicts with Policy DP3 and has not demonstrated compliance with Policies N2, N3 and DP4**. The housing and other benefits of the scheme are matters for the overall planning balance, but they should be considered against the absence of a properly evidenced and secured landscape-led

design. The national policy position supports substantive revision of the Winchfield part of the proposal and, in its present form, supports refusal on landscape and design grounds.

- 3 In conclusion, the shortcomings cannot be resolved by a general condition requiring landscaping at reserved matters stage. At minimum, a revised application and LVIA should:
- re-map the Winchfield-specific landscape, heritage and visual constraints and use them to revise the development envelope;
 - assess Winchfield LCA 1 separately and evaluate effects on each of its defining characteristics;
 - provide night-time effects and a reasonable worst-case levels envelope;
 - add representative and sequential viewpoints from the omitted PRowWs, Totters Lane and the full Brenda Parker Way route;
 - apply significance judgement case by case, including to Moderate effects;
 - define a Winchfield character area with reviewed developable area, secured density, height, grain, frontage and rural-edge parameters;
 - secure minimum development setbacks, view corridors and planting typologies where they are essential to mitigation;
 - protect the Brenda Parker Way's rural setting and varied open/enclosed experience rather than enclosing it with generic screening; and
 - demonstrate how the revised scheme complies with the WNP policies identified above.
- 3 The proposal as presented is inappropriate to the distinctive landscape character of Winchfield. The LVIA materially underestimates the effects upon the local character area, remnant historic parkland, the Brenda Parker Way, other PRowWs and locally important views. The DAS and parameter plans do not demonstrate that the constraints have shaped the development envelope, and they do not secure the mitigation relied upon. A genuinely landscape-led process would have resulted in a different distribution, scale, density, height and edge treatment of development within Winchfield. The application should not be approved in its current form.

4. Review of the proposal within Hook Parish

Landscape-led Design Approach

- 4 The Hook-side landscape is more varied than the distinctive and historically layered Winchfield landscape. Although the A30, railway, overhead power lines and loss of field boundaries reduce landscape condition in places, this does not establish that the area can accommodate the proposed scale and form of development without significant effects.
- 4 The River Whitewater valley, mature vegetation, PRowWs and Hook's eastern landscape setting remain locally valued and susceptible to urbanising change. A landscape-led approach should have used these constraints to determine whether, where and at what scale development could be accommodated, particularly the school, playing fields and Hook-facing development edge, with the necessary limits secured through the parameter plans.

Parameter Plans and Outline Control

- 4.3. The River Whitewater is a chalk stream and forms an important landscape, ecological and hydrological feature within the Hook portion of the Site. Together with its floodplain, associated vegetation and

relationship with Bassetts Mead, it provides a distinctive landscape corridor and contributes to the rural setting of Hook.

- 4.4. The Composite Parameter Plan LTW006-204-P identifies the corridor as 'Neighbourhood Green Spaces'. However, this does not distinguish it from other forms of public open space with different landscape functions and characteristics. The parameter plan should define the principal open-space typologies, their minimum widths or buffers and any landscape measures relied upon as embedded mitigation within the LVIA.
- 4.5. The Illustrative Landscape Strategy shows an extensive SANG and riparian landscape along the river. This is a positive starting point but remains illustrative and subject to change. It does not clearly identify which elements are embedded mitigation or whether planting is intended to screen, filter or frame views. It therefore cannot safely be relied upon when determining residual landscape and visual effects.
- 4.6. A sufficiently broad landscape buffer and gradual transition are required between the river corridor and built development. This should accommodate the riparian landscape, retained and new vegetation, drainage requirements and recreational access, while avoiding an abrupt urban edge.
- 4.7. The effectiveness of this transition will also depend upon levels. Development platforms, roads, the school and playing fields could require cut and fill, potentially resulting in engineered slopes, retaining structures or elevated built form close to the valley. Indicative levels and sections should demonstrate how development would respond to the valley landform without encroaching upon or visually dominating the river corridor.
- 4.8. Where the acceptability of the development or the LVIA conclusions depend upon the extent and character of the river corridor, minimum buffers, structural planting, retained view corridors or separation from the school and residential development, these requirements should be secured through the parameter plans or other enforceable outline controls.

