



**Stage 2 Matters Statement for Stevenage Borough Council Local
Plan Examination**

Matter 12 – The Natural and Historic Environment

Statement of behalf of Miller Homes and Bellway Homes

Stevenage Local Plan Examination

Stage 2 Matters and Questions

Matter 12 – The Natural and Historic Environment

Question 1: Has the Plan had regard to heritage assets, including the statutory test set out in S66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990?

Question 2: Are the policies in accordance with the advice in the Framework in relation to historic environment?

1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of Miller Homes and Bellway Homes in relation to Stage 2, Matter 12, Questions 1 and 2.

1.2 A number of the heritage assets within the Borough of Stevenage are located within proximity to proposed site allocation HO3: North Stevenage. As such, in considering whether the Plan has had regard to heritage assets, the statutory test and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), is strongly linked with the HO3 allocation. Whilst the impact of the proposed allocation on heritage assets will be considered at Stage 3, Matter 16 hearing session, this Statement has been prepared to assist the Inspector in considering whether the Plan has had regard to heritage assets.

1.3 The proposals for North Stevenage are significantly advanced and a planning application is due to be submitted shortly. As part of this preparation, an assessment of the effects and impact on heritage assets in proximity to the site has been undertaken within the Environmental Statement and Heritage Statement. Further detail will be provided at the site specific session; however a summary of the findings is set out below to assist the Inspector in considering the historic environment matters for the Plan as a whole.

1.4 The Heritage Statement has identified the following heritage assets that have potential to be affected by the development of allocation HO3:

- Chesfield Park (a non-designated heritage asset) adjoining the north-east boundary of the site;
- Rooks Nest House (a Grade I listed building – see Appendix A) close to the south-east boundary;
- Rooks Nest Farmhouse and outbuilding (two Grade II listed buildings – see Appendix A) close to the south-east boundary);
- The Old Bury (a Grade II * listed building – see Appendix A) close to the southern corner of the site;

- Church of St. Nicholas (a Grade I listed building – see Appendix A) close to the southern corner of the site; and
- The St. Nicholas / Rectory Lane Conservation Area.

1.5 The development proposals, which include HO3 cover a site area of approximately 75 hectares of which almost 46 hectares are within the conservation area. Less than 6 hectares of the section of the site within the conservation area would be used for roads and buildings; the remainder (St. Nicholas' Meadows) would be landscaped to restore the approximate appearance of this area in the late-nineteenth century and would be accessible to the public through the retention of existing footpaths and the creation of a new network of footpaths. Guiding Principles for the Establishment of St Nicholas' Meadows have been prepared by Woodhall Planning and Conservation which are attached as Appendix 1. These principles are based on extensive consideration of the historic context and seek to minimise the impact of the development on heritage assets.

1.6 The Environmental Statement Chapter includes a summary of the effects of the development proposals which are set out below:

Receptor	Nature of Effect	Impact Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures	Residual impact	Significance of effect
Construction					
St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area	Construction of buildings within and adjacent to designated area, with associated noise, dust and lighting	Moderate Adverse	CEMP	Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse
Rooks Nest House, Rooks Nest Farmhouse and outbuilding, The Old Bury, and Church of St. Nicholas	Construction within setting of listed buildings	Minor Adverse	CEMP	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Chesfield Park	Construction within setting of the park	Minor Adverse	CEMP	Minor Adverse	Slight Adverse
All other heritage assets	Construction at some distance, with associated noise, dust and lighting	Negligible	CEMP	Negligible	Neutral

Receptor	Nature of Effect	Impact Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures	Residual impact	Significance of effect
Completion and Occupation					
St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area	Additional buildings within designated area and increased urbanisation	Minor Adverse	Landscaping and tree planting incorporated into the scheme, including St. Nicholas' Meadows and the orchard	Minor Adverse	Slight Adverse
Rooks Nest House, Rooks Nest Farmhouse and outbuilding, The Old Bury, and Church of St. Nicholas	Increased urbanisation	Minor Adverse	Landscaping and tree planting incorporated into the scheme, including St. Nicholas' Meadows and the orchard	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Chesfield Park	Increased urbanisation	Minor Adverse	Landscaping and tree planting incorporated into the scheme, including St. Nicholas' Meadows	Minor Adverse	Slight Adverse
All other heritage assets	Increased urbanisation	Negligible	N/A	Negligible	Neutral
Cumulative Effect					
St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area	Additional buildings within designated area and increased urbanisation	Minor Adverse	Landscaping and tree planting incorporated into the scheme, including St. Nicholas' Meadows and the orchard	Minor Adverse	Slight Adverse
Rooks Nest House, Rooks Nest Farmhouse and outbuilding, The Old Bury, and Church of St. Nicholas	Increased urbanisation	Minor Adverse	Landscaping and tree planting incorporated into the scheme, including St. Nicholas' Meadows and the orchard	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse
Chesfield Park	Increased	Minor	Landscaping and tree planting incorporated	Moderate	Slight Adverse

Receptor	Nature of Effect	Impact Prior to Mitigation	Mitigation / Enhancement Measures	Residual impact	Significance of effect
	urbanisation	Adverse	into the scheme, including St. Nicholas' Meadows	Adverse	
All other heritage assets	Increased urbanisation	Negligible	N/A	Negligible	Neutral

1.7 As a result of the above, the Heritage Statement concludes in relation to the NPPF, the following:

“The Minor Adverse Impacts on above-ground heritage assets that have been identified are considered to result in ‘less than substantial harm’ to the significance of the designated heritage assets (the Conservation Area and the listed buildings). ‘Less than substantial harm’ can range from very minor (almost negligible) harm to harm that is so great that it would come close to being ‘substantial harm’ (that is harm that ‘... seriously affects a key element’ of the special interest of a heritage asset - see paragraph 18a-017-20140306 of the Planning Policy Guidance). It is considered that, in relation to the Conservation Area, the level of harm is at approximately the mid-point of the range of ‘less than substantial harm’. In relation to the listed buildings, it is considered to be in the lower half of the range.”

