



Full Planning Consent Application

Erection of a building to provide a 64 bed care home, including 16 community beds, together with a building to provide 14 health workers' accommodation units, with access from Knowle Lane, associated parking and ancillary works

Cranleigh, Surrey

June 2020



Landscape Visual Impact Appraisal - Part 1 Report v3

By

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1.0 CONTEXT

1.1 INTRODUCTION - PROJECT DESCRIPTION

TPM were commissioned by HC One in September 2018 to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal (LVIA) for land off Knowle Lane, Cranleigh; this will be referred to as the proposal site throughout the document. This document is in support of a masterplanning exercise for the site seeking planning permission for a erection of a building to provide a 64 care home, including 16 community beds, together with a building to provide 14 health workers accommodation units, with access from Knowle Lane, associated parking and ancillary works. The LVIA will consider the baseline for both landscape and visual amenity and will seek to identify the sensitivity of each before considering the change that proposed development may introduce. Both the landscape and visual impact of the proposed residential development will be assessed and a strategy of mitigation planting or other methods will be explored where relevant to reduce identified impacts.

The site appraisal was undertaken in September 2018 when trees are with leaf. It is understood that the assessed effects to the visual resource are likely to be greater during the winter months due to the trees being without leaf. Where these are particularly relevant this has been considered and appraised in the assessment.

Following the submission of the proposals in 2018, the proposed development was amended with a reorientation of the buildings and redesign of the site layout, and this LVIA has been reviewed with regard to the amended layout as illustrated in Figure 1.

1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposal site lies on the southern edge of Cranleigh settlement, noted as being a large village and civil parish, in Surrey County, and Waverley Borough Council administrative area. Cranleigh lies approximately 12km south of Guildford.

The proposal site is a broadly triangular unmanaged field in poor condition, comprising of rough grassland with mature trees to each of its 3 boundaries. The field is most likely a remnant corner of a larger historic field pattern, which has ceased to be connected to the wider farmed landscape to the west of Knowle Lane.

The proposal site is bounded to the west by Knowle Lane, which is a tree lined country lane, with a drainage ditch which runs along the boundary. The Downs Link regional footpath runs along the north-eastern boundary beyond a belt of trees, and the rear gardens of John Wiskar Drive residential development abut the footpath. The southern boundary has a beck which is approximately 1.5m below the field level, and is tree-lined with native understorey vegetation. Snoxhall Fields sports pitches and recreation grounds lie to the south of the tree belt on the southern boundary. The topography of the site is flat at approximately 53m AOD.

1.3 DESIGNATIONS

Landscape Designations are considered in part 3 of this appraisal. The proposal site is located in an area with the following local landscape designation:

- ASVI Area of Strategic Visual Importance

Green Belt lies to the north of Cranleigh settlement but is not within an area of visual influence.

Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies to the north-east and north-west of Cranleigh settlement, (which is also identified as an area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) within the local plan. The AONB/ AGLV are not within an area of visual influence of the proposal site.

1.4 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The development proposals comprise a detailed planning application for a erection of a building to provide a 64 care home, including 16 community beds, together with a building to provide 14 health workers accommodation units, with access from Knowle Lane, associated parking and ancillary works. The proposals referred to in this assessment are illustrated in Figure 1, which represent a reduced form from that submitted previously, both in size and position of the buildings, in response to concerns raised on the previous application with regard to impact on the ASVI (addressed later in this report)

Landscape mitigation proposals are summarised in Chapter 9 and a mitigation strategy proposed to alleviate impacts are described in Chapter 8 and have informed the final landscape masterplan design.

1.5 DEFINING THE STUDY AREA

To gain an understanding of the receiving landscape, a desktop study in conjunction with a site visit was undertaken. The local roads were driven and public footpath networks explored to determine the receptors to be appraised. This helped to determine a realistic zone of theoretical influence for the proposed development. Following this an area of study was determined for both landscape and visual receptors beyond which no notable effects are expected to occur.

1.6 STUDY AREA

The local roads were driven and public footpath networks explored to determine the receptors to be appraised and the extents of the visual envelope. The visual envelope is contained by residential development and settlement to the north and east; trees, hedgerows and woodland to the west, and trees topography, and trees and topography to the south. All views beyond the immediate site itself will be heavily filtered by the dense tree belt surrounding the site, and whilst there are potentially sensitive visual receptors in the designated landscapes to the north, there is no potential for long distance views due to the southern edge of settlement location, tall trees in the landscape and the generally flat landscape in the locality. The theoretical Visual Envelope of the proposed development is considered in Section 7 of this Appraisal.

The extent of the study area is illustrated in Figure 2 Site Location and Study Area, and its wider landscape context illustrated in Figure 3 Wider Area Context Plan. Factors influencing the Study Area such as settlement and trees and woodland can be observed in the Aerial photographs in Figure 4.