Density and Height

- 4 The proposal identifies an average net residential density of approximately 40 dwellings per hectare, with development of up to three storeys across extensive parts of the Site and limited taller elements. These broad controls do not establish how density, grain and height would reduce towards the River Whitewater or respond to the generally low-rise character of Hook and its rural eastern edge.
- 4 The spatial approach places the largest continuous area of SANG between Hook and the proposed built edge. This is preferable to locating housing directly against the River Whitewater and should be retained as a firm parameter. The Hook-facing residential parcels should form a clearly defined character area with a lower and more varied density, reduced building heights, generous street and plot proportions and a landscape-led edge that positively address the SANG and open space.
- 4 The proposed school and its associated playing fields occupies a sensitive position on the western edge of the development. The Building Heights Parameter Plan allows school buildings up to 14 m, creating the potential for a substantial roofscape beyond the River Whitewater valley. The landscape effects would not arise solely from the main school building, but also the sports pitches, fencing, equipment, parking, access, activity and lighting would contribute to the overall change.
- 4 Playing fields may retain a degree of physical openness, but they should not automatically be treated as equivalent to the existing rural landscape. Their formal character and associated infrastructure could be prominent from elevated parts of Hook and routes approaching the River Whitewater.

Green and blue infrastructure

- 4 The SANG and public access along the River Whitewater offers potential landscape, ecological and recreational benefits. The retention and reinforcement of vegetation along the river could strengthen the fragmented habitat network and provide a defensible landscape structure between Hook and the proposed built development.
- 4 These benefits are acknowledged, but they should not be conflated with the effects upon landscape character. Conversion from agricultural countryside to managed SANG would introduce paths, signage, furniture, drainage features and likely a different management regime. Even where built development is screened, the landscape would no longer have the same rural character.
- 4 The landscape framework should respond to the small-scale lowland mosaic described by the HNP rather than relying upon a continuous screening belt. Dense planting across the full corridor could remove the open and filtered eastward views that contribute to the experience of the River Whitewater valley. The strategy should instead establish a considered sequence of open meadow, wetland, riparian vegetation, scrub and woodland, using planting to filter development while retaining valued openings and visual connections.
- 4 The SANG and SuDS strategies should also be coordinated. Drainage basins, swales and wetland features should appear as integrated components of the valley landscape, with naturalistic profiles, varied marginal planting and limited engineered infrastructure. The application should demonstrate that floodplain constraints, drainage requirements, recreational capacity and structural planting can be delivered together without compromising landscape character or the establishment of mitigation.
- 4 The location, species composition, establishment requirements, management objectives and replacement provisions for structural planting should be secured. The Year 15 conclusions should only rely upon planting that is clearly defined in supporting parameter plans, deliverable and capable of being maintained for the lifetime of the development.

Key Views

- 4 HNP Policy HK7 identifies an important eastward view from Hook across the River Whitewater valley towards the Site. This view contributes to the rural setting of Hook and is experienced by users of the local PRow network.
- 4 The LVIA identifies a Moderate adverse effect upon this view at Year 15. Although planting may filter the visibility of development over time, the proposal would still alter its existing rural composition and could create a more enclosed outlook.
- 4 The development proposals should respond directly to this adverse effect and seek to reduce it through the outline parameters. This should include appropriate setbacks from the river corridor, controls on development height and the school roofscape, and the retention of selected openings and view corridors within the landscape framework.

Lighting and night-time character

- 4.21. HNP Policy HK8 requires the effects of external lighting to be minimised, while its supporting text identifies the need for particular care at village-edge locations to prevent light spill into the countryside. The absence of a night-time assessment remains a material omission for the Hook portion of the proposal.
- 4.22. Section 9.7 of the DAS states that an outline lighting strategy will establish a framework for the development, including streets, the school and sporting and leisure uses. It also identifies the need to minimise obtrusive light and protect dark wildlife corridors. These principles are welcomed, but the

outline lighting strategy has not been provided and the application does not demonstrate how they would be achieved.