1.8 In addition to the work undertaken by the Council in addressing the heritage impacts of the Plan, the assessment above demonstrates that significant consideration has been given to the potential impact on heritage assets in relation to site allocation HO3, including to the statutory test and the NPPF. It is concluded that the Plan can therefore be found sound in relation to the consideration of heritage assets.

Stage 2 Matters Statement for Stevenage Borough Council Local Plan Examination in Public-Matter 12 Question 4

A Report on behalf of Miller Homes and Bellway Homes

January 2017

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Response

Figures

- Figure 1 Landscape Designations
- Figure 2 National and District Landscape Character Areas
- Figure 3 Local Landscape Character Areas
- Figure 4 Landscape Analysis
- Figure 5 Topographic Context
- Figure 6 Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This statement has been prepared in relation to Matter 12 (the natural and historic environment) question 4:

“There is a significant amount of local objection to the development of land referred to locally as ‘Forster Country’. Has an assessment of the impact of development promoted through the Plan on the landscape character in this part of the Borough been considered? If so what were the findings?”

2.0 Response

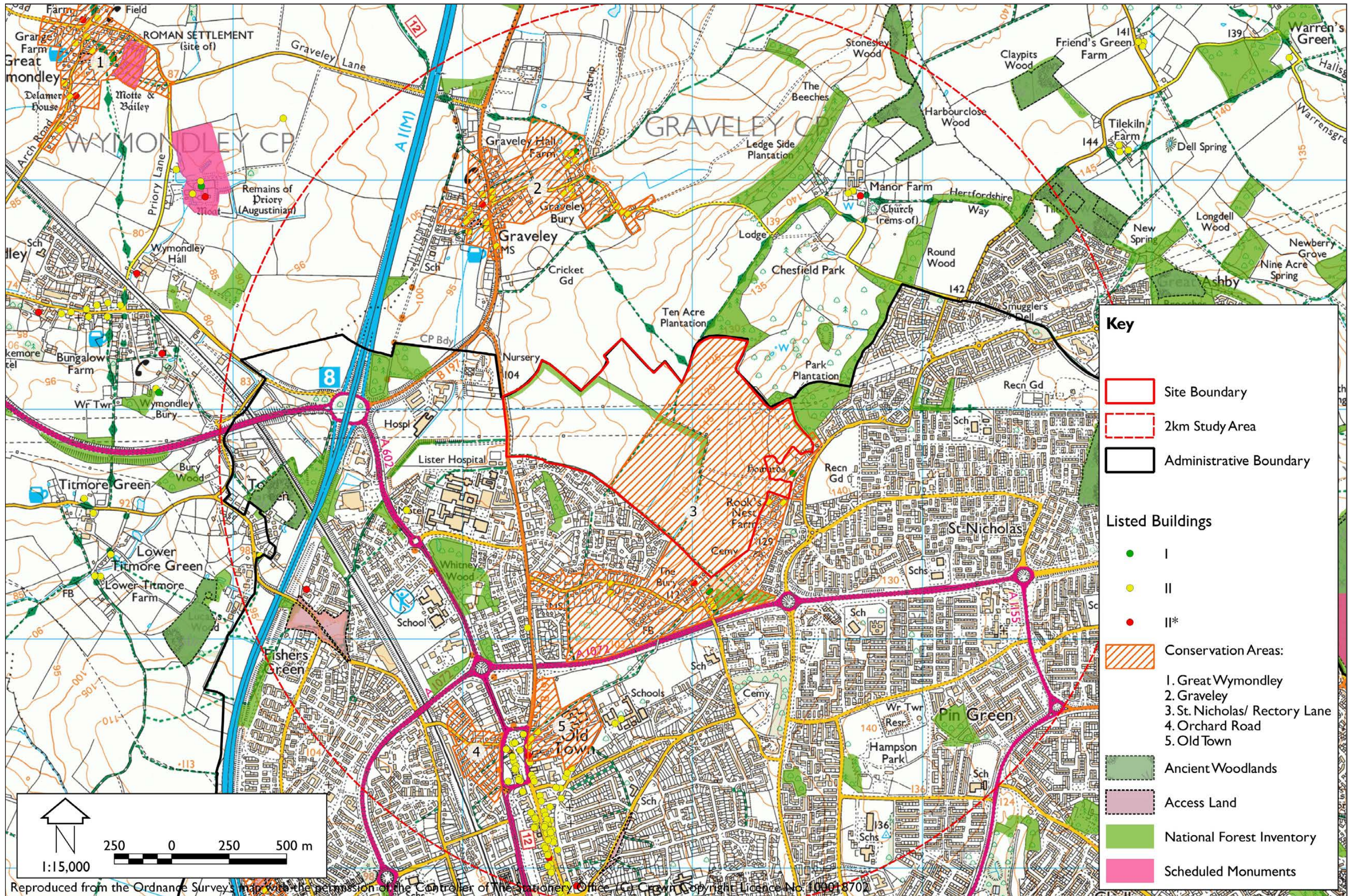
- 2.1 It is recognised that the area referred to locally as 'Forster Country' would include the extent of the housing allocation area HO3. Whilst it is understood that the site specific allocation HO3 is due to be considered at Matter 16 of the Stage 3 Hearings, given that the reference to Forster Country includes this emerging allocation and that extensive technical assessment has been undertaken in relation to bringing forward a planning application for the site, this Statement has been prepared to assist the Inspector in consideration of Matter 5, Question 4.
- 2.2 An application is being prepared by Bellway Homes and Miller Homes for the development of Land at North Stevenage. At the time of writing this Statement the proposed planning application is in an advanced form, having undertaken extensive pre-application engagement with Stevenage Borough Council and is ready for submission shortly. As part of the proposed application submission a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared. In advance of submitting a planning application and our extensive evidence being made publically available the following extracts of the LVIA are appended to this statement:

