

Landscape Briefing Note

Bewley Homes PLC – Land at Littlemeads, Cranleigh

7th September 2018

1 Introduction

- 1.1. Aspect Landscape Planning received instruction on behalf of Bewley Homes PLC to undertake an initial landscape and visual appraisal of the site in order to assess the landscape and visual constraints, and appropriateness for development potential. A desktop assessment and site visit has been undertaken to assess the landscape visual context associated with the site and a number of baseline plans have been prepared (Refer to Enclosure 1). This has in turn fed into the development of an Opportunities & Constraints Plan and Illustrative Framework Plan to indicate how development could potentially be achieved within the site.
- 1.2. A number of published documents and assessments have been reviewed including the Waverley Borough Council Landscape Study – Part 1 (August 2014) and Waverley Green Belt Assessment (August 2014).

2 Baseline Assessment

- 2.1. The site is located on the north-western settlement edge of Cranleigh, directly adjacent to the residential area associated with Westdene Meadows and Lashmere. The site is situated in the countryside beyond the Green Belt, directly adjacent to the built-up edge. To the north, north east and west lies the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) is located in closer proximity, approximately 190m to the west of the site. Two application sites with planning consent for residential development are located within the immediate setting to the south of the site (Application Ref. WA/2016/1921 for 54 dwellings to the south west and the Reserved Matters Application Ref. WA/2018/0460 following outline approval of WA/2014/2384 for 120 dwelling to the south east. Furthermore, a larger scheme of 265 dwellings (Application Ref. WA/2016/2207) further to the south has also been approved. Once these developments are fully implemented, they will extend the existing built edge to the south of Cranleigh and change the character along Elmbridge Road.
- 2.2. The site is located on relatively flat and low-lying landform, which falls gently towards a localised water course running north-south to the west of the site. The high point of the site is approximately 54m AOD in the south-eastern corner, falling to the south-west to approximately 110m AOD. The topography of the localised context steadily rises to a high point of approximately 71m AOD 0.9km to the north-east near Manfield Park. To the west of the site, the topography gently rises beyond the water course towards Smithbrook. The localised topography allows the built-up area of Cranleigh to be set low down within the landscape and surrounded by localised ridgelines.
- 2.3. The site appears to have been historically in use as a tree sapling nursery, although now includes large areas of scrub, open areas of grassland and some young and maturing trees.

The boundaries are made up of a more established treescape. The mature treescape and vegetation structure along the site boundaries and its located setting provides a strong degree of visual and physical containment to the site. It is considered that views are largely restricted and limited to the localised area to the immediate adjoining areas to the south and east of the site. As a result of the wider topography, the intervening elements and highly contained nature of the site, partial and glimpsed views are largely localised and predominantly restricted to the immediate adjoining areas only including residential roads of Lashmere and Westdene Meadow and the Downs Link Path. Middle distance views from the site's localised context are not readily available due to the relatively flat and low-lying landform in which the site is set, alongside the extent of robust mature vegetation structure both within and adjacent to the site and within the localised setting (refer to Visual Assessment, Enclosure 2). Views from the Area of Great Landscape Value to the west are not available.

