

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

For Economic Development Zone

At Applegarth Farm, Grayshott

On Behalf of Applegarth Farm

December 2014

Application for Outline Planning Permission

Supporting Information

Prepared by Tim Reid, CMLI
Urban Wilderness Ltd



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is prepared on behalf of Applegarth Farm as part of an application for outline planning permission. The proposed site at Applegarth Farm is situated between Grayshott and Headley Down. The purpose of this study is to provide guidance to the client and Local Planning Authority on perceived impacts of the proposed development on the landscape and visual resources of the site and its surroundings.
- 1.2. The report will examine the nature and extent of the development and measure, as appropriate, the magnitude and significance of the proposed scheme on the landscape and visual receptors within the visual envelope of the site. From this, an evaluation of landscape capacity can be made. Ultimately, the report will provide a professional opinion on the suitability of the development within the particular landscape context. The site occupies an area of 1.96 hectares or 4.84 acres with its current vehicular access from Headley Road to the south of the site.
- 1.3. The study has been undertaken by Tim Reid, a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute, with 11 years of experience in landscape planning, construction and environmental consultancy. It has been carried out in accordance with the 3rd edition of the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (2013) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.
- 1.4. Throughout this report a number of assumptions are based on the premise that the residential development at Applegarth Vale is an enabling project, which if successful, will finance the significant investment required for the farm. Therefore, the LVIA assumes that residential accommodation, associated open greenspace and structure planting will be implemented on the adjacent site.

2. Methodology

- 2.1. This report studies the effects on (i) the landscape character and resources and (ii) visual amenity. Landscape impacts describe the potential effects of the proposals on the physical character and quality of the landscape. Visual impacts describe the effects of the development on visual receptors such as existing local residents, walkers and road users.
- 2.2. It should be borne in mind that there is a degree of professional experience and judgement exercised during the LVIA process. Professional opinions are given within the framework of “clear and transparent methods so that the reasoning applied at different stages can be traced and examined by others.”
- 2.3. To assess the significance of landscape and visual effects of the proposed residential development, the receptor’s sensitivity to change and magnitude of change are described and evaluated. Sensitivity explores the capacity of a given landscape to accommodate change, while magnitude assesses size and duration of the effect on the landscape.
- 2.4. In quantifying an identified landscape or visual effect, the following scale is used to describe sensitivity to change:
- High: landscapes or receptors which are highly sensitive to change, with particularly distinctive characteristics
 - Medium: landscapes or receptors which are potentially tolerant of change which have less obvious, or partially degraded, characteristics
 - Low: landscapes or receptors which potentially have the capacity for significant change
- 2.5. In quantifying an identified landscape or visual effect, the following scale is used to describe magnitude of change:
- High adverse > Medium adverse > Low adverse
 - No change
 - High beneficial > Medium beneficial > Low beneficial
- 2.6. This scale’s criteria are based on an assessment of the size, scale and duration of change which the development is anticipated to cause within a given landscape.
- 2.7. The overall impact is calculated by combining the sensitivity of the landscape or receptor and the magnitude of change to landscape character or visual resource. These can be either positive or negative. Again, professional judgement is used to determine the overall anticipated impact and are classified as follows:

Substantial > Moderate > Minor > Negligible

3. Planning Context

National Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)

- 3.1. “At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 3.2. For plan-making this means that:
- local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;
- 3.3. For decision-taking this means:
- approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
 - where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.”
- 3.4. “Policies in Local Plans should follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay. All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally.”

NPPF,
para 14, p. 4

Ibid,
para 15, p. 4

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

- 3.5. “Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:
- support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
 - promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
 - support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres; and

Ibid,
para 28, p. 9

- promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

3.6. “To deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community”

Ibid,
para 70, p. 17

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

3.7. “The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;
- recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;
- minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability;”

Ibid,
para 109, p. 25

3.8. “Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value. Local planning authorities may continue to consider the case for setting a locally appropriate target for the use of brownfield land.”

Ibid,
para 111, p. 26

3.9. “Local planning authorities should...[plan] positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.”

Ibid,
para 114, p. 26

3.10. “To minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should:

- promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets.”

Ibid,
para 117, p. 27

3.11. In the determination of planning applications, “Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged [by the local planning authority.]

Ibid,
para 118, p. 28

Local Context

East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (Adopted May 2014)

Sustainable Economic Development

EHDLP,
para 2.5, p. 11

3.12. “Rural enterprise needs to benefit from diversification of activities on farms and support for landowners and rural services.”

3.13. “Sustainable Economic Development

Objectives

Ibid, p. 16

1) To maintain a sustainable, buoyant local economy designed to provide jobs to meet resident’s needs and improve the quality of life in East Hampshire, but always within the constraints of the local environment;”

CP6 Rural Economy and Enterprise

Ibid, p. 34

3.14. “Development will be permitted:

a) For farm diversification schemes and enterprises that help maintain the viability of farm businesses engaged in sustainable land management, including:

- local food processing;
- countryside pursuits;
- farm shops selling local produce;
- tourism facilities; visitor attractions and visitor accommodation
- equine enterprises and
- green technologies.

b) For the conversion of rural buildings for appropriate uses, including:

- affordable housing;
- commercial use;
- tourism facilities and accommodation;
- community use;
- general residential use, where appropriate and where assessment shows that the use for the above purposes is not possible or is unsuited.

c) For the reasonable extension of existing firms in the countryside and new small-scale employment uses within the settlement policy boundaries of rural settlements.

Provided that they do not harm the character of the site or its surroundings or do not adversely affect natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage and opportunities for recreation.”