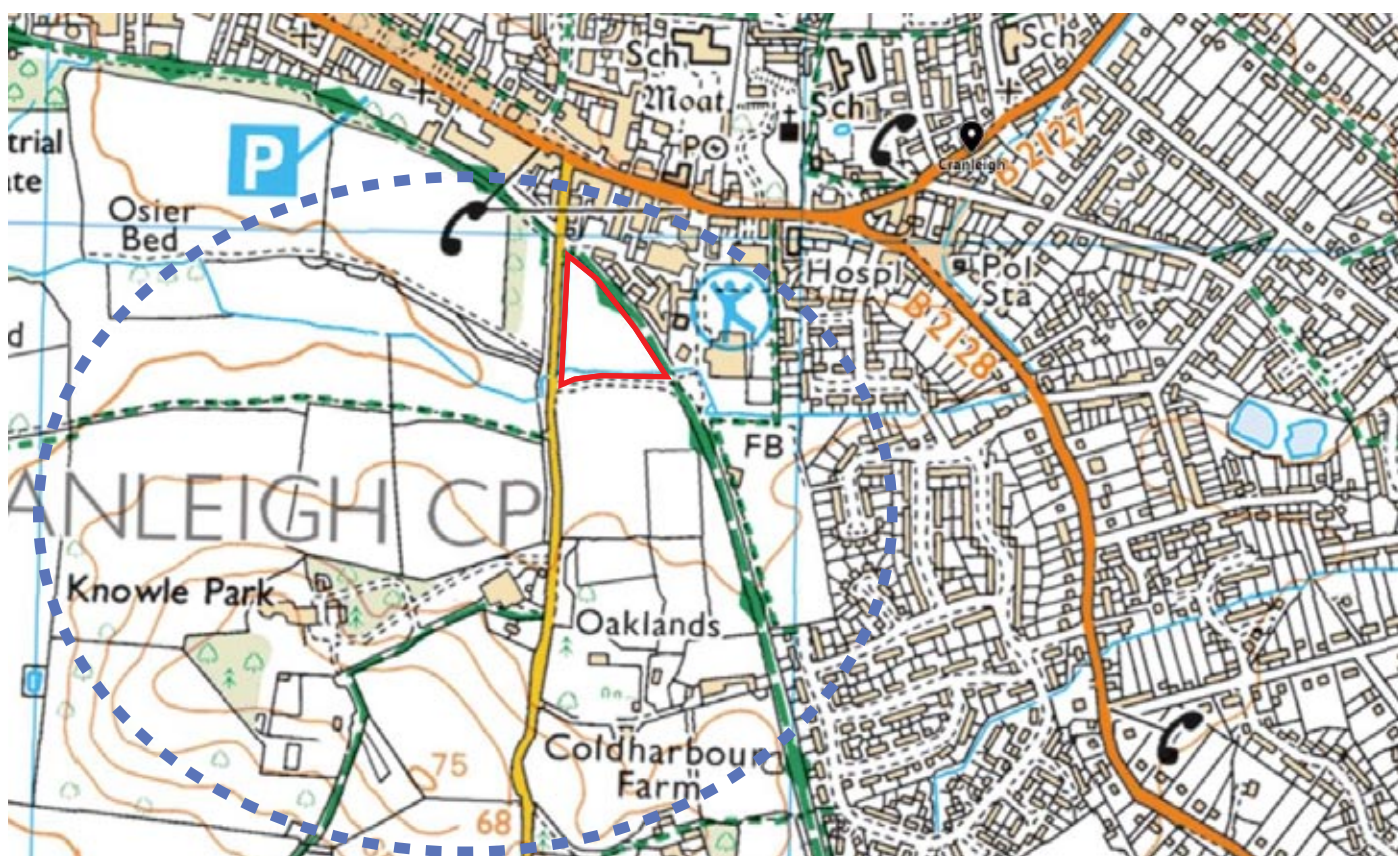
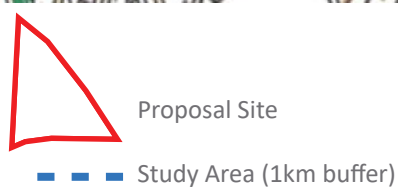


Figure 2. Site Location and Study Area



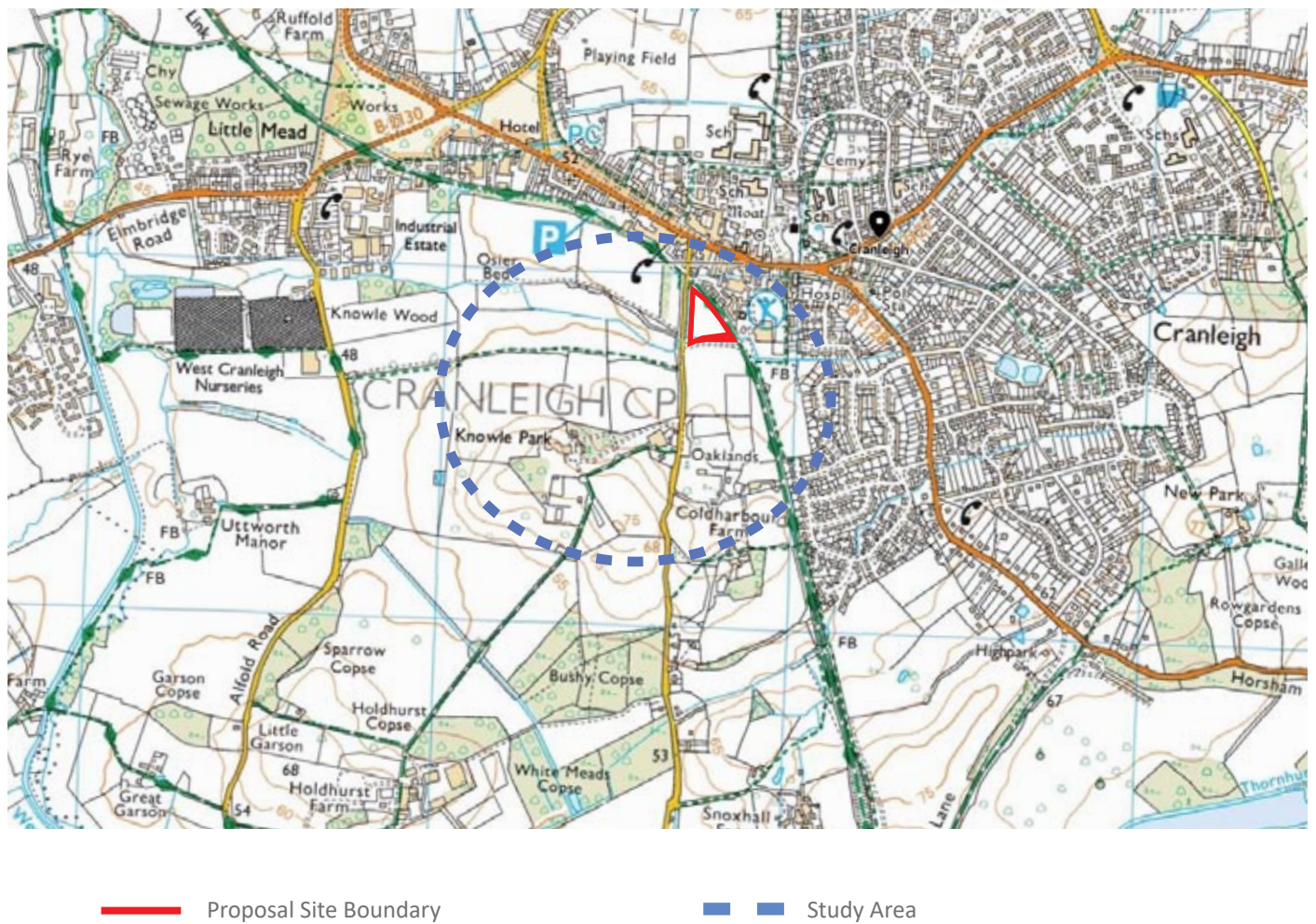


Figure 3. Wider Area Context Plan



Figure 4. Aerial Images

Below Wider scale aerial image



Proposal Site Boundary



2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 METHODOLOGY

The site was visited and the surrounding road network driven. Positive and detracting elements in the landscape were recorded, as was the general land use and quality of the site. Viewpoints were identified based on public viewpoints (public footpaths), private viewpoints (residential properties) and key distant viewpoints to determine the wider impact on the landscape and where development would have the potential to affect the quality and character of existing views and in consideration of the nature of the proposed development. A study area of approximately 1km was assessed in consideration of the likely visual envelope. Potential longer distance views were also considered. A photographic record of the study area, surrounding context and important views/character were recorded.