- 2.4. The Waverley Landscape Study (August 2014) carried out by AMEC on behalf of the Borough Council identifies the site within the southern portion of the Segment CL7 B. The document assesses the site and localised area as having a low value in terms of landscape qualities, visual prominence, intervisibility, landscape sensitivity and landscape value. While the study concludes that the Segment CL7 B may not be suitable for development, it is considered that this conclusion relates to the Segment CL7 B as a whole and does not provide an accurate assessment of the development potential for the site itself. The site is within the southern portion of segment CL7 B and immediately adjacent to the existing built edge.
- 2.5. The Waverley Green Belt Review (August 2014) identifies the site within the Segment S located outside of the area designated as Green Belt. The study mentions the presence of housing development, sewage works and some open countryside within the area associated with Segment S and concludes that this segment presents a reasonably strong case for Green Belt designation. While the study concluded that the Segment S could be added to the Green Belt, it is considered that this conclusion does not necessarily provide an accurate assessment for the parcel of land of the site itself. The Inspector's report of the Local Plan also concluded that there was no justification to the inclusion of this parcel within Green Belt and it was subsequently removed.
- 2.6. Aspect has undertaken a more localised assessment of the site and the immediate surrounding landscape. It is clear that the site is well enclosed both visually and physically and the built-up edge along the site's southern boundary imparts an urbanising influence upon the character of the site itself. The extent of established vegetation structure along the boundaries and mixed woodland to the north provide a high level of separation from the wider rural countryside landscape. As a result, the site relates better to the built-up edge of Cranleigh than that of the wider rural landscape further north.
- 2.7. The Opportunities & Constraints Plan identifies how the site has the capacity to support potential residential development whilst respecting and enhancing the key principles of the site. The development of the site will be informed by the landscape, ecology and arboriculture constraints and opportunities, retaining key trees of importance and hedgerows. The development of the site will seek to retain and enhance the existing key vegetation structure to assist to break up the development parcels and integrate proposed built form. The existing site boundaries form the basis to the green infrastructure which will seek to successfully assimilate the development. It is considered that alongside any proposed development, the vegetation structure associated with the site boundaries should be

enhanced, ensuring the successful integration of the scheme within the localised site setting particularly to the north-eastern boundary with the Downs Link Path. It is considered that carefully designed new residential built form would tie in with the characteristics, scale, form and urban grain of the existing built-up context can be included within site without significant adverse impacts to the wider landscape characteristics.

- 2.8. The Opportunities & Constraints Plan that has been prepared has sought to highlight key environmental variables to be taken in consideration in order to successfully integrate a residential development within the site and its immediate setting from a landscape perspective. Key trees and hedgerow of value primarily the site boundaries should be retained and further enhanced where possible to retain the existing character of the locality. New residential development for this site could be accessed via the existing access adjoining Lashmere Drive to the south and will also be accompanied by additional tree, hedgerow and shrub planting as part of a comprehensive landscape strategy. Opportunities for enhancing the pedestrian and cycle links between the site and the Downs Link Path as well as the play area and recreation ground.

3 Summary and Conclusion

- 3.1. The highly contained nature of the site enables new residential built elements to be successfully integrated within the established vegetated context and any localised or middle distance glimpsed views of built form will be barely perceptible within context of the existing built edge of Cranleigh. Views of new built form from the wider landscape setting will not be readily available due to the proposed robust green edge to the site and intervening vegetation / topography. As such, it is considered that a new residential development would be entirely compatible with the localised and wider landscape character.
- 3.2. Furthermore, it is considered that the mature, established vegetation structure within the site, and associated with the site boundaries will be retained, improved and enhanced where possible. Developable areas will be offset from the mature vegetation structures and opportunities exist for properties to be orientated to face outwards to create a high-quality, soft edge to the proposals. The extent of new landscaping as part of the green infrastructure network would provide benefits within the locality as well as enhancements to localised biodiversity.
- 3.3. It is considered that the site and receiving environment have the capacity to accommodate sensitively designed residential development that will respond to the localised context and will not result in significant harm to the landscape character or visual environment. As such, it is considered that the proposed development can be successfully integrated in this location, and that the site should be brought forward as an allocation within the emerging Waverley Borough Council Local Plan Part 2 or the Cranleigh Neighbourhood Plan.

Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd

7th September 2018

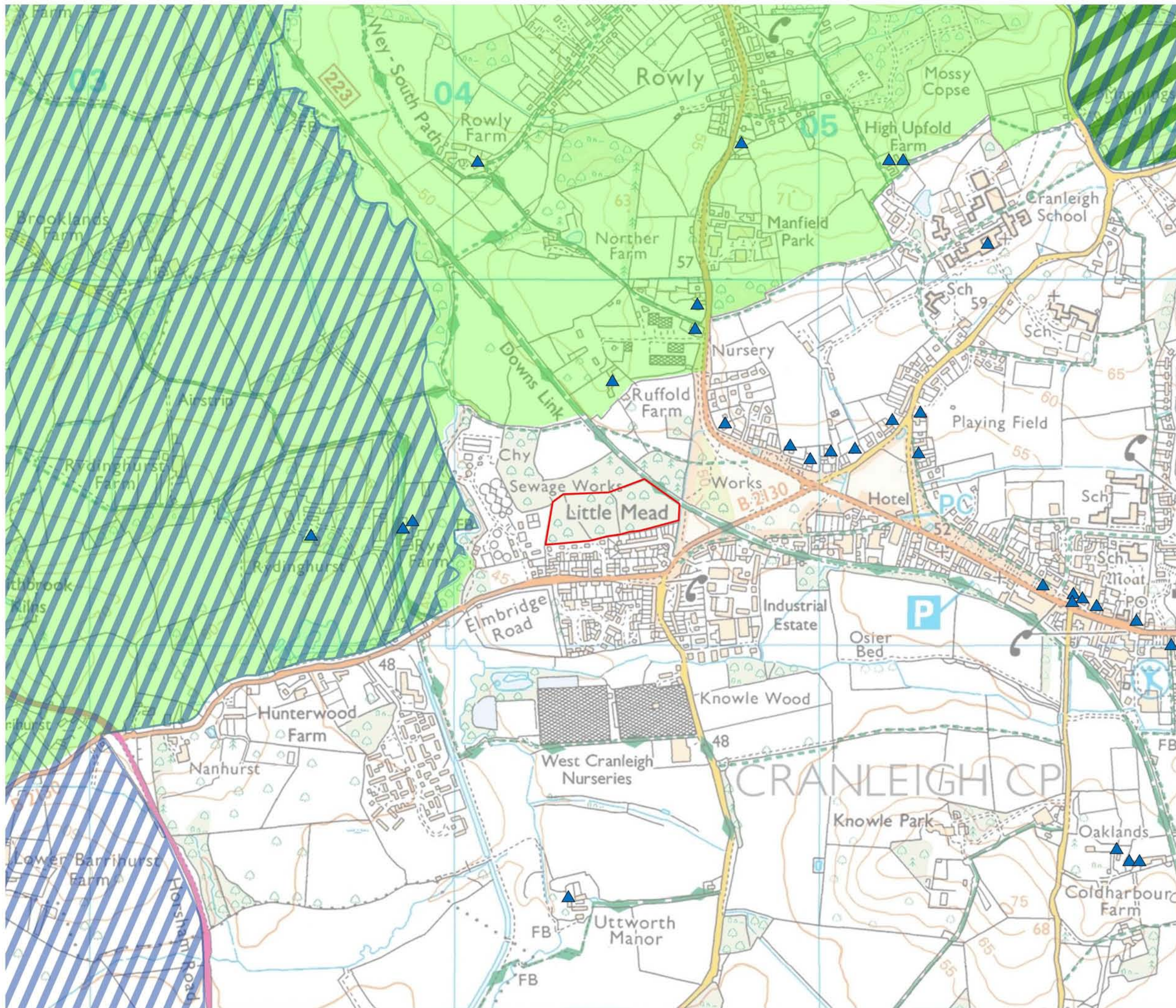
Enclosure 1

Site Location and Designation Plan

Site & Setting Plan

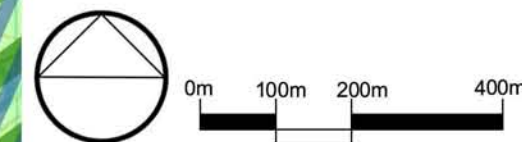
Opportunities & Constraints Plan

Development Framework Plan



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- Key:
- Site Boundary
 - Listed Buildings
 - Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)
 - Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
 - Green Belt

REV	DATE	NOTE	DRAWN	CHK'D

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TITLE
Land at Littlemeads, Cranleigh
Site Location and Designation Plan

