

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment:

Proposed Glamping Site (Rev D)

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2NL.

Date: April 2025

Client: Harwinder Singh

Kirsten Bowden
CHARTERED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT



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References:

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<https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/public-rights-of-way/rights-of-way-map>
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1.0 Introduction

Purpose of this document

1. Kirsten Bowden CMLI was appointed in February 2025 to provide a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as part of an application for a proposed glamping site on land to the east of Church Lane, Gravesend.
2. The land currently consists of an area of rough woodland and associated access trackway, hardcore surfaced hard standing and driveway. Access to the Site is from a gateway leading in from Church Lane to the west. There is relatively little level change across the Site, with the lowest point to the north at approximately 5m above ordnance datum (AOD) up to 10m AOD to the south.
3. Proposals are for seven glamping units. The layout has been collated by Glampitect. The units would be positioned to make best use of the spaces within the existing setting. Retained vegetation would help soften any potential impact by forming physical and visual buffers between most of the nearby properties and the proposed glamping locations.
4. The location of the proposed glamping units, existing vegetation and orientation have all been considered and care has been taken to ensure that existing vegetation is retained where possible. Proposals have been put together with the environment in mind, with scope for better management of existing trees and hedges. Proposals would include new planting that supports wildlife in order to improve the condition of the existing features.
5. The Site sits in the countryside within Shorne and Higham Marshes landscape character type to the east of Gravesend. The Site is located on the north facing slopes above the River Thames, to the east of Church Lane. To the north, east and west there are fields, some with views towards the Site. To the south there is a cluster of mixed dwellings, with the Site forming part of the paddocks adjacent. The scale of the Site and setting form part of a more intimate rural character. Generally, neighbouring properties are separated by trees and hedges.
6. In order to illustrate how the proposed buildings would sit within the Site and the wider setting, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared. This has been produced in order to gain a greater understanding of the landscape and to highlight any potential visibility issues. It has also been used to illustrate the capacity of the setting to accommodate the proposed new buildings and possible mitigation measures which could be used to strengthen the existing landscape character and soften any impact.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

7. Landscape and visual appraisals are a tool used for predicting and evaluating the effects of a development on the surrounding landscape character, heritage features and on views from the wider area. It aims to achieve avoidance, reduction or mitigation of detrimental effects identified. The appraisal broadly follows the principles set out in GLVIA 3¹.
8. The study initially comprised of a desktop exercise to review relevant designations and policies, landscape character assessments and aerial mapping. This was followed by a site visit to establish viewpoints and the extent of the visual envelope.
9. The site visit was undertaken on 17.04.2025 and all photos were taken on this day. Weather conditions were clear and dry. The appraisal was able to assess the Site visibility in early summer conditions with light vegetative cover. It is considered that in winter, a lack of foliage on the trees and hedges would mean that the Site is more visible.
10. The visual assessment of the Site looked at how prominent the glamping units are likely to be and identified which neighbouring properties and/or publicly accessible views are likely to be affected. It judged how particular views of the landscape are impacted upon and how the visual amenity of those using them might be affected.

1 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact. Version 3 2013 LI and IEMA.

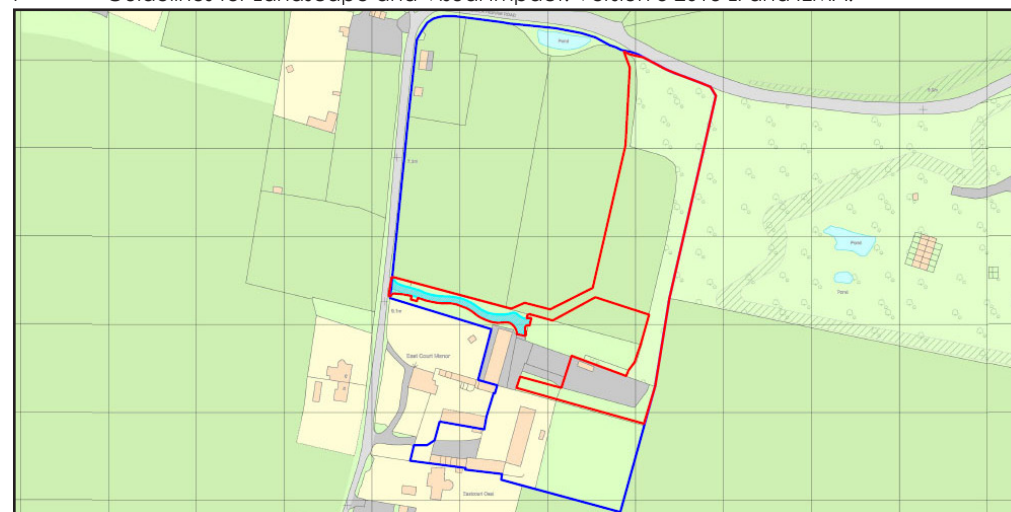


Figure 01. Location Plan - application area (red line)

1.0 Introduction

KEY

Site

Study Area

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Figure 02. Location Plan



2.0 Landscape Context

The Site

1. The landscape of this part of Kent falls within the jurisdiction of Gravesham Borough Council (GBC). The landscape is defined by its mixed use which has evolved and changed according to demand and management techniques. The rolling large arable fields wrap around small clusters of houses like those on Church Lane, where smaller fields form a buffer between the houses and the large scale landscape beyond.
2. Houses and other land uses have grown in an organic manner along Church Lane and there are a mixture of historic and more modern dwellings. There are homes in the form of a series of converted barns, adjacent to East Court Manor to the south of the Site. To the west there are equine paddocks and to the east are open fields. To the north is Lower Higham Road, beyond which are grazing fields. There are no buildings on the Site, but there are areas of hard-standing and storage containers.
3. Buildings and garden fences border the Site to the south, and fragmented hedges border it on all other sides. This means that views into the Site are largely prevented and other woody vegetation means that views are also largely filtered. Views from the wider landscape, although open, cannot see directly into the Site. In general, since most of the boundary vegetation would be retained, any impact would be limited and contained.
4. To the south, the ground rises towards the Church and the edge of the crematorium grounds, with open arable fields. The gently rolling topography limits views to the brow of the hill and it is not possible to see the Gravesend Road (A226) beyond.
5. To the east of the Site are open arable fields, interspersed with fragmented hedges, but existing boundary vegetation on Site means that views out are limited.

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

6. There are a limited number of Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the wider area. The closest is PROW NG5, which is to the north-east and runs on a east-west axis across open farmland between the edge Lower Higham Road and Queen's Farm. The level difference involved means that there is unlikely to be any views into the Site. It would not be the main focus of the outlook and there would be no physical impact on the PROW or any others locally.

Planning

7. GBC Local Plan consists of the Core Strategy and Local Plan Policies Map (2014). 2028. It outlines the strategic objectives for the Borough based on the characteristics of the area and the key issues to be addressed. It sets out a delivery strategy for achieving the objectives. It also defines areas where policies of restraint will apply and those places or characteristics that will be preserved and/or enhanced to ensure that the Borough's sense of place and local distinctiveness remains as a foundation upon which community can grow and prosper.
8. The plan notes that biodiversity and green spaces are a high priority, with the Green Belt wrapping around the edge of Gravesham in which the Site is set. Developments that support on and off-site enhancements for biodiversity, which protect and link up green spaces for nature, protect and increase tree cover are highlighted as being important. This links in with a desire to see better provision of green spaces.
9. Projects that protect or enhance the particular character or the part of the countryside within which it is set are to be encouraged, but there is also a need to strike a balance between the need for development and protection of character.
10. The Site is within the Green Belt which is there to protect open green space around London. The Green Belt plays an important role in protecting the setting of London. It restricts urban sprawl and was designed to prevent the city physically merging with neighbouring towns and villages.
11. With this in mind the proposals have taken into account the existing structure, pattern and character of the landscape locally. There is scope to strengthen local landscape characteristics, including the strengthening of green corridors and hedges with improved wildlife value.

Heritage

12. There are 6 historic listings within 1km of the Site (Five Grade II and one Grade II*). The nearest is East Court Farmhouse, which is to the south of the Site. The next closest are to the west of the Site on Lower Higham Road and their setting would remain unaffected by the proposals.
13. The proposed development takes into account significant features listed locally and in the surrounding wider landscape there are a number of historical features, but it is not anticipated that any of these would be affected.

2.0 Landscape Context

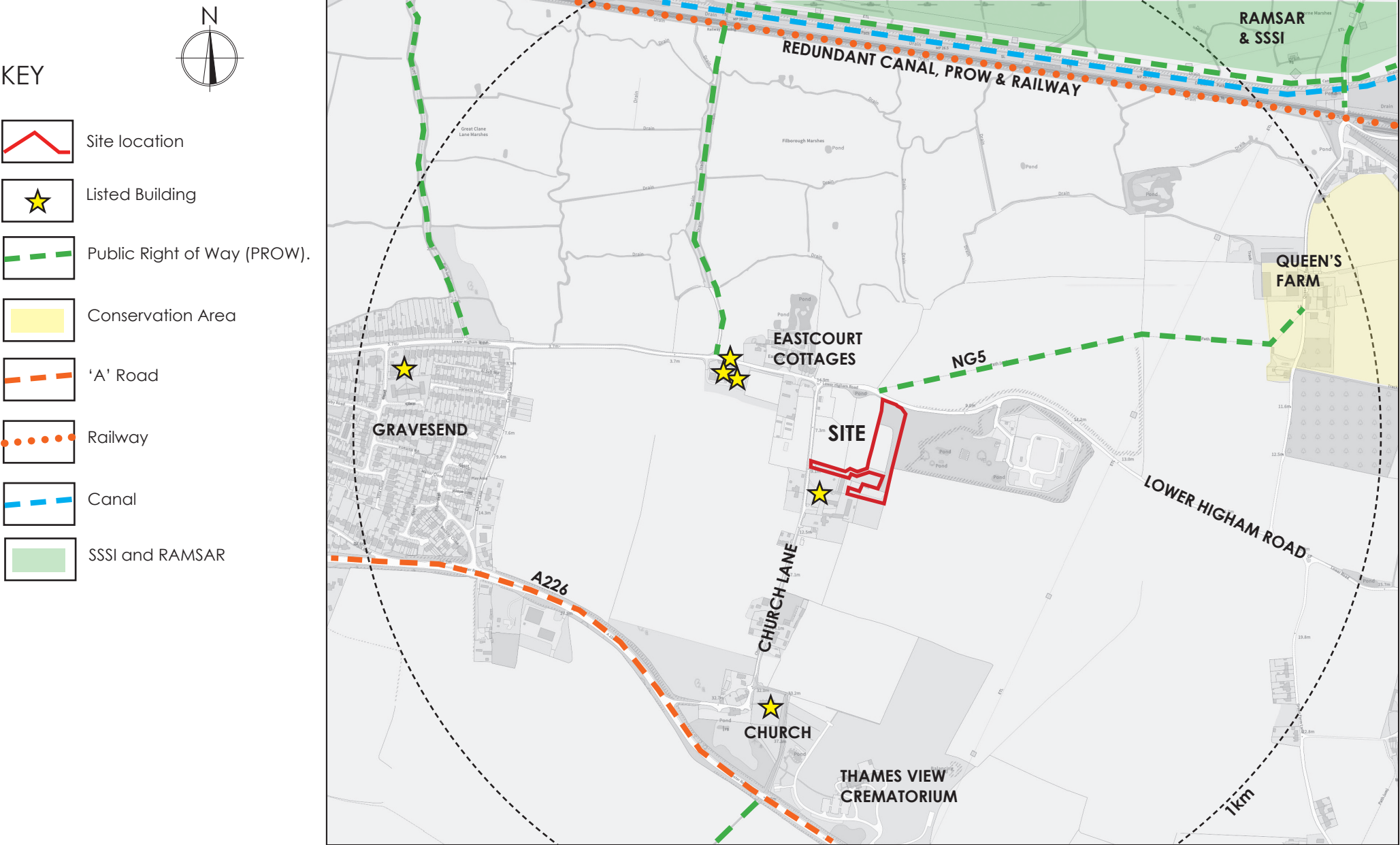


Figure 03. Site in relation to local properties.



3.0 Landscape Context Photographs

3.0 Landscape Context Photographs

KEY

 Site location

 Photo location.