EHDLP,
para 5.28, p. 34

3.15. “The rural economy and enterprise strategy is to retain and enhance both established and new businesses and rural enterprises subject to their being

consistent in scale and environmental impact with their location. As a part of this strategy priority will also be given to:

- working with others to retain, develop and promote rural enterprise, in particular that associated with agriculture, horticulture and forestry infrastructure that can support local products and local markets;
- developing markets for sustainably produced local, land-based products, including local foods sold through local outlets, and wood products;
- developing initiatives that help nurture markets and business enterprise in rural skills including traditional building skills; and
- promoting understanding by the local community of the needs of rural enterprise; and
- enabling residential development essential to maintain a rural workforce, including agricultural workers' dwellings and rural affordable housing where there is an established local need."

Ibid,
para 5.29, p. 35

3.16. "Business and enterprise in the rural parts of East Hampshire make an important contribution to the overall economic success of the District and contribute to the sustainability of the environment that is so highly valued by residents and visitors. This economic activity falls into several linked components, including farming and forestry, tourism, rural and village businesses (many located in redundant agricultural buildings) and an infrastructure of community services and affordable housing."

3.17. According to the Rural Coalition¹, creating and maintaining sustainable rural economies is critical to supporting the sustainable and vibrant rural communities. It adds that there is a need for a more balanced approach to achieving social, economic and environmental well-being in rural communities. (para 5.33 page 35)

3.18. Evidence from rural-based businesses, property agents and developers support the view that for many rural businesses, growth is regarded as being stunted by a lack of appropriate premises and extremely limited scope for expanding or modernising existing premises. Businesses would like to have more scope to convert disused or redundant farm buildings into offices and light industrial to provide low cost premises or offices for start-up businesses (incubation centre). This would provide extra income for the rural business and at the same time cater for new businesses that can't afford expensive rent elsewhere.

Ibid,
para 5.35, p. 36

CP19 DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

3.19. "The approach to sustainable development in the countryside, defined as the area outside settlement policy boundaries, is to operate a policy of general restraint in order to protect the countryside for its own sake. The only development allowed in the countryside will be that with a genuine and proven need for a countryside location, such as that necessary for farming, forestry, or other rural enterprises (see Policy CP6)."

Ibid, Section
Introduction,
p. 55

¹ Rural Coalition's The Rural Challenge, Achieving sustainable rural communities. 2010:
http://ruralcommunities.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/RuralCoalitionWEB_MH.pdf

- 3.20. "Farming has a key influence on the landscape. Farm diversification and the reasonable expansion of existing rural businesses needs to be supported to help sustain agricultural enterprise and to maximise opportunities to strengthen the rural economy."
- 3.21. "It is therefore recognised that some development can take place which is beneficial to the countryside and the people that live and work there. The emphasis in the Joint Core Strategy is therefore to allow development in the countryside where it can be demonstrated that a countryside location is both necessary and justified. Such an approach will preclude development for which a rural location is not essential. Inappropriate types and scales of development will not be permitted in order to maintain the landscape character and quality of the countryside. The countryside will continue to be protected for its intrinsic value. Even so, it is possible to maximise opportunities to strengthen the rural economy by encouraging uses related to the land, including appropriate forms of agriculture, forestry and green tourism."

CP20 LANDSCAPE

- 3.22. "The special characteristics of the district's natural environment will be conserved and enhanced. New development will be required to:
- b) protect and enhance local distinctiveness, sense of place and tranquillity by applying the principles set out in the district's Landscape Character Assessments, including the Community/Parish Landscape Character Assessments;
 - d) protect and enhance natural and historic features which contribute to the distinctive character of the district's landscape, such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows, soils, rivers, river corridors, ditches, ponds, ancient sunken lanes, ancient tracks, rural buildings and open areas;
 - e) incorporate appropriate new planting to enhance the landscape setting of the new development which uses local materials, native species and enhances biodiversity;
 - f) maintain, manage and enhance the green infrastructure networks (see Policy CP26 Green Infrastructure)."

CP23 GAPS BETWEEN SETTLEMENTS

- 3.23. "The generally open and undeveloped nature of the following gaps between settlements will be protected to help prevent coalescence and retain their separate identity:

Headley Down/Grayshott

Development will only be permitted within gaps if:

- it would not undermine the physical and/or visual separation of settlements;
- it would not compromise the integrity of the gap, either individually or cumulatively with other existing or proposed development; and
- it cannot be located elsewhere."

3.24. “The gaps have not been defined for the express purpose of protecting the countryside (Policy CP19) or landscape (Policy CP20), but rather as a planning tool designed to shape the patterns of towns and villages. A clear break between settlements helps to maintain a “sense of place” for residents of, and visitors to, the communities on either side of the gaps. When passing from place to place (by all forms of transport) these gaps give a recognisable structure to a group of settlements, establishing in travellers’ minds that they have left one settlement before they arrive somewhere else.”

Ibid,
para 7.29, p. 61

3.25. Small scale developments, such as agricultural buildings and stables, that are in keeping with the rural nature of the gaps, are not ruled out, providing they are appropriately sited and designed to minimise impact on the openness of the gap and subject to other planning policies. Gaps have another positive aspect - the open land adjacent to urban areas can be used for recreation and other green infrastructure purposes.

Ibid,
para 7.30, p. 61

Grayshott Village Design Statement (VDS)

See Figure 1
p. 28

Refer to Figure 1: Settlement & Conservation Boundaries

3.26. The statement contains the relevant design guidelines:

VDS (2005),
p. 6

3.27. In regards to location and setting the design guidelines state that development should:

“Retain and where possible enhance important areas of nature conservation, woodland and heathland which contribute to the character and setting of the parish.”