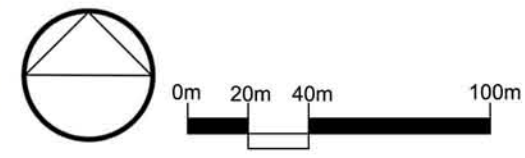
CLIENT
Bewley Homes PLC

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- Key:
- Site Boundary
 - Public Right of Way
 - Listed Building
 - Green Belt
 - Water Course
 - Area of Great Landscape Value

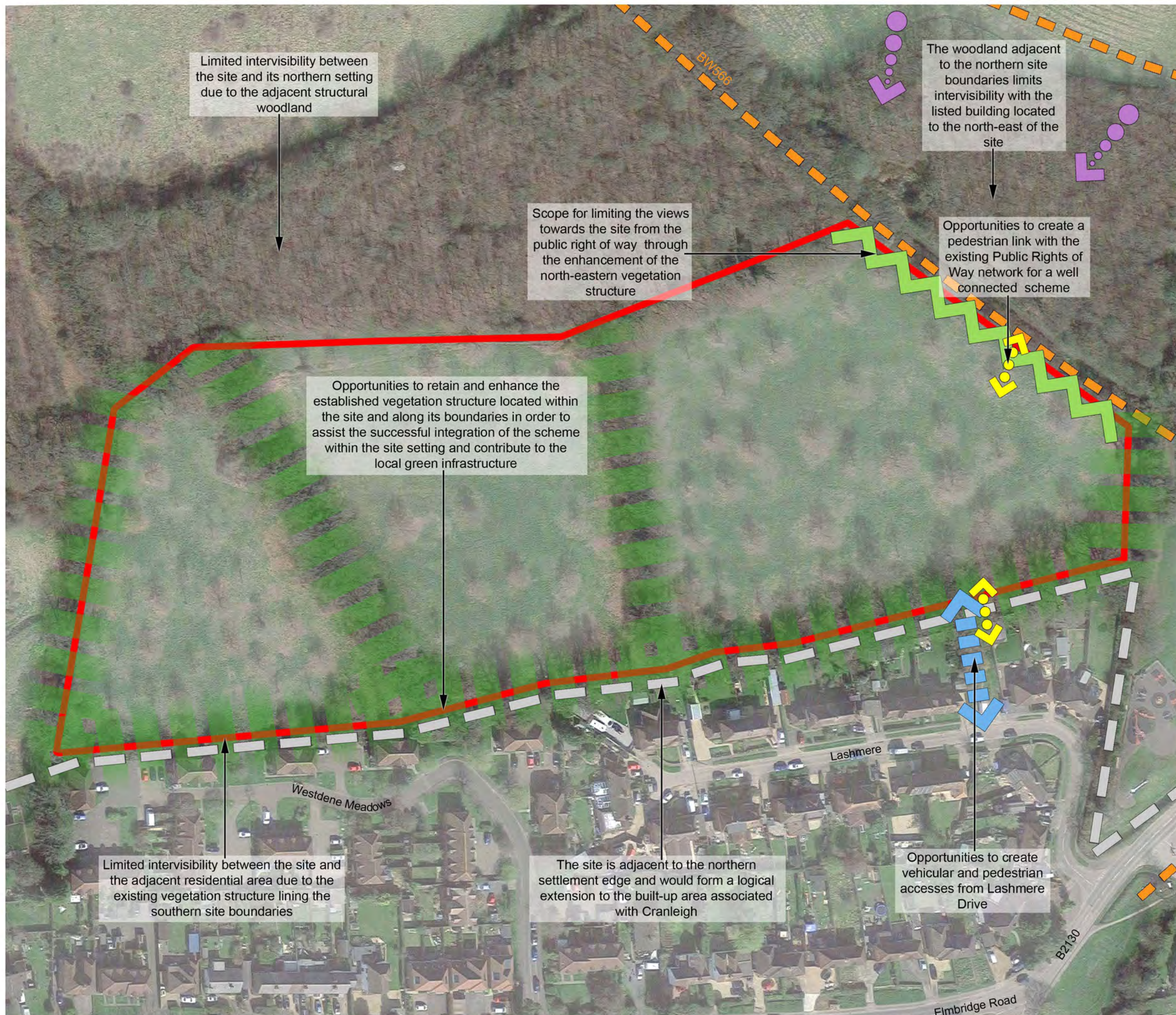
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TITLE
Land at Littlemeads, Cranleigh
Site & Setting Plan

