

**Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment for: PAN8 Land north of Pangbourne Hill, Pangbourne**

## Methodology

### Basis of methodology

- 1.1 The methodology and assessment criteria used for this assessment are detailed below. The key texts on which methodology is based are the Scottish Natural Heritage and Natural England's *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (2017) and subsequent *Topic Paper 6 Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity* (2006) as well as the Landscape Institute / IEMA *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (2013) (GLVIA).
- 1.2 As in current best practice, sensitivity should be assessed against a specific change, and for this study, a development scenario based on densities set out in the West Berkshire Density Pattern Book (September 2019) has been assumed for each site as a guide against which sensitivity has been assessed.
- 1.3 Best practice guidance also recognises that a landscape with a high sensitivity does not automatically mean that landscape has a low capacity for change, but that 'capacity is all a question of the interaction between the sensitivity of the landscape, the type and amount of change and the way that the landscape is valued' (*Topic Paper 6, 2006, p12*). The sites have been assessed with the development scenario above in mind. Recommendations and comments have been added regarding the appropriate development of particular sites and to ensure raised awareness of potential unacceptable adverse effects on landscape character.
- 1.4 Proposals for any development would need to include appropriate, detailed and specialist input into siting, layout and design, and a full landscape and visual impact assessment should accompany a specific planning application relating to any site. Other studies including ecology, archaeology, arboriculture, traffic, soils may also be required to accompany specific proposals.
- 1.5 Details of the landscape and visual attributes for each site and an assessment of landscape and visual sensitivity (based on desk top studies and field surveys) are to be found on the Record Sheets

### Assessment process

- 1.6 The assessment methodology is a staged process. Landscape attributes (Table 3), and visual attributes (Table 4), are considered separately in accordance with the guidance in GLVIA. These attributes are used to identify the **intrinsic landscape and visual sensitivity** (Stages 1 and 2) of the site, or its sub-areas, on a scale of 5 levels from low to high as set out under the Matrix 1 and 2 below. Then the landscape and visual sensitivity of the site, or its sub-area, are merged to identify the **landscape character sensitivity** (Stage 3) as set out under Matrix 3 below.
- 1.7 The Study goes on to classify the **sensitivity of the site in its wider context** (Stage 4) into five categories. Then in Stage 5 the landscape character sensitivity is combined with the wider sensitivity as set out in Matrix 4 to identify the **overall landscape sensitivity** (Stage 5).
- 1.8 The **landscape value** (Stage 6) of each site, or sub-area, is assessed separately on a scale of 5 levels as set out under Table 5 below. Finally, the overall landscape character sensitivity is merged with the landscape value on a scale of 5 levels to give an assessment of **landscape capacity**

(Stage 7) on a scale of 5 levels as set out under Matrix 5 below. This 'bottom up' process is tested against the five criteria for landscape capacity (Stage 7) based on professional judgement and an overall full understanding of the sites.

**Assessment abbreviations and colour code:**



– Low Capacity



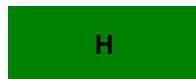
– Medium / Low Capacity



– Medium Capacity



– Medium / High Capacity



– High Capacity

**Stage 1: Determination of Visual Sensitivity**

- 1.9 This assessment is set out in the Record Sheets and Reports for each site, or sub-division.
- 1.10 The assessment considers the types of **views**, the nature of the **viewers** and the **potential to mitigate** visual impact on the identified viewpoints. The more viewpoints, the more exposed the site, the greater the sensitivity of the viewers (based on GLVIA) and the greater difficulties in screen planting to mitigate the impact without harm to the landscape and visual attributes of the site, the higher the sensitivity. As a final test all the sites were reviewed to assess the relative visual sensitivity of the sites and ensure that professional judgements have been consistent along the way. At this stage each level has been given a score from low = 1 to high = 5 and the scores are added up. Total scores for the site, or sub areas, are grouped as shown.

**Matrix 1: Visual sensitivity**

<b>General visibility</b>	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>Population</b>	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>Mitigation</b>	L (1)	M/L (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>OVERALL VISUAL SENSITIVITY</b>	<b>3-4 = low; 5- 7 = Med/low; 8-10 = Med; 11-13 = Med/high; 14-15 = High</b>				

**Table 3: Notes on Visual Sensitivity Assessment**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Higher sensitivity</b>	<b>Lower sensitivity</b>
<b>General Visibility</b>	Sequenced and exposed views toward site	Fleeting and limited views
	Most of site area visible	Little of site area visible
	Site is a key focus in available wider views	Site is an incidental part of wider views
	Site includes prominent and key landmarks	No landmarks present
	Important vistas or panoramas in/out of area	Unimportant or no vistas
	Prominent skyline	Not part of skyline
<b>Population</b>	Large extent or range of key sensitive receptors	Lack of sensitive receptors
	Large number of people see site	Few can see site
	Key view from a sensitive receptor	Views of site are unimportant
	Site is part of valued view	Site does not form a part of a valued view
	Site in key views to/across/out of town	Not part of setting of settlement view
<b>Mitigation</b>	Mitigation not very feasible	Mitigation possible
	Mitigation would interrupt key views	Would not obscure key views
	Mitigation would damage local character	Mitigation would not harm local character

