LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

CAR PARK, FOREWOOD LANE, CROWHURST, EAST SUSSEX

229CVH/LVA/01

OCTOBER 2018
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1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

   **Introduction**

1.1. This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been produced to inform a planning application for a proposed car park at land to the south of Forewood Lane in Crowhurst, in Rother District, East Sussex.

1.2. The proposed development comprises a car park (Appendix A) with native boundary planting and pedestrian access to join a public footpath.

1.3. Baseline assessment of landscape resource and visual amenity identifies levels of sensitivity in relation to the proposed development through analysis of mapping data, character assessments, survey and photography.

1.4. The anticipated effects of the proposal upon landscape resource and visual amenity are considered.

**Summary of Anticipated Effects on Landscape Resource**

1.5. The proposed car park and boundary planting would facilitate access within the High Weald AONB to local community facilities including the Church of St George, and Crowhurst C of E School. The creation of a car park is considered beneficial for visitors and residents of Crowhurst.

1.6. Access within the High Weald AONB would be improved for visitors using local public rights of way, and enhanced for local residents by reducing kerb side parking in the village.

1.7. The proposal includes a native hedgerow with hedgerow trees around the boundary of the proposed car park to mitigate the effect upon local landscape character and the High Weald AONB. The proposed hedgerow and native hedgerow trees would provide additional ecological connectivity and provide additional habitat resource for birds, bats and invertebrates.

**Summary of Anticipated Effects on Visual Amenity**

1.8. The proposed car park would be bounded by a native hedgerow of similar species composition to existing hedgerows in the locality with additional native hedgerow trees at intervals to provide aerial habitat.

1.9. When in use the car park would be screened by the proposed boundary hedgerow. Some vehicles may be visible from some of the viewpoints, however it is likely that the hedgerow would effectively screen vehicles upon establishment, after approximately five years.

1.10. There would be a reduction in the number of cars parking along Forewood Lane, where their presence detracts from the serenity and visual aesthetics of the village. Cars would be parked in a visually contained location with good footpath connectivity, surrounding by new native planting.

1.11. There would be a reconfiguring of hedgerows around the field perimeter which would be visible from the public footpath to the south of the proposal site. The proposal would not obscure views of the Grade I listed building of the Church of St George, or the Manor House ruin scheduled monument.

1.12. The anticipated significance of the effect upon views from Forewood Lane (Views 1 and 2) are considered to be minor.

1.13. The anticipated significance of the effect upon the view from the Church of St George (View 3) is considered to be negligible.

1.14. The anticipated significance of the effect upon the view from the public footpath to the south of the proposal site (View 4) is considered to be minor as the proposed hedgerow will significantly screen the proposal.

1.15. The anticipated significance of the effect upon the view from the public footpath to the west south of the proposal site (View 5) is considered to be moderate. The proposal would be evident. Native planting will effectively screen the proposal without detracting from visual amenity or obscuring views of the listed building or scheduled monument visible in the view.

**Conclusion**

1.16. The proposed car park would be visible but well screened and in a location which does not obstruct views of heritage features. New hedgerow planting will effectively screen parked cars in the medium term and provide additional hedgerow with characteristic native hedgerow trees.

1.17. The proposed car park with the mitigatory landscape proposal would not significantly detract from local landscape character and resource, or have an adverse effect on views.
## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Summary of Effects upon Visual Amenity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Number</th>
<th>Reference Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Assessed Sensitivity</th>
<th>Factors influencing the assessed ‘significance of effect’ upon the view</th>
<th>Magnitude of Effect</th>
<th>Significance of Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Forewood Lane (1)</td>
<td>Road</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Proposal site bounded by hedgerow. Proposed hedgerow and native hedgerow trees to bound proposal site. Proposed access visible from Forewood Lane. Wider long distance views of AONB unaffected.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Forewood Lane (2)</td>
<td>Road</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Proposal site obscured by trees and hedgerow. Limited scope for effects. No obstruction of long-distance views of AONB.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Church of St George</td>
<td>Grade I Listed Building</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Proposal site obscured by hedgerow and trees. Limited scope for effects. Proposal does not adversely affect setting of Grade I listed building.</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Public Footpath 6a (1)</td>
<td>Public Footpath</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Proposal site to be screened by new native hedgerow and hedgerow trees. Rising topography partially obscures site. No loss of visual amenity.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Public Footpath 6a (2)</td>
<td>Public Footpath</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Proposal site to be bounded with native hedgerow and native hedgerow trees. Proposal does not obstruct heritage features or long distance views within AONB. Effects reducing as new hedgerow planting becomes established.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

2.1. This report is a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) and follows the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd ed. 2013) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

2.2. Visual receptors assessed are those which have potential to be affected by the proposal.

Objectives of the LVA

2.3. The purpose of this appraisal is to evaluate the likely impacts of the development upon landscape character and visual amenity of the site and its surroundings. This report concludes with appropriate mitigation measures to prevent, reduce or offset any effects that arise from the proposed development.