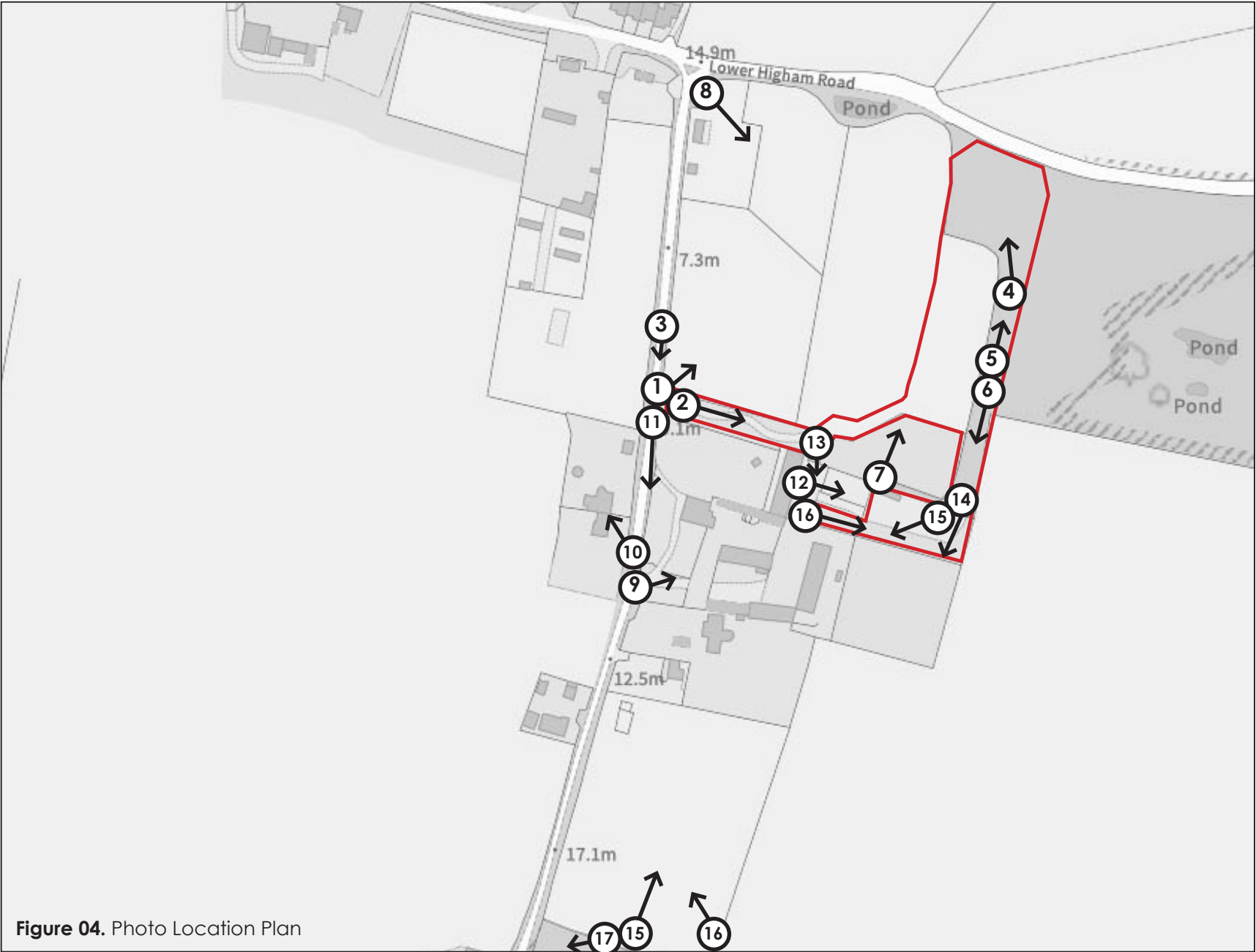


Figure 04. Photo Location Plan

3.0 Landscape Context Photographs

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend



Photo 01. Taken from within the Site looking north-east across the Site from the existing access point on Church Lane. The views are extended towards the railway line and the Thames Estuary beyond. The vegetation on the peripheries of the Site limit views from the roads which border the Site on two sides.



Photo 02. The main access into the Site is gently curved and provides access to the parking area and barns. Laurel planting and other evergreens limit views of the gardens of East Court Manor.



Photo 03. Taken from Church Lane, looking south. Access into the Site is via an established access onto the Lane and the well vegetated character of the lane limits views to the east and west.



Photo 04. Taken from within the Site looking north towards the edge of the woody copse where the glamping units would be located. The wooded character would be retained in order to limit the impact on the setting and the character of the wider area. The vegetation would enhance the setting of the units.



Photo 05. Looking north along the trackway which leads towards the woody copse where the glamping units would be located. The hedges are established, but overgrown and would benefit from being managed.



Photo 06. Taken from within the Site looking south towards the area of hardstanding. There are some sections of hedge where there is dead elm and these sections would benefit from being gapped up.

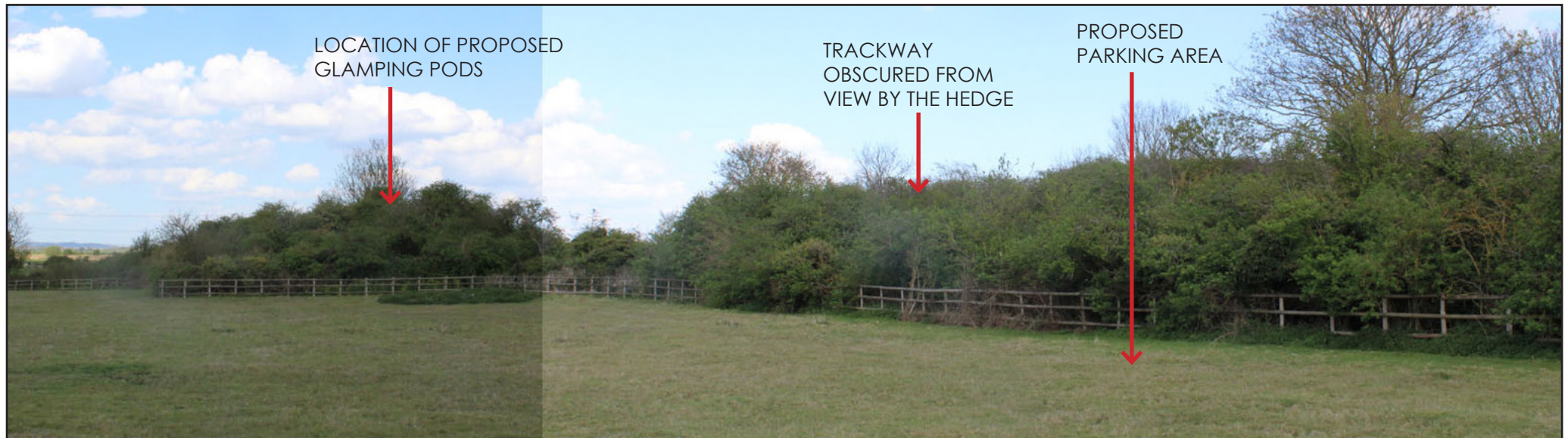


Photo 07. Taken from within the Site looking north towards the Thames Estuary. The proposed glamping pods would be set within the woody copse, with the existing hedge lined trackway leading from a parking area down to the units. The parking area would be screened by planting.

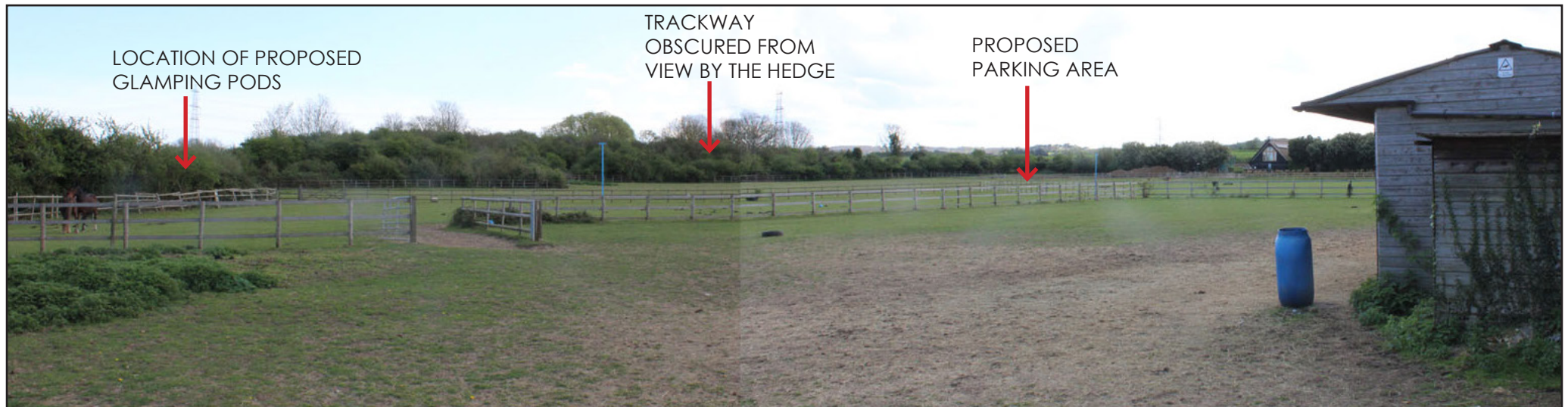


Photo 08. Looking from the gateway in the north-west corner of the paddock, the woody vegetation along the eastern boundary of the field means that views in this direction are limited. The proposals would be well screened and additional planting would help ensure that the units are largely hidden from view.

3.0 Landscape Context Photographs

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend



Photo 09. Taken from the access to East Court Manor, the house faces towards Church Lane, utilising what would have been the farm access to the now converted farm buildings. The well-vegetated gardens, orientation of the house and barns means that the proposals are not visible from this point.



Photo 10. No.24 & 25 Church Lane have views towards the lane, but the house, buildings and gardens of East Court Manor means that they do not have views into the Site and would not be able to see the proposals.



Photo 11: Church Lane rises to the south as it leads up to the Church on the brow of the hill. The Lane has a sunken appearance due to the well-vegetated character that the hedges and gardens create. This limits views out.

3.0 Landscape Context Photographs

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend



Photo 12. Taken from the parking area in front of the garage building (which prevents views to East Court Manor) looking east, the court, gardens and existing boundary hedge limit views to the wider landscape. New planting and reconfiguration of the layout would help to spatially divide the Site sympathetically.



Photo 13. The converted barn complex and associated garages prevent views to the wider landscape and screen the lane from the southern half of the Site, which would make use of the existing storage area.

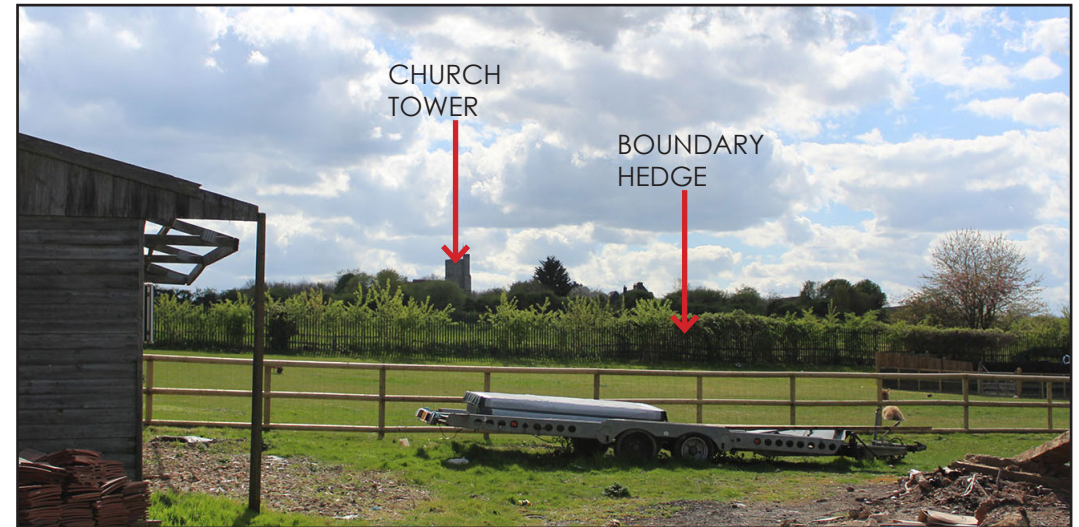


Photo 14. Taken from the edge of storage area where three glamping units are proposed. Views to the south are curtailed by a hedge on the garden edge. The church at the top of Church Lane is visible on the brow of the hill.

3.0 Landscape Context Photographs

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

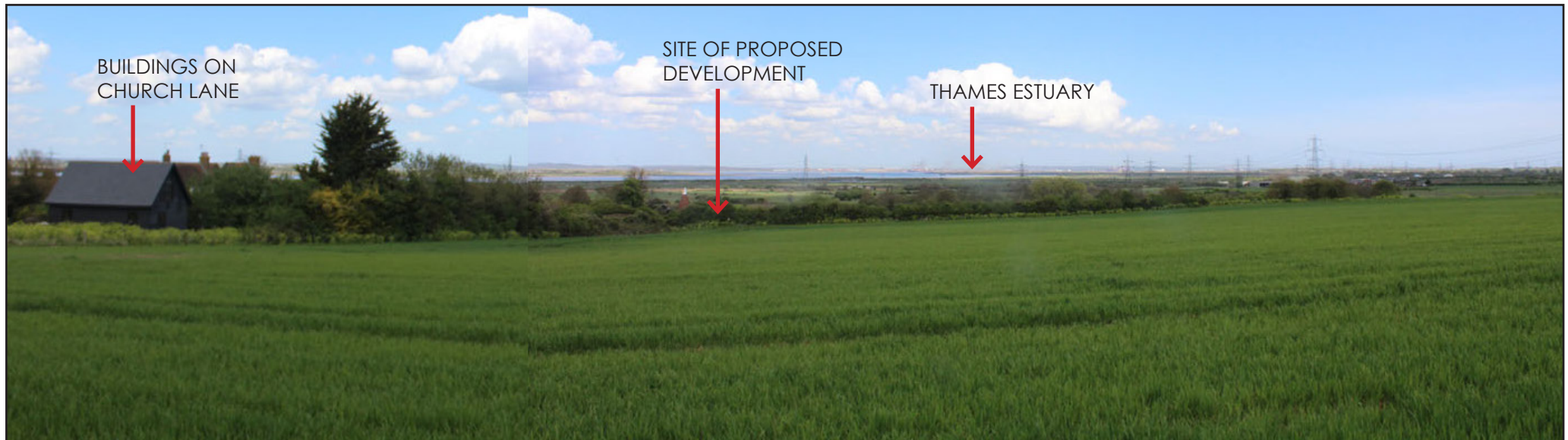


Photo 15. Taken from the edge of the Thames View Crematorium looking north, the Site is in the foreground and obscured from view by the topography and existing vegetation. Due to the scale of the landscape and elevated position, the eye is drawn to the wider setting and Thames Estuary beyond.