**Stage 2: Determination of Landscape Sensitivity**

- 1.11 This assessment is set out in the Record Sheets and Reports for each site or sub-division.
- 1.12 The assessment considers the **natural** physical factors which make up the landscape character of the site, the **cultural** and built form aspects and the **perceptual** features. The greater the incidence of landscape interest and diversity, historically important features and cultural associations, and the greater the levels of access and perceptions of tranquillity and strong landscape pattern, the greater the sensitivity. As a final test all the sites were reviewed to assess the relative landscape sensitivity of the sites and ensure that professional judgements have been consistent along the way. At this stage each level has been given a score from low = 1 to high = 5 and the scores are added up. Total scores for the site, or sub areas, are grouped as shown.

**Matrix 2: Landscape sensitivity**

<b>Natural factors</b>	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>Cultural factors</b>	L (1)	L/M (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>Perceptual features</b>	L (1)	M/L (2)	M (3)	M/H (4)	H (5)
<b>OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY</b>	<b>3-4 = low; 5- 7 = Med/low; 8-10 = Med; 11-13 = Med/high; 14-15 = High</b>				

**Table 4: Notes on Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Higher sensitivity</b>	<b>Lower sensitivity</b>
<b>Natural</b>	Native woodland	Plantation
	Significant tree/groups	Insignificant/young trees
	Strong hedgerow structure with hedgerow trees	Weak structure and no trees
	Species rich grassland	Arable field
	Significant water feature(s)	No water feature(s)
	Varied landform and distinctive feature of the area	Uniform landform and lack of topographical features
	Pronounced Geology	Lack of geological features
	Soils significantly contribute to landscape features	Soils are not an important feature
	Complex and vulnerable landcover	Simple robust landcover
	Presence of other significant vegetation cover	Absence of other significant vegetation
	Presence of valued wildlife habitats	Absence of valued wildlife habitats
	Significant wetland habitats and meadows	Poor water-logged areas
	Presence of common land	No common land
	Presence of good heathland	Lost heathland
<b>Cultural</b>	Distinctive good quality boundary features	Generic or poor boundary features
	Evidence of surviving part of an historic landscape	No evidence
	Complex historic landscape pattern with good time depth	Simple modern landscape
	Evidence of historic park	No evidence
	Important to setting or in a Conservation Area	No relationship
	Includes a Scheduled Ancient Monument or Important to setting	No relationship
	Locally distinctive built form and pattern	Generic built form
	Important to setting of a Listed building	No relationship
	Distinctive strong settlement pattern	Generic or eroded pattern
	Locally significant private gardens	Poorly maintained gardens erode the character
	Evidence of visible social cultural associations	Lack of social cultural associations
<b>Perceptual</b>	Quiet area	Noisy area
	Absence of intrusive elements	Intrusive elements present
	Dark skies	High levels of light pollution
	Open exposed landscape	Enclosed visually contained landscape
	Unified landscape with strong landscape pattern	Fragmented/'bitty' or featureless landscape
	Well used area or appreciated by the public	Inaccessible by public
	Important rights of way	None present
	Well used and valued open air recreational facilities	None present
	Open access land	None present

**Stage 3: Determination of Landscape Character Sensitivity**

1.13 The landscape sensitivity and visual sensitivity are combined, as shown in Matrix 3, to give the **landscape character sensitivity**. The results of the assessment are set out in the Reports for each site or sub-division.

**Matrix 3: Landscape character sensitivity**

<b>VISUAL SENSITIVITY</b>	High	M	M/H	M/H	H	H
	Med/High	M/L	M	M/H	M/H	H
	Medium	M/L	M/L	M	M/H	M/H
	Med/Low	L	M/L	M/L	M	M/H
	Low	L	L	M/L	M/L	M
	Low	Med/Low	Medium	Med/High	High	
<b>LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY</b>						

**Stage 4: Determination of Wider Sensitivity – The Contribution of the Site to the Wider Landscape and Settlement Edge Pattern**

1.14 Stages 1 to 3 have led to a comprehensive assessment of the intrinsic landscape sensitivity of the individual sites. However, the sensitivity of each site to development is also affected by its importance, and contribution, to the adjacent wider rural landscape and the influence of, and pattern of uses within, the settlement edge. The relative wider sensitivity of each site is assessed as follows:

**Low wider sensitivity** – The site is heavily influenced by the built form of the adjacent urban settlement and not an important part of the adjacent wider landscape

**Medium/Low wider sensitivity** – The site is heavily influenced by urban fringe uses and has views of some parts of the adjacent urban settlement but shares some of the characteristics of the adjacent wider landscape

**Medium wider sensitivity** – The site is partly influenced by urban fringe uses but shares many of the characteristics of the wider landscape, with good physical and visual links to the wider landscape

**Medium/High wider sensitivity** – The site has strong physical and visual links to the wider landscape and these outweigh any minor impacts from the adjacent urban settlement

**High wider sensitivity** – The site is an important part of the wider landscape with which it has strong visual and landscape links. The nearby settlement has little impact on the site.