The methodology seeks to use recognised, published industry standards and techniques to identify and describe a landscape and visual baseline and ascribe a sensitivity to these landscape and visual receptors which may be altered through the introduction of the proposed development. Landscape and Visual Impacts are considered separately although the conclusion on sensitivity and impact will have regard to both these related areas of study and proposals made for the mitigation of that impact.

The magnitude of change brought about through the proposed development is considered alongside the level of sensitivity for each landscape area or receptor and the level of landscape or visual effects is expressed as a combination of these two elements.

The methodology for landscape character appraisal and visual appraisal is provided in Appendix 1

The appraisal has been based on guidelines and information provided in the following publications:

- Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002)
- Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage). Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England, 2014)
- Natural England's Published Landscape Character Assessments (www.gov.uk)
- The Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit - Cumbria County Council, 2011
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) 3rd edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013)
- Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/2009. Use of photography and photomontage in landscape and visual assessment.

2.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER APPRAISAL

A desktop study and site survey of existing landscape policies, planning designations and character appraisals was undertaken and an appraisal made of the landscape character of the surrounding area and the proposal sites value in landscape terms within this character area.

To determine the effects of development on the landscape three different key aspects or receptors are considered:

Elements: Individual elements within the landscape, which are quantifiable and include features such as hills, valleys, woods, trees, hedges and ponds;

Characteristics: Elements or combinations of elements that make a particular contribution to the character of the area i.e. scenic quality, tranquillity or wildness;

Character: A combination of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.

These key aspects or landscape receptors indicate the landscape condition, quality, value and susceptibility to change which are considered when judging landscape sensitivity.

To assist in the appraisal of the sensitivity of the landscape resource each landscape encountered is considered against the criteria set out in the tables in Appendix 1. The tables identify the principal factors considered when assessing the sensitivity of the landscape, combining judgements of susceptibility to change from the proposed development, landscape quality and landscape value.

The criteria used to assess the landscape effects on key aspects or landscape receptors included:

- The importance level of effects
- The sensitivity and type of receptor
- The magnitude of change
- The effects of development on the landscape (pre-mitigation)
- The effects of development on the landscape (post-mitigation)
- The nature of landscape effects

2.3 VISUAL APPRAISAL

Visual appraisal relates to the change to views as a result of development, and the overall effects on visual amenity.

Considerations when judging sensitivity included:

- Location of the viewpoint
- Context of the view
- Activity of the receptor
- Frequency and duration of the view

To assist in the appraisal of the sensitivity of visual amenity each viewpoint is considered against the criteria set out in the tables in Appendix 1. The sensitivity of visual receptors is based on consideration of both susceptibility to change in views, quality and value attached to each identified view.

The criteria used to assess the visual effects on selected viewpoints included:

- The importance level of effects
- The sensitivity and type of receptor
- The magnitude of change
- The effects of development on the view (pre-mitigation)
- The effects of development on the view (post-mitigation)
- The nature of visual effects

The appraisal of visual effects describes:

- The changes in the character of the available views resulting from the development and the changes in the visual amenity of the visual receptor.
- The appraisal process mirrors that of landscape effects in that it requires the collation of baseline information relating to the nature and type of views and the receptors which will receive them. As with landscape effects, visual effects are determined by considering the magnitude and nature of change evaluated in consideration of the sensitivity of the receptor.
- The magnitude of change to the view will depend on numerous factors including the extent and nature of the current view, the distance to the proposed development, the time of year and whether other elements intervene in the view such as vegetation or moving traffic.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

The overall planning context in relation to the Proposed Development is explored in greater detail within the separate Planning Statement that accompanies the planning application. The following provides a summary in relation to landscape and visual matters.

3.1 NATIONAL CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF February 2019)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published March 2012 and various updates, with the current Framework dated February 2019. It sets out the government's (national) planning policies. The NPPF is a key part of the reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible, to protect the environment and to promote sustainable growth.

In the updated NPPF the emphasis remains on achieving well designed places (12), conserving and enhancing the natural environment (15) and conserving and enhancing the historic environment (16).

The framework emphasises that developments be sympathetic to local character and history including surrounding built environment and landscape setting (12-127.c).

The framework places emphasis on: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (15-170.a); recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside (15-170.b).

There is also direction that protection should be identified in relation to a distinguishable hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites with allocated land being found from those with the least environmental or amenity value.

The framework continues to identify National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty at the top of this hierarchy where the greatest weight for conservation and enhancement of the landscape and scenic beauty falls.

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) comprises of web based guidance categories first published from March 2014. The NPPG supports and informs the NPPF and sets out further specific planning guidance. NPPG categories relevant to this proposed development include: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (2018), Design (2014) and Natural Environment (2016). Design and Natural Environment categories emphasise a character based approach to design and proposed development.