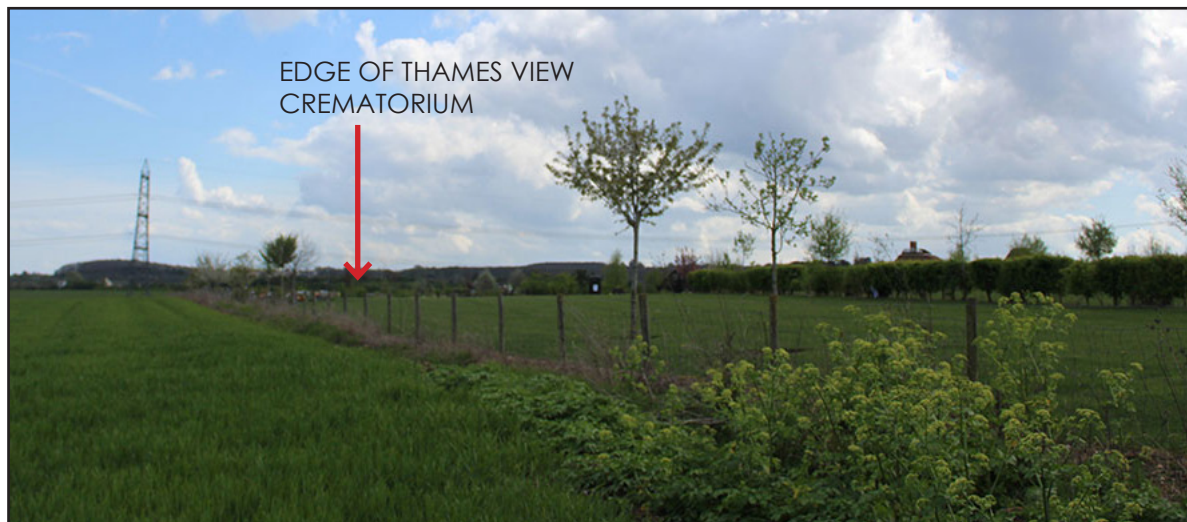


Photo 16. Thames View Crematorium to the south of the Site is on the top of the hill topographically. Planting within the Site limits views to the north. The arable fields to the north are open and allow for extended views across the landscape.



Photo 17. Taken from the edge of the churchyard, the tower of the church is a key focal feature within the landscape on the brow of the hill. The church is Grade II* listed.



4.0 Effects on Greenbelt

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Purposes of the Green Belt

The proposal site is situated within the Green Belt.

The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

The five purposes of Green Belt designation are:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

KEY



Green Belt



Site location

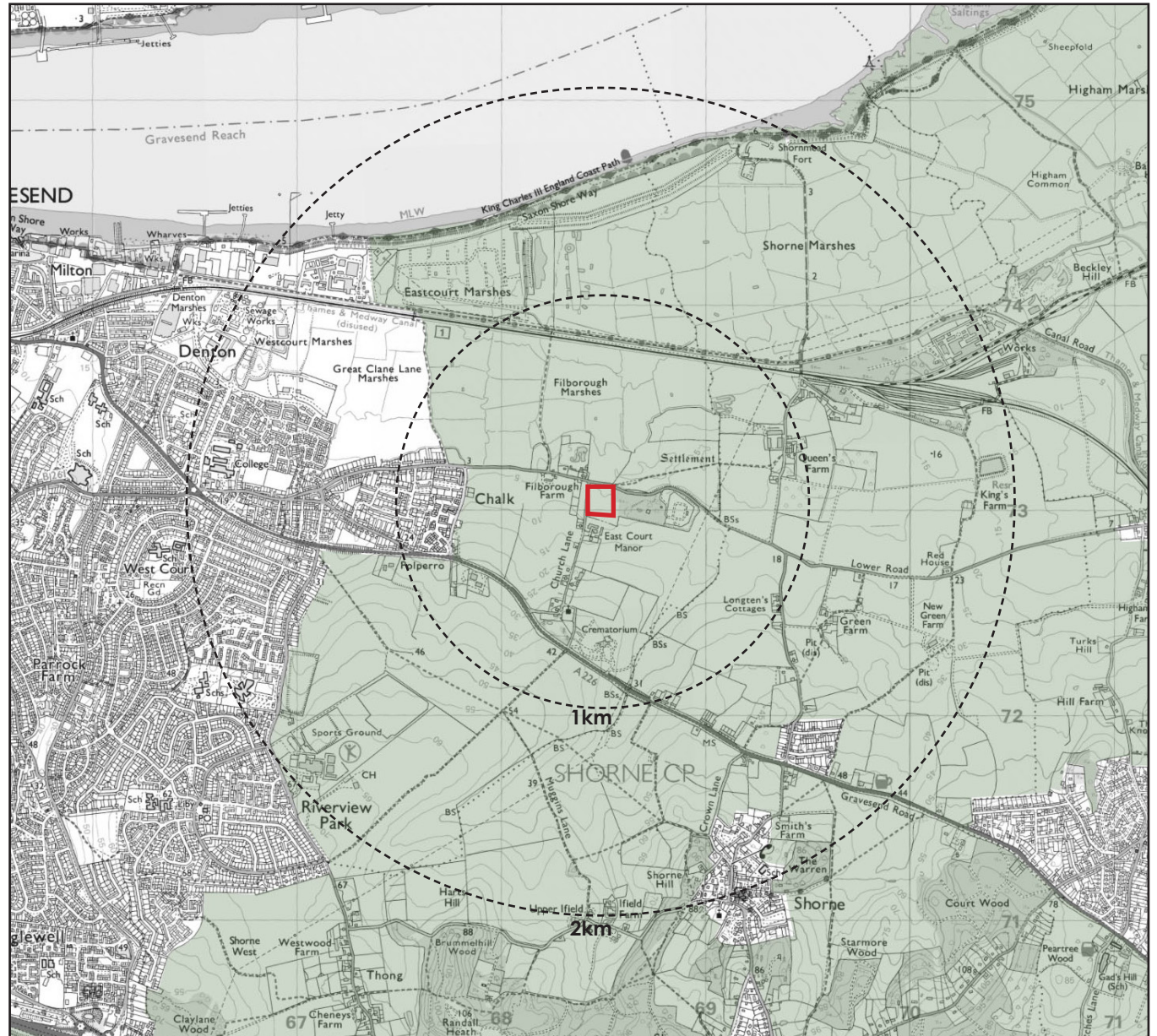


Figure 05. Site in relation to local properties.

4.0 Effects on Greenbelt

Development in Green Belt

1. Regarding development in the Green Belt Paragraph 152 of the NPPF states;
"152. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances."
2. New buildings are generally considered to comprise inappropriate development in the Green Belt, with some exceptions. In this case, the proposed units are small low level structures which would form part of other environmental improvements to the setting.
3. The NPPF goes on to set out other forms of development which may also not be inappropriate as follows; "155. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
4. The proposal comprises a glamping operation which would not affect or change the openness of the Green Belt.

Effect of the Proposal on the Purposes of the Green Belt

5. The proposal does not consist of permanent built development and therefore would not affect sprawl of large built up areas designed to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
6. The proposal does not consist of built development and therefore would not affect merging of neighbouring towns. It would maintain in assisting the safeguarding of the countryside from encroachment with new planting.
7. The proposal is located on the edge of an existing field, which was a track which led to a quarry. It would not therefore affect encroachment upon the countryside. Thus preserving the setting and special character.
8. The proposal site does not comprise the setting of historic towns. The nearest conservation area is at Stock over 3km to the south west of the proposal site. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
9. The proposal is located on previously developed land and does not consist of built development. There would be no effect upon urban regeneration arising from the proposal.
10. It is therefore concluded that the proposals do not conflict with any of the purposes of the Green Belt.

Effect on Openness

11. A number of matters have been taken into account when making this assessment. These include:
 - Is the openness capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, is the visual impact of the proposal relevant, and what are the effects in relation to its volume?
 - What is the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness? *and*
 - What degree of activity is likely to be generated? Such as traffic.

Openness

12. The proposals consists of a series of glamping pods. These would be set in and around the edge of a woody copse and track, within a small paddock. The proposals would be low key visually and set within vegetation and the impact would be hard to discern.
13. The units are technically temporary structures and the long term impact of the proposals would be limited to their potential removal, in which case the vegetation surrounding would remain unchanged.

Duration and Remediability

14. The proposals would continue for as long as the glamping site continues to operate. The proposal can be dismantled and the proposals are completely remediable.

Activity generated

15. The proposals would generate a limited amount of activity during the working day. The level of activity is considered to be of a low level.

Conclusion

16. The proposals would have a limited effect on openness, being temporary structures, set within a woody copse in a contained paddock. The proposal would be completely remediable.

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5.0 Landscape Character

National Landscape Character Assessment Profile

1. At a national level the Site is located on the edge of the Greater Thames Character Area (Area 81) and the character of the Site is broadly typical of this landscape character type. To the south of the Site is the North Kent Plain (Area 113).

Greater Thames (Area No. 81)

2. The Greater Thames National Character Area (NCA) is characterised by the predominantly flat, low-lying, narrow, deeply indented strip of soft coastline. It forms the eastern edge of the London Basin, and the shape of its branching estuaries is determined by the glacial and fluvial sands and gravels that overlie London Clay between the North Sea and the rising ground of the adjacent North Kent Plain and Northern Thames Basin NCAs. These provide a backdrop to the extensive flat open spaces of the estuary. Uninterrupted, far-reaching views out across the Thames to the opposite banks are possible from this higher ground, and industrial and historic military landmarks are highly visible in this predominantly low-lying marshy coastal landscape. The notable key characteristics are:
 - Predominantly flat, low-lying coastal landscape where extensive open spaces are dominated by the sky, and the pervasive presence of water and numerous coastal estuaries extend the maritime influence far inland.
 - Eastern edge of the London Basin with its underlying geology of the extensive London Clay, containing important sites for geodiversity including fossiliferous deposits, and overlain by productive loamy soils derived from intertidal alluvial muds.
 - Geological contrast and variety along the coastline provided by Sheppey, a long, low island rising from a stretch of very flat marsh along the Swale Estuary in Kent with low, steep clay cliffs facing towards Essex, and Mersea Island in the Blackwater Estuary in Essex.
 - Open grazing pastures patterned by a network of ancient and modern reed-fringed drainage ditches and dykes, numerous creeks and few hedges or fences, with tree cover a rarity.
 - Traditional unimproved wet pasture grazed with sheep and cattle combined with extensive drained and ploughed arable land protected from floods by sea walls, with some areas of more mixed agriculture on higher ground.
- Open mosaic habitats on brownfield sites support nationally important invertebrate assemblages and key populations of rare invertebrate species.
- Some of the least settled parts of the English coast with numerous small villages and hamlets on higher ground and marsh edges reflecting medieval patterns and the coastal economy.
- Highly urbanised areas within London and on marsh edges subject to chaotic activity of various major developments including ports, waste disposal, marine dredging, housing regeneration, mineral extraction and prominent power stations plus numerous other industry-related activities.
- Increasing development pressures around major settlements and especially towards London, with urban, industrial and recreational sites often highly visible within the low-lying marshes.
- Major historical and current transport link to Inner London provided by the River Thames, with an extensive network of road and rail bridges spanning its reaches within the city.
3. The key opportunities in this area must take into consideration the sensitivity of the landscape. At a national character area level, the change of land use would have a limited impact on the character due to the location of the Site. The position of the proposals and the potential cumulative effects that this kind of development can have are an important aspect of the design process. The addition of glamping units in this case would see the use of rough woody ground on the edge of a paddock and an existing storage area. The vegetation would largely remain intact, maintaining the overall character of the area.
4. The treed skyline and scale of the landscape in this area, means that at this level there would be a limited impact on the wider character. The fact that the glamping units would be located in a well screened location, means that changes to the character would be contained. The design process has been used to evaluate the potential impact on the countryside, resulting in the creation of proposals which are in scale with and respond to the rural setting.