1.15 The results of the assessment are set out in the reports for each site or sub-division.



**Stage 5: Determination of Overall Landscape Sensitivity**

1.16 The **overall landscape sensitivity** is determined by combining the landscape character sensitivity with the wider sensitivity as shown in Matrix 4. The results of the assessment are set out in the Report Sheets for each site or sub-division.

**Matrix 4: Overall landscape sensitivity**

<b>LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY</b>	High	H	H	M/H	M/H	M
	Med/High	H	M/H	M/H	M	M/L
	Medium	M/H	M/H	M	M/L	M/L
	Med/Low	M/H	M	M	M/L	M/L
	Low	M	M	M/L	M/L	L
		High	Med/High	Medium	Med/Low	Low
<b>WIDER SENSITIVITY</b>						

**Stage 6: Determination of Landscape Value**

1.17 The model for this work follows GLVIA 2013.

**Table 5 - LANDSCAPE VALUE CRITERIA**

Value	Typical criteria	Typical scale	Typical examples
<b>High</b>	Very High importance (or quality) and rarity. No or limited potential for substitution	International	World Heritage Site SAC
<b>Medium/high</b>	High importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	National	National Park/ AONB SSSI EH Register of Parks and Gardens Grade I and II* listed buildings and their settings National recreational route or area e.g. Chiltern Way
<b>Medium</b>	Medium importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Regional	Setting of AONB / National Park Regional Park (i.e. Colne Valley) Local landscape designation Landscape value identified in the Local Plan SINC/Conservation Areas and their setting Grade II listed buildings and their setting Local Wildlife sites Regional recreational route/area e.g. South Bucks Way
<b>Medium/low</b>	Local importance (or quality) and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Local	Undesignated but value expressed through publications such as Village Design Statements Local buildings of historic interest and their settings Local recreational facilities of landscape value
<b>Low</b>	Low importance (or quality) or rarity		Area of little value and identified for improvement

**Designations:** The location of the site within a designated area, or the presence of a designated area within the site, is an important measure of the value society gives to the landscape of the site. These include landscape, historic and ecological designations and recreational routes at a national/international level, regional or district level, or at the local level.

**Local Associations:** These are included as far as possible using available data. In addition to the more formal designations above, sites may sometimes have special scenic value, associations or meanings to the local community and therefore make a contribution to the value of the local landscape. This has

been assessed through a review of readily available evidence of community value. Further research may be required as part of any detailed landscape and visual impact assessment.

**Stage 7: Determination of Landscape Capacity**

1.18 Landscape capacity is the ability, or otherwise, of the sites to accommodate a certain amount of development. The landscape capacity is determined by combining the overall landscape sensitivity with the landscape value as shown in Matrix 5. The results of the assessment are set out in the Report Sheets for each site or sub-division.

**Matrix 5 LANDSCAPE CAPACITY**

<b>OVERALL LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY</b>	High	M	M/L	L	L	L
	Med/High	M/H	M	M/L	L	L
	Medium	H	M/H	M	M/L	L
	Med/Low	H	H	M/H	M	M/L
	Low	H	H	H	M/H	M
	Low	Med/Low	Medium	Med/High	High	
	<b>LANDSCAPE VALUE</b>					

1.19 The results from the matrix are subsequently tested against the following classifications for each level of landscape capacity, building on classifications used by the authors of this Report for other capacity studies.

**Low capacity** – The landscape could not accommodate areas of new development without a significant and adverse impact on the landscape character and visual amenity. Occasional, very small-scale development may be possible, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

**Medium / Low capacity** – A low amount of development can be accommodated only in limited situations, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

**Medium capacity** - The landscape could be able to accommodate areas of new development in some parts, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. There are landscape and visual constraints and therefore the key landscape and visual characteristics must be retained and enhanced.

**Medium/ High capacity** – The area is able to accommodate larger amounts of development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. Certain landscape and visual features in the area may require protection.