2.4. The LVA process works best in tandem with the design process. The assessment of landscape character and visual effects should inform the iterative design process, identify residual effects and provide guidance on strategies for enhancement thereby resulting in effective primary mitigation as an integral part of the design proposal.

2.5. The baseline assessment is carried out prior to development of the landscape proposal. The baseline survey informed the landscape strategy and subsequent primary mitigation measures.

2.6. Where the requirement for assessment does not have scope for inclusion within the design process, assessment would be carried out at the end of the design process. The proposal would then require revision to include recommendations and mitigation strategies as set out in the LVA as secondary mitigation.

2.7. In both situations the LVA provides an objective assessment of the residual effects of the development proposal upon visual amenity to provide stakeholders with accurate information regarding anticipated effects and inform planning decisions.

2.8. The LVA includes:
   • Identification, description and evaluation of the current baseline conditions and setting of the site.
   • Desktop studies providing information on statutory and non-statutory planning designations which could be affected by the proposal.
   • A GIS analysis showing the zone of theoretical influence based on high resolution topographical data.
   • Assessment of the sensitivity of receptors taking into account factors affecting their susceptibility to change.
   • A description of the development proposal highlighting the factors which could affect the magnitude and significance of effect.
   • Assessment of the effects of the proposed development upon the visual character and amenity of the site and surrounding area to determine the significance of anticipated effects.
   • Opportunities for mitigation and enhancement of the proposal.

Guidance

2.9. This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been carried out by fully qualified, trained and experienced landscape professionals using techniques and best practice in accordance with the following guidelines:
   • Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11. Photography and Photo-montage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.
   • Landscape Institute Advice Note 02/17. Visual representation of development proposals.

2.10. Planning Guidance informing this report includes:
   • MAGIC Interactive mapping, Natural England (magic.defra.gov.uk)

2.11. Ordnance Survey maps were used in combination with aerial imagery to identify local features such as public rights of way, likely receptor viewpoints, topography, and intervening features in the wider area.

Photographic Methodology

2.12. Each image is captured with a full-frame-sensor 50mm optical length lens, tripod mounted with a levelling head, at a height of 1.5m, to best represent the viewing experience of a pedestrian. Viewpoint locations are recorded with internal camera GPS and external GPS and GLONASS receiver with quad helix antenna.

2.13. Photographs are digitally merged to create panoramic views centred on the site which represent a wider field of view and convey an holistic viewing experience, and provide contextual information for assessment.

2.14. Individual central images are shown in Appendix A. These may be displayed at A3 size and held at arms length to best emulate the scale of the real-world viewing experience.

Field Survey

2.15. Site visits of the application site and its surroundings were carried out to verify the desk study data, determine the locations of visual receptors, and carry out baseline photography.
   • This fieldwork involved walking the public footpaths and bridleways within the Zone of Theoretical Visibility to identify the visual significance of hedgerows, tree belts and other vegetation.
   • Private property was not entered but locations and the setting of dwellings in proximity to the application site were noted.
   • Visual corridors towards the site were identified.
of competing visual elements.

2.25. The degrees of sensitivity and magnitude can be sub-divided to represent most accurately the position on the sliding scale. Whether impacts are beneficial or adverse is again judgemental based upon individual perceptions of the development and its appropriateness in its particular setting.

Magnitude of Effect

2.26. Effects on the landscape of new development can be adverse or beneficial; these can be direct or indirect, secondary or cumulative. There is also a temporal aspect as the changes may be temporary, such as site enabling work, or permanent.

2.27. A direct effect is one that is directly attributable to the proposals such as the removal of a tree or other landscape feature. An indirect effect may result from associated enabling development such as upgraded transport infrastructure.

2.28. Cumulative visual effects result from additional changes to visual amenity caused by the proposals in conjunction with other developments (associated with or separate), or actions that occurred in the past, present or the foreseeable future that might affect the way the landscape is experienced.