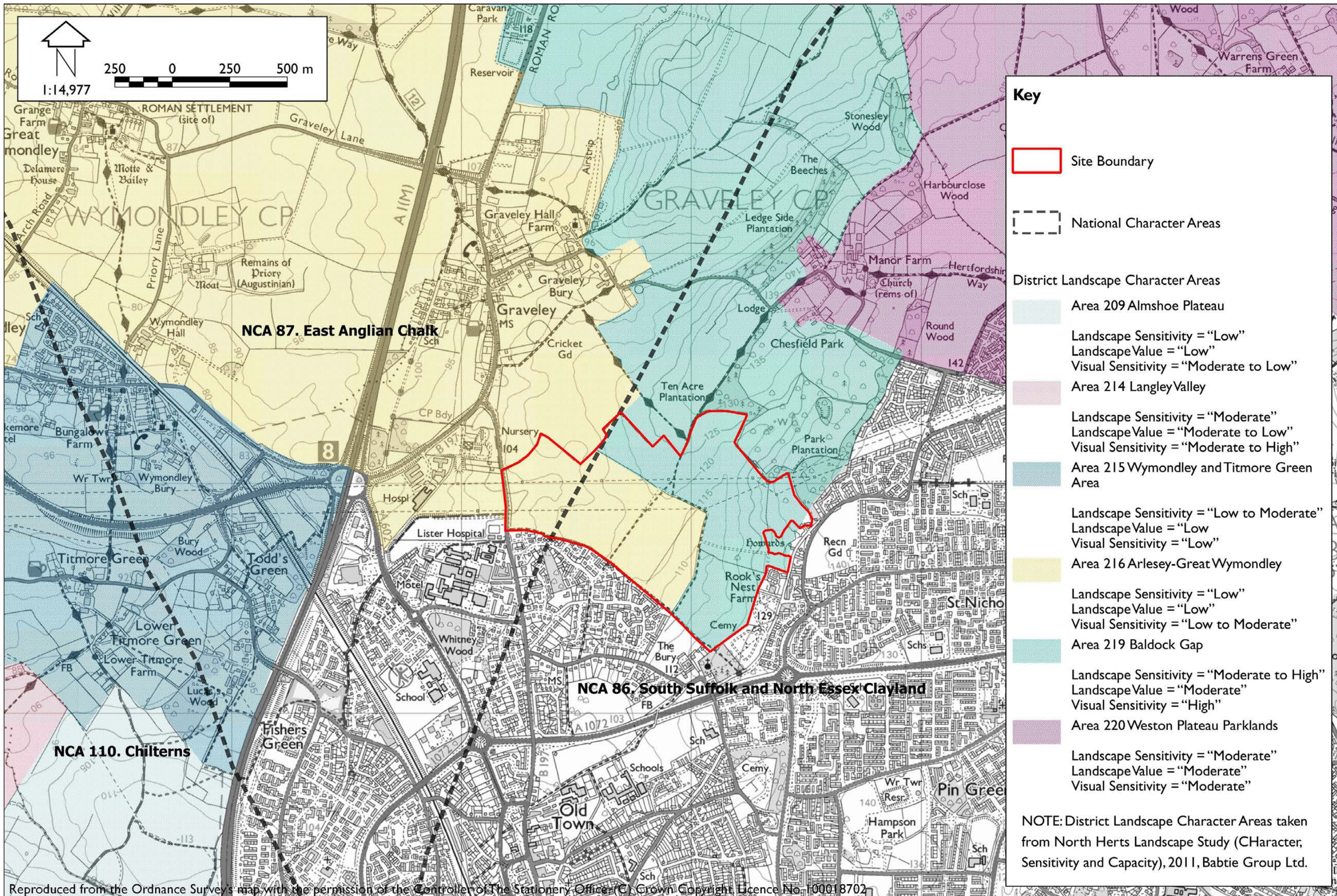
- Figure 1 Landscape Designations
- Figure 2 National and District Landscape Character Areas
- Figure 3 Local Landscape Character Areas
- Figure 4 Landscape Analysis
- Figure 5 Topographic Context
- Figure 6 Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan

-
- 2.3 The LVIA has been compiled during the summer and winter of 2016 by a Chartered Landscape Architect in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition (LI/IEMA, 2013 and has assessed the predicted impacts of the proposed development on the landscape character of the local area, including on land known as ‘Forster Country’.
- 2.4 As part of the LVIA relevant designations were investigated which are shown on Figure 1. The proposed development area is not covered by any formal landscape designations although the eastern part is included within the Character Zone 2 of the St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area.
- 2.5 There are a number of published landscape character assessments that cover Land to the North of Stevenage. The wider context is provided in landscape character terms by the National Character Areas and the district level Landscape Character Areas which are shown on Figure 2. The assessment that provides the finest level of detail is the Stevenage Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study published in January 2006 which is provided as part of the Council’s evidence base for the Local Plan. The Land North of Stevenage is divided into two character areas and the identified landscape areas within the immediate context of the site are shown on Figure 3. Of these the character area covering the central and western part of the development area (North Stevenage Farmlands) was considered to have a lower landscape sensitivity and consequently a higher capacity to accommodate development than the character area covering the eastern most part of the proposed development i.e. the area proposed as St Nicholas’ Meadows.
- 2.6 The LVIA has analysed the existing landscape character of the proposed development area and divided the site and its surroundings into a number of landscape character areas (shown on Figure 4). The gently undulating nature of site is demonstrated on Figure 5. The LVIA considered that the character area covering the central and western parts of the site (LLCA1) had the lowest level of landscape sensitivity due to the negative influence of the existing built edge of Stevenage, combined with the low number of field boundaries and the dominating presence of two lines of electricity pylons. The landscape character area spanning the northern part of the site (LLCA3) is considered to have a higher level of sensitivity due to the positive enclosure afforded by the mature vegetation along its boundaries with Chesfield Park and the edge of Graveley. LLCA2 occupies the eastern part of the site and is judged to have the highest level of sensitivity due to the larger number of