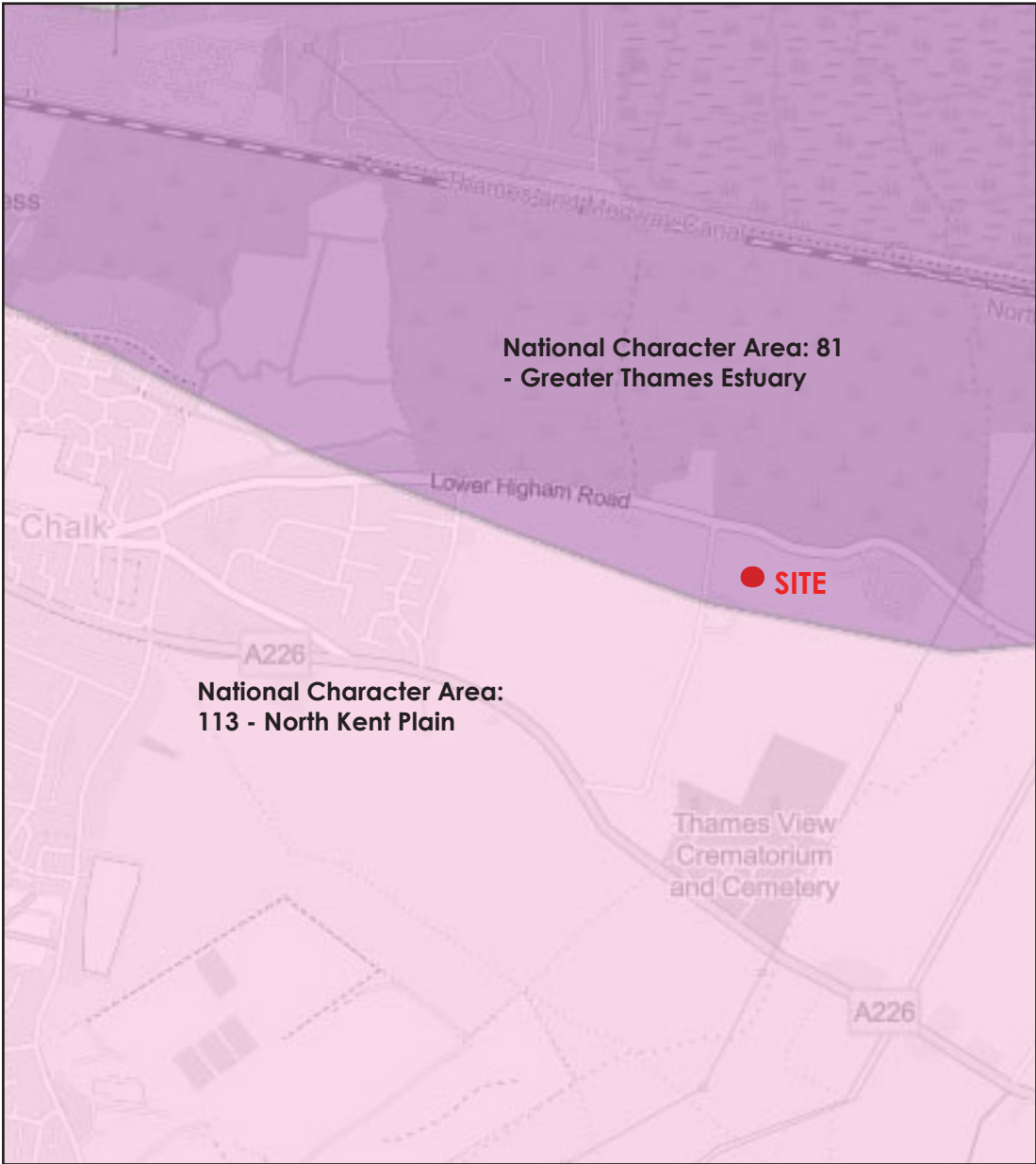


Figure 06. National Landscape Characterisation Map (extract) - Area 81

5.0 Landscape Character - Local Level Study

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

Local Landscape Character Assessment Profile

- At a more local level, Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) produced a more detailed Landscape Character Assessment in 2009 as part of the evidence base for planning policy. For character area there is an assessment of condition and sensitivity and guidelines for appropriate actions to protect and enhance the landscape. The document also contains guidelines for different types of landscape and development. The Landscape Character Assessment has been taken into account when considering proposals and the sensitivity of the landscape. The Site falls within the Higham Arable Farmlands Character Area.
- Higham Arable Farmlands are located east of Gravesend and south of Shorne and Higham Marshes.

The key character descriptions of the Shorne and Higham Marshes are summarised as follows:

- Very gently undulating topography
- Open arable farmland
- Views out to the marshes and the River Thames in the north
- Original Saxon village of Lower Higham and more recent development to the south
- Marsh side hamlets and settlements
- Isolated farmsteads and scattered properties with locally distinct styles and materials
- Pockets of orchards and garden nurseries
- Historic sites including a Priory and Gad's Hill, once home to Charles Dickens
- Thames and Medway Canal (disused) runs to Lower Higham

Overall character and sensitivity

- The main physical elements of the landscape, such as the topography and general field pattern, are consistent. However land use provides an element of fragmentation, such as small areas of orchards and garden nurseries set within the dominating context of open arable farmland. Large pylons to the north, rail sidings, poly tunnels and polythene covering nursery stock are visually detracting features. Although visual unity is coherent, the condition of the character area is assessed as being very poor.
- Intense agricultural use of the landscape with large arable fields and few hedgerow boundaries, interspersed with overgrown orchards, shelterbelts, gappy hedgerows and small areas of open water. Isolated properties and

farmsteads provide local distinctiveness, which contrast with more recent development within Higham and Lower Higham. There is a modified cultural integrity and the overall, functional unity is weak. The condition of the landscape is therefore rated as poor.

- The distinct landscape elements comprise isolated buildings and farmsteads that contribute towards local distinctiveness through their traditional style and use of materials. Enclosure lines provided by ditch lines and remaining hedgerows provide historic features. Locally there are pockets of distinctive landscape such as the dry valley south east of Higham, however much of the modern landscape comprises gappy hedgerows, limited woodland and indistinct recent buildings and the landscape features are indistinct with a weak sense of place. On balance, the sensitivity of the landscape is moderate.
- The guidelines for the Higham Arable Farmlands focus on restoring landscape elements in poor condition, whilst safeguarding it as a prominent landscape feature within the wider landscape. In this case the proposals present the opportunity to improve the existing hedgerows and better manage the woody vegetation.



Photo 20



6.0 Proposals

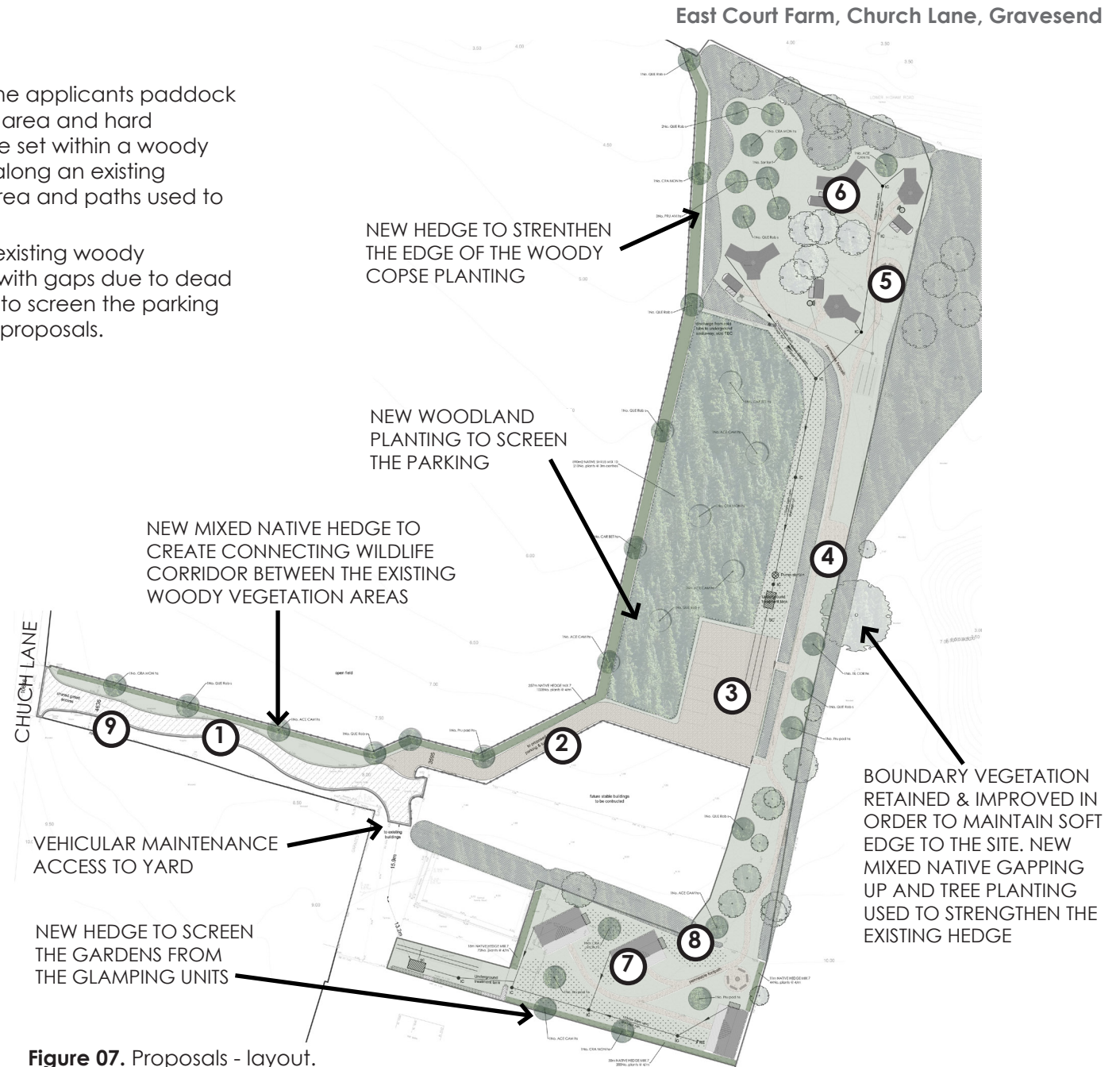
6.0 Proposals

The proposals

1. The Site is contained within the eastern side of the applicants paddock and extends to make use of an existing storage area and hard standing. The proposed glamping units would be set within a woody copse of vegetation and accessed via a path along an existing trackway. Vehicles would be left at a parking area and paths used to access the units.
2. New Planting would be used to strengthen the existing woody vegetation, some of which is in poor condition, with gaps due to dead elm. New mixed native planting would be used to screen the parking which would be the most visible element of the proposals.

Key:

1. Existing entrance and vehicular track (shared)
2. New permeable surface track
3. New parking and turning area
4. Outdoor gym
5. Communal fire pits
6. Finman retreats positioned in between trees within the woodland area
7. Side-entry glamping pods located in the reinstated meadow area
8. Existing structures to be relocated
9. Refuse and recycling storage





7.0 Landscape Effects

Landscape appraisal

1. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment considers effects on the physical landscape, as well as on character and the perceptual aspects of the experience of the landscape. Two types of receptors in this study have been considered relevant:
 - a) The landscape itself - its features and fabric
 - b) The character of the landscape, the **Shorne and Higham Marshes** character type.

Effects are generally considered to be confined to the zone from within which those effects are experienced – inside the visual envelope.

Landscape value and sensitivity

2. This is a rural setting with outlying open countryside, featuring large fields, mashland and fragmented hedges. This fragmented vegetative cover combines to form a varied and extended skyline. Sporadic blocks of vegetation add height and local interest. The trees and hedges are physical features that add to the character of the local area and particularly where well vegetated gardens filter views and soften the intervening spaces.
3. The settlement cluster of properties on Church Lane consists principally of dwellings which have grown up on either side of the road which connects the main Gravesend Road (A226) to Lower Higham Road. This links into the wider landscape and the setting remains broadly representative of the local settlement type. The location of listed buildings reflects the historical growth pattern of the settlement in this area.
4. The proposed new glamping site on land to the north and east of East Court Manor have been designed to work with the existing layout, with proposals set in amongst the woody copse and storage yard. This would see the continued use of the existing access onto Church Lane, running along the western edge of the paddock.
5. The appearance of the proposed units would take into consideration the character of the setting and scale. They would be largely hidden by existing buildings, trees and hedges.
6. The fact that there is already good vegetative screening on the edge of the Site, in combination with the topography, means that the local landscape character could accommodate change without great detrimental effects, but the character of the Site would benefit from being strengthened with additional planting.

Impacts to (A) landscape features

7. Description of effect: Effects on physical features would be mostly limited to the management of the existing vegetation, but wherever possible any hedges, shrubs and trees that are healthy would be retained to become part of the wider green setting. It is recommended that there is new planting throughout in order to help the proposals fit in with the local landscape character.

Sensitivity of receptor: **LOW**.

Magnitude of change: **LOW** (adverse) The overall impact to site features remains limited. The management of the existing vegetation is likely to result in some minor loss and a few trees may also need to be removed to aid access, but otherwise there would be limited change. The addition of new planting would strengthen and improve the existing landscape features.