3.2 LOCAL CONTEXT - Waverley Borough Council

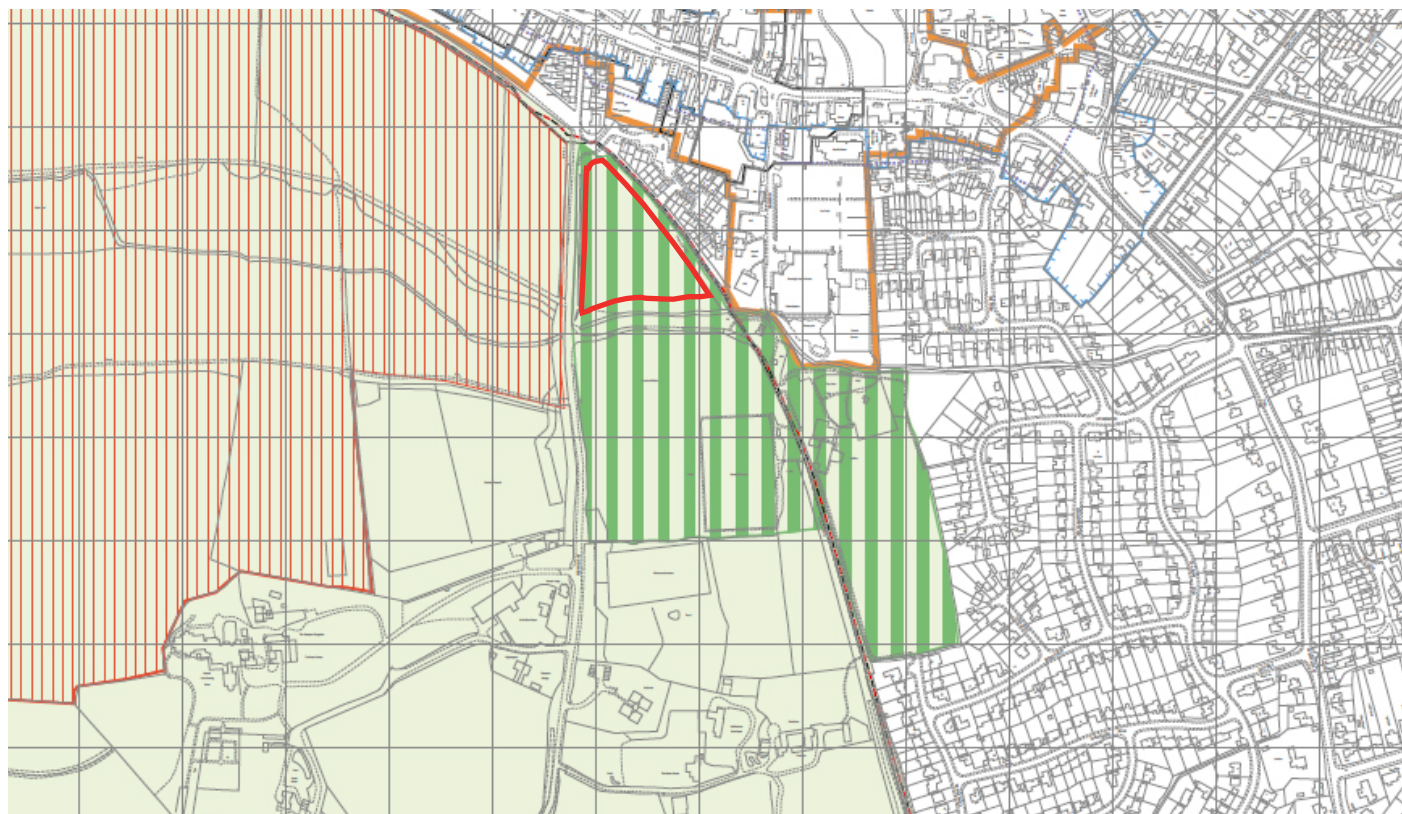
The Waverley Borough Council website describes the status of the Local Plan as follows:

Waverley’s new Local Plan replaces the Local Plan 2002 and will direct new development in Waverley up to 2032.

Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies and Sites was adopted by the Council on 20 February 2018. Local Plan Part 1 includes a spatial strategy showing how much development will be delivered in the Borough to 2032 and how this will be distributed. It includes strategic policies on a range of issues, including transport, housing, employment and infrastructure, and strategic site allocations for developments of more than 100 homes.

Local Plan Part 2: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies will contain policies that direct planning application decisions. It will allocate additional sites for housing in parts of the Borough, review the boundaries of our town centres and local landscape designations, and allocate sites for gypsy and traveller accommodation. Some Local Plan 2002 policies have been retained until Local Plan Part 2 is adopted.

Figure 5 below shows an extract from the Waverley Interactive Policies Map, which shows saved policies from Local Plan 2002 and which is subject to review for Part 2 of the Local Plan to 2032



KEY

Countryside beyond the Green Belt Policy RE1	Guildford to Cranleigh Movement Corridor Policy M6/ST1
Areas of Strategic Visual Importance (ASVI) Policy RE3	Shared Pedestrian / Cycle Routes Policy M6, M7/ST1
Areas of Suitably Located Industrial and Commercial Land Policy IC2/EE2	Town Centre Area Policy TC3/TC5T
Conservation Areas Policy H22/HA1	Central Shopping Area Policy TC2
Sites and Areas of High Archaeological Potential Policy HE14/HA1	Strategic Sites Policies SS1-SS9
Long Distance Footpath Routes Policy LT15/LR1	

Figure 5. Extract from the Waverley Interactive Policies Map (2002 Saved policies)



3.3 Relevant Policies

Waverley Local Plan Part 1 (February 2018)

The proposal site lies in land with the following policy allocations (subject to completion of Part 2 of the Local Plan):

Policy RE1 - Countryside beyond the Green Belt

Within areas shown as Countryside beyond the Green Belt on the Adopted Policies Map, the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside will be recognised and safeguarded in accordance with the NPPF.

Policy RE3 - Areas of Strategic Visual Importance (ASVI) - Local Landscape Designation

Waverley BC prepared a Local Landscape Designation Review in 2014 to consider the relevance of the local designations to the emerging new Local Plan (2018). Whilst the Designation Review recommended the retention of the majority of the local designation policies, the boundaries of the areas designated is subject to further review for Part 2 of the Local Plan. The proposal site lies in land currently allocated as ASVI.

Part 1 of the Local Plan notes the following with regard ASVI policies:

Policy RE3 - Landscape Character

New development must respect and where appropriate, enhance the distinctive character of the landscape in which it is located

Pending a review of the detailed boundaries in Local Plan Part 2, the Areas of Strategic Visual Importance will be retained. The appearance of the ASVI will be maintained and enhanced. Proposals for new development within the ASVI will be required to demonstrate that the development would not be inconsistent with this objective.

13.44 The Area of Strategic Visual Importance (ASVI) designation affects certain areas of land around Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere and Cranleigh. The areas are designated because they are considered to play an important role in preventing the coalescence of settlements or because they are areas of open land that stretch into the urban area. They are considered to be 'strategic' because of the role they play in maintaining the urban character of Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere and Cranleigh.

13.45 The Local Landscape Designation Review concludes that the majority of the ASVIs do make a contribution to the purposes of their designation, but that some make a more significant contribution than others.

13.46 The Review concludes that there are sound reasons for the ASVI designation in these areas. It recognises the importance that this land continues to play in defining the character of the main settlements. However, a more detailed review of the precise boundaries of the remaining ASVI areas will take place in Local Plan Part 2 to address any anomalies that have arisen since the original designation.

The Local Landscape Designation Review provided the following Definition of Purpose of ASVI land:

"Local Plan Brief 1981 stated that in addition to the 'broad areas of search' identified in the SSP, there were other areas in the District which could be vulnerable to pressure from development but where it was essential, because of their strategic visual importance or for strong environmental reasons that they should be preserved. They may or may not be GB or AONB or AGLV."