“not be permitted in undeveloped areas of woodland and heathland which are important features in the overall character, quality and appearance of the parish”

Ibid, p. 9

3.28. Considering the History of Grayshott, Settlement Pattern and Conservation Area, the design guidelines state that “the layout and design of development should:

“define property boundaries by the use of hedges, wide verges or low wooden fencing as these are features which characterise the village.”

“include landscaping as an integral part of the design and protect mature trees”

“Protect historic landscape features such as dry sandstone walls and boundary banks.”

Ibid, p. 14

3.29. “In and around the village centre development should” in term of building style and detail:

“Generally not exceed two storeys”

“avoid flat roofed buildings or extensions”

“use traditional materials where possible”

Ibid, p. 15

3.30. Open space and Landscape features should adhere to the design guidelines:

“Development should be designed to respect the existing landscape framework of the parish and should retain and incorporate existing landscape features onto the proposals”

“existing woodland and important trees should be safeguarded”

“trees that have had to be felled should be replaced where it is appropriate to do so”

“indigenous trees and shrubs should be used for boundary planting”

“Boundary treatments should blend with immediate and overall surroundings”

Ibid, p. 16

3.31. For Lanes, Bridleways and Footpaths the design guidelines state development should:

“not detract from the network of footpaths, bridleways and lanes”

“maintain the rural character of footpaths, bridleways and lanes by avoiding inappropriate surfaces, markings, signs or street furniture”

“ensure tree and landscape management is carefully and appropriately applied”

4. Baseline studies

Topography

See Figure 2
p. 30

Refer to Figure 2: Topography

- 4.1. In broad terms, the site is located just below a shallow ridgeline which runs from Hindhead to the east towards Headley Down in the West at approximately 185m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).
- 4.2. More specifically, the site is located between 185.5-183m AOD. It appears broadly flat with the reducing levels towards Headley Road seemingly imperceptible. Headley Road connects Applegarth Farm with the village of Grayshott with a relatively flat single carriageway main road. Similar to the farm, the village sits at 183-200m AOD and combined with the new public footpath running parallel with the Headley Road, creates a physically undemanding connection for those on foot or cycle.

Landscape Character

See Figure 3
p. 31

Refer to Figure 3: Landscape Character

National Character Area 120 - Wealden Greensands

NCA 120
p. 6-7

- 4.3. Key Characteristics
 - A long, narrow belt of Greensand, typified by scarp-and-dip slope topography, including outcrops of Upper Greensand, Gault Clay and Lower Greensand. The Greensand forms escarpments separated by a clay vale: the overall undulating and organic landform – particularly in the west – gives a sense of intimacy to the landscape. Leith Hill in Surrey is the highest point in south-east England.
 - There are extensive areas of ancient mixed woodland of hazel, oak and birch, with some areas having been converted to sweet chestnut coppice in past centuries. These areas reflect the diverse geology, including the distinctive chalk grassland elements within the East Hampshire Hangers Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the wooded commons ('charts') of East Surrey and West Kent, and conifer plantations.
 - Semi-natural habitats include: remnant lowland heathland, mostly concentrated in West Sussex, Hampshire and West Surrey; the wetlands associated with the River Arun in West Sussex; and unimproved acid grasslands found in commons, parklands, heathland and other areas of unimproved pasture.
 - Fields are predominantly small or medium, in irregular patterns derived from medieval enclosure. Boundaries are formed by hedgerows and shaws, with character and species reflecting the underlying soils. On the clay, hedgerows are dense and species-rich, with occasional standard oaks. On more acidic soils they generally consist of hawthorn and blackthorn, also with occasional oak trees, and often trimmed low.

- Agricultural land comprises a mosaic of mixed farming, with pasture and arable land set within a wooded framework. There is a fruit-growing orchard belt in Kent and also around Selborne in Hampshire.
- The rural settlement pattern is a mixture of dispersed farmsteads, hamlets and some nucleated villages. Large houses set within extensive parks and gardens are found throughout the area.
- The local built vernacular includes the use of Greensand, ragstone and, in the west, malmstone, bargate stone, plus dark carrstone patterned in the mortar between stones ('galleting') in Surrey, as well as timber-framing and weatherboarding.
- There are a range of historic landscape features, including field monuments, old military defences, prehistoric tumuli, iron-age hill forts, Roman forts, the Royal Military Canal, small quarries and relics of the iron industry (including hammer ponds). Sunken lanes cut into the sandstone are a historic and characteristic feature, as are older deer parks and more recent 18th-century parklands.
- Surface water is an important feature across the Greensand, with many streams and rivers passing through the NCA: the Western Rother, Wey, Arun, Medway and the Great and East Stour.
- The Greensand ridge meets the coast of Kent between Folkestone Warren and Hythe. While most of the coastal strip is now built up and protected by sea defences, the undeveloped sea cliffs at Copt Point provide important geological exposures, are designated for their nature conservation interest and fall within the Dover-Folkestone Heritage Coast.

NCA 120
p. 3

4.4. Summary

"The long, curved belt of the Wealden Greensand runs across Kent, parallel to the North Downs, and on through Surrey. It moves south, alongside the Hampshire Downs, before curving back eastwards to run parallel with the South Downs in West Sussex. Around a quarter of the NCA is made up of extensive belts of woodland – both ancient mixed woods and more recent conifer plantations. In contrast, the area also features more open areas of heath on acidic soils, river valleys and mixed farming, including areas of fruit growing.

The area has outstanding landscape, geological, historical and biodiversity interest. Some 51 percent of the NCA is covered by the South Downs National Park, Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Surrey Hills AONB – a testament to the area's natural beauty. The underlying geology has shaped the scarp-and-dip slope topography, with its far-reaching views, but it has also had a significant bearing on the area's sense of place: there are clear links between vernacular architecture, industry and local geology. The heritage assets provide vital connections to the NCA's industrial, military and cultural history,

and include distinctive deer parks and more recent 18th-century parklands. Biodiversity interests are represented by internationally and nationally designated sites alongside numerous local sites and other non-designated semi-natural habitats.