Impact significance: **LOW**

Impacts to (B) Character type – ‘Shorne and Higham Marshes’

8. Description of effect: There is likely to be little impact on the wider character area due to the nature of the proposals and their scale in proportion to the setting. The proposed structures within a well treed site, would not be out of character with the immediate surroundings and the neighbouring dwellings would remain largely unaffected.

Sensitivity of receptor: **MODERATE** The proposed new units would introduce additional new structures near to existing homes and subsequently the capacity of the character area to absorb low key development without undue adverse impacts on the wider character of the landscape is increased and the sensitivity of the receptor is reduced.

Magnitude of change: **SLIGHT** (neutral) The development would result in a slight noticeable change over a small area of the landscape receptor. The combined effects of retaining much of the existing vegetation, with the introduction of the new structures would not necessarily represent an adverse change as the proposed would be in proportion to the wider setting.

Impact significance: **LOW**

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8.0 Visual Effects

8.0 Visual Effects

Visual impacts methodology

1. Visual impact assessment aims to understand the influence a proposal would have on the view and appearance of the landscape, its amenity, and the people who experience it. It considers the likely effects on viewpoints including dwellings, roads, rights of way, and other publicly accessible land.
2. Survey work was used to determine a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). This is used to show the area from which an object could theoretically be seen. There are two principal types of ZTV. The first is bare ground, where the underlying model represents the topography without screening vegetation or structures. These ZTV depict the worst-case scenario. With the Screened ZTV, the model includes topography as well as other screening features.
3. Both are based on the same terrain model, but the screened ZTV also takes into account principal blocks of vegetation as screening elements. The screened ZTV indicates a reduced theoretical visibility compared to the bare ground ZTV. The extent of a ZTV is confirmed through the use of fieldwork and presents a realistic depiction of theoretical views. Features not included in the screening layer such as hedgerows, field trees and garden vegetation are then checked to further define the extent of views compared to the screened ZTV model.
4. Using this information, a visual envelope was then established, which shows the approximate extent of the area from where the Site can be seen (see Figure 09). The majority of the Site photographs were taken in early summer when there was light vegetative cover.
5. Six viewpoints within the visual envelope were selected for this appraisal. Photographs were taken of or at each viewpoint and the current view described. The existing view was then compared to the likely changes to the view at year 1 (winter conditions) and year 15 (summer conditions). The effects were described,
6. The viewpoints are shown on Figure 10:

Viewpoint 1. View from Eastcourt Cottages looking south-east towards the Site.

Viewpoint 2. View south from Lower Higham Road into the Site.

Viewpoint 3: View from PROW (NG5) looking south-west towards the Site.

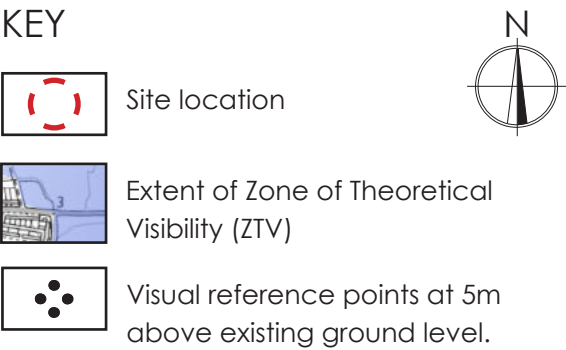
Viewpoint 4: View from Longtens Cottages looking north-west across fields towards the edge of the Site.

Viewpoint 5: View from second (and possibly first) floor windows of East Court Manor.

Viewpoint 6: View from Church Lane looking east.

Visual conditions - views out

7. From the Site, views out are visually affected by either buildings and/or vegetation. There are trees, hedges, woodland and buildings on the peripheries of the Site. Beyond these, to the south-west are the main body of buildings set around East Court Manor. Although the character of the setting is rural, there has been some new development, including the conversion of existing farm buildings and a new hard surface court.
8. To the south, views are limited by the existing barns dwellings and rising ground. The views extend across arable fields towards a treed horizon and the church at the top of the lane. The gardens to the rear of the barn conversion are relatively open with post and rail fences and a hedge on the outer edge.
9. The barns and buildings set around East Court Manor limit views to the west from the southern part of the Site. The northern half of the Site is more open, with views towards Church Lane. This is lined by a mixed native hedge, beyond which is a laurel hedge, which limits views to the edge of Gravesend beyond.
10. To the east, on the southern half of the Site, there are more open views across open arable fields. These are curtailed by the brow of the hill and the built form of houses on Green Farm Lane and Shorne. The northern half of the Site is screened to the east by a block of woodland.
11. To the north, views are limited by woody vegetation on the edge of the Site, where an overgrown hedge limits views in this direction. From the more elevated parts of the Site there are extended views towards the Thames Estuary.
12. Overall, the majority of the views out from the Site are filtered by vegetation and buildings on the boundaries. This means that views are interrupted, apart from those to the northern edge. Given the contained nature of the site, there is likely to be limited visual impact. Views back into the Site are likely to be correspondingly restricted and this is explored further in the next section.



ZTV - Bareground:

Based on topography which is gently rolling in this area, the extent of the zone of theoretical visibility extends out in an uneven manner across the landscape. The height of the proposed dwelling is likely to be about 8m tall. The ground level of the Site varies between 30-35m AOD. Given the scale of the setting, it is unlikely that the naked eye would be able to discern any significant change beyond 3km.

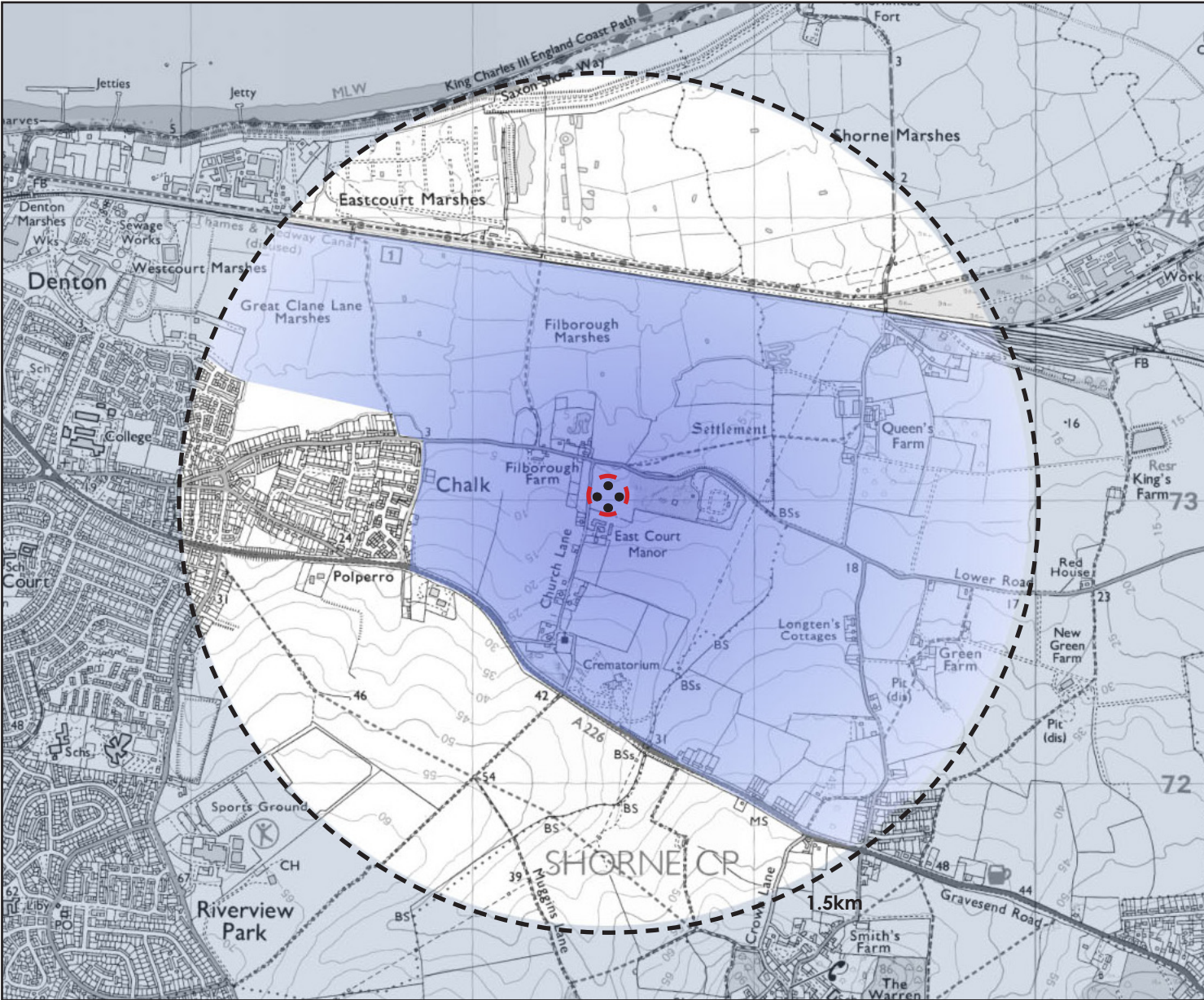


Figure 08. Site in relation to local properties.

KEY

 Site location

Extent of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

 Visual reference points at 5m above existing ground level.



Taking into account the vegetation, and physical features like buildings and bunds etc, the extent of the ZTV is greatly reduced. From within this a series of viewpoints were then identified for further analysis.

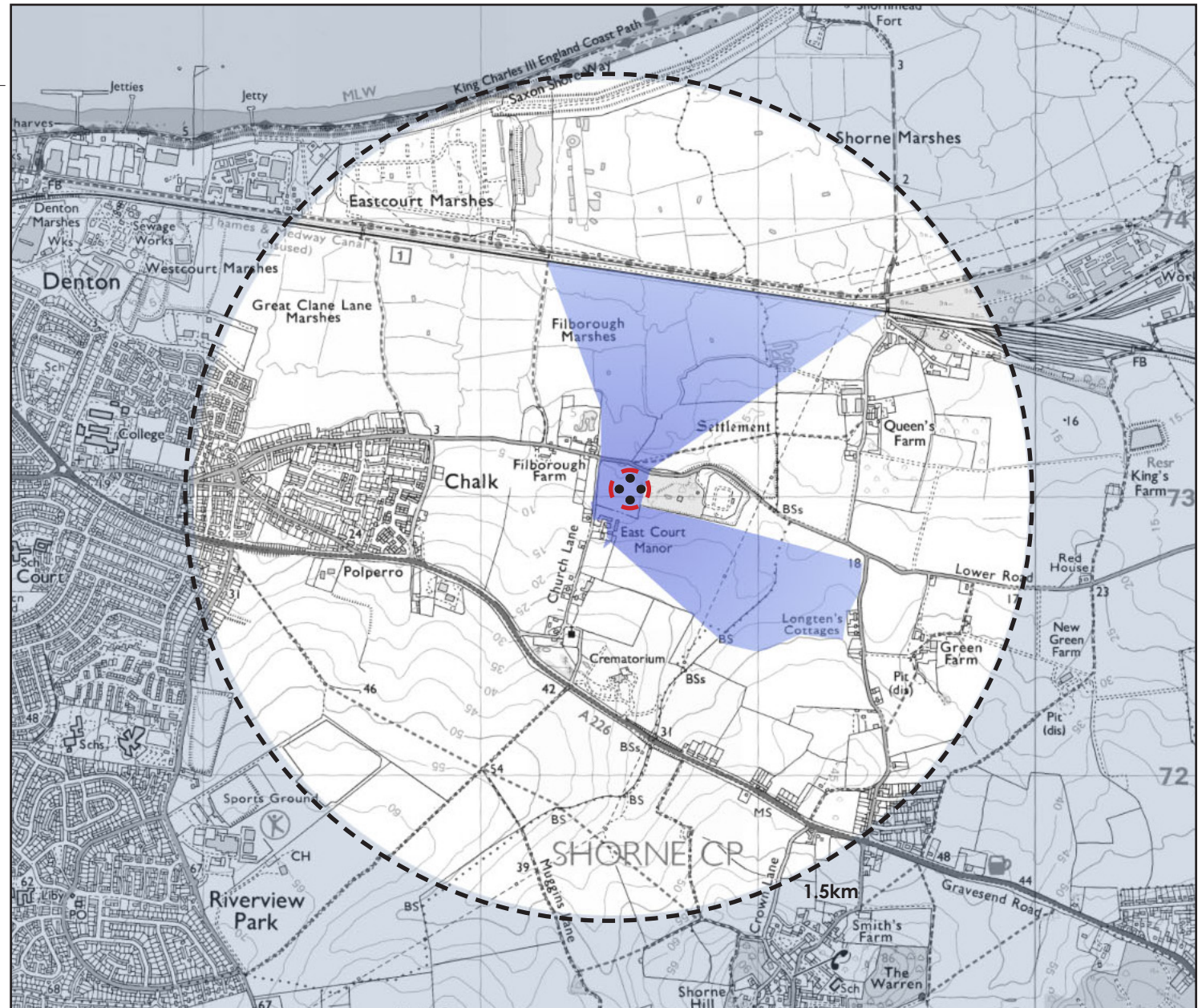


Figure 09. Site in relation to local properties.