"They are areas of predominantly open land, usually adjacent to urban areas and perhaps relatively small, whose importance lies in the crucial role they play in preserving the character of the locality. The District Plan set out to identify such areas with policies for protection." First defined in the 1984 Local Plan. The plan refers to their 'crucial role in establishing the character of a locality and preventing the coalescence of developed areas'. As well as the areas of landscape quality, there are other areas which need protection because of the crucial role they play in preventing the coalescence of settlements or because they are an area of open land that penetrates into the urban area like a green "lung". They are strategic areas because of the part they play in retaining the character of Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere and Cranleigh. In some areas, the urban fringe is vulnerable to deterioration and in a number of instances neglected areas of land can appear degraded. The ASVI policy highlights the importance of these fringe areas and the need to protect them.

With regard to the Cranleigh ASVI Area 1 within which the proposal site is located, the Local Landscape Designation Review 2014 defined the ASVI area as follows:

This ASVI is either side of the Downs Link path in Cranleigh, covering a small park and playing fields to the south of Cranleigh Leisure Centre. The fields provide open land but as playing fields they do not preserve character, as they are more obviously man made than the rural land to the west.

The 2014 Review Assessed the following:

ASVI's were categorised into the following criteria:

- Areas Making a Significant Contribution to ASVI Purpose
- Areas Making a Contribution to ASVI Purpose
- Areas Making a Limited Contribution to ASVI Purpose

Cranleigh Area 1 (the area within which the proposal site is located) was assessed as an 'Area Making a Contribution to ASVI Purpose', with the following assessment:

The sports fields are an open green space, on the edge of a rural open space, but do not fully comply with the preserving the character aspect of the ASVI.

Waverley BC ASVI Topic Paper 2018

The purpose of the the above topic paper is defined below:

3.0 Methodology of the Review

LPP1 was adopted by the Council on 20th February 2018. LPP1 retains all the existing ASVI areas and their boundaries, but states that '...a more detailed review of the precise boundaries of the remaining ASVI areas will take place in Local Plan Part 2 to address any anomalies that have arisen since the original designation'.

These anomalies were defined in the Local Plan Part 2 Issues and Options consultation document (June 2017), which states that they '...may relate to sites which have planning permission (either outline or full), or areas where changes have occurred resulting in the boundary no longer following defined features'.

and further notes;

The review has addressed the ASVIs in Farnham, Godalming and Haslemere but not the ASVI in Cranleigh, which will be reviewed through the Neighbourhood Plan.

Cranleigh Neighbourhood Plan

The Cranleigh Neighbourhood Plan is currently under preparation by Cranleigh Parish Council.

It is understood that progress on the Cranleigh Neighbourhood Plan is now uncertain following the publication of the Independent Examiner's interim findings on 16 April 2020. The Independent Examiner found that there is a 'fatal flaw' in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan and recommended that it is suspended or withdrawn.

It is notable that the Examiner found that the draft NP failed the 'basic tests' and also that there was insufficient evidence that the previous planning application and its implications had been considered in the Plan, and notes inaccuracies in the draft NP's mapping of the LVIA. The Independent Examiner also questions what evidence is there to support the identification of the views [of value]?'.

It is understood that the Parish Council has subsequently indicated that they will proceed with 'Option B' of the Examiner's four options, namely that the examination is suspended to allow further work to be undertaken alongside the necessary consultation.

This is likely to result in significant changes, re-consultation and a considerable delay.

TPM Landscape review of the proposal site with regard to Cranleigh ASVI Area 1

This appraisal has considered the landscape of the proposal site with regard to the wider Cranleigh ASVI Area 1. All the reviews and assessments to date have described the ASVI area as being 'open sports fields' in character and man-made. The proposal site is a remnant field as part of a no-longer functioning field system, which is entirely contained by trees and separated from the wider

With regard to design of proposed development the following policies from Waverley Local Plan Part 1 (February 2018) are also relevant:

Policy TD1: Townscape and Design

The Council will ensure that the character and amenity of the Borough are protected by:

1. Requiring new development to be of a high quality and inclusive design that responds to the distinctive local character of the area in which it is located. Account will be taken of design guidance adopted by the Council including design and development briefs, Conservation Area Appraisals and associated Management Plans, town and village design statements and other design policies and guidance produced within subsequent Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans.

2. Ensuring that new development is designed so that it creates safe and attractive environments that meet the needs of users and incorporate the principles of sustainable development.

3. Encouraging and supporting the preparation and adoption of local town and village design statements and Neighbourhood Plans.

4. Promoting a high quality public realm including landscaping, works to streets and public spaces.

5. Maximising opportunities to improve the quality of life and health and well-being of current and future residents, for example the provision of:

- private, communal and public amenity space;*
- appropriate internal space standards for new dwellings;*
- on site playspace provision (for all ages);*
- appropriate facilities for the storage of waste (including general refuse, garden, food and recycling);*
- private clothes drying facilities.*

Policy NE2: Green and Blue Infrastructure

The Council will seek to protect and enhance benefits to the existing river corridor and canal network, including landscaping, water quality or habitat creation. This will be partially achieved, on development sites, by retaining or creating undeveloped buffer zones to all watercourses of 8 metres for main rivers and 5 metres for ordinary watercourses. In accordance with the Water Framework Directive, development will not be permitted which will have a detrimental impact on the visual quality, water quality or ecological value of existing river corridors and canals.

In addition to the measures mentioned in NE1 above, new development should make a positive contribution to biodiversity by creating or reinforcing habitat linkages between designated sites, in order to achieve a connected local and regional ecological network of wildlife corridors and green infrastructure.

The Council will seek, where appropriate, to maintain and enhance existing trees, woodland and hedgerows within the Borough.