2.29. Cumulative effects may be positive or negative and where they comprise a range of benefits, they may be considered to form part of the mitigation measures. Cumulative effects can arise from the inter-visibility of a range of developments or combined effects of individual elements. Inter-visibility depends upon the topography, tree cover and other obstructions or layers in the view.

2.30. The elevation and distance of the visual receptors from the source affects visual acuity which is further influenced by weather and light conditions.

Significance of Effect

2.31. Once sensitivity and magnitude of effect are classified, the two are correlated to achieve an assessment of the ‘Significance of Effect’. The overall significance is then stated in terms of: None; Low; Low to Moderate; Moderate; Moderate to High; High

2.32. The determination of whether a visual effect is of benefit or harm is largely subjective and related to individual perceptions of the character of both the proposal and the receiving environment.

2.33. The assessment of a beneficial effect would be an intervention or interventions that reinstate or reinforce a landscape signature or signatures of the area, or may mitigate existing views of existing adverse landscape components from the local landscape.

2.34. As ‘sensitivity’ and ‘magnitude of effect’ are both on sliding scales it is appropriate to sub-divide the categories into whichever degree most accurately evaluates any given situation, e.g. a Low to Moderate ‘sensitivity’ or a Moderate to High ‘magnitude of effect’ are fully acceptable.

2.35. Where mitigation results in a change to the Significance of Effect over time, the initial effect and effect as mitigation is established may be compared. Where tree planting and shelter belts are employed this is likely to be within 5 to 15 years depending upon planting specifications and growing conditions.
3. SITE CONTEXT

3.1. The proposal site comprises an area of approximately 870 m² of rough grassland, just to the south of Forewood Lane as it passes through the village of Crowhurst.

3.2. The proposal site is bounded by a predominantly hawthorn hedgerow to the north, a mixed loosely overgrown hedge and mature trees to the east. The site is unbounded to the west and south.

3.3. The proposal site is located within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

3.4. The church of St George, a Grade I listed building, the and graveyard surrounding it is located to the east of the proposal site.

3.5. The remains of manor house, a scheduled monument, are situated to the south east of the proposal site.

3.6. There are no dwellings adjacent to the proposal site.

3.7. A public footpath passes approximately 50 metres to the south of the proposal site.

3.8. Crowhurst C of E Primary School is situated about 100 metres to the east of the proposal site.
4. STATUTORY LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

4.1. Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are landscapes with the same level of national recognition and protection as National Parks. AONBs are working landscapes with a high levels of land management and productivity.

4.2. The proposal site is located within the High Weald AONB.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

4.3. A SSSI is an area of special interest by reason of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical interest to safeguard the diversity and geographic range of habitats, species, geological and geomorphological features.

4.4. Fore Wood SSSI is a rare example of ghyll woodland in East Sussex. Flora are not remarkable but the woodland contains a rich breeding community which includes hawfinch, woodcock and greater woodpecker.1

Other Statutory Landscape Designations

4.5. There are no other statutory landscape designations within the study area.

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1 Nature England SSSI Citation (https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/1002864.pdf)
5. HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS

Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monument

Parish Church of St George

5.1. The nearest listed building is the Grade I listed parish Church of St George. The tower dates from the 15th century and is the main reason for the Grade I listing. The remainder of the church was rebuilt in 14th century in 1856. There are a number of notable veteran yew trees within the church grounds.

5.2. The proposal site can just be seen from the graveyard which on the western side of the church.

Ruin of Old Manor House

5.3. The Grade II listed ruin of the Old Manor House are located about 70 metres to the south of the proposal site. The ruin is also a scheduled monument.

5.4. There is no inter-visibility between the proposal site and the ruins of the Old Manor House.

School House

5.5. School House is located on Forewood Lane, approximately 95 metres to the east of the proposal site. Intervening trees and hedgerows prevent views of the proposal site from School House.

Other Listed Buildings

5.6. There are a number of other Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings around Crowhurst, with no inter-visibility between them and the proposal site.

Other Heritage Designations

5.7. There are no conservation areas, or registered parks and gardens within the study area.
6. **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

6.1. Public Rights of Way (PROW) provide access across privately owned land. They form an important network for outdoor recreation. The level of visual amenity experienced by users of PROW contributes to their value as a resource. Users of PROW may experience views over extended periods and are important receptors to consider in the assessment of viewpoint sensitivity.