**High capacity** – Much of the area is able to accommodate significant areas of development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

### Stage 8: Determination of Landscape Capacity within the Site

- 1.20 Each site report contains an overall plan showing the landscape capacity classification of the site at the beginning of the site report; and an overall plan showing the extent of the site recommended for further consideration as a site and the recommended location.
- 1.21 Each site is examined in detail to determine the potential area for development in the light of the landscape capacity and landscape and visual constraints on the site. In some cases, the whole site will be ruled out for development. In others the whole site will be included as a potential site, subject to the provision of Green Infrastructure. However, in many cases we recommend a 'reduced area' which identifies a part of the site that could be considered further as a potential site subject to the provision of Green Infrastructure. The 'reduced area' is that part of the site that could be developed whilst conserving (and potentially in some cases indirectly enhancing) the key landscape and visual characteristics of the site and its landscape setting; and whilst conserving and reinforcing the influence of the underlying landscape on the settlement pattern of the adjacent town or village. The policy constraints affecting sites within the AONB have also been taken into account.
- 1.22 The capacity of each site is based on densities set out in the West Berkshire Density Pattern Book (September 2019) for the site or reduced area.
- 1.23 Study Constraints
- The sites have largely been assessed from publicly accessible viewpoints including the local road network, public rights of way, public open space and other publicly owned land.
  - Site photographs included in this study are representative of key views of the site.
  - Views from the surrounding countryside or urban areas have been assessed by noting intervisibility from within or adjacent to the site, but the Study does not include an assessment of the potential zone of visual influence of any development on each site.

- The majority of study fieldwork was undertaken in October 2020 with summer vegetation.
- The West Berkshire Density Pattern Book (September 2019) has been used to guide capacity. Time limitations have meant that no public consultation has taken place during the Study.

**West Berkshire Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment 2020 RECORD SHEET**

<b>Site:</b>	Land north of Pangbourne Hill
<b>Site character areas:</b>	
<b>Date of site survey:</b>	14/10/2020
<b>Surveyors:</b>	LA
<b>Weather/visibility:</b>	Clear and dry
<b>LCA:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• North Wessex Downs AONB: LT2 Downland with Woodland</li><li>• West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment 2019: LCA WC1: Basildon Elevated Wooded Chalk with Slopes</li><li>• Setting of Chilterns AONB: LCA11 Thames Valley and Fringes</li></ul>
<u>North Wessex Downs AONB: LCA 2B Ashampstead Downs</u>	
<b>Key characteristics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Elevated plateau incised by dry valleys</li><li>• Extensive interconnected semi natural woodland, much of ancient origin, on the valley sides and steep slopes creating a strong sense of enclosure</li><li>• Large scale open arable summits</li><li>• Pasture, including remnant herb rich chalk grassland</li><li>• Settlements consisting of hamlets and small villages of clustered form</li><li>• An intricate network of minor roads, rural lanes and tracks</li></ul>	
<b>LCA landscape and visual Sensitivities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Localised visual intrusions on the open summits and skylines, which would impact on the secluded rural character</li></ul>	
<b>Key Management Requirements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The overall management requirement is conserve and enhance the quiet rural character of the Ashampstead Downs with key features to be conserved and enhanced are the open downland summits and views</li></ul>	

LCA WC1: Basildon Elevated Wooded Chalk with Slopes

**Key Characteristics**

- Elevated and dramatic rolling topography underlain by chalk geology
- Land use is mixed agriculture divided into a varied field pattern, with areas of woodland and historic parkland
- Extensive areas of semi-natural habitat including ancient woodland and calcareous grassland
- Spectacular views from higher ground, sometimes interrupted by energy infrastructure
- A sense of enclosure is often experienced due to the frequent woodland, creating an intimate and tranquil landscape

**Valued Features and Qualities**

- Nationally valued landscape which forms part of the North Wessex Downs AONB
- Generally, sparsely settled with strong rural character
- Expansive open views and setting for the River Thames and Chilterns AONB

**Detractors**

- Impacts of future tall structures on skylines

**Landscape Strategy**

- Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the nationally designated landscape of the North Wessex Downs AONB
- Conserve and enhance the tranquil rural qualities and sparsely settled character

**Landscape designations:**

North Wessex Downs AONB

**VISUAL SENSITIVITY**

<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<p><b>Views into the site from:</b> Rear gardens/dwellings on Sheffield Close Rear gardens/dwellings on Riverview Road Private views from the northern Thames valley side within the Chilterns AONB</p>	<p><b>Types of viewers:</b> Local Residents Private views from Chilterns AONB on opposite valley side</p>	<p><b>Opportunities for mitigation and landscape compatibility of mitigation:</b> Proposed woodland planting would link with recently planted areas of trees and the wider vegetation pattern</p>
<p><b>Views out of the site to:</b> Opposite River Thames valley side within the Chilterns AONB Rear garden boundary of dwellings on Riverview Road Rear garden boundaries within the new adjacent development on Sheffield Close</p>	<p><b>Magnitude of viewers (level of use and popularity):</b> A high number of the views will be from private land</p>	<p><b>Impacts of mitigation:</b> Change of landscape character from open to more enclosed. Loss of views of open skyline from opposite valley side</p>
<p><b>Does the site form part of a skyline?</b> Yes</p>	<p><b>Visual perceptions (activity and expectations of local visual receptors):</b> AONB visitors</p>	
<p><b>Panoramic views:</b> No</p>		
<p><b>Landmark features:</b> No</p>		
<p><b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium</p>	<p><b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium</p>	<p><b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium</p>
<p><b>Visual sensitivity score: Medium</b></p>		