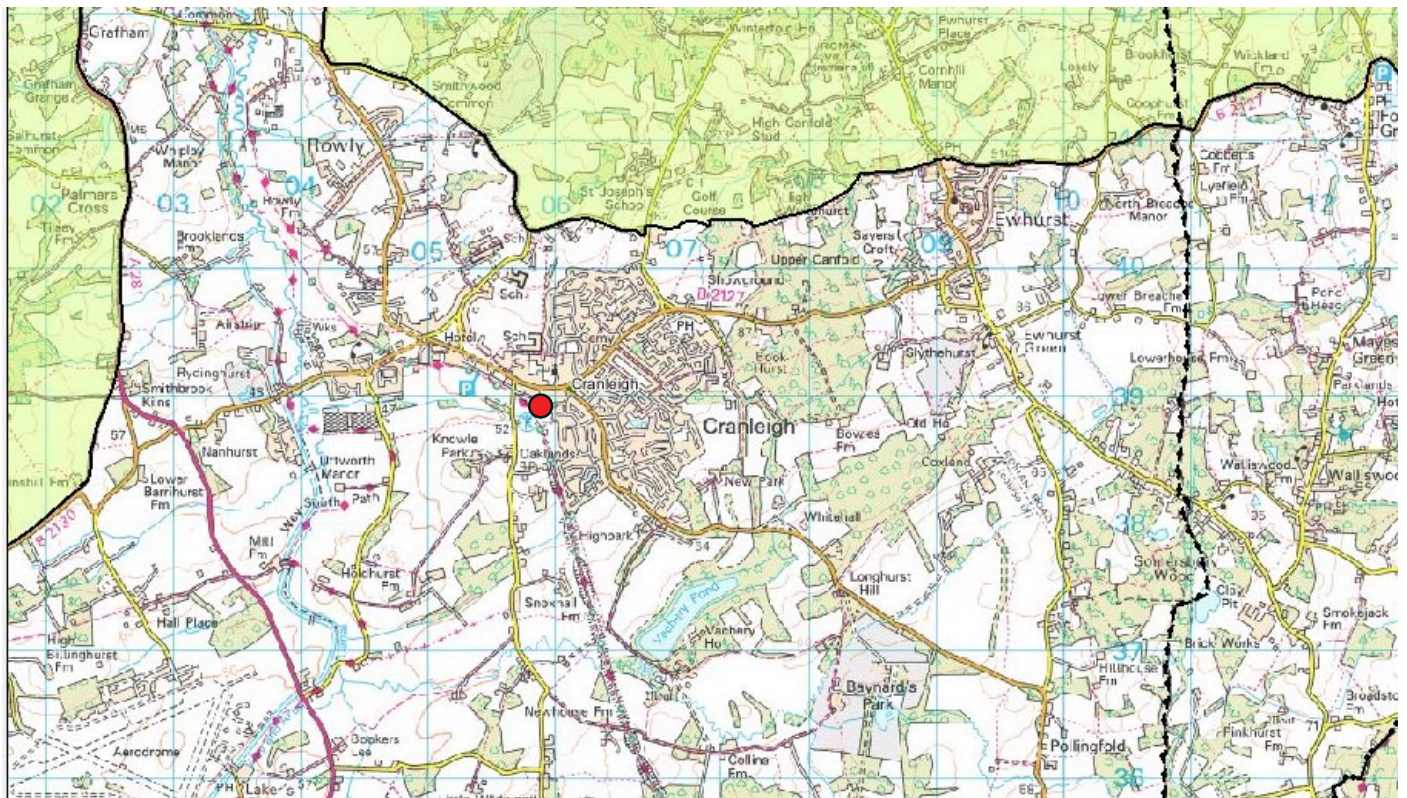


Figure 6.1 Extract from Surrey Interactive Mapping of Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the north of Cranleigh (www.surreycc.gov.uk) ● Proposal Site

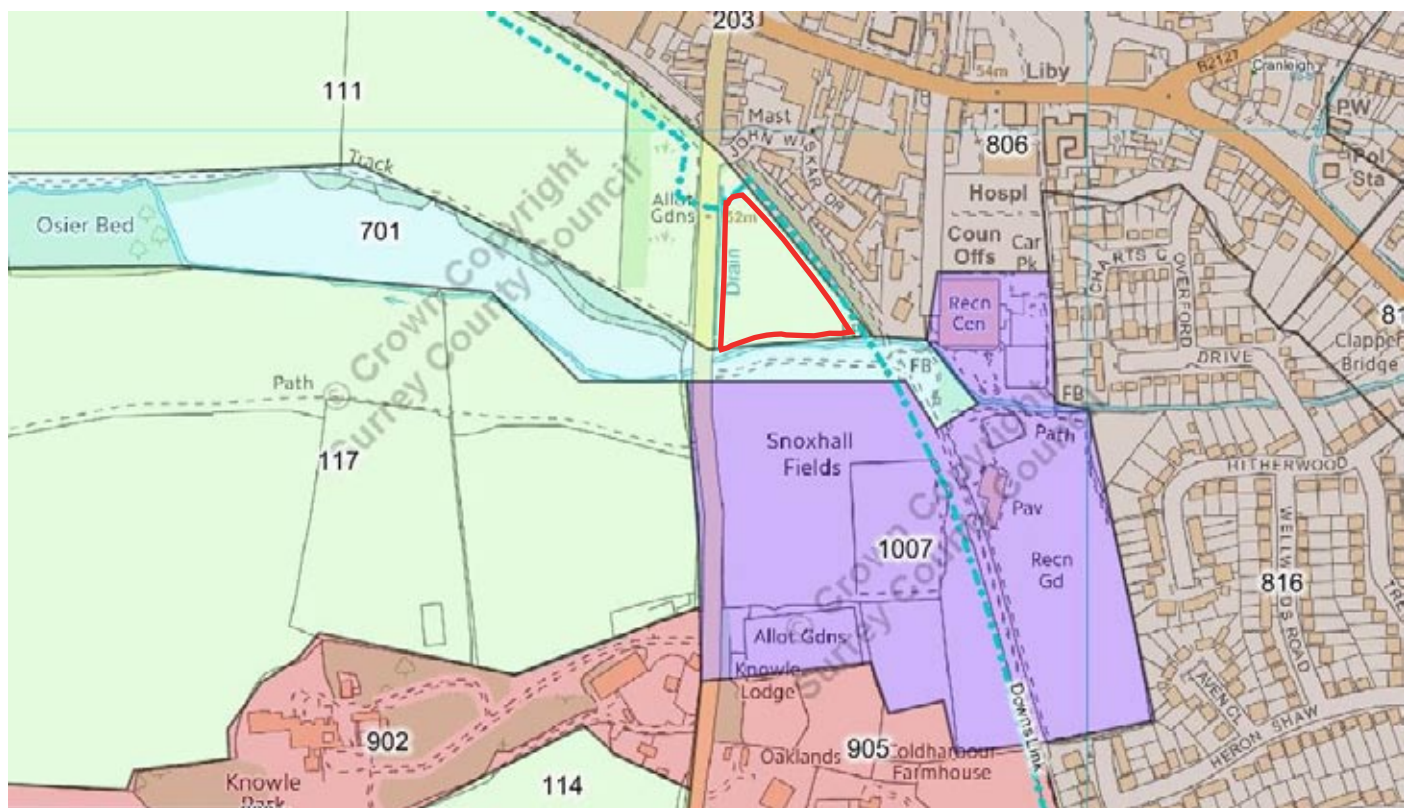


Figure 6.2 Extract from Surrey Interactive Mapping of Historic Landscape (www.surreycc.gov.uk) ▬ Proposal Site