9.0 Visual Analysis

9.0 Visual Analysis (& Zone of Theoretical Visibility)

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

KEY



Site boundary



Extended views towards the Thames Estuary are possible in the winter months.



Viewpoints considered

Viewpoint locations:

Viewpoint 1. View from Eastcourt Cottages looking south-east towards the Site.

Viewpoint 2. View south from Lower Higham Road into the Site.

Viewpoint 3: View from PROW (NG5) looking south-west towards the Site.

Viewpoint 4: View from Longtens Cottages looking north-west across fields towards the edge of the Site.

Viewpoint 5: View from second (and possibly first) floor windows of East Court Manor.

Viewpoint 6: View from Church Lane looking east.



Figure 10. Site in relation to local properties and the wider setting.



10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

VIEWPOINT 1 - View from Eastcourt Cottages looking south-east.

VISUAL AMENITY BASELINE

Receptor Susceptibility

The view would be experienced from the first floor windows of the dwellings. The susceptibility is considered to be moderate.

Features

The foreground comprises a minor road with gardens and hedgerow to the left of the view. Angle towards the Site is oblique. The value of the view is considered to be Moderate.

Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the view is assessed as Medium.

Sensitivity of View

SUSCEPTIBILITY	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH	HIGH
	MODERATE	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH
	LOW	LOW	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM
		LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
		VALUE		

Viewpoint Data

Date: 17.04.2025
Time: 13:21

Bearing: 140°
Distance to Site Centre: 180m

Viewpoint Elevation: 5m
Camera Height: 1.5m

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 1

Anticipated Effect upon View

The tops of the glamping units may just be visible and the parked cars associated with the glamping guests.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be minor (adverse).

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be of Low Significance.

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 15

Anticipated Effect upon View

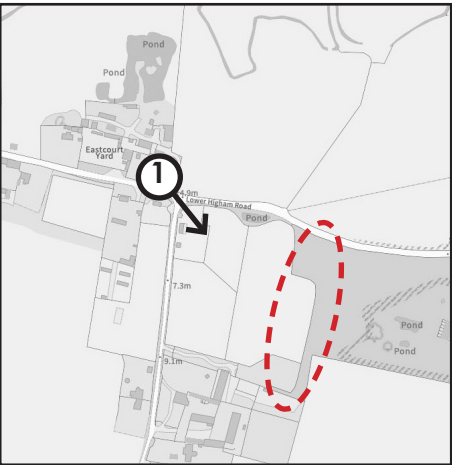
The planting and existing vegetation would continue to grow and screen the site, with effects reduced over time.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be negligible (adverse).

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be of insignificant.

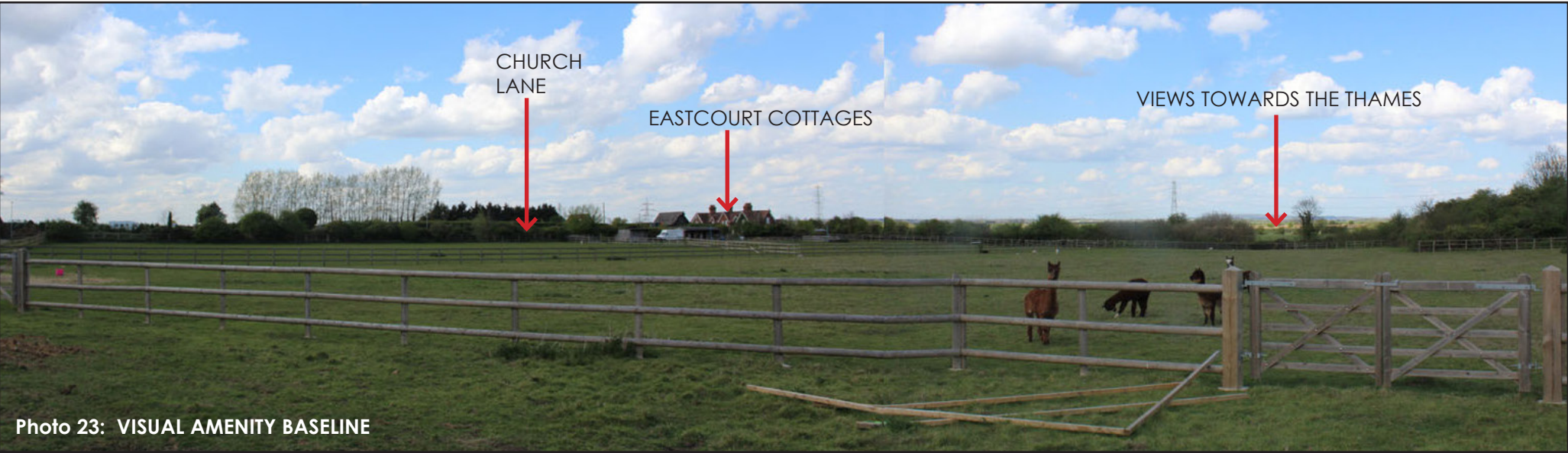
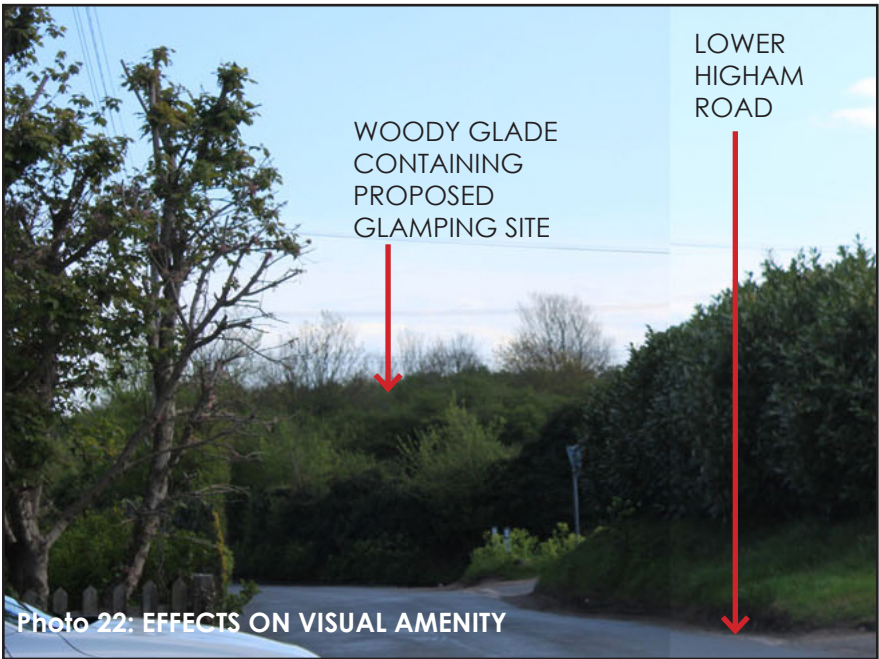


Significance of Effect - Year 1 (yellow) & year 15 (blue)

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT	MAJOR	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MODERATE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MINOR	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT
	NEGLECTIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
		SENSITIVITY OF RECEPTOR		

10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend



10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

VIEWPOINT 2 - View south from Lower Higham Road.

VISUAL AMENITY BASELINE

Receptor Susceptibility

The view would be experienced from the roadside as a possible passing point of interest. The susceptibility is considered to be low.

Features

The foreground comprises a minor road with a hedge filtering and limiting views into the Site. The value of the view is considered to be low.

Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the view is assessed as low.

Sensitivity of View

SUSCEPTIBILITY	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH	HIGH
	MODERATE	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH
	LOW	LOW	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM
		LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
		VALUE		

Viewpoint Data

Date: 17.04.2025
Time: 12:40

Bearing: 150°
Distance to Site Centre: 30m

Viewpoint Elevation: 5m
Camera Height: 1.5m

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 1

Anticipated Effect upon View

It may just be possible to see the parked cars associated with the glamping units.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be minor (adverse).

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be insignificant.

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 15

Anticipated Effect upon View

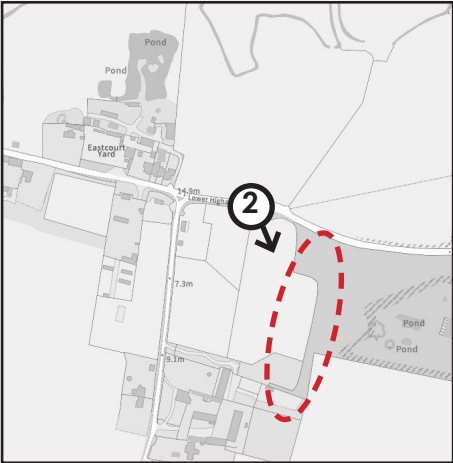
New planting would screen the effects, resulting in little or not change to the existing view.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be negligible.

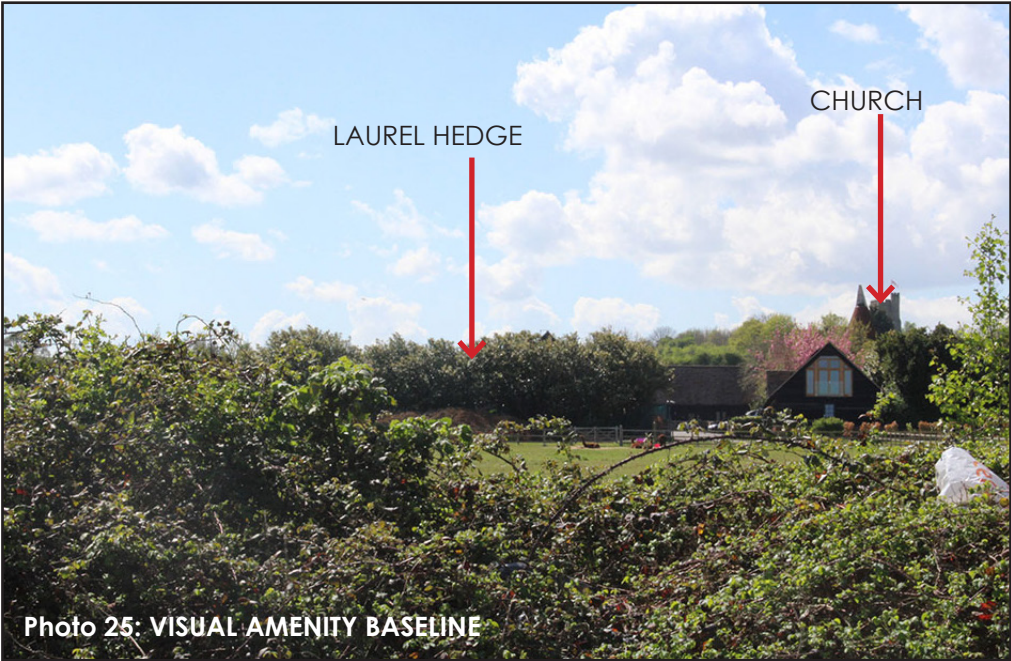
Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be of insignificant.



Significance of Effect - Year 1 (yellow) & year 15 (blue)

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT	MAJOR	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MODERATE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MINOR	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT
	NEGLECTIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
		SENSITIVITY OF RECEPTOR		



10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

VIEWPOINT 3 - View south-west from the PROW

VISUAL AMENITY BASELINE

Receptor Susceptibility

The view would be experienced from when walking east to west along the PROW. The susceptibility is considered to be moderate.

Features

The foreground comprises an open grassed field, with a minor road and woody vegetation on the southern edge of the Site. The value of the view is considered to be moderate.

Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the view is assessed as medium.

Sensitivity of View

SUSCEPTIBILITY	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH	HIGH
	MODERATE	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH
	LOW	LOW	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM
		LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
		VALUE		

Viewpoint Data

Date: 17.04.2025
Time: 12:43

Bearing: 210°
Distance to Site Centre: 90m

Viewpoint Elevation: 5m
Camera Height: 1.5m

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 1

Anticipated Effect upon View

The tops of the proposed glamping units may just be visible within woodland.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be negligible (adverse).

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be insignificant.

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 15

Anticipated Effect upon View

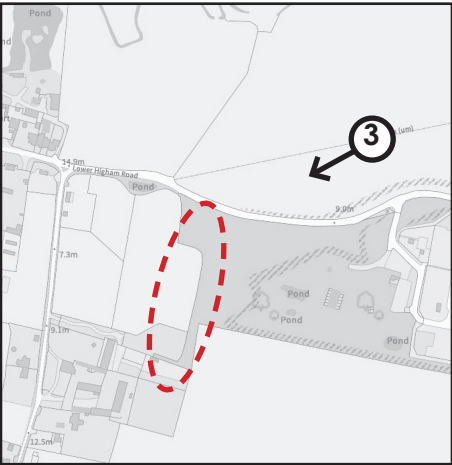
By year 15 it is unlikely that any change would be experienced, with woody vegetation completely screening views.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be negligible (adverse).

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be insignificant.