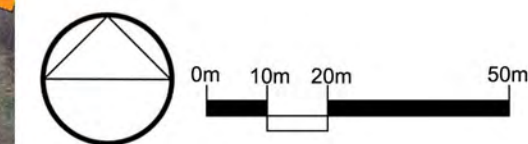
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- Key:
- Site Boundary
 - Public Right of Way
 - Key Existing Vegetation Structure
 - Key Boundary Vegetation to Be Enhanced Associated with the Site
 - Limited Intervisibility Between the Site and nearby Listed Buildings
 - Potential Pedestrian Access
 - Potential Vehicular Access
 - Settlement Edge (Cranleigh)

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REVISIONS				

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TITLE
**Land at Littlemeads, Cranleigh
Opportunities and Constraints Plan**

CLIENT
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SCALE 1:1,000@A3	DATE JUL 2018	DRAWN SFB	CHK'D CJ
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Key:

- Site Boundary
- Existing Vegetation to be Retained
- Developable Area
- Public Open Space
- Indicative Tree Planting
- Existing Public Right of Way
- Proposed Footpaths
- Indicative Road Layout

A	24.8.18	Amended to client comments	SLB	CJ
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REVISIONS				

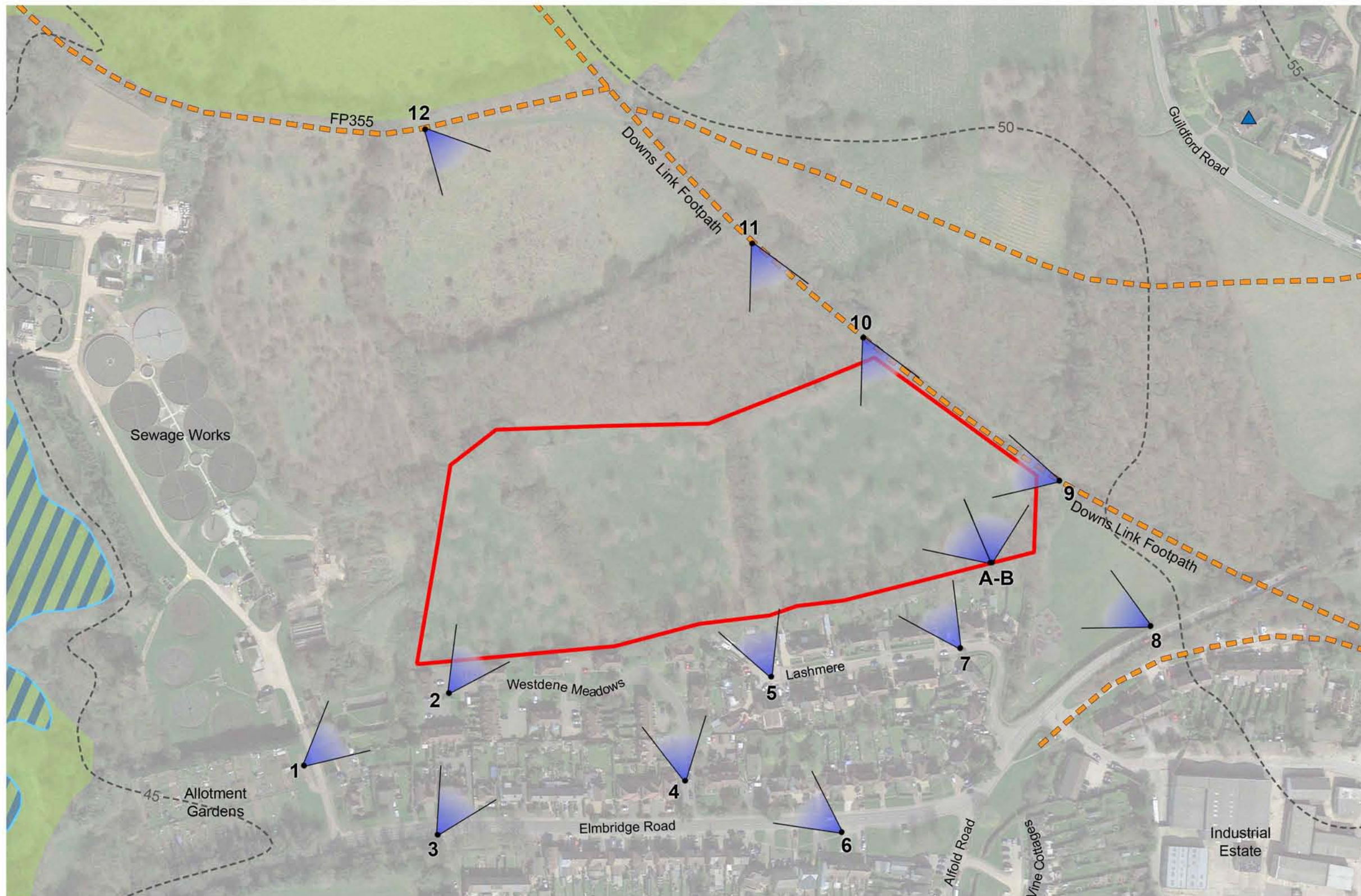
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TITLE
Land at Littlemeads, Cranleigh
Development Framework Plan