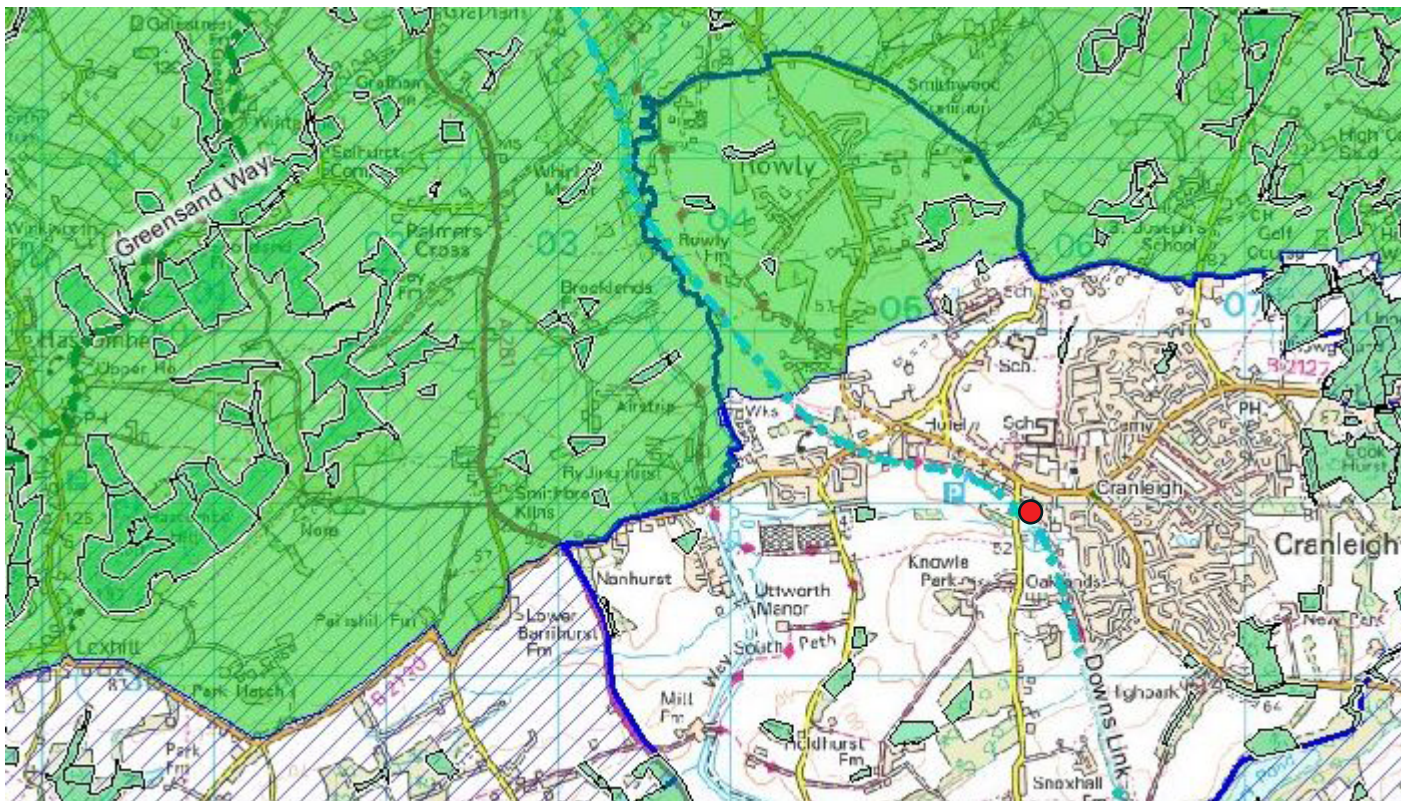


Figure 6.3 Extract from Surrey Interactive Mapping of Green Belt to the north of Cranleigh (www.surreycc.gov.uk)

● Proposal Site

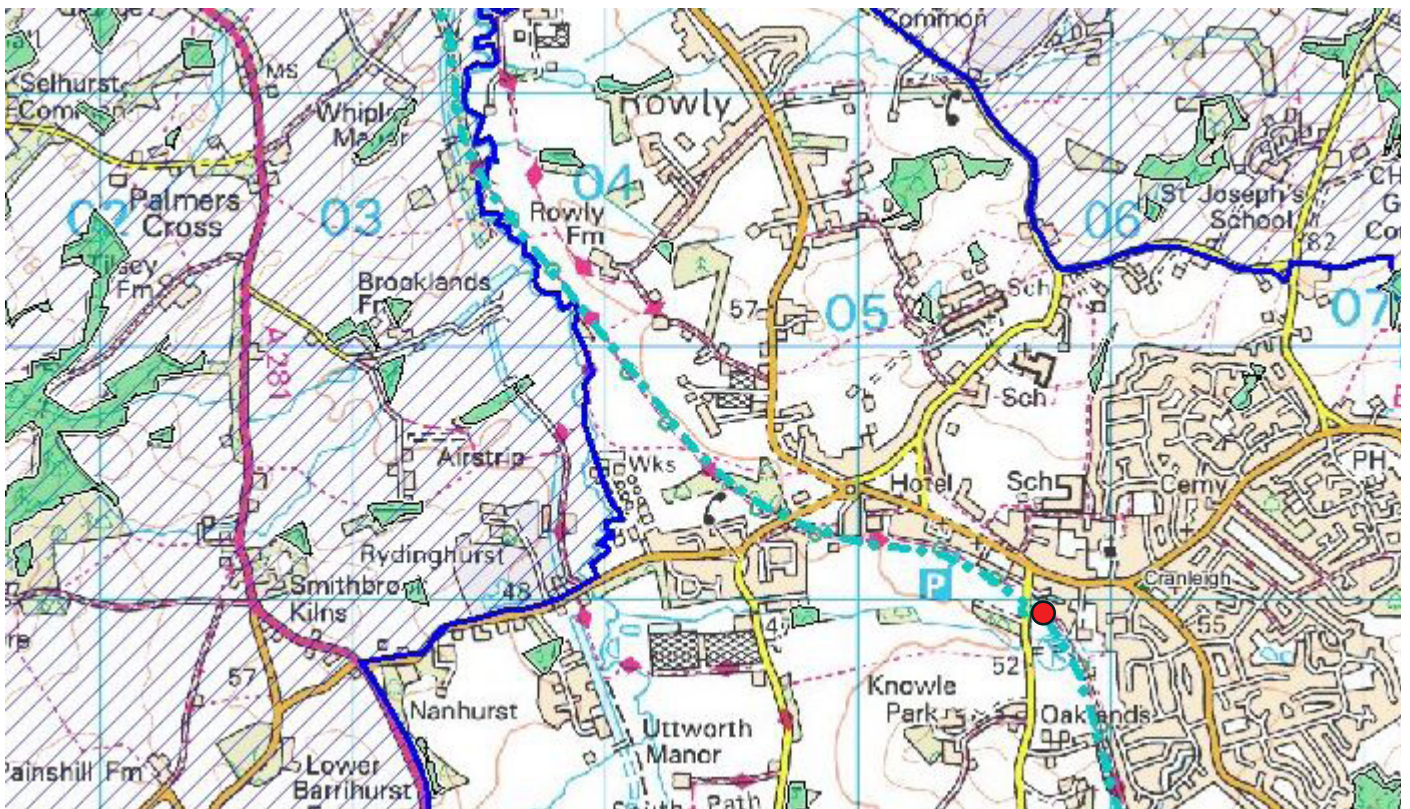


Figure 6.4 Extract from Surrey Interactive Mapping of Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) in the vicinity of Cranleigh (www.surreycc.gov.uk)