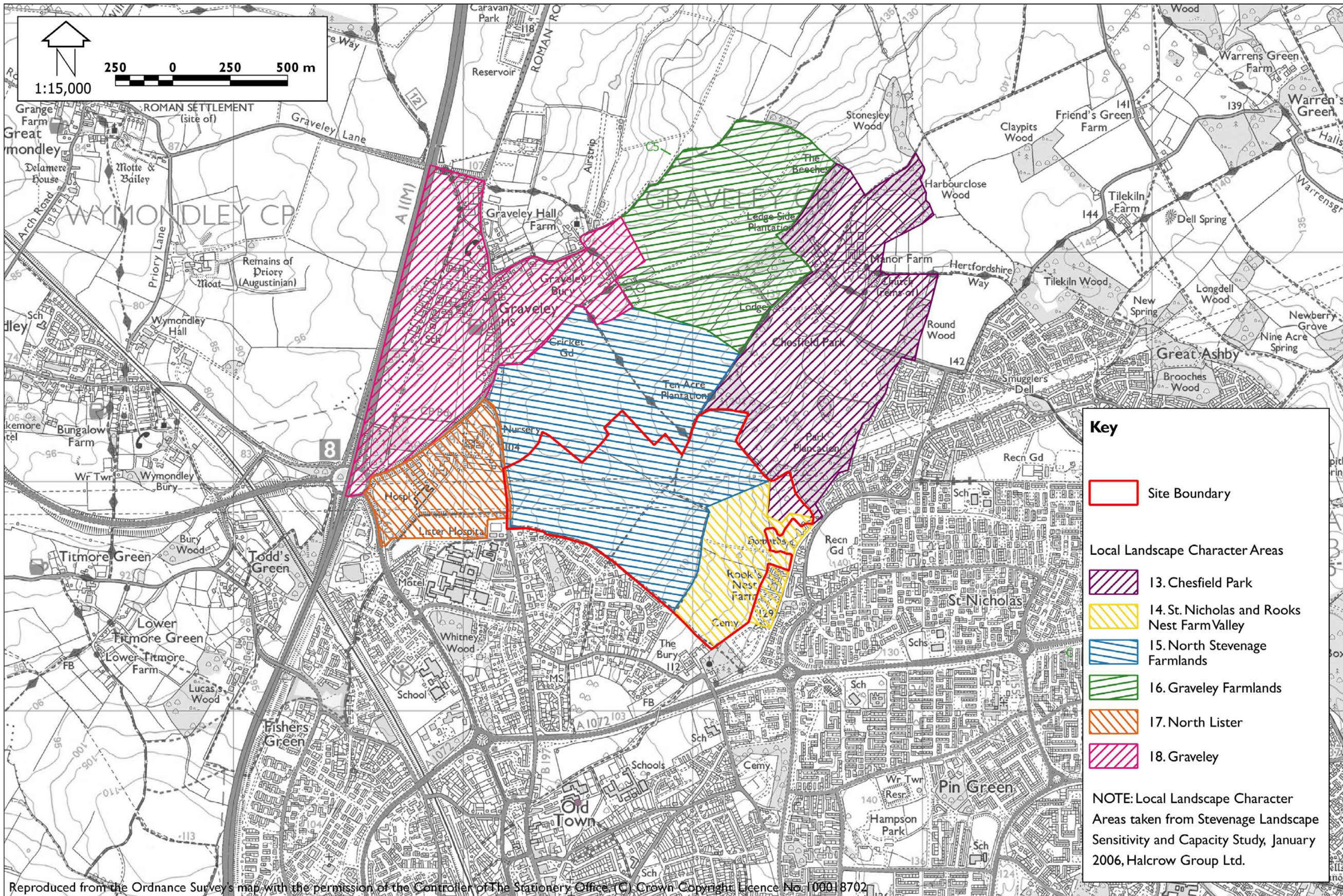
hedgerows, some of which include trees and the positive influence of mature vegetation located along much of its northern and eastern edges.

- 2.7 The built development proposed within the western and central parts of the site (see Figure 6) will result in some adverse impacts on the landscape character of LLCA1 due to the loss of the existing arable fields and the change to the open nature of this area. These adverse impacts will be offset to a degree by the network of street trees proposed, the central area of open space containing a series of drainage ponds with associated planting and the hedgerows with trees which will form a green corridor along the southern edge.
- 2.8 The relatively small area of built development proposed within LLCA3 which will be fringed with a belt of native vegetation is likely to result in a limited adverse impacts on the landscape of this character area.
- 2.9 Significant beneficial impacts will result from the implementation of the St. Nicholas' Meadows proposals within the eastern part of the site (LLCA2) which accounts for over half of the total development area. These proposals are focussed on restoring historic field enclosures including the conversion of the existing arable fields to hay meadows with positive enclosure and a strengthening of character and biodiversity provided by the additional native hedgerows, tree copses and an orchard. These positive landscape elements are situated wholly within the St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area and will be subject to enhanced public access due to the proposed series of new permissive paths which will link to the existing network of public rights of way.
- 2.10 It has been demonstrated by the Council's Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Study and within this Statement that a thorough assessment has been undertaken in relation to the landscape character impact of promoting development within the Local Plan on land within this part of the Borough. The proposals within the St. Nicholas' Meadows part of the development will enhance this area of what is referred to locally as 'Forster Country'.
- 2.11 Overall, the adverse impacts resulting from the implementation of the built footprint of proposed development needs to be considered in the context of the significant beneficial impacts that will be delivered in landscape character terms over the majority of the site area, once the proposed mitigation measures shown on the Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan have become established.