The internationally designated sites include three Special Protection Areas (SPAs), two Ramsar sites and eight Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), representing the outstanding value and quality of the heathland, woodland, wetland and coastal habitats found within the NCA. In addition, fragments of acid grassland and parkland landscapes add to the overall diversity of habitats.”

East Hampshire Landscape Character Assessment – (Land Use Consultants, 2006)

Landscape Type 9: Greensand Hills

EHLCA
p. 185

4.5. Key Characteristics

- Prominent hills formed from sandstones and cherts of the Lower Greensand group with a steep escarpment at their inner edge.
- Streams drain the hills in deep ravine-like valleys.
- Significant woodland cover comprising an interlocking mosaic of different woodland types and structures - oak-birch woodland, beechwoods, mixed woodland and coniferous plantations on former commonland.
- Woodland clearings support heathy unenclosed commons including ecologically rich habitats - open heather heath, acid grassland, bracken, gorse, woody scrub, and oak-birch woodland.
- The irregular pattern of fields within clearings and woodland edges support rough grazing.
- Narrow, deeply sunken lanes wind up hillsides linking isolated farmsteads.
- Dispersed medieval settlement form with scattered early piecemeal enclosures around the edge of former commons.
- Extensive network of public rights of way and unenclosed commons open to public access.
- Hammer ponds along the foot of the hills associated with the former Wealden iron industry.
- Extensive panoramic views from open hill tops.
- Characterised by a sense of enclosure, mystery and remoteness.

gB Ludshott and Bramshott Commons

Refer to Figure 4: Local Landscape Character

EHLCA

p. 193

See Figure 4

p. 32

4.6. Key Characteristics

- Part of a series of hills formed from the sandstones of the Lower Greensand group.
- Elevated and undulating landform informed by the resistant sandstone of the Hythe beds. Incised by Coopers stream which creates more pronounced undulations.
- A mosaic of woodland supporting variation in type and structure (including sessile oak and beech woodland, coppice and mixed and coniferous plantation) with some ancient woodland on the steeper valley sides.
- Internationally important areas of unenclosed healthland common (Bramshott and Ludshott Commons SSSI) part of the Wealden Heaths SPA within clearings in the woodland.
- Small regular pastoral fields occur in woodland clearings sometimes containing paddocks.
- Quiet rural lanes enclosed by woodland and sunk deeply into the sandstone occur in association with the valleys.
- Settlements of Grayshott and Headley Down are contained by woodland and well integrated into the landscape.
- Historic parkland with pre-1800 park at Downlands House, post-1800 parkland at Ludshott Manor and Grayshott Hall.
- A large area of National Trust land (Ludshott Common, Hunters Moon, Bramshott Chase and Waggoners' or Wakeners' Wells) with a comprehensive footpath network and access facilities.
- A rural and tranquil landscape with a sense of intimacy and secrecy. The corridor of the A3 (T) in the southern part of the area is a local source of noise and disruption."

Landscape Character Field Assessment by Urban Wilderness

- 4.7. Applegarth Farm is characterised by a farm shop and restaurant, located in a building some 65m north of the Headley Road. A large barn lies further north of this building, which is currently used predominantly for farm machinery. The barn has planning permission for a change of use to a Soft Play facility (ref. 27202/025) which is due to expire 3 April 2015. There are a number of timber cabins laid out in an arc to the south of the restaurant, which form one side of a courtyard. The space is enclosed by a bamboo cane-clad timber fence creating a sheltered sun trap for outdoor dining.

- 4.8. Large mature trees adorn the front reception area of the farm shop and restaurant, as well as the area to the west of the buildings which help frame the current outdoor play space, which is in need of upgrading. Together, the trees provide a well-established screen, shielding sightlines from the road and adjacent land and providing a strong sense of place for the outdoor dining area.
- 4.9. The character of the barn is currently agricultural as no work has been started to implement the Soft Play facility. A large irregular stone-surfaced car park area lies to the east of both buildings. Far-reaching views exist over the Polo field with recent storm damage necessitating the felling of remaining Leyland cypress trees which formerly lined the car park area. The area has a timber post and rail fence partially separating the field from the car park. The rear elevation of the restaurant toilet block has a number of air conditioning units standing adjacent and is in need of upgrading. A large overgrown Hawthorn hedge lies directly in front of the toilets contributing to the somewhat degraded appearance.
- 4.10. To the south of the building complex, a large open field of grass separates the farm from the Headley Road. A mature single avenue of native trees runs parallel with the road, with a partial mixed species hedge of Viburnum, Cherry laurel and Privet.

Townscape Character

Grayshott Village Design Statement

- VDS (2005),
The Village
Today, p. 8
- 4.11. “The centre of Grayshott is the densely built commercial and residential area of Headley Road and Crossways Road and the focal point of the village is St. Luke’s Church”
- Ibid,
Outside the
Conservation
Area, p. 8
- 4.12. “In the centre of the village are several Victorian and Edwardian shops and homes, which contribute greatly to Grayshotts character...”
- Ibid,
Building Style
& Detail, p. 12
- 4.13. “Although there is no single predominant style in Grayshott, individual areas of the village have their own characteristics”
- Ibid,
Village Centre,
p. 12
- 4.14. “The village centre has a predominantly Victorian and Edwardian style of steeply pitched roofs with either slate or plain tiles, gable ends, barge boards and decorative tile hung finishes of natural clay above red brick walls.”
- Ibid,
Around the
Village Centre,
p. 12
- 4.15. “Around and beyond the centre of the village are attractive examples of period developments of semi-detached and terraced houses..”
- Ibid,
Kingswood Firs
Estate, p. 12
- 4.16. Kingswood Firs is protected by Local plan policy to retain its “characteristic style of low density housings, many trees, wide verges and narrow roads..” (*Kingswood Firs Estate*, page 12)
- Ibid,
Waggoners
Wells Estate,
p. 12
- 4.17. Waggoners Wells Estate is an “interesting example of open plan development” similar to that of Kingswood Firs. (*Waggoners Wells Estate*, page 12)

Grayshott Conservation Area.