Significance of Effect - Year 1 (yellow) & year 15 (blue)

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT	MAJOR	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MODERATE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MINOR	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT
	NEGLECTIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
		SENSITIVITY OF RECEPTOR		

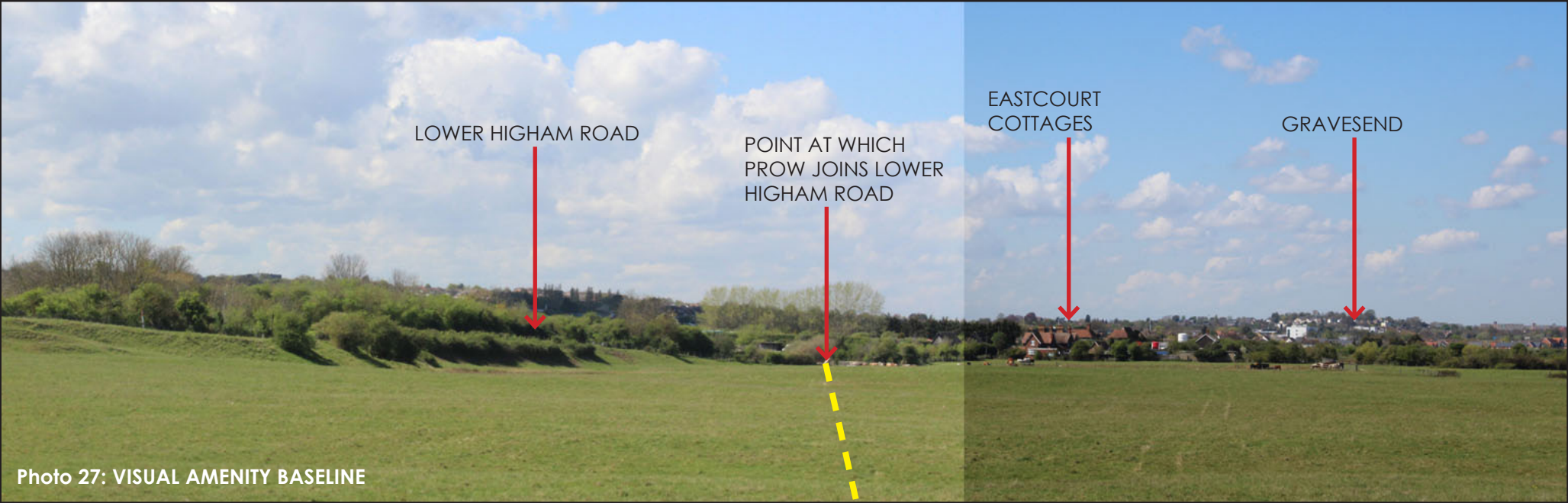


Photo 27: VISUAL AMENITY BASELINE



Photo 28: EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY

10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

VIEWPOINT 4 - View from Longtens Cottages, Green Farm Lane, looking north-west.

VISUAL AMENITY BASELINE

Receptor Susceptibility

The view would be experienced from the first floor windows of the dwellings from a long distance. The susceptibility is considered to be moderate.

Features

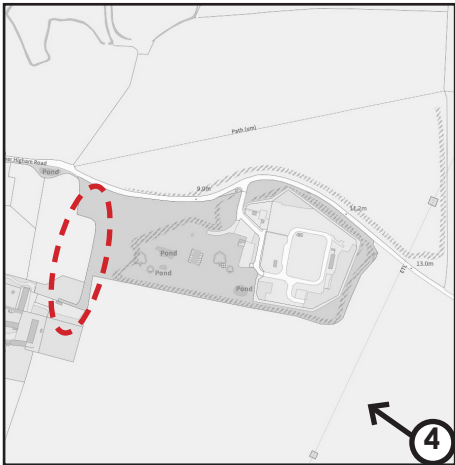
The foreground comprises open farmland which is subject to seasonal change. Vegetation on the edge of the Site. The value of the view is considered to be moderate.

Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the view is assessed as medium.

Sensitivity of View

SUSCEPTIBILITY	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH	HIGH
	MODERATE	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH
	LOW	LOW	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM
		LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
		VALUE		



Viewpoint Data

Date: 17.04.2025
Time: 12:30

Bearing: 320°
Distance to Site Centre: 900m

Viewpoint Elevation: 25m
Camera Height: 1.5m

Grid Reference: TQ 6931 7255

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 1

Anticipated Effect upon View

The new glamping units may just be visible, but change would be hard to discern and the nature of the outlook would be unchanged.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be minor (adverse).

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be of low significance.

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 15

Anticipated Effect upon View

New planting would ensure that any initial perceived change is negligible by year 15. The character of the outlook would be unchanged.

Magnitude of Effect

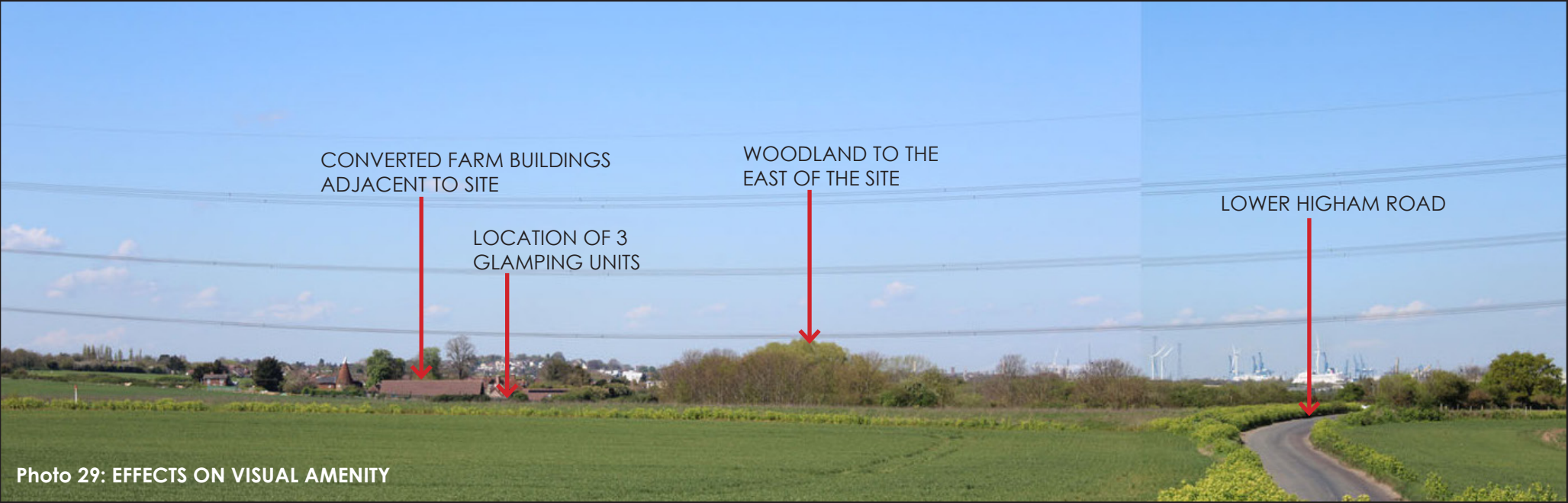
The magnitude of the effect is considered to be negligible.

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be insignificant.

Significance of Effect - Year 1 (yellow) & year 15 (blue)

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT	MAJOR	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MODERATE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MINOR	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT
	NEGLECTIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
		SENSITIVITY OF RECEPTOR		



10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

VIEWPOINT 5: View from second (and possibly first) floor windows of East Court Manor.

VISUAL AMENITY BASELINE

Receptor Susceptibility

Views east from East Court Manor Grade II listed) to the east. Intervening buildings largely obscure views, with potential for views from small upper windows.

Features

The foreground comprises the gardens and buildings. Site is currently used for storage with containers and vehicles.

Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the view is assessed as medium.

Sensitivity of View

SUSCEPTIBILITY	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH	HIGH
	MODERATE	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH
	LOW	LOW	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM
	VALUE			
		LOW	MODERATE	HIGH

Viewpoint Data

Date: 17.04.2025
Time: 13:41

Bearing: 90°
Distance to Site Centre: 75m

Viewpoint Elevation: 10m
Camera Height: 1.5m

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 1

Anticipated Effect upon View

The tops of the proposed glamping units in the existing yard next to the court are likely to be visible, but removal of existing storage items likely to improve the outlook.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be minor (positive).

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be of low significance.

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 15

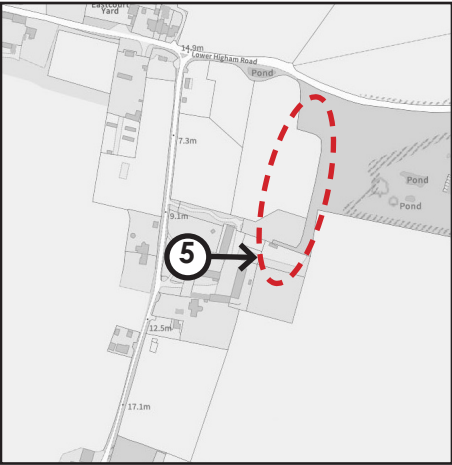
By year 15, the new planting and change of use would improve the outlook.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be negligible in terms of effects.

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be insignificant.



Significance of Effect - Year 1 (yellow) & year 15 (blue)

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT	MAJOR	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MODERATE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MINOR	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT
	NEGLIGIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
		SENSITIVITY OF RECEPTOR		



10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

VIEWPOINT 6 - Church Lane looking east.

VISUAL AMENITY BASELINE

Receptor Susceptibility

The view would be experienced from the roadside through a gap in the hedge. The susceptibility is considered to be low.

Features

The foreground comprises a minor road with a hedge filtering and limiting views into the Site. The value of the view is considered to be low.

Sensitivity

The sensitivity of the view is assessed as low.

Sensitivity of View

SUSCEPTIBILITY	HIGH	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH	HIGH
	MODERATE	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM to HIGH
	LOW	LOW	LOW to MEDIUM	MEDIUM
		LOW	MODERATE	HIGH
		VALUE		

Viewpoint Data

Date: 17.04.2025
Time: 13:29

Bearing: 90°
Distance to Site Centre: 160m

Viewpoint Elevation: 7m
Camera Height: 1.5m

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 1

Anticipated Effect upon View

The new parking area would be visible initially and potentially the tops of the new glamping units in the wooded area.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be minor (adverse).

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be insignificant.

EFFECTS ON VISUAL AMENITY - YEAR 15

Anticipated Effect upon View

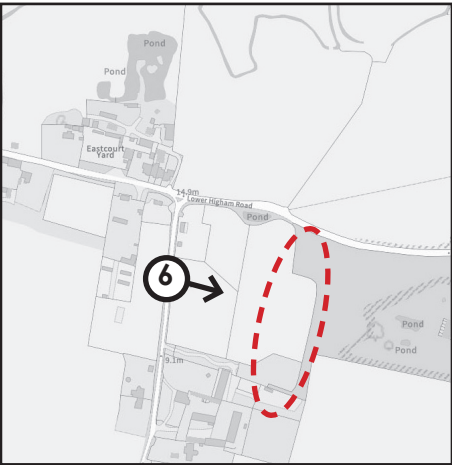
New planting would have grown up to form an effective screen.

Magnitude of Effect

The magnitude of the effect is considered to be negligible.

Significance of Effect

The effect is considered to be insignificant.