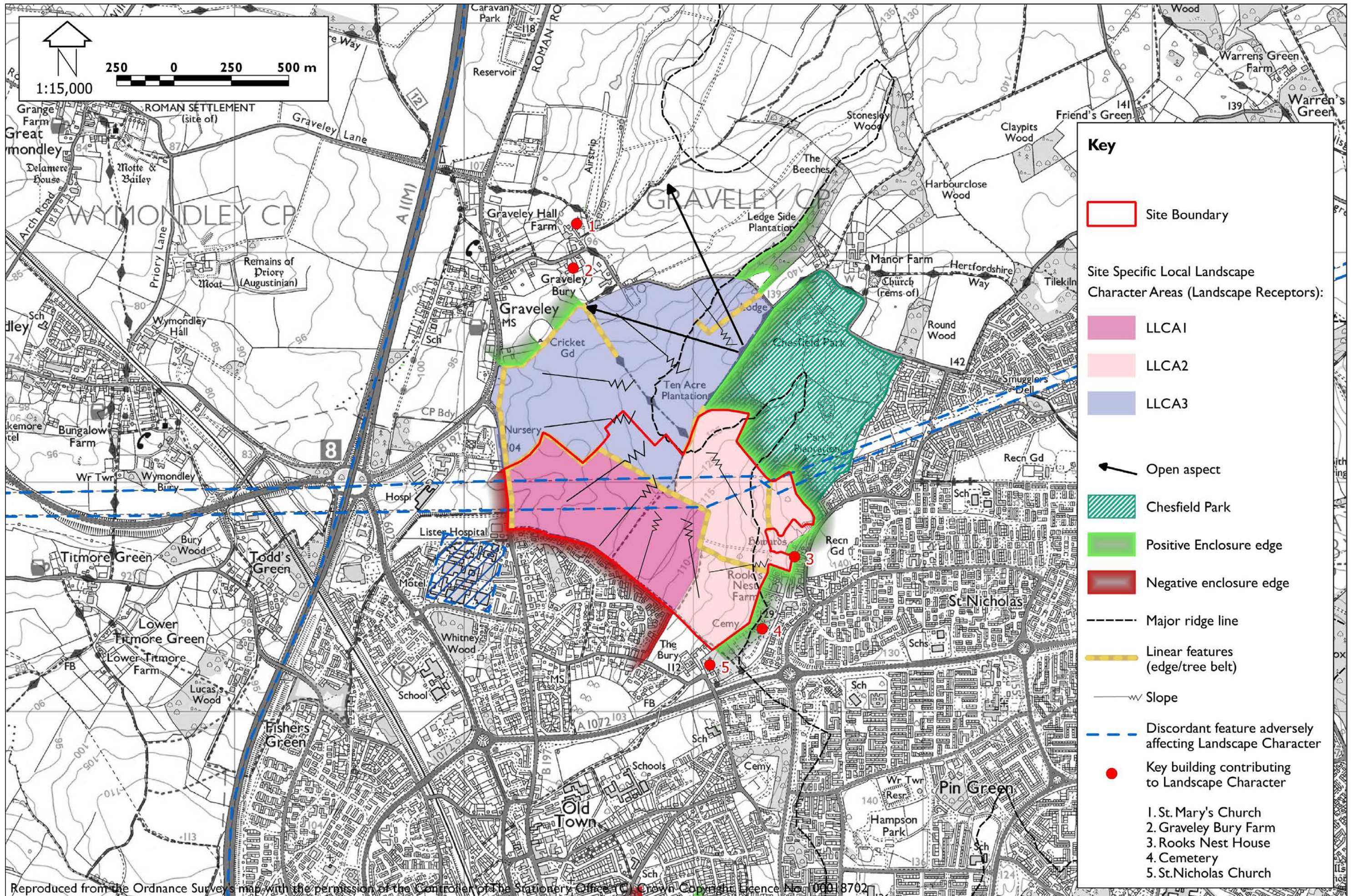




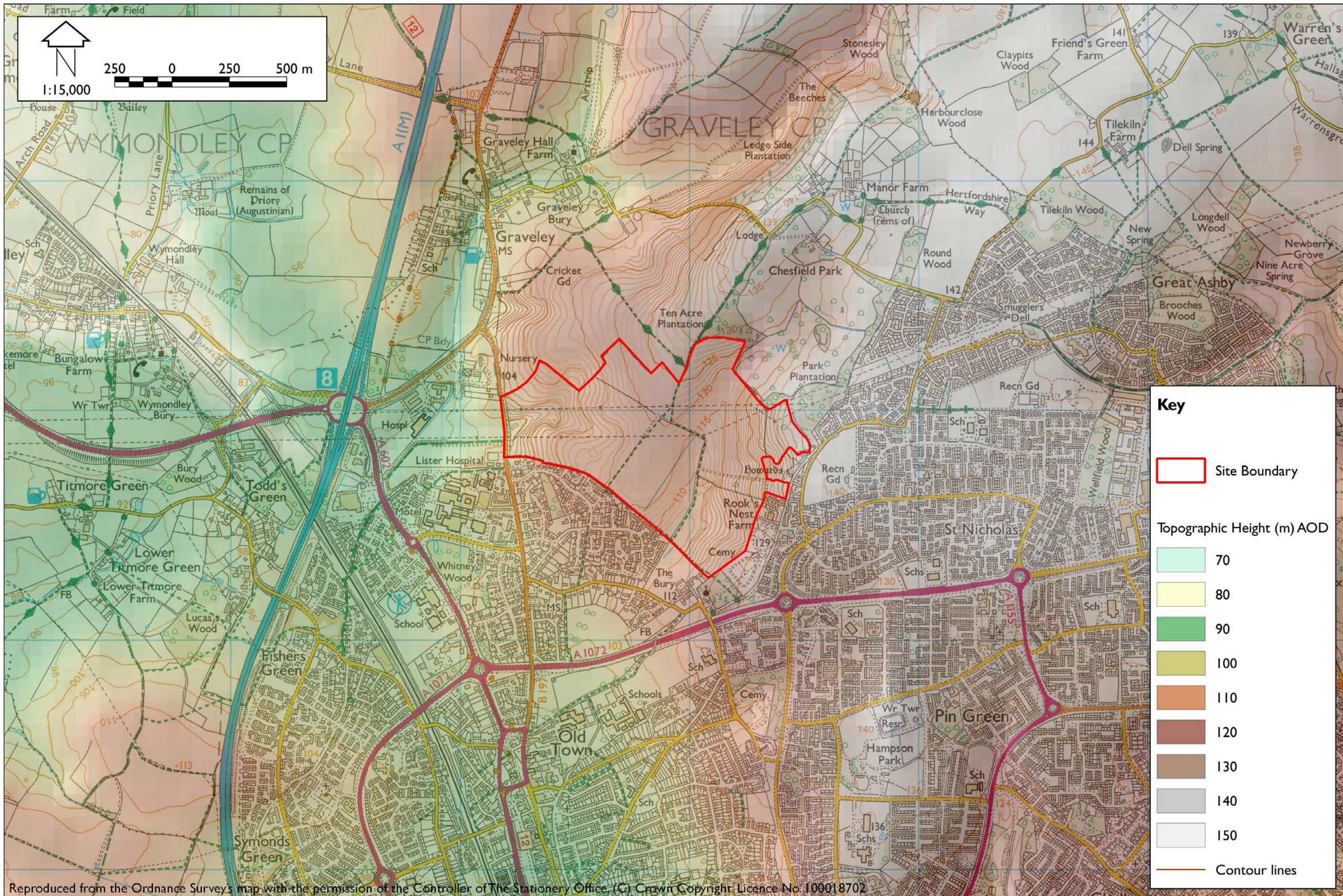
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey's map with the permission of the Controller of The Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright Licence No. 100018702