<i>General visibility</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Mitigation potential</i>
<p><b>Additional comments:</b> The assessment was undertaken within the summer months when the surrounding woodland/ trees/ hedgerows would have an effect on the visibility of the site, especially from the opposite valley side within the Chilterns AONB. Although the site is not visible from public viewpoints it is located on the higher part of the valley side and above the outer 70m AOD contour where the main part of the settlement of Pangbourne is located</p>		

**LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY**

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<p><b>Topography and landform:</b>                      Located on the upper valley side containing the River Thames                      The site area extends from 65m AOD from the northern corner up to 80m AOD along the western boundary</p>	<p><b>Boundary features other than vegetation:</b>                      Rear garden boundaries of new development on Sheffield Close</p>	<p><b>Tranquillity – Noise levels:</b>                      Good, to the south, but compromised by the railway to the north</p>
<p><b>Geological features:</b>                      Small dry valley part of a chalkland landscape</p>	<p><b>Historic landscapes:</b>                      Part of <i>Re-organised fields</i></p>	<p><b>Tranquillity – Visual intrusion / detractors:</b>                      Adjacent housing/ rear garden boundaries</p>
<p><b>Soil quality:</b>                      Grade 2/very good and Grade 3/good to moderate</p>	<p><b>Parkland features:</b>                      None</p>	<p><b>Tranquillity – Light pollution/dark skies:</b>                      At the southern end the level of light pollution will be affected by the adjacent new development. Northern end adjacent properties on Riverview Road, light pollution will be less apparent due to the intervening garden trees/vegetation and the properties at a lower level. Development on this site will extend light pollution further out of the valley into the adjacent area containing darker skies</p>
<p><b>Water features:</b>                      None</p>		
<p><b>Landcover and land use:</b>                      Grassland and grazing</p>	<p><b>Conservation Area:</b>                      N/A</p>	
<p><b>Tree belts, individual trees and riverside trees:</b>                      None</p>	<p><b>Landscape features of CA:</b>                      Gently rounded with dry valley and spurs as part of the elevated chalk plateau</p>	
<p><b>Hedgerows and hedgerow trees:</b>                      None</p>	<p><b>Built form:</b>                      None</p>	<p><b>Accessibility by public footpath:</b>                      No</p>
<p><b>Woodland and copses:</b>                      None</p>	<p><b>Setting of listed buildings:</b>                      None</p>	<p><b>Open access areas:</b>                      No</p>

Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment for sites within West Berkshire

<i>Natural factors</i>	<i>Cultural factors</i>	<i>Perceptual features</i>
<b>Wetland and meadow:</b> No	<b>Scheduled Ancient Monuments:</b> None	<b>Recreational areas:</b> No
<b>Common land:</b> No	<b>Settlement pattern:</b> Pangbourne - located at junction of two rivers, with some development extending up river valley sides	
<b>Heathland:</b> None	<b>Contribution of private gardens to landscape character:</b> Adjacent rear gardens on Riverview Road forms a soft/vegetated edge to the settlement of Pangbourne	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity - Elements of openness/enclosure:</b> Elevated site, extending onto out above Pangbourne onto areas of open downland which forms part of the open setting of Pangbourne
<b>Other significant vegetation cover:</b> None	<b>Cultural associations:</b> None	<b>Aesthetic sensitivity – landscape pattern:</b> Part of the valley side open setting of Pangbourne
<b>BAP/Phase 1 records:</b> N/A	<b>Features of cultural importance:</b> None	
<b>Presence of SSSI/SINC/local wildlife designation/Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland:</b> None		
<i>Other information</i>		
<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium/low	<b>Sensitivity score:</b> Medium
<b>Landscape sensitivity score:</b> Medium/Low		
<b>Additional comments:</b> Recent tree planting along the western edge of the site will in time make this site more enclosed		