See Grayshott Conservation Area: Study and Character Appraisal (Sep 2009)

See Figure 1
p. 29
GCA:SCA,
p. 4

- 4.18. “Grayshott village is a thriving commercial centre located close to the Surrey border. The present Conservation Area is centred on the crossroads embracing the shops in Crossways Road, children’s play area and open space with the church providing the visual focus. It was designated a Conservation Area on 9 April 1991.”
- 4.19. The conservation area includes Victorian and Edwardian Arts and Crafts buildings on both sides of Crossways Road from five-Ways as far as the car park. St. Luke’s Church, begun in 1898 and completed in 1920, sits at the west end of the conservation area. It also includes the Fox and Pelican public house.
- 4.20. Applegarth farm lies 1.5km west of the Grayshott Conservation area and as such the designation is not considered a Landscape receptor.

Landscape Designations

See Figure 5
p. 33

Refer to Figure 5: Landscape Designations

- 4.21. The farm sits a little over 400m south of the south west corner of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is afforded statutory protection at a national level.
- 4.22. Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland lies 240m north of the site. There is also Bramshott and Ludshott Commons Site of Special Scientific Interest and Wealden Heaths Phase II Special Protection Area which lie approximately 210m to the south and south-west of the site. These are protected under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).
- 4.23. It is considered that none of the above landscape designations will be affected by the development and thus are not landscape receptors. In part, this is due to their distance from the site, but it is anticipated that neither the sense of tranquillity, cultural heritage, sense of wildness or scenic quality will be affected by the development.

Listed Buildings within 1.5km (info from English Heritage)

See Figure 5
p. 33

There are 8 listed buildings within 1.5km of the development site, shown in Figure 5. These are assessed in further detail below.

1. The Old Cottage – Grade 2

Once called Whitmore Vale Cottage the 18th Century 2-storey cottage is built from masonry to the 1st floor. Differing styles suggest a one-storey early phase. Predominantly Malmstone rubble with quoins and dressings of varying red brick with a tiled roof. This is not considered a landscape receptor on account of its distance from the site and its lower elevation.

2. Beacon Hill Lodge – Grade 2

The picturesque L-shaped lodge cottage with steeply pitched gable end was built in the 19th Century. The tiled roof, with carved and pierced bargeboards and a tall chimney of conjoined diagonal shafts, sits atop random rubble freestone dressings. This not considered a landscape receptor.

3.1 & 2 Beacon House – Grade 2

The large detached house was built in 1927 and later subdivided. Neo-Tudor in style with Arts and Crafts influences, reusing timbers from houses thought to come from the Maidenhead area and 11th Century or earlier Flemish panels.

The timber framed building features curved tension braces and eclectic brick infill panels. It has a tiled roof with brick chimneystacks, including an external stack to the west. The south frontage has three projecting gables including tall western gable with recessed centre and projecting gabled porch supported on wooden piers. The north front has two western gables with upper floors projecting on brackets and two projecting bays to the east supported on square brick piers. This is not considered a landscape receptor due to its distance from the proposed development.

4. Stream Farmhouse – Grade 2

The two-storey building dates to the 18th Century with later alterations. Built from Malmstone rubble with red brick quoins and dressings, with a half hipped tiled roof and off-centre chimney now pebbledashed. Modern window casements with glazing bars sit beneath segmental relieving arches on the ground floor. There is a two-storey, one-window early 19th Century extension of similar style. This is not considered a landscape receptor due to the lower elevation and visual screen afforded by the intervening forestry.

5. Barn to North of Purchase Farmhouse – Grade 2

The Barn is c. 17th century and made from Malmstone rubble with red brick quoins and dressings. A hipped thatched roof sits above one storey of three bays. Enter through boarded doors and the interior shows roof trusses with curved queen-struts, and butt purlins. The attached one-storey outbuilding is not of special interest. This is not considered a landscape receptor due to its elevation and the intervening forestry.

6. Bowes Cottage – Grade 2

The 18th century cottage has early C19 & C20 extensions and restoration. Built from mixed walling materials and a tiled roof the 2 storey dwelling has the timber-frame exposed in the upper part with stone and brick infill. The south-east end has a massive tapered stack, and the north-west an outshot, with a boarded ½-gable above the stone walling. To the rear is the 20th century extension of similar style. This is not considered a landscape receptor due to its distance from the proposed development.

7. Church of St. Luke – Grade 2

Completed early 20th century, the Parish Church by l'Anson and Son is built

from stone walls with a tiled roof. It is early English in design with chancel, north vestry and south tower, nave of 5 bays with aisles and a south porch. The clerestory windows have 4-cusped roundels above coupled lancets and the east window is traceried. The tower has a shingled broach spine, and flat buttresses. This is not considered a landscape receptor as the site shares no physical or visual connection with the church.

8. Church of St. Joseph – Grade 2

The Roman Catholic Church of 1911 features stone walls and a tiled roof. Perpendicular in design, with north and south chapels, transepts, nave of 4 bays with a north aisle, and a north porch. The roof is a single ridge, brought to a low eaves above the aisles, with a parallel lower roof above the north and south chapels. A stone bell turret rises above the main roof, positioned above the chancel arch. The windows are perpendicular in style, of 2 or 3 cusped lights, with mixed square and arched heads. This is not considered a landscape receptor for the same reason as St. Luke's above.