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey's map with the permission of the Controller of The Stationery Office. (C) Crown Copyright Licence No. 100018702



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey's map with the permission of the Controller of the Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright Licence No 100018702



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey's map with the permission of the Controller of The Stationery Office. (C) Crown Copyright Licence No. 100018702



- Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan notes:
1. Proposed orchard to reflect planting indicated on historic maps (1884 Ordnance Survey map). Proposed orchard will filter views to the development proposals and increase the biodiversity of the existing paddock.
 2. Existing arable fields to be subject to future management as hay meadows in order to provide increased biodiversity, wildlife habitat, recreational amenity and accord with literary text references for E.M Forster.
 3. Proposed permissive paths to facilitate enhanced public access to the St. Nicholas Meadows area of the proposals.
 4. Existing hedgerows to be enhanced by gap planting and carefully considered future management. Additional native species hedgerows with trees to be planted to reflect the local historic field pattern, strengthen the landscape character and to filter/conceal views to the proposed built development.
 5. Existing vegetation to be retained for local habitat and landscape character value and to provide a good level of concealment in views to the development in conjunction with proposed hedgerow and copse planting.
 6. Proposed native species woodland copses to be planted to enhance the local landscape character, provide additional wildlife habitat and filter views of the proposed development.
 7. Proposed native hedge and occasional tree planting to provide green corridor for the bridleway/ footpath, preserve the existing bat commuting route and filter views from the existing built development immediately to the south.
 8. Possible green nodes at intersections of existing and proposed access routes.
 9. Series of proposed areas planted with trees of reasonable mature height to soften the building frontages and provide a visual punctuation of the roofscape in views from the St. Nicholas/ Rectory Lane Conservation Area.
 10. Multi-Use Games Area with appropriate planting in central location to provide opportunities for formal play.
 11. Series of SuDS Drainage ponds to create an attractive feature within the central length of informal open space which can be further enhanced by appropriate planting in order to provide opportunities for informal recreation and potentially become a wildlife corridor.
 12. Planting at entrances to the site to create suitable gateway features in conjunction with proposed SuDS pond and help conceal the base of the pylon.
 13. Tree lined routes to enhance the building frontages/road edges and provide an attractive streetscape within the proposed development.
 14. Existing shelter belt vegetation retained to preserve the existing bat commuting route - retain as dark corridor.

PROJECT NO:	I0651 MH	CLIENT:	MILLER HOMES AND BELLWAY HOMES	FIGURE NO:	6
DATE:	January 2017	PROJECT:	LAND NORTH OF STEVENAGE	TITLE:	Landscape and Ecology Strategy Plan
ISSUE STATUS:	EIP MATTERS				

Appendix 1: Guiding Principles for the Establishment of St Nicholas' Meadows

LAND NORTH OF STEVENAGE

Guiding Principles for the Establishment of St Nicholas' Meadows

As part of the development of land north of Stevenage, it is proposed that the south-eastern end of the site (within the St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area) should be restored (predominantly as hay meadows) to approximately the pattern of fields that would have existed in the late nineteenth century. This approach to the south-eastern end of the site would accord with design guidelines set out in the St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document, adopted by Stevenage Borough Council in July 2012. It would also accord with Policy NH8 of the emerging Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011–2031.

Historic landscape

An extract from the 1834 Tithe Map of Stevenage (see Appendix B), indicates that, at that date, this part of the parish consisted of a pattern of small fields, on both sides of Weston Road. At that date much of the land at the south-eastern end of the site was owned by the Bishop of London and occupied by a John Smith (who appears to have farmed from Bury Farm to the north-west of the church). The land to the north-west (that is proposed for housing development) was owned by the Rector of Stevenage (probably as part of the glebe lands) and was occupied by a Charles Williams.

The 1884 Ordnance Survey map (see Appendix C) shows that, by that date, the majority of the small fields had been amalgamated into much larger parcels of land. This map also shows a number of trees within the various hedgerows.

Since 1884 a small number of other field boundaries have been lost to the west of Weston Road (within the site of the proposed development). The principal changes to the area have occurred during the second half of the twentieth century as a result of the development of the urban areas of Stevenage to the east of Weston Road and to the north of Rectory Lane. In addition, the Weston Road Cemetery has been created to the south of the farm and two overhead electricity lines now cross the site.

Although the majority of the field boundaries shown on the 1884 Ordnance Survey map (see Appendix C) survive, they are now generally in poor condition. Many have gaps in their hedges, there are few hedgerow trees, and traditional hedgerow flora has been largely been lost as a result of modern farming practices.