CLIENT
Bewley Homes PLC

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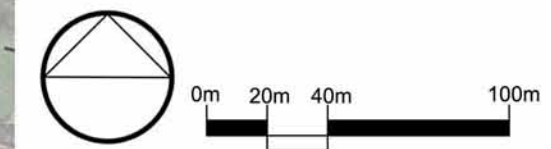
Enclosure 2
Visual Assessment



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- Key:
- Site Boundary
 - Public Right of Way
 - Listed Building
 - Green Belt
 - Water Course
 - Area of Great Landscape Value
 - Viewpoint Location



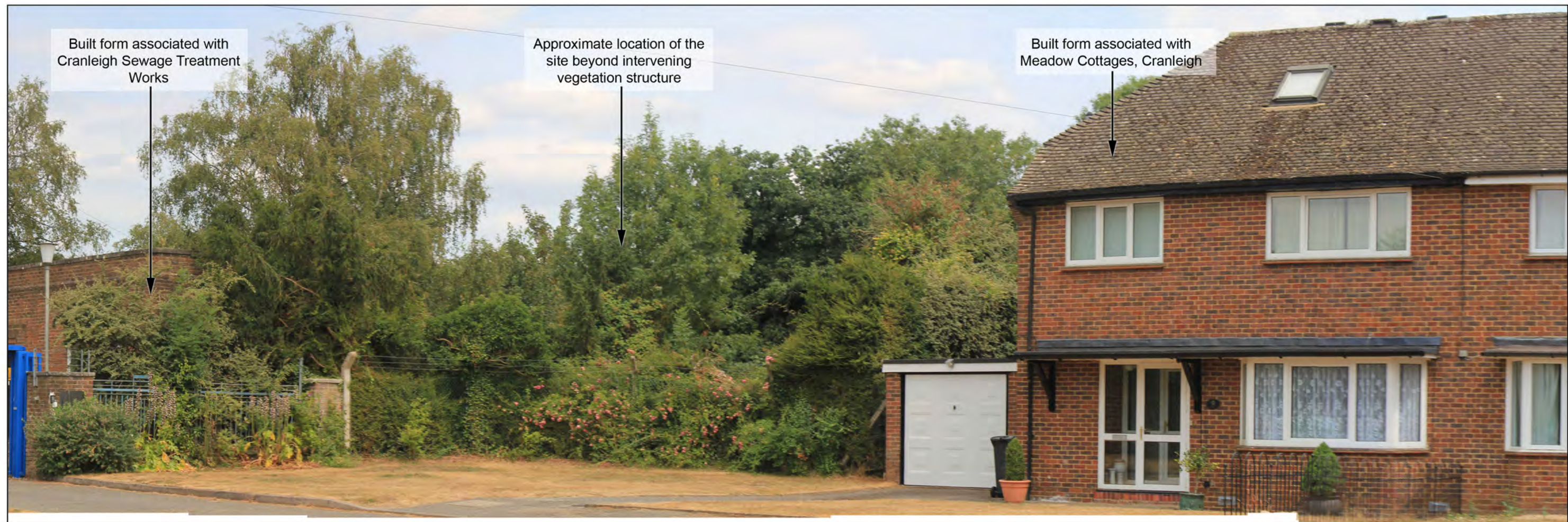
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TITLE
**Land at Littlemeads, Cranleigh
Viewpoint Location Plan**