Scheduled Monuments

Cross Dyke on Hindhead Golf Course 1.4km

- 4.24. A roughly east-west aligned cross dyke constructed across a sandstone spur situated around 1.5 kilometres to the north-west of Hindhead. The 150 metre long dyke has a ditch around 5 metres wide and 0.75 metres deep, flanked to the south by a bank up to 7 metres wide and 1 metre high. Due to its location approximately 1.5km from site, this is not considered a landscape receptor.

Historic Parks and Gardens

- 4.25. There are no designated historic parks or gardens within 2km of the proposed development, therefore it is considered that the development will not affect any of those further afield.

5. Development Proposals

Refer to Figure 6: Illustrative Masterplan

- 5.1. The proposal comprises an expansion of the existing farm shop and restaurant retail offering with the addition of three new facilities as part of a broader commercial development, namely a Rural Enterprise Centre, a Soft Play Facility and Cooking School.
- 5.2. The REC will provide accommodation for 8nr. artisan workshops, where local craftsmen will have space to simultaneously carry-out their trade and sell their produce. It is anticipated that there will be a centralised point of sale area for the workshops. Additional modern cabins (5nr.) would be located west of the REC to create an enclosed courtyard space.
- 5.3. The Soft Play Area already has stand-alone planning permission (ref. 27202/025) and will have its own car park to the north of the existing barn. The existing barn will be converted and remain on its current footprint. A physical connection to the restaurant area will allow access to the shared kitchen facilities. The Soft Play area will connect to an external playspace which will have a dedicated terrace area with access to the café indoors.
- 5.4. The cooking school will run classes for adults and kids, with 12 places available at any one time. Access to the central kitchen area will provide additional preparation area for larger parties and events.
- 5.5. The existing farm shop will be extended and reconfigured providing a greater range of home-style freshly cooked foods, locally sourced produce and fresh vegetables grown in the production garden. It is anticipated that an additional two chefs will be employed for the purpose.
- 5.6. The restaurant will be extended to provide a maximum capacity of 120 covers to produce “an exceptional range of delicious foods” adding new private dining and business meeting spaces. A number of small external dining pods, set within the new production garden, will provide a further dining opportunity for both restaurant-goers and cooking school students.
- 5.7. The existing small-scale production garden would be totally upgraded, employing a full-time head gardener. Horticulture classes will be run from the garden in addition to the provision of vegetables to the farm shop and other local businesses.

6. Assessment of Effects

Landscape Effects

- 6.1. The Applegarth Farm site is currently well-screened to the north and west, with established woodland offering effective visual containment, even in winter when the leaves have fallen. To the south, the mature single avenue of trees provides landscape structure, albeit with partial screening. Views eastwards from the site towards the Drovers Waggoners Way are open and views of the residential development are totally screened by the native deciduous woodland.
- 6.2. This visual enclosure affords the site a high level of landscape separation from other significant landscape designations in the area. Listed properties and scheduled monuments are either sufficiently distant and/or totally screened by well-established mature woodland to occlude all the potential long distance views out from the site. There are also no historic parks or gardens within a 2km radius which would be affected either. The result is that there are no landscape receptors which are considered to be affected by the proposed commercial development at the farm.
- 6.3. However, it is anticipated that the current visual envelope and landscape character of the farm's environs will change significantly in the event that (i) Planning Permission is given to the Applegarth Vale residential development and (ii) that the farm is upgraded. The perception of rural seclusion will be diminished by the introduction of houses to the north and east of the farm with the Applegarth Vale proposals. Likewise, the new building complex, upgrading and refurbishment of the farm site will change the character of managed farm and agricultural pasture to a more organised, commercial and carefully managed series of spaces. It is anticipated that the upgrading of the farm site will benefit the outlook from the proposed Vale houses and generally improve the quality of open greenspace.
- 6.4. In the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal produced for the Applegarth Vale planning application, the report states:
- “Views between the Site and Applegarth Farm are at present open and unrestricted. The Farm buildings and associated earth and lumber storage detract from views where these elements are visible. Where views take in the frequent activity of car parking and visitors to the farm shop and restaurant alongside mown grassland, the landscape has a sense of activity and management similar to that of a parkland estate rather than open countryside....New planting between the Site and Applegarth Farm would be of benefit to soften and filter views of the farm buildings.”
- 6.5. Concerning the local gap (subject of Policy CP23 - 'Gaps between Settlements'), Applegarth Farm is located west of Grayshott. It is not physically connected to the existing urban area or the settlement boundary and as such lies within the gap between the settlements of Grayshott and Headley Down. There is the potential for the gap to be eroded by the proposed development, where the proposals have an urbanising effect on the farm's setting and surrounding rural character. Despite falling within this gap, the bulk of the proposed development will take place on the existing farm footprint. Moreover the proposed farm buildings will be in keeping in

See separate
Report:
Applegarth Vale
LVIA, published
by FPCR
Environment and
Design Ltd
(Aug 2014
para 4,22, p.24)

style and material to this rural context. The most significant change will be that the car parking proposed between the buildings and Headley Road may be viewed as an urbanising element within the landscape. It is considered however that the car park's rural character will be in keeping with that already in existence. Furthermore significant new planting around the car park area (see Visual Effects and Mitigation Section below) will fully address this factor. Once established new planting will serve to enhance the sense of separation between the two settlements. It is therefore considered that the proposals are in accordance with Policy CP23 and that the landscape integrity of the gap would not be compromised.