**Relationship with the wider landscape/townscape**

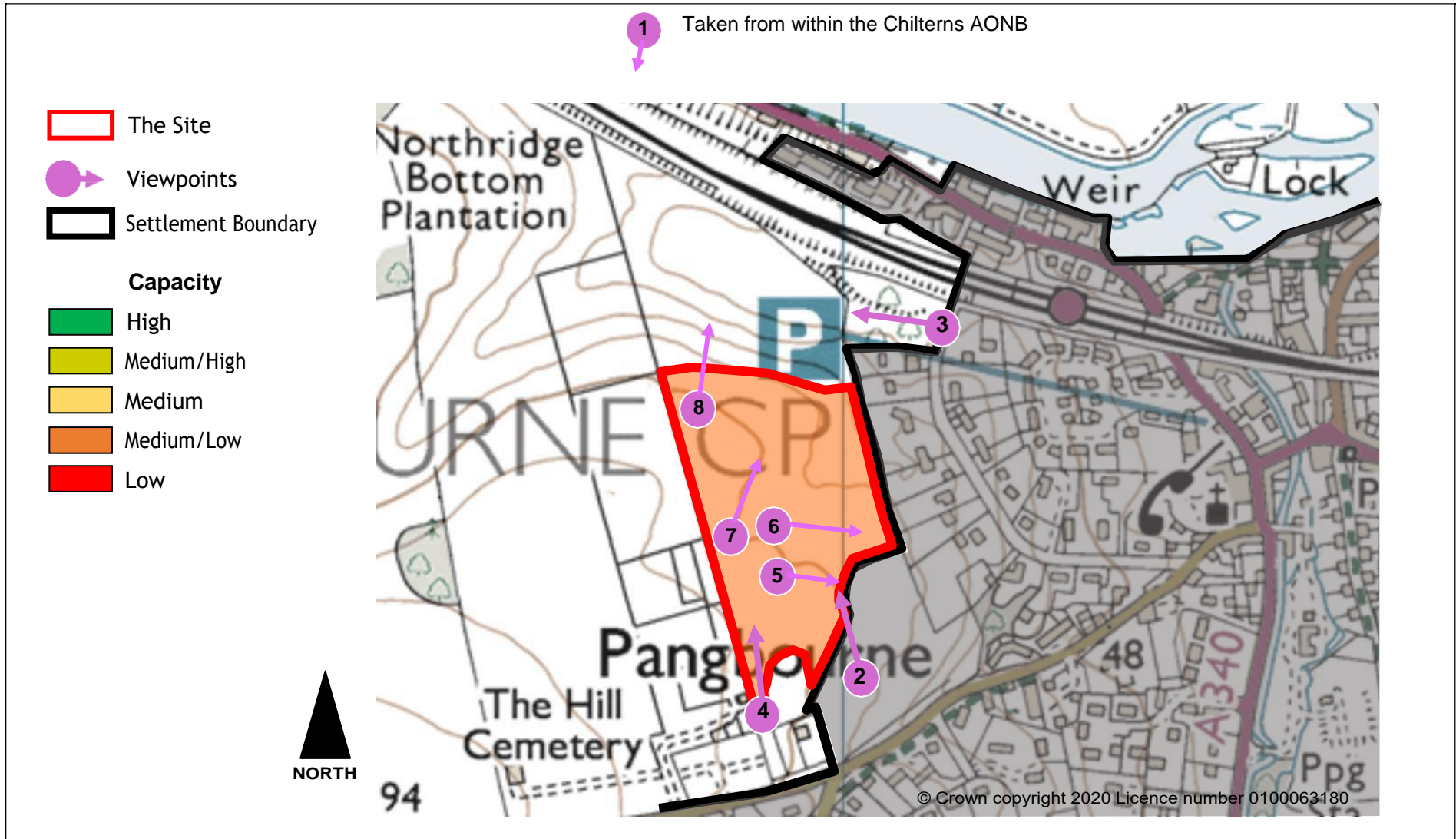
<b>Adjacent settlement:</b> Pangbourne
<b>Character of the urban edge:</b> The Eastern boundary of the site is separated from Pangbourne by mature trees/hedgerows in long rear gardens with large detached dwellings on Riverview Road; as set out within the <i>West Berks Quality Design SPD Part 3: Residential Character Framework</i> , this adjacent area of housing is described as <i>semi-rural</i> due to its <i>very low density</i> . The new housing development off Sheffield Road is of a higher density of detached dwellings with some of 2.5 storeys, this forms a small part of the southern boundary of the site. The existing settlement edge off Riverview Road sits below the 70m AOD contour, with dwellings located at a lower elevation at around 65m AOD. The rear garden boundaries of the new development off Sheffield Close align the 75m AOD contour, with the housing set at a further lower level from 73.6m AOD to 72m AOD.
<b>Presence in a floodplain:</b> No
<b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside:</b> Originally part of open arable/grass field pattern west of Pangbourne, although recent tree planting has been undertaken towards the western boundary of the field breaking up the original open character. Straddles slopes above Pangbourne facing the Chilterns AONB
<b>Character of adjacent village(s):</b> N/A
<b>Historic links with the wider area if known:</b> Part of area of reorganised fields, formerly pre 18th century irregular fields extending into the wider landscape
<b>Ecological links with the wider area if known:</b> None known
<b>Recreational links with the wider area:</b> Straddles slopes above the village facing the Chilterns AONB

**VDS/Parish Plan – relevant extracts:**

Pangbourne Village Plan 2005

- The area between Pangbourne Road and the River Thames floodplain is a dramatic landscape of steeply sloping land, dropping to the Thames valley and looking across to the Chilterns AONB.
- Strong contrast between settlement and surrounding countryside
- Contrast between floodplain to east and hills to west
- Views of the river and river meadows
- Views from Pangbourne Hill to the Chilterns