- 4.23. The development would introduce a substantial new area of lighting, altering the existing night-time relationship between Hook and the countryside. The school and playing fields require particular consideration, as it is not confirmed whether the pitches would be floodlit or what the associated column heights, light spill and hours of use might be.
- 4.24. The outline lighting strategy should be provided and should establish whether sports pitches would be floodlit; maximum column heights, illumination levels and operating hours; controls on upward light and horizontal spill; and the protection of dark corridors along the River Whitewater, woodland edges and hedgerows. It should also address lighting associated with the school, parking areas, streets and the Hook-facing development edge.
- 4.25. Detailed specifications may be addressed at reserved-matters stage, but the principles and limits necessary to control landscape and visual effects should be established at outline stage rather than deferred solely to a general lighting condition.

Impact on Hook Parish conclusions

- 4.26. Notwithstanding the retention of the River Whitewater corridor and proposed SANG, the development would result in adverse effects on the landscape character of Hook's eastern countryside setting and the experience of users of the local PRoW network. The introduction of built development, infrastructure and managed open space would substantially alter the existing rural character and outlook.
- 4.27. The location of the SANG between Hook and the proposed built development is a positive principle. However, the application does not adequately secure the width and character of the river corridor, the transition to development, structural planting, retained views or the relationship of the school, playing fields and residential edge to the valley landform. The effects of cut and fill, school height and roofscape, sports infrastructure and lighting also remain insufficiently defined.
- 4.28. The illustrative landscape measures cannot be relied upon to mitigate effects unless the spatial requirements and embedded mitigation are secured through the parameter plans or other enforceable outline controls. The current submission therefore does not demonstrate that an appropriate landscape and visual relationship with Hook would be achieved.
- 4.29. The following table identifies the principal relationship with the Hook Neighbourhood Plan landscape policies.

HNP policy	Assessment
HK5 - Landscape	Parts of the Site are influenced by infrastructure and have lower scenic quality. Nevertheless, the LVIA identifies adverse effects upon the surrounding landscape and landscape character areas. The proposal would permanently alter the character of the Site and weaken the rural transition between Hook and the countryside
HK7 - Views	The proposal would result in a locally significant adverse effect upon the eastward key view identified by Policy HK7. The parameter plans do not adequately secure the development setbacks, height controls or retained openings necessary to respond to this view.
HK8 - Light and noise pollution	No night-time LVIA or adequate outline lighting strategy has been provided. The effects of the school, sports provision, streets, local centre and housing on the countryside edge have therefore not been demonstrated to be acceptable.

4 At minimum, the application should:

- define the principal open-space typologies and secure the minimum buffers and embedded mitigation required along the River Whitewater corridor;
- provide indicative levels and sections demonstrating the relationship of the school, playing fields, roads and residential development to the valley landform; and
- provide the proposed outline lighting strategy, confirming whether sports pitches would be floodlit and establishing appropriate limits for lighting, light spill and operating hours.

5. Overall Conclusion

- 5 For **Winchfield**, the application is founded on an incomplete understanding of the locally distinctive landscape and relies on outline controls that are too broad to guarantee the claimed landscape and visual outcome. The LVIA then compounds that weakness by undervaluing the local historic landscape, omitting relevant route experiences and viewpoints, excluding Moderate effects from significance without case-specific reasoning, omitting night-time effects and relying on unsecured illustrative mitigation.
- 5 The proposal would replace a substantial area of former parkland and rural context with urban development, materially changing Winchfield LCA 1 and the experience of the Brenda Parker Way and other paths. New woodland and open space may provide ecological, recreational and amenity benefits, but they do not offset the loss of land-use pattern, openness, historic association, rural outlook and dispersed settlement character.
- 5 Accordingly, the proposal has not demonstrated compliance with the made Winchfield Neighbourhood Plan and, in landscape and design terms, conflicts with Policy DP3 and has not demonstrated compliance with Policies N2, N3 and DP4 of the 2026 NPPF. It should not be approved in its present form.
- 5 For **Hook**, parts of the Site are influenced by existing infrastructure and have lower landscape value than the Winchfield parkland. The retention of the River Whitewater corridor and proposed SANG is a positive design principle, but the development would still adversely affect landscape character, the rural eastern setting of Hook, the Policy HK7 view and the experience of PRoW users. The parameter plans do not adequately secure the rembedded landscape mitigation or controls relating to levels, school height and lighting.
- 5 Therefore, as with Winchfield, the application should not be approved in its present form without the Hook-specific amendments and further information identified above.