- 6.6. By far the greater impact on the gap will be the Applegarth Vale residential proposals adjacent to those of Applegarth Farm. FPCR note in relation to the Applegarth Vale proposals that "Development within the Site although physically reducing the gap, complies with the essence of this policy in that the separate identities of Grayshott and Headley Down will be preserved and their visual separation will be maintained and strengthened." This assessment corroborates the findings of this assessment and consequently concludes that the impact on the gap as a result of the combined farm and Vale proposals may be accommodated through strategic tree planting.
- 6.7. See Section 7. Mitigation for suggested landscape interventions to help incorporate the Applegarth Farm proposals with those of Applegarth Vale.

Visual Effects

Receptor types

Road users along Headley Road

These are described as car or lorry drivers, bikers and cyclists. Vehicles may be travelling at speeds up to 50mph. Traffic moving along Headley Road will glimpse the site through the boundary tree planting as they travel past. Many of those travelling down Headley Road are likely to be local residents however and will have more time and inclination to take stock of the changed views around the area.

Local residents of proposed Applegarth Vale

This group represents all the residential receptors living in the proposed properties at Applegarth Vale with a view into the development site.

Pedestrians, Headley Road

The group is described as pedestrian users on the recently-completed Headley Road roadside footpath.

Recreational users

This receptor type is confined to walkers using public footpaths 7 & 13. The views towards site would be limited to a short section of no. 13 if the Applegarth Vale proposal is successful.

Ibid, para 6.22,
p.32)

Viewpoints

See Figures 7-13 for reference

See
pp. 35-41
See p.36

Viewpoint 1 - View South East Along Headley Road

- 6.8. The principal visual receptor for this view will be the motorist driving towards Grayshott village. With the speed limit set at 50mph, the view will therefore only be glimpsed briefly. The view currently has a polytunnel and fenced animal pasture. Mature lime trees in the foreground occlude much of the view of the proposed development area itself. However, the masterplan identifies this area for car parking. It therefore has the potential to alter the rural character of the space from one of agricultural/horticultural activity to more intensified commercial use.
- 6.9. It is considered that the sensitivity of the receptor is low due to the relative speed, brevity of view and transient nature of the vehicle driver. The magnitude of change is anticipated to be low adverse. The overall visual impact is therefore considered to be minor.

See p. 37

Viewpoint 2 - View North East from Headley Road towards the Farm

- 6.10. This view taken from Headley Road shows the cabins and southern extent of the current outside dining and sales area, as well as the fields to the west and polytunnel. Large deciduous woodland trees flank all sides of the view and convey a quiet, verdant rural character. The browse line of the lime trees lining the roadside allows views underneath the canopies into the middle distance. There is no pavement at this point and main receptors will therefore be motorists as with Viewpoint 1. Much of the foreground of this view will be taken up by the proposed car parking area, with the proposed courtyard and surrounding building complex in the middle ground.
- 6.11. The view of the site is broader here than that of Viewpoint 1. Nevertheless, with vehicles travelling at speeds of around 50mph, the receptor's view will be again briefly glimpsed. The receptor's sensitivity to change is therefore low and the magnitude of change will be low adverse. It is anticipated that the overall visual impact therefore will be minor.

See p. 38

Viewpoint 3 - View North from Headley Road towards the Farm

- 6.12. This view of the farm is partial when seen by pedestrians walking along the roadside and glimpsed when seen by passing motorists travelling in the direction of Headley Down. The panorama offers an oblique view into the site: the lime trees and low hawthorn hedge offer good quality screening and assert the local heavily-wooded character of the area. The proposed access to Applegarth Vale is unlikely to affect the perception of this view and there is no residential development proposed along the Headley Road corridor.
- 6.13. With the existing building complex already partially screened, and since the proposed car parking area will not be visible from this viewpoint, it is anticipated

that the both the vehicular and pedestrian receptors will have a low sensitivity to change. It is also anticipated that there will be only very modest change in the overall visual resource. Therefore the overall significance of effect will be negligible.

See p. 39

Viewpoint 4 - View North West from Proposed Vale Residential Area

- 6.14. This panorama is very much a view of two halves: the eastern elevation to the farm shop and outdoor dining and sales area offers a high quality aesthetic, with bamboo fencing edging the perimeter, mature oak and lime trees growing adjacent to the shop and a rough stone car park in keeping with the rural character of the area. Meanwhile, the northern half presents the eastern elevation of the barn, with cladding, guttering and adjacent landscape now in need of significant upgrading and 2m-high Lawson cypress log piles located to the right of view. This side has an agricultural feel, more akin a working farm.
- 6.15. This view will be an important one for the Applegarth Vale Residential area as this will serve as the primary boundary between the two development sites. The masterplan successfully addresses this challenge with a series of landscape and architectural interventions which will significantly improve the overall appearance of Applegarth Farm. New estate railings, trees, shrubs, car parking and a total refurbishment of the barn will transform this area.
- 6.16. It is anticipated that the sensitivity to change of the proposed residential receptors will be high and that the magnitude of change will be high beneficial. With the significant anticipated improvement to the visual resource, the overall significance of effect will be substantial.

See p. 40

Viewpoint 5 - View South West from Proposed Vale Residential Area

- 6.17. The view to the farm from this viewpoint shows the service-end of the current farm, farm shop and restaurant operation. The receptor in this location, as proposed in the Vale Planning Application, will be predominantly local residents, whether they are using the public access or living adjacent with views direct from their first or second floor accommodation.
- 6.18. As it stands, the view shows a building in a poor state of repair, with equipment and supplies normally associated with agricultural holdings arranged around the yard. Like Viewpoint 4, this area will undergo a dramatic transformation as shown in the proposed master plan. New boundary treatment with estate railings, trees, shrubs, car parking and the education centre (relocated from the driving range west of site) will change the character of the area but significantly improve the appearance.
- 6.19. It is anticipated that the proposed residents' sensitivity to change will be high and that the magnitude of change will be high beneficial. Due to the upgrading of this part of the site, the overall significance of visual effect will be substantial.