**Site:** Land north of Pangbourne Hill



The site lies within the following LCA, for which the key requirements are set out below:

North Wessex Downs AONB: LT2 Downland with Woodland

*Key management requirements:*

- The overall management requirement is conserve and enhance the quiet rural character of the Ashampstead Downs. The key features to be conserved and enhanced are the open downland summits and views

West Berks Landscape Character Assessment 2019

*Landscape Strategy:*

- Conserve and enhance the special qualities of the nationally designated landscape of the North Wessex Downs AONB
- Conserve and enhance the tranquil rural qualities and sparsely settled character

**Site description:**

The site constitutes part of a grass field, located on the upper side of the River Thames valley. Located adjacent the western edge of the settlement of Pangbourne. The settlement of Pangbourne, and its hinterland, has two distinct character areas: the river valleys of the Pang and Thames in the north, east and south-east; and the rising open hillsides of Ashampstead Downs in the west and south-west where the site is located. Pangbourne remains compact and, despite more recent development up the valley hillsides, retains its importance as a settlement on the confluence of these two rivers.

**Key landscape planning factors:**

The site is located as follows:

- Within the North Wessex Downs AONB
- Within the setting of the Chilterns AONB
- Outside the settlement boundary of Pangbourne



Viewpoints:



**Photo 1:** Summer view from the northern River Thames valley side (within the Chilterns AONB) across to the open southern valley side which the site forms part of



**Photo 2:** View into the site, with the new dwellings screening the long views across to the northern valley side within the Chilterns AONB



**Photo 3:** View from the end of Riverview Road into the adjacent open countryside, although this area is not included within the site



**Photo 4:** View along northern edge towards the site, showing the new tree planting on the western boundary





**Photo 5:** From the centre of the site looking towards the adjacent area of new development (HSA21)



**Photo 6:** From the centre of the site looking north towards the Chilterns and the northern Thames Valley side



**Photo 7:** From centre of the site looking north west towards the Chilterns AONB







**Photo 8:** From the top of the site looking towards the Chilterns AONB

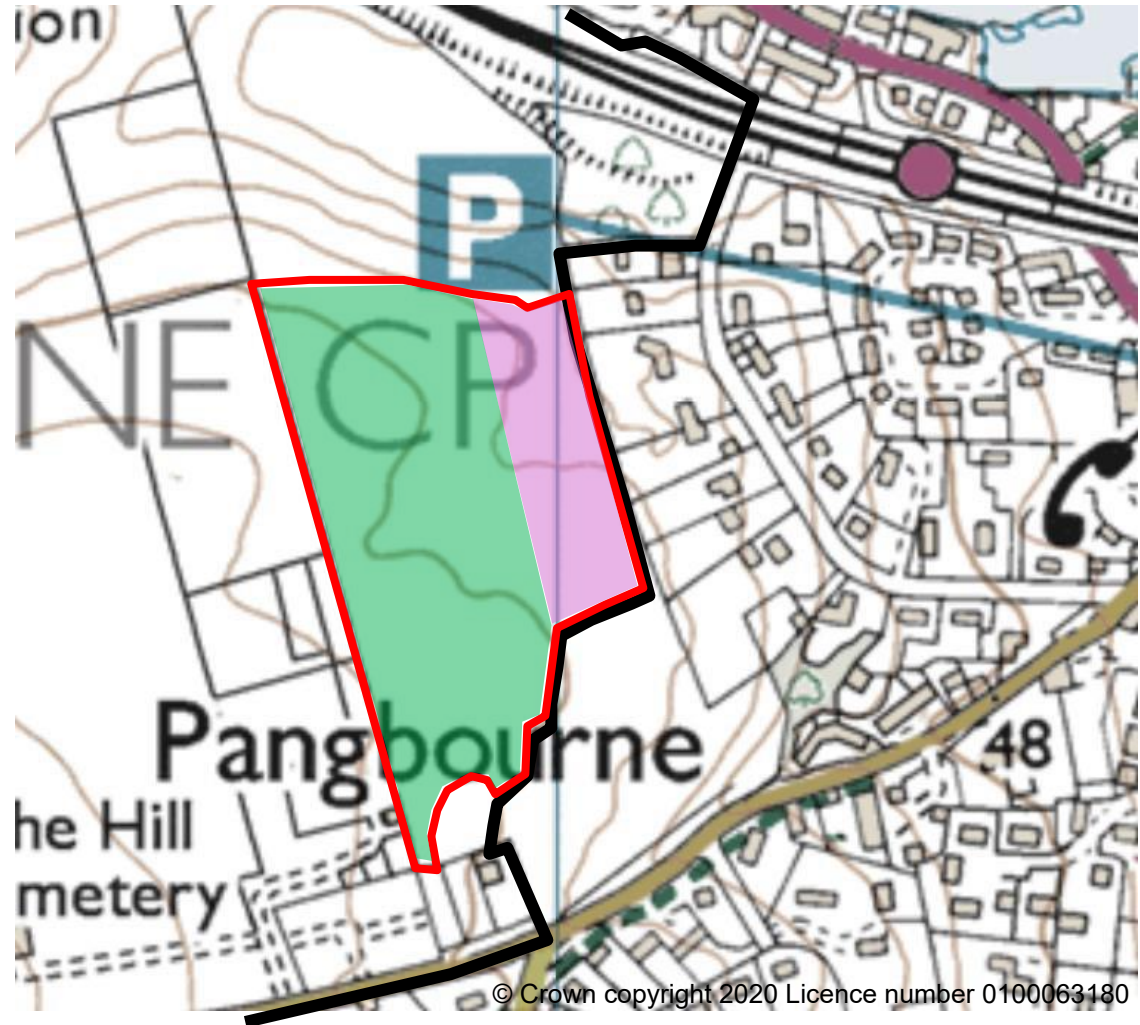
**Please refer to section 3 methodology of the assessment process**