4.0 SITE CONTEXT

The following views have been selected to give an overview of the landscape within the surrounding area and the proposal site itself. An assessment of the visual amenity and specific receptors is included within section 7 and Part 2: Views.

Figure 7. Site Context Photos - Location Plan



 Proposal Site Boundary



Site Photograph of north-eastern boundary with Downs Link path/ John Wiskar Drive

2



Site Photograph of southern boundary with Snoxhall Fields

3



Site Photograph of western boundary with Knowle Lane

4



Site Photograph of western boundary with Knowle Lane



Context Photograph - Cranleigh High Street (Conservation Area)



Context Photograph - Residential properties at John Wiskar Drive to the north-east of the site



Context Photograph - Car Park at Rear of Marks and Spencer (rear of Cranleigh High Street)



Context Photograph - Entrance to Berkeley Homes site opposite proposal site, west of Knowle Lane



Context Photograph - Open countryside west of Knowle Lane along the southern fringe of Cranleigh




Context Photograph - Community bandstand building adjacent to south-eastern corner of the proposal site

4.1 Topography, Vegetation, Settlement - Factors which affect the potential visual envelope of the proposal

The factors influencing the extent of the visual envelope can be identified in Figure 8. The proposal site is contained on all boundaries by trees which filter all views other than those directly adjacent to the site. Beyond this the visual envelope is contained by the built form of Cranleigh settlement to the north and east. Further trees, woodland groups and hedgerows restrict all views to the rural landscape to the west of the proposal site beyond Knowle Lane. There is the potential for some filtered views of the proposal site into the recreation fields of Snoxhall Fields to the south, however these will be partial views and only in winter when the trees are without leaf.



Figure 8. Factors restricting visual envelope

 The proposal site

4.2 Public Rights of Way

The Downs Link path runs adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the site, a regional footpath which provides a link between the North Downs Way and South Downs Way, and is located in an urban fringe context in this location, following the southern edge of Cranleigh. Footpath FP 393 is located approximately 50m to the south-west of the proposal site leading from Knowle Lane to the rural landscape to the west.

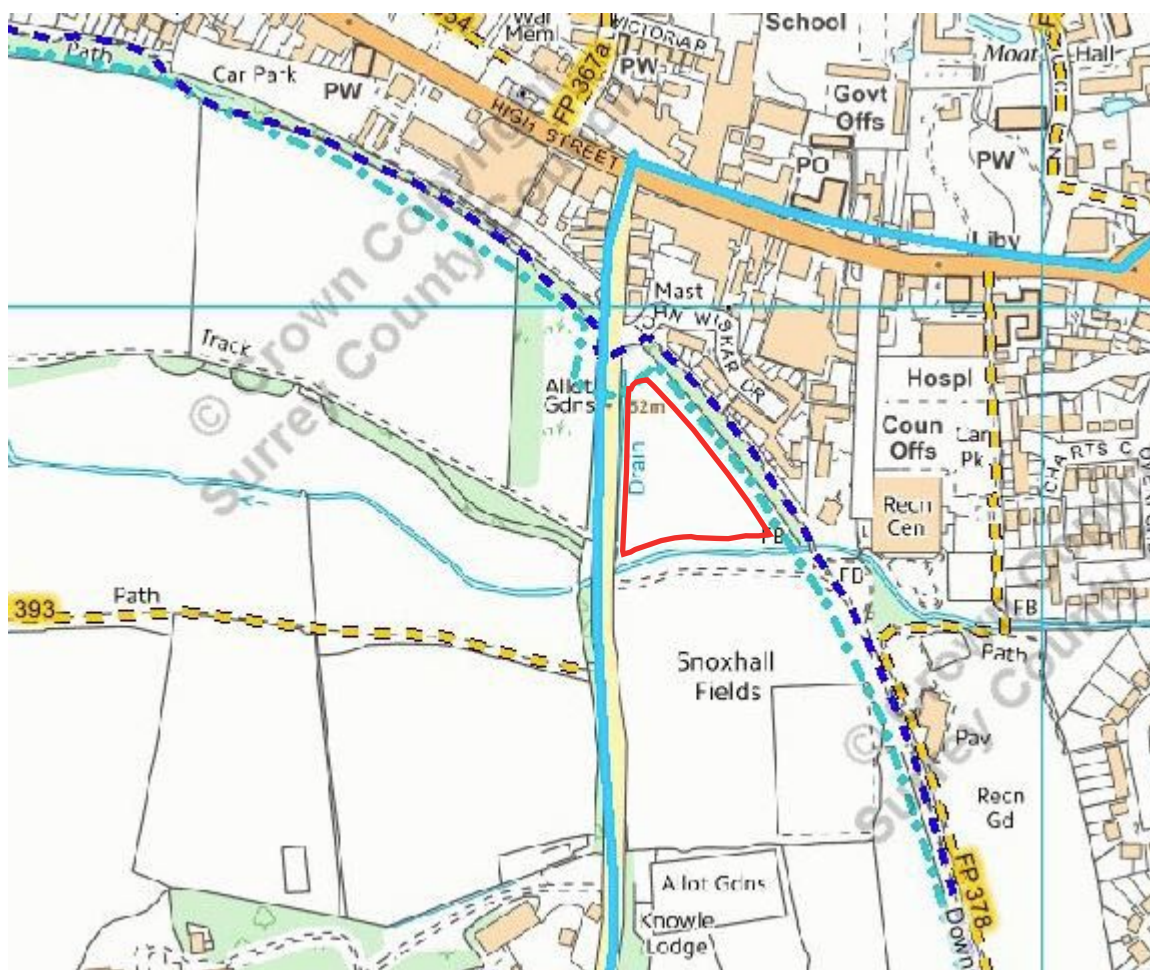


Figure 9. Public Access

 The proposal site