Literary references

The novelist E.M. Forster (1879–1970) was familiar with the area during the late nineteenth century. He spent some of his childhood at Rooks Nest House (now a Grade I listed building because of its association with Forster) and used it as the basis for the house, Howards End, in his novel of the same name. Relevant extracts from the novel and a description of Rooksnest (the name by which he knew the house) written by Forster are included as Appendix A. Forster's descriptions indicate that the surroundings of the house were dominated by farming activity, with references to meadows, hay-cutting, and the harvesting of wheat, together with ducks, cows and guinea-fowls (see extracts from pages 19 and 20, and 141, 325 and 326 of the novel in Appendix A). The hedges around the fields and their flora appear to have been important to Forster (see extracts from pages 19 and 20, and 264 of the novel, together with pages 338 and 339 of Forster's description of Rooksnest in Appendix A).

The 1834 Tithe Map shows an irregularly shaped field to the north-west of Rooks Nest House that was almost certainly the meadow that formed part of the property in Forster's time (see extract from page 268 of the novel in Appendix A). The boundaries of this field (which lies outside the site of the proposed development) remain largely unaltered since 1834 and it is understood that the field remains within the same ownership as Rooks Nest House. This field is probably not the 'big meadow' that features in the last chapter of the novel (see extracts from pages 325 and 326, and 332 of the novel in Appendix A).

Proposal

As shown on the illustrative framework drawing for the proposed development, it is suggested that a section of land at the south-eastern end of the site (within the St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area) should be restored as St. Nicholas' Meadows. Within this area the field boundaries shown on the 1884 Ordnance Survey map (see Appendix C) that have been lost would be reinstated with hedgerows, including hedgerow trees and other traditional flora. These are hedges that would have existed when Forster (who was born in 1879) first came to the area. In addition, the new boundary that has been created to the west of the Weston Road Cemetery would be developed as a similar hedgerow, together with hedgerow trees. In addition, the surviving field boundaries would be improved by gap-filling where breaks exist and additional trees would be introduced. Carefully considered hedgerow management would re-create traditional hedges and would allow tree saplings to grow to a mature height as hedgerow trees.

It is also proposed that a few of the pre-1884 field boundaries within this area (as shown on the 1834 Tithe Map of Stevenage – see Appendix B) would be reinstated in order to provide the opportunity to introduce further hedges and trees, with appropriate traditional flora. A further new hedgerow (extending west from Rooks Nest House) would also be created (mainly for ecological reasons); this would approximately follow some of the field boundaries shown on the 1834 Tithe Map (see Appendix B). A number of small copses of trees would also be planted in this area (principally for ecological reasons). In addition, it is proposed that an orchard (as shown on the 1884 Ordnance Survey map – see Appendix C) be reinstated between Rooks Nest House and the farm buildings to the south.

The likely species within the restored and new hedgerows would include Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Hazel (*Coryllus avellana*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*), Field rose (*Rosa avellana*), Old Man's Beard (*Clematis vitalba*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*). A selection of trees would be included within these hedgerows and would include Oaks (*Quercus robur*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*). Similar species would be used within the new copses. These species reflect those currently found within the local area and also include species that are mentioned within Forster's literary texts.

It is proposed that the majority of the fields within this pattern of restored and new hedges would be managed to create species-rich hay meadows. Such meadows generally require a lower level of soil fertility than that found within agricultural soil that has been subject to an arable regime (as is the case for land within the site). The lower fertility allows a range of wildflower species to establish without being out-competed by grass species. The aim would be to produce a meadow sward that includes a range of perennial grasses and wildflowers. This would be achieved by determining the current fertility of the soil and the residual levels of key nutrients (such as phosphorus) within the topsoil and subsoil horizons in order to ascertain the most appropriate technique for the management of the soils and the establishment of traditional hay meadow plant species.

All these elements of the proposals would lead to a significant increase in the biodiversity of this part of the site. The meadows and their hedgerows would provide beneficial shelter, food and habitat for a range of birds, mammals and invertebrates. The network of hedgerows would also provide wildlife corridors connecting to other hedgerows, shelterbelts, copses and areas of woodland and scrub within the western part of the site and the surrounding area.

A new network of footpaths is also proposed across this area, linked to the existing footpath network and to Weston Road. This would provide public access into the St. Nicholas' Meadows.

The management of the hay meadows is likely to be incompatible with full public access. The timing of hay-cutting operations is important to allow grass and wildflower species to set seed prior to harvesting. The main hay cut would therefore need to take place in July and August. The method of cutting the hay is also crucial to ensure that any ground-nesting birds are given the opportunity to disperse safely to the field margins.

This approach to the south-eastern end of the site would follow the relevant design guidelines set out in the St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area Management Plan Supplementary Planning Document, adopted by Stevenage Borough Council in July 2012. In particular, the restoration of hedges and hedgerow trees reinforce the traditional local character, which is recognised in paragraph 9.19 that states:

A significant strength of the St Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area is the visual amenity of the local rural character. The original pattern of gardens and grounds and the presence of trees and hedgerows contribute greatly to the character of the area.

The provision of additional footpaths that increases recreational access to the area would accord with paragraph 9.20, which includes the comment that:

... open fields to the north contribute greatly to the recreational opportunities for Stevenage and the wider area.

The proposals for the hedgerows and hay meadows would increase the biodiversity of this part of the site in accordance with paragraph 9.26, which includes the statement that:

We will support the improvement of existing habitats and encourage the development of new nesting areas for protected species

In addition, this approach accords with Policy NH8 of the emerging Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011–2031, which seeks to improve public access to this part of the St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area.

Conclusion

This approach to the south-eastern end of the site would result in a restoration of the late-nineteenth-century landscape character of this area and its flora, together with a significant increase in the biodiversity of this part of the site.

In view of the importance of E.M. Forster to this part of Stevenage, it is considered that the approach set out above, would be appropriate and would result in the re-creation of something of the character of the area as it was known by Forster. It would therefore result in an enhancement of this part of the St. Nicholas/Rectory Lane Conservation Area and an enhancement of part of the setting of Rooks Nest House (a Grade I listed building).