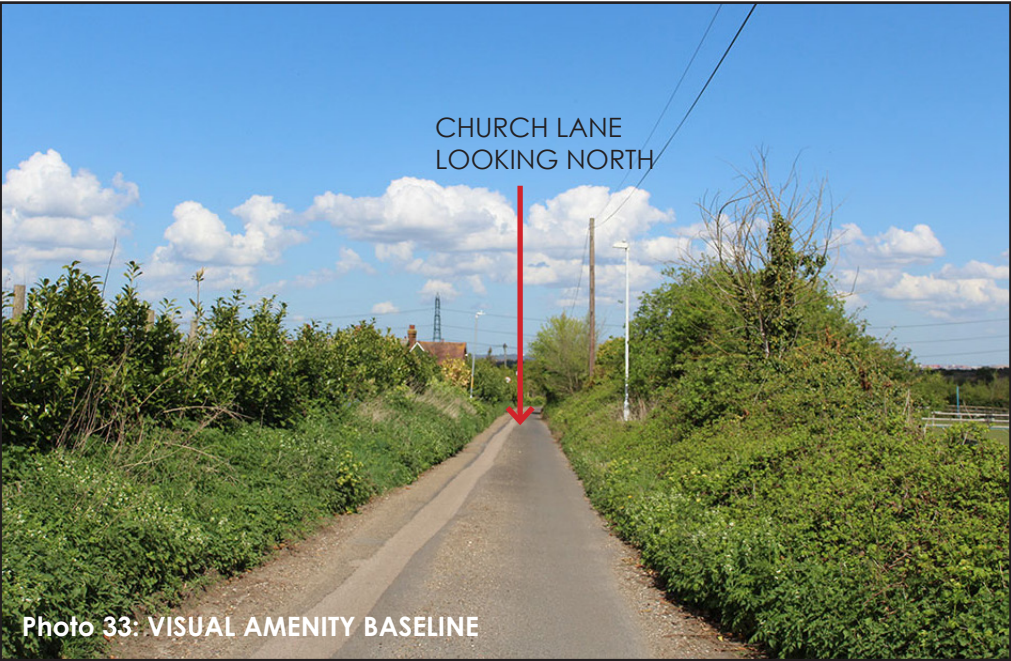


Significance of Effect - Year 1 (yellow) & year 15 (blue)

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT	MAJOR	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MODERATE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
	MINOR	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE	SIGNIFICANT
	NEGLIGIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT	INSIGNIFICANT	LOW SIGNIFICANCE
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
		SENSITIVITY OF RECEPTOR		

10.0 Visual Amenity Baseline & Visual Effects

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend





11.0 Visual Amenity & Visual Effects Summary

11.0 Visual Amenity & Visual Effects Summary

East Court Farm, Church Lane, Gravesend

EFFECTS ON RECEPTOR VIEWS

VIEWPOINT	LOCATION	DISTANCE (M)	SENSITIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF EFFECT	MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT	SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECT
1	First floor window views from Eastcourt Cottages, Lower Higham Road.	180m	MEDIUM	Initial view of glamping units and associated parking, but this would be screened with new planting in the long-term.	MINOR (ADVERSE) ↓ NEGLECTIBLE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE ↓ INSIGNIFICANT
2	View from Lower Higham Road looking south into the Site	30m	LOW	The retained vegetation means that any change would be hard to discern. Car park may just be visible initially.	MINOR (ADVERSE) ↓ NEGLECTIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT
3	View from PROW NG5 when travelling south-west towards the Site.	90m	MEDIUM	Tops of glamping units may just be visible in year 1, but existing woody vegetation would screen views completely by year 15.	NEGLECTIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT
4	Elevated long distance views from Longtens Cottages looking west.	900m	MEDIUM	The cottages may just be able to see the proposed glamping units on the southern edge, but distance and vegetation means that any change would be hard to discern.	MINOR (ADVERSE) ↓ NEGLECTIBLE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE ↓ INSIGNIFICANT
5	View from second (and possibly first) floor windows of East Court Manor (Grade II listed).	75m	MEDIUM	The elevated views from the house are currently of a storage yard, with vehicles and container units etc. Proposals would see glamping units and planting which is considered an improvement to the outlook.	MINOR (POSITIVE) ↓ NEGLECTIBLE	LOW SIGNIFICANCE ↓ INSIGNIFICANT
6	Oblique view east from Church Lane looking directly towards the Site.	160m	LOW	When travelling along Church Lane, it is likely that the new parking and tops of the glamping units would be visible initially, but over time, new planting would soften any impact to soften the impact of any change.	MINOR (ADVERSE) ↓ NEGLECTIBLE	INSIGNIFICANT



12.0 Summary

12.0 Summary

1. The Site currently consists of an area of rough woodland and associated access trackway, hardcore surfaced hard standing and driveway. Access to the Site is from a gateway leading in from Church Lane to the west. There is relatively little level change across the Site, with the lowest point to the north at approximately 5m above ordnance datum (AOD) up to 10m AOD to the south.
2. Located within the jurisdiction of Gravesham Borough Council (GBC). The landscape is defined by its mixed use which has evolved and changed according to demand and management techniques. The rolling large arable fields wrap around small clusters of dwellings like those on Church Lane, where smaller fields create a buffer between the houses and the large scale landscape beyond.
3. This appraisal considered both the physical effects the development might have on the landscape, its features and character, and on the visual amenity or the changes to views within the area. It also considered the potential effects on the Green Belt which would be limited due to the nature of the proposals and retention of the green setting.
4. The proposal is for seven new glamping units, associated parking and facilities. The addition of the proposed glamping site at this location would fit comfortably into the existing layout, utilising an existing piece of rough ground and the edge of a grazed paddock. The trees and hedges surrounding the Site add a sense of maturity and would continue to form a treed buffer between the Site and the wider setting. This characteristic would be preserved through the retention of trees and hedges and additional new planting to provide screening and to strengthen the wildlife value of the woody vegetation.
5. The impact of the proposals on the physical landscape would consist of new glamping units in the woody copse, parking and access, an outdoor gym facility and glamping units on an area of rough ground currently used for storage. There would be a limited amount of vegetative material removed to improve access, with that retained better managed to encourage healthy new growth. New planting would create wildlife corridor connections and screen the proposals.
6. In terms of landscape character, it is concluded that although the Proposals would have a slight impact on the immediate area, the Site does have some capacity to absorb development without undue detrimental effects to the Shorne and Higham Marshes landscape characteristics, i.e. gently rolling topography, arable farmland and open views to the Thames Estuary. The location of the Site adjacent to existing dwellings adjacent to a group of dwellings on Church Lane would mean that visual change would not be discordant with the existing local landscape setting.
7. The characteristics of the landscape surrounding the Site combine to form a relatively contained visual envelope; its location and boundary vegetation helps to limit views. This is reflected in the visual impact significance values of the six selected viewpoints, which range from close to long distance views towards the Site. The magnitude of the visual impact varies from minor (adverse) to negligible. The proximity of local properties and the degree of change to the outlook is in the generally softened by intervening properties (converted barns) and surrounding trees and hedges. The visual effects on properties adjacent and the wider landscape would be predominantly negligible in the long term.
8. When viewed from Church Lane, the outward appearance of the Site would not differ greatly to that currently seen as views are heavily filtered by the roadside hedges. The glamping units may be apparent when close, but the combined effects of new and existing vegetation should ensure that any impact is limited.
9. The introduction of a glamping site in this location would result in very little change to the local landscape character and any potential change would be limited to the immediate area. It is therefore considered that the proposals would not detract from the local setting.
10. Over time any visual effects would reduce with the increasing maturity of the existing and proposed vegetation, and the weathering of glamping units as they bed into the setting. The proposals would continue to maintain the well treed appearance of the lane and the proposals would not be discordant with the existing landscape character and any change could be largely mitigated, with little or no effect on the Green Belt.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Summary of LVIA methodology

This study follows the guidance in ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3’ (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition, April 2012). Impacts to landscape and visual receptors are considered separately. Landscape Character assessment methodology is set out in ‘Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland’ (Countryside Agency/Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).

Values of sensitivity of the receptor (landscape or view type) were cross-referenced against the size and nature of the change likely to occur. Text justifications are provided to validate and explain the judgements reached.

Landscape methodology

ESTABLISH VISUAL BASELINE AND IDENTIFY RECEPTORS

Physical receptors comprise landscape features such as trees or other natural aspects and are identified through site visits. More significant often is the impact on the local landscape character. Identify character receptors through evaluation of available character assessments as well as through site work to establish contribution made by site and any local variances. Assess value and sensitivity of receptors - see tables in Appendix 2.

PREDICT EFFECTS ON RECEPTORS

Describe the likely effects on each landscape receptor and assess the magnitude of the effects likely to arise. Include consideration of the effect of time passing by comparing likely effects at Year 1 to those likely at Year 15 to understand the effect of maturing vegetation. Effects should be assigned a positive, negative or neutral value.

ASSESS SIGNIFICANCE

Derive judgement of the significance of landscape effects by cross referencing the values of magnitude and sensitivity using the table below and through the application of professional judgements. Judgements must be described and justified fully in the text.

Visual methodology

ESTABLISH VISUAL BASELINE AND IDENTIFY RECEPTORS

Map the area within which the site is visible on foot or from a vehicle, assuming an observer eye height of approx. 1.7m. Within this ‘zone of visual influence’ identify the number and type of visual receptors. i.e. the routes, places and people, that are likely to be affected by the proposals. Select representative and specific viewpoints for the assessment of likely changes to the view and describe the current views. Provide illustrative photographs

of each viewpoint. Assess value and sensitivity of receptors - see tables in Appendix 3.

PREDICT EFFECTS ON VIEWPOINTS

Describe the likely visual effects on each viewpoint and assess the magnitude of effects likely to arise. Include consideration of the effect of time passing by comparing likely effects at Year 1 to those likely at Year 15 to understand the effect of maturing vegetation on the selected viewpoints. Visual effects should be assigned a positive, negative or neutral value.

ASSESS SIGNIFICANCE

Derive judgement of the significance of visual effects by cross referencing the values of magnitude and sensitivity using the table below and through the application of professional judgement . Judgements must be described and justified fully in the text.

Effect significance values			
Magnitude of change	Sensitivity of receptor		
	HIGH	MODERATE	LOW
Severe	Very - high	High	Medium - high
Substantial	high	Medium – high	Medium – low
Moderate	Medium – high	Medium - low	Low
Slight	Medium - low	Low	Negligible
Negligible	Low/negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Significance values in darker greys are deemed ‘significant’ and cause unacceptable effects and strenuous efforts should be made by designers to reduce the significance level.

Values in mid grey are not deemed significant and represent an acceptable level of landscape or visual impact. Values in light grey are dependent on context and significance should be fully discussed in the assessment. Efforts to mitigate effects should be fully explored to reduce impacts to an acceptable level. Visual assessment method.

Finally, proposals for mitigation are presented to prevent/avoid/reduce the potential negative effects identified. Any ‘significant’ residual effects remaining after mitigation should be identified.

Appendix 2: Landscape assessment - definitions of values used:

Landscape receptor: Sensitivity				
HIGH	MODERATE		LOW	
Receptor with low ability to absorb change without a substantial deterioration of character/quality, comprising significant loss of valued features or characteristics. Development would be highly intrusive and prominent.	Receptor with moderate ability to absorb some level of change without significant deterioration of character/quality. Some loss of valued features or characteristics. Development would be noticeable but not especially intrusive or discordant.		Receptor has good ability to absorb change with little deterioration of character/quality. Little or no loss of valued features or characteristics. Development would not be readily apparent or discordant.	
Landscape receptor: Value				
HIGH	MODERATE		LOW	
Receptor with international or national statutory designation for its character and scenic quality. Rare landscape character type that is irreplaceable or cannot easily be replicated.	Local designation for landscape quality and scenic character, such as Local Plan special landscape policy. Pleasant to ordinary characteristics with reasonably common landscape character type that is partly replaceable or can be replicated.		Landscapes with no statutory or policy designation, though likely valued at a community level. Ordinary everyday landscape with some detracting elements. Commonly found landscape character type, and/or that is replaceable or can be replicated.	
Landscape effects – Scale/Size				
NONE	NEGLECTIBLE	MINOR	MODERATE	SEVERE
No change to landscape character.	Very minor change to one or more characteristics or features, affecting a very small proportion of the landscape.	Noticeable change to one or more characteristics or features affecting a small proportion of the landscape.	Very noticeable change to more than one characteristic or features affecting a moderate proportion of the landscape.	Changes to more than one landscape characteristics or features, are dominating and will affect a large proportion of the landscape.
Magnitude of landscape impact				
NEGLECTIBLE	SLIGHT	MODERATE	MAJOR	SEVERE
Very minor/barely noticeable or short-term change to the landscape receptor.	Noticeable change, over a small area of the landscape receptor.	Some long-term or permanent change across a moderate proportion of the landscape.	Long-term substantial changes over a large proportion of the landscape.	Permanent wide-reaching effects with dominant visual changes of a greater proportion of the landscape.

Appendix 3: Visual assessment - definitions of values used:

Visual receptor: Sensitivity				
HIGH		MODERATE		LOW
People at points with direct views and where the view is of principal interest: - Dwellings with ground floor views from living areas. - Recreational areas or footpaths/trails/ waterways in designated landscapes where interest is likely to focus on views of the landscape.		People at points where the views is less direct or is of moderate interest: - Dwellings where view is from upstairs or is very oblique. - Rights of way/waterways/recreation areas in non-designated landscape. - Scenic drives or rail routes.		People at points or routes where the view is of cursory interest: - Places for sport or recreation where appreciation is not relevant. - Roads, railways in non-designated landscapes. - Places of work or public buildings where setting is not important to quality of working life.
Visual receptor: Value of view				
HIGH		MODERATE		LOW
View is over international or national statutory designated landscape, comprises other valued view with high levels of scenic value and/or strong cultural associations much valued by visitors as well as local people.		View is over landscape designated by policy at district level or comprises other valued view with some scenic value and/or cultural associations, occasionally valued by visitors as well as local people.		View is not over designated, or landscape designated at district level. Low scenic value and/or no cultural associations, value at local level only.
Visual effects – Scale/Size				
NONE	NEGLIGIBLE	MINOR	MODERATE	SEVERE
No change.	Unappreciable or very minor change to composition of existing view.	Noticeable change to small part of view.	Very noticeable change affecting a moderate proportion of the view.	Very large amount of visual change within the view.
Magnitude of visual impact				
NEGLIGIBLE	SLIGHT	MODERATE	MAJOR	SEVERE
Very minor/barely noticeable change would be experienced, no deterioration to visual amenity and/or be of short duration or be fully reversible.	Proposals would be a small/minor component within the view and cause little deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of short duration or be almost completely reversible.	Proposals would introduce a noticeable component within the view and cause some deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of medium duration or be partly reversible.	Proposals would introduce a large component within the view and cause deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of medium to long duration or be almost completely irreversible.	Proposals would become the dominant feature of a view, and cause major deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of long duration or be irreversible.