6.2. There are no PROW passing through the proposal site. A long distance trail passes to the immediate north of the proposal site.

6.3. Public footpath ‘Crowhurst 6a’ currently passes to the south of the proposed car park site. A number of other footpaths merge around the parish church of St George.

6.4. There is no access land within the study area.

6.5. The proposal includes moving the footpath from its present starting point on Forewood Lane, opposite Station Road, to the proposed park where it would connect with the 1066 Country Bexhill Link long distance trail.

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**KEY**

- Site Boundary
- Proposed Footpath
- Existing Footpath Redirected
- Recreational Route - 1066 Country Walk Bexhill Link
- Public Footpath
- Byway

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7. **VISUAL SENSITIVITY**

7.1. The proposal site is bounded by a native hedgerow along Forewood Lane, which currently screens the proposal site. There is a five bar gate to the west of the proposal site which allows limited views on the proposal site.

*Assessment Viewpoints*

7.2. All the selected viewpoints are in publicly accessible locations and are selected to best represent the viewing experience of the majority of visual receptors. Views are gained from a height of 1.5 metres which is considered to be similar to the eye-height of a typical person.

7.3. All assessment views are orientated toward the centre of the site in the horizontal plane only.
VIEW 1 - VIEW FROM FOREWOOD LANE (1)

View 1
View from Forewood Lane (1)
Road

Viewpoint Data
Date: 25.07.2018
Bearing to Site cen: 140°
Distance to Site cen: 39m
Camera Height: 1.5m
Grid Reference: TQ 7567 1242

Features
This view is gained from the verge of Forewood Lane, close to the proposal site. The proposal site is partially obscured by a hawthorn hedgerow. A small part of the Church of St George is just visible between trees at the west of the church yard.

Detractors
There are no significant detractors in the view.

Receptors
The view would be gained by road users approaching the proposal site. This includes occupants of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Value
The view is gained from within the High Weald AONB. Views are partly foreshortened by trees and hedgerows. A small part of a Grade I listed building is evident in the view. The value of the view is considered to be moderate.

Susceptibility
There is potential for the development proposal to be seen from the viewpoint. The susceptibility of the view to change is considered to be high.

View Sensitivity
The sensitivity of the view is assessed as moderate.
Features
This view is gained from the footpath along Forewood Lane. The church yard can be seen to the left of the view. Forewood Lane can be seen to the right of the view. Mature trees and existing hedgerow obscure the site.

Detractors
There is an overhead cable evident in the view.

Receptors
The view would be gained by road approaching the proposal site. This includes occupants of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Value
The view is gained from within the High Weald AONB. Views are foreshortened by trees and hedgerows. The value of the view is considered to be moderate.

Susceptibility
There is limited potential for the development proposal to be seen from the viewpoint. The susceptibility of the view to change is considered to be low.

View Sensitivity
The sensitivity of the view is assessed as moderate.
**VIEW 3 - VIEW FROM CHURCH OF ST GEORGE**

**Features**
This view is gained from a location within the church yard close to the Grade I listed building of the Church of St George. A hedgerow and mature trees obscure the proposal site.

**Detractors**
There is no significant detractors in the view.

**Receptors**
The view would be gained by visitors to the church users of the footpath.

**Value**
The view is gained from the setting of a Grade I listed building within the High Weald AONB. Views are foreshortened by trees and hedgerows. The value of the view is considered to be moderate.

**Susceptibility**
There is some potential for the development proposal to be seen from the viewpoint between existing trees. The susceptibility of the view to change is considered to be low.

**View Sensitivity**
The sensitivity of the view is assessed as moderate.
VIEW 4 - VIEW FROM PUBLIC FOOTPATH 6A (1)

Public Footpath

Viewpoint Data
Date: 25.07.2018
Bearing to Site cen: 21°
Distance to Site cen: 73m
Camera Height: 1.5m
Grid Reference: TQ 7512 6832

Features
This view is gained from a public footpath to the south of the proposal site. Dwellings on Forewood Lane can be seen to the left of the view. Rising topography partially screens the proposal site.

Detractors
There are no significant detractors in the view.

Receptors
The view would be gained by recreational users of the footpath.

Value
The view is gained from a public footpath close to a Grade I listed building within the High Weald AONB. The value of the view is considered to be moderate.