Viewpoint 6 – View South from Proposed Vale Residential Area

See p. 41

- 6.20. This panorama was taken from a point close to the proposed residential dwellings at the western-most edge of Applegarth Vale. It highlights the clear line of sight between the location and Headley Road. Currently, a broad flat open field, interrupted by the small horse paddock and the driving range access road, meets the main road. It is enclosed on two sides, with the Italian alder to the west and earthen mound and polytunnel to the east. However, there will be little privacy for the proposed residents who will live north of the farm’s red line boundary. Equally, the proposed production garden area will be overlooked by the new dwellings. The proposed visual receptors will therefore be local residents.
- 6.21. As local residents, the receptors will have a high sensitivity to change. In the foreground, there will be a significant change where the land use converts from green pasture to market garden. In the background meanwhile, parked cars in front of the avenue of trees along Headley Road will create visual interference and alter the otherwise rural character of the space. This visual intrusion, along with the requirements for privacy by both the farm and adjacent dwellings, indicates that the magnitude of change will be medium adverse. It is considered therefore that the overall significance of visual effect will be moderate. See section 7. Mitigation for suggested landscape interventions.

Visual Effects Table

Item	Receptor type	Receptor Location	Sensitivity to change	Magnitude of Change	Significance of Effect
VP1	Vehicular	View north east from Headley Road towards Farm	Low	Low adverse	Minor
VP2	Vehicular	View North East from Headley Road towards the Farm	Low	Low adverse	Minor
VP3	Pedestrian & Vehicular	View North from Headley Road towards the Farm	Low	No change	Minor
VP4	Pedestrian & Vehicular	View north west from proposed Vale residential area	High	High beneficial	Substantial
VP5	Residential, Pedestrian & Vehicular	View South West from Proposed Vale Residential Area	High	High beneficial	Substantial
VP6	Residential	View South from Proposed Vale Residential Area	High	Medium adverse	Moderate

7. Mitigation & Enhancement

- 7.1. Where the overall landscape or visual impact is anticipated to be substantial or moderate, this report is recommending that a form of mitigation is undertaken and incorporated into the scheme design. The intelligent and sensitive integration of landform, greenspace design and structure planting can serve to ameliorate the anticipated visual impacts whilst creating an attractive, practical and appropriate setting for the proposed building complex.

Viewpoint 1 – View North East from Headley Road towards the Farm

- 7.2. It is considered that, in line with the findings of the LVIA for Applegarth Vale adjacent and in accordance with the guidance within the Grayshott Village Design Statement, the rural character of this intervening space between Grayshott and Headley Down should be maintained as far as possible. While mitigation would not necessarily be advocated for minor visual impacts, in this case, there is a case for strengthening the boundary treatment along the north side of Headley Road. This will serve three purposes: (i) reduce the visual impact of the proposed car parking area; (ii) enhance the wooded character of the Headley Road corridor and (iii) help screen views of the residential dwellings to the north of the Applegarth Farm development.
- 7.3. The use of local native tree, shrubs and hedging plants is advised to help retain and enhance local landscape character.
- 7.4. Planting additional trees within the car park would also help break down the visual interference of the parked cars and restrict oblique views through the site from the road.

Viewpoint 6 – View South from Proposed Vale Residential Area

- 7.5. It is recommended that a reasonable level of visual separation between the proposed residential area north of the farm boundary and the production garden area is created. A 15m-wide woodland strip could be made, with topsoil taken from the large mounds (in centre view of Viewpoint 6) for terrain modelling to increase the ground level at north-west corner of the site. Into this raised area, a matrix of native trees could be planted as 2+1 whips to produce a fast-establishing visual screen between the two development areas.

See

Figure 8, p. 36

See

Figure 13, p. 41

8. Summary and Conclusions

- 8.1. There is a high level of synchrony between the Applegarth Vale and Farm planning applications. Access off Headley Road is shared, and the disturbance to protected trees, habitat and the woodland character of the Headley Road corridor is kept to a minimum.
- 8.2. It is considered that there is a high level of positive landscape enhancement which will serve to mitigate some of the minor visual impacts. The planning application should provide the client and wider community with both the impetus and financial investment for areas of landscape in need of upgrading for Applegarth Farm. In addition, the upgrading of the eastern and northern boundaries in particular will serve to improve the setting into which the potential residential dwellings will be placed on the adjacent site.
- 8.3. It is anticipated that there will be no landscape receptors affected by the development, with all designations either too distant or at a lower elevation to have a bearing on the Applegarth farm site.
- 8.4. There is a low level of negative visual interference along Headley Road, as motorists and pedestrians pass or visit Applegarth Farm. There is potential for the closest of the proposed dwellings within the Applegarth Vale site to be negatively impacted by the farm development also. However, these issues can be successfully mitigated with various landscape interventions such as native tree, shrub and hedge planting along the road, on both sides of the existing fence, and terrain modelling and woodland planting along the northern boundary. So as the Visual Effects table relates, there is potential for significant improvement of the overall visual resource.
- 8.5. The scale of the proposed development dictates that a multi-disciplinary approach is taken to the re-design of the farm complex. This ensures that the masterplan evolves in a coordinated way and the findings of this report have been reflected in the final composition of the masterplan.
- 8.6. It is considered that the scale of the proposals, and underlying vision behind them, are very suitable and sensitive to the local environment and that the development will make a positive contribution to local character, built form and the cultural heritage of the wider Grayshott community.