5th December 2016

Woodhall Planning and Conservation

APPENDIX A

SETTING OF ROOKS NEST HOUSE AS DESCRIBED BY E.M. FORSTER

Rooks Nest House (a Grade I listed building) provided the basis for the house, Howards End, in the novel of the same name by E.M Forster (1879–1970), who had lived in the house for part of his childhood. There are some descriptions of the surroundings of the property in the novel (beyond the descriptions of the house itself and its garden). Some additional information is provided in a description of Rooksnest (the name by which he knew the house), written for the most part when Forster was 15. This description is included as an appendix to the 1989 Penguin Books edition of the novel, edited by Oliver Stallybrass.

Relevant extracts from the novel and the appendix are provided below (the page numbers are those of the 1989 Penguin Books edition).

THE NOVEL

Pages 19 and 20

Extracts from letter from Helen to her sister Meg

Then there's a very big wych-elm – to the left as you look up – leaning a little over the house, and standing on the boundary between the garden and meadow. I quite love that tree already. Also ordinary elms, oaks – no nastier than ordinary oaks – pear trees, apple trees, and a vine. No silver birches, though. ...

This long letter is because I'm writing before breakfast. Oh, the beautiful vine leaves. The house is covered with a vine. I looked out earlier, and Mrs Wilcox was already in the garden. ... Then she walked off the lawn to the meadow, whose corner to the right I can just see. ... The dog-roses are too sweet. There is a great hedge of them over the lawn – magnificently tall, so that they fall down in garlands, and nice and thin at the bottom, so that you can see ducks through it and a cow. These belong to the farm, which is the only house near us.

Page 141

Comments by Mr. Wilcox to Margaret

Well, Howards End is one of those converted farms. They don't really do, spend what you will of them. We messed away with a garage all among the wych-elm roots, and last year we enclosed a bit of the meadow and attempted a rockery. ... You remember, or your sister will remember, the farm with those abominable guinea-fowls, and the hedge that the old woman never would cut properly, so that

it went all thin at the bottom. ... And the position wasn't right either. The neighbourhood's getting suburban.

Pages 262 and 263

Margaret walks from the station to Howards End

At the church the scenery changed. The chestnut avenue opened into a road, smooth but narrow, which led into the untouched country. She followed it for over a mile. Its little hesitations pleased her. Having no urgent destiny, it strolled downhill or up as it wished, taking no trouble about the gradients, nor about the view, which nevertheless expanded. The great estates that throttle the south of Hertfordshire were less obtrusive here, and the appearance of the land was neither aristocratic nor suburban. To define it was difficult, but Margaret knew what it was not: it was not snobbish. Though its contours were slight, there was a touch of freedom in their sweep, to which Surrey will never attain, and the distant brow of the Chilterns towered like a mountain. ...

Page 264

Part of the description of Margaret's walk from the farm to Howards End

... The hedge was a half-painted picture which would be finished in a few days. Celandines grew on its banks, lords-and-ladies and primroses in the defended hollows; the wild rose bushes, still bearing their withered hips, showed also the promise of blossom.

Page 268

Margaret with Miss Avery

'It's a beautiful meadow,' she remarked. It was one of those open-air drawing rooms that have been formed, hundreds of years ago, out of the smaller fields. So the boundary hedge zigzagged down the hill at right angles, and at the bottom there was a little green annex – a sort of powder-closet for the cows.

Page 325 and 326

Beginning of the final chapter

Tom's father was cutting the big meadow. He passed again and again amid whirring blades and sweet odours of grass, encompassing with narrowing circles the sacred centre of the field. ...

Fourteen months had passed, but Margaret still stopped at Howards End. No better plan had occurred to her. The meadow was being re-cut, the great red poppies were reopening in the garden. July would follow with the little red poppies among the wheat, August with the cutting of the wheat.

Page 329

Helen to Margaret

'All the same, London's creeping.

She pointed over the meadow – over eight or nine meadows, but at the end of them was a red rust.

Page 330

Paul to his father, Mr Wilcox, following the suggestion that Howards End might be left to him

... 'As I've given up the outdoor life that suited me, and have come home to look after the business, it's no good my settling down here,' he said at last. 'It's not really the country, and it's not the town.'

Page 332

End of final chapter

From the garden came laughter. 'Here they are at last!' exclaimed Henry, disengaging himself with a smile. Helen rushed into the gloom, holding Tom by one hand and carrying her baby on the other. There were shouts of infectious joy.

'The field's cut!' Helen cried excitedly - 'The big meadow! We've seen to the very end, and it'll be such a crop of hay as never!'

APPENDIX

Page 333

I have, or think I have, a clear impression of my arrival at Rooksnest. I certainly remember coming in the train I think I remember too coming in the fly and seeing the church and the farm as we passed and also seeing Rooksnest itself but I do not remember entering the house

I suppose I had better begin by a description of the house. It was about one mile from Stevenage walking and one and a half driving and was on a particularly bad piece of road which led from Stevenage to Weston, a small village about three miles further on and naturally had very little traffic. Stevenage is on the G.N.R. and is the highest point on the line between London and York and Rooksnest is a good deal higher than Stevenage so we had a very fine view to the west and north-west over Hertfordshire and part of Cambridgeshire. People who were accustomed to call Herts an ugly county were astonished at this view and the surroundings of the house were altogether very pretty, first and foremost the fine view, and to the north a peep of the park with its little woods of firs and oaks. We could not see beyond the road as there was a high hedge and there were no windows looking out that way. The house faced south-west but it professed to face south.

Pages 338 and 339

All one side of the garden stretched the meadow. It was our meadow but we let it to Mr Franklin on condition that no obnoxious animals should be allowed there. ... The boundary line between the two was a fence of four wires which we had not to spoil the view We were very fond of the meadow. It had three fine greengage trees, which we were allowed to have, and a large oak tree on which was hung a swing. It was of very odd shape ... and was all downhill. It had hedges full of clematis, primroses, bluebells, dog-roses, may, bryony and nuts, with many trees which were nearly all in the hedges. In it was a little dell which communicated with our pond in the back garden to prevent it getting too full. From it were most lovely views of the surrounding country. It was generally used for hay in summer.

APPENDIX B
EXTRACT FROM 1834 TITHE MAP