CLIENT
Bewley Homes PLC

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Viewpoint 1



Viewpoint 2



Viewpoint 3



Viewpoint 4



Viewpoint 5



Viewpoint 6



Viewpoint 7



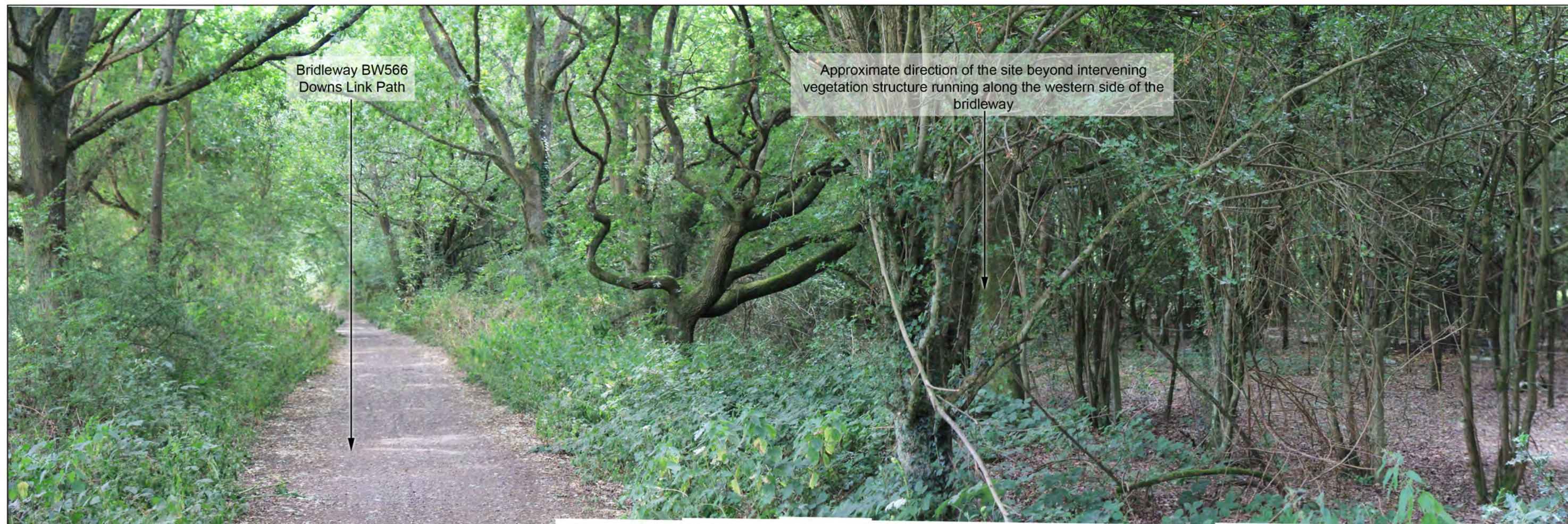
Viewpoint 8



Viewpoint 9



Viewpoint 10



Viewpoint 11



Viewpoint 12



Viewpoint 13



Viewpoint 14



Internal Viewpoint A



Internal Viewpoint B