Susceptibility
There is potential for the development proposal to be seen from the viewpoint. The susceptibility of the view to change is considered to be moderate.

View Sensitivity
The sensitivity of the view is assessed as moderate.
**View 5 - View from Public Footpath 6a (2)**

**Public Footpath**

**Viewpoint Data**
- Date: 25.07.2018
- Bearing to Site cen: 91°
- Distance to Site cen: 149m
- Camera Height: 1.5m
- Grid Reference: TQ 7512 5539

**Features**

This view is gained from a public footpath to the west of the proposal site. The Grade I listed building of the Church of St George and the Grade II* listed Manor House ruin can be seen to the right of the view. Dwellings on Forewood Lane can be seen to the left of the view.

**Detractors**

Overhead cables detract from the view.

**Receptors**

The view would be gained by recreational users of the footpath.

**Value**

The view is gained from a public footpath within the High Weald AONB. A Grade I listed building and scheduled monument are evident within the view. There are some detractors. The value of the view is considered to be high.

**Susceptibility**

The proposal site can be seen from the viewpoint. The susceptibility of the view to change is considered to be high.

**View Sensitivity**

The sensitivity of the view is assessed as high.
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

CAR PARK, FOREWOOD LANE,
CROWHURST, EAST SUSSEX

APPENDIX A

OCTOBER 2018
Single Image: View 1 - View from Forewood Lane (1) EXISTING

Represents actual scale of viewing experience when A3 at arms length
Single Image: View 1 - View from Forewood Lane (2) EXISTING

Represents actual scale of viewing experience when A3 at arms length.
Single Image: View 1 - View from Church of St George EXISTING

Represents actual scale of viewing experience when A3 at arms length
Single Image: View 1 - View from Public Footpath Sa (1) EXISTING

Represents actual scale of viewing experience when A3 at arms length
Single Image: View 5 - View from Public Footpath 5a (2) EXISTING

Represents actual scale of viewing experience when A3 at arms length.
CAR PARK, FOREWOOD LANE, CROWHURST

2.4m x 43m VISIBILITY SPLAY

FOREWOOD LANE

PROPOSED EXIT ONLY

GATED 12 SPACE CAR PARK IN CRUSHED SANDSTONE

Native hedgerow trees

Native Oak (Quercus robur) 12-14cmg standard

Existing Tree

Proposed Tree

Proposed Native Hedgerow

Gate

Kissing Gate

Estimated RPA

Crushed Sandstone

LEGEND

Existing mixed species native hedge (predominately hawthorn)

3.5m

Existing Ash

Native meadow with mown path

Emorsgate EM4 - Meadow mixture for clay soils

Redirected Public Footpath

Crowhurst 6a

End of Footpath moved to proposed car park for improved access

Path to be mown and improved with hoggin or gravel

Existing Route of Public Footpath

Crowhurst 6a

Estimated Root Protection Area based on estimated 500mm stem diameter of existing trees

PROPOSED ENTRY ONLY

2.4m x 43m VISIBILITY SPLAY

FOOTWAY LINK TO TIE IN WITH EXISTING FOOTWAY

Proposed mixed species native hedge (50% Hawthorn, 10% Field Maple, 10% Dog Rose, 10% Hazel, 10% Blackthorn)

Native meadow with mown path

Proposed mixed species native hedge (50% Hawthorn, 10% Wild Cherry, 10% Field Maple, 10% Dog Rose, 10% Hazel, 10% Blackthorn)

Proposed mixed species native hedge (30% Hazel, 20% Field Maple, 20% Dog Rose, 10% Hazel, 10% Blackthorn)

Native hedgerow trees

Existing mixed species native hedge (predominately hawthorn)

Redirected Public Footpath

Crowhurst 6a

End of Footpath moved to proposed car park for improved access

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Native meadow with mown path

Proposed mixed species native hedge (30% Hazel, 20% Field Maple, 20% Dog Rose, 10% Hazel, 10% Blackthorn)

Native hedgerow trees

Existing mixed species native hedge (predominately hawthorn)

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Native meadow with mown path

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Native hedgerow trees

Existing mixed species native hedge (predominately hawthorn)

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Native hedgerow trees

Existing mixed species native hedge (predominately hawthorn)

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Crowhurst 6a

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Path to be mown and improved with hoggin or gravel

Existing Route of Public Footpath

Crowhurst 6a

Estimated Root Protection Area based on estimated 500mm stem diameter of existing trees