1. **Visual Sensitivity: Medium**
  - An elevated location above the settlement edge of Pangbourne
  - Potential views from opposite valley side within Chilterns AONB
  - Limited views from adjacent public areas
  - Mitigation planting would change the open character of the landscape, but could reinforce the wooded character of the valley side
  
2. **Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/low**
  - Open area of grassland as part of larger field
  - Located on the upper valley side, straddling the adjacent plateau landscape
  - Includes an incised dry valley
  
3. Landscape Character Sensitivity: Medium/Low (combines 1 and 2)
  
4. **Wider Landscape Sensitivity: Medium/High**
  - The site has strong physical and visual links to the wider landscape and these outweigh any minor impacts from the adjacent settlement of Pangbourne
  
5. Overall Landscape Sensitivity: Medium (combines 3 and 4)
  
6. **Landscape Value: Medium/High**
  - Located within the North Wessex Downs AONB
  - Faces the Chilterns AONB
  
7. Landscape Capacity: Medium/Low (combines 5 and 6)

<p><b>Relationship of site to <i>Pangbourne</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjoining housing within Pangbourne (along Riverview Road) is semi-rural in character with the landscape being the dominant characteristic</li> <li>• Proposed site includes an area on the open valley side above 75m, which is not a characteristic location for development within Pangbourne</li> </ul>
<p><b>Relationship with adjacent wider countryside</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part of open grass field pattern west of Pangbourne, although there are new areas of recent woodland planting along the western boundary of the site</li> <li>• Straddles slopes above Pangbourne facing the Chilterns AONB</li> <li>• Part of an area of reorganised fields, formerly pre 18th century irregular fields extending into the wider landscape</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential impact on key landscape characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No impact on woodland or pasture or particular landscape features</li> <li>• Loss of open grass field which forms a part of the wider open landscape on the hillside west of Pangbourne</li> <li>• Development on the western part of the site would extend the village envelope above the predominant 70m AOD to above 75m AOD</li> <li>• Tranquillity of northern part of the site is already compromised by the railway line</li> <li>• Access would be a continuation from the existing new access road for the recent adjacent development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential impact on key visual characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development particularly on the higher slopes would be prominent in views from the west, the Chilterns AONB; development on the lower eastern slopes would be less intrusive</li> <li>• Views from the river corridor largely unaffected</li> <li>• Potential loss of panoramic views from new road into development across the Thames Valley to the Chilterns</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential impact on key settlement characteristics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development over the whole site would not be in keeping with the pattern of the adjacent semi-rural density of development along Riverview Road</li> <li>• Development on higher ground could potentially impact on the development free views from the Chilterns AONB</li> <li>• Development on higher ground would be out of character with the rest of the settlement</li> </ul>
<p><b>Potential impact on the AONB, <i>including the Chilterns AONB</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development sited on the exposed open slopes is likely to have a detrimental effect on the special qualities of the North Wessex Downs AONB and the settlement of Pangbourne</li> <li>• Potential views of the development against the skyline as seen from the Chilterns AONB</li> </ul>
<p><b>Landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffer planting along western edge should be designed to conserve and enhance the AONB, as well as mitigating any visual effect of development on lower ground</li> <li>• A low density of development on the lower ground would allow space within the private gardens for tree planting to develop which in time will break up the roofline</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conclusion and recommendations</b></p> <p>As seen with the adjacent area of new development, this site is within an elevated location, which could be visible from the opposite valley side within the Chilterns AONB. To maintain the open upper valley side, a special quality of this area of the AONB only the lower parts of the site below 70mAOD could be developed without damaging the natural beauty of the AONB</p>



-  The site
-  Settlement Boundary
-  With potential for development
-  Considered inappropriate for development



**Site Land to the north of Pangbourne Hill:** Recommended developable site area and Green Infrastructure