

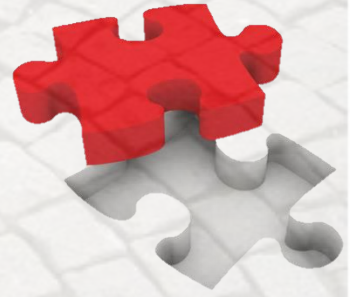
# Jigsaw Planning and Development Limited

Office 29A

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NG25 0HD



## REPRESENTATIONS TO THE REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION ON THE SUBMISSION SURREY HEATH LOCAL PLAN PREFERRED OPTIONS (2019-2038)

### RESPONSES ON BEHALF OF ADP Fairoaks Limited (September 2024)

#### 1. Executive Summary

These representations focus on employment-related considerations for the redevelopment and expansion of the Strategic Employment Site (SES) designation at Fairoaks Business Park. The aim is to advocate for additional employment designation at this location. Key points include:

- 1. Unsound Employment Assumptions**  
The local plan is built on assumptions about employment growth and job provision that are unrealistic in terms of both quantity and practical delivery.
- 2. Disruption of Existing Jobs**  
Redevelopment of current employment sites, particularly Fairoaks Business Park would cause major disruption and result in the loss of existing jobs without adequate space for relocation.
- 3. Need for Expanded SES**  
A larger SES designation is necessary to allow space for decanting and protecting existing jobs while encouraging the development of modern, higher-order employment opportunities in line with the aspirations of Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC).
- 4. Exceptional Connectivity and Lack of Environmental Constraints**  
Fairoaks Business Park offers excellent connectivity to the wider region and lacks the environmental constraints that restrict much of the borough. The current SES proposal misses the opportunity to create a high-quality employment park in this well-situated area.
- 5. Release from Greenbelt**  
The presence of large, outdated buildings and developed land means the site does not serve the purposes of the Greenbelt, making it a candidate for release under exceptional circumstances. It has previously been agreed with Surrey Heath that large expanses of

the immediate surrounding areas are deemed to be “previously developed land”. See Appendix 1

## 2. Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy

ADP Fairoaks Ltd Position: Object

### 2.1 Oversimplified Development Focus

Policy SS1 directs new development to the west of the borough, stating that the east is constrained by environmental designations and Greenbelt. This view is oversimplified, as Fairoaks Business Park has no significant environmental constraints, but is limited by Greenbelt designation, which can be reconsidered.

### 2.2 Fairoaks' Strategic Opportunity

Fairoaks is a rare site in the east of the borough without major environmental constraints, providing unrivalled opportunity to meet economic goals in the Local Plan.

### 2.3 Employment Land Projections

The updated Employment Land Technical Paper (2023) outlines the need for employment floorspace in Surrey Heath. However, the spatial strategy underestimates growth ambitions, relying too heavily on redevelopment, which often replaces rather than grows existing employment space.

### 2.4 Inadequate Land Allocation for SES

While Fairoaks has been elevated from a Locally Important Employment Site to a Strategic Employment Site, the tight definition of land limits its potential for promoting modern employment uses. This missed opportunity is exacerbated by the fact that much of the surrounding land is previously developed and associated with the airfield.

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### 3. ER1: Economic Growth and Investment

ADP Fairoaks Ltd Position: Support with Modifications

#### 3.1 Employment Composition and Growth

Nearly 90% of Surrey Heath's businesses in 2019 were micro-businesses, driving local economic growth. The Local Plan should support their needs and allow for flexibility in response to changes in economic circumstances.

#### 3.2 Over-Reliance on Redevelopment

While the policy is broadly supported, it leans heavily on protecting and redeveloping existing employment sites. This approach does not add new employment opportunities, merely replacing old spaces with new ones.

#### 3.3 Fairoaks and the Film/Media Industry

Fairoaks is under pressure for additional employment land, particularly for the film and media industry. It is within the "Golden Triangle" of media interest, close to the M25, M3, and Heathrow. There is evidence that low vacancy rates for employment land in the borough could hinder growth unless more land is designated for employment.

#### 3.4 Difficulties of Redeveloping Existing Sites

The shape and disposition of existing buildings at Fairoaks make redevelopment challenging. Any redevelopment would also displace small businesses, which are key to the local economy.

#### 3.5 Call for Policy Modifications

The policy should be amended to encourage growth of small businesses, prevent the loss of employment land, and include expansion of SES by removing Greenbelt restrictions.

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#### 4. ER2: Strategic Employment Sites

ADP Fairoaks Ltd Position: Support, Subject to Enlarged SES Designation

##### 4.1 Fairoaks' SES Designation Welcomed

The upgrade of Fairoaks to a Strategic Employment Site is seen as a positive development, recognizing its strategic importance for employment and economic growth.

##### 4.2 Constraints on Development

The tightly drawn SES boundaries significantly limit practical redevelopment. The current layout and uncoordinated historical placement of buildings make it difficult to achieve modern employment needs within the designated area. See illustration below.

##### 4.3 Greenbelt Considerations

Much of the land that could be included in an expanded SES is already classified as previously developed, meaning it serves little Greenbelt function. Precedents exist for enlarging previously developed sites in the Greenbelt, such as the inclusion of Chobham Business Centre.

##### 4.4 National Planning Policy Influence

The draft revisions to the NPPF (2024) suggest identifying "grey belt" land within the Greenbelt, which supports removing Fairoaks from its Greenbelt designation. The policy risks being unsound if it does not align with these emerging national policies.

##### 4.5 Request for SES Enlargement

The policy should be adjusted to formally designate additional land at Fairoaks and remove it from the Greenbelt. This would create the necessary space for growth without the restrictions currently imposed by the Greenbelt.

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5. Policy GBC1: Development of New Buildings within the Greenbelt

ADP Fair Oaks Ltd Position: Support

5.1 Support for Greenbelt Development Policy

This policy aligns with long-standing national and local Greenbelt principles, and no changes are requested. However, Fair Oaks' designation as a Strategic Employment Site within the Greenbelt creates tension that should be resolved.

5.2 Exceptional Circumstances at Fair Oaks

Exceptional circumstances, such as low Greenbelt performance, employment growth, and previously developed land, justify removing Fair Oaks from the Greenbelt to enable its SES role.

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## 6. East Sheet Policies Map

ADP Fairoaks Ltd Position: Amend

### 6.1 Requested Amendments

- Enlarge the SES designation for Fairoaks and Chobham Business Centre.
- Remove these areas from the Greenbelt designation to facilitate strategic employment growth

**Figure 3.1 Fairoaks Airport and Chobham Business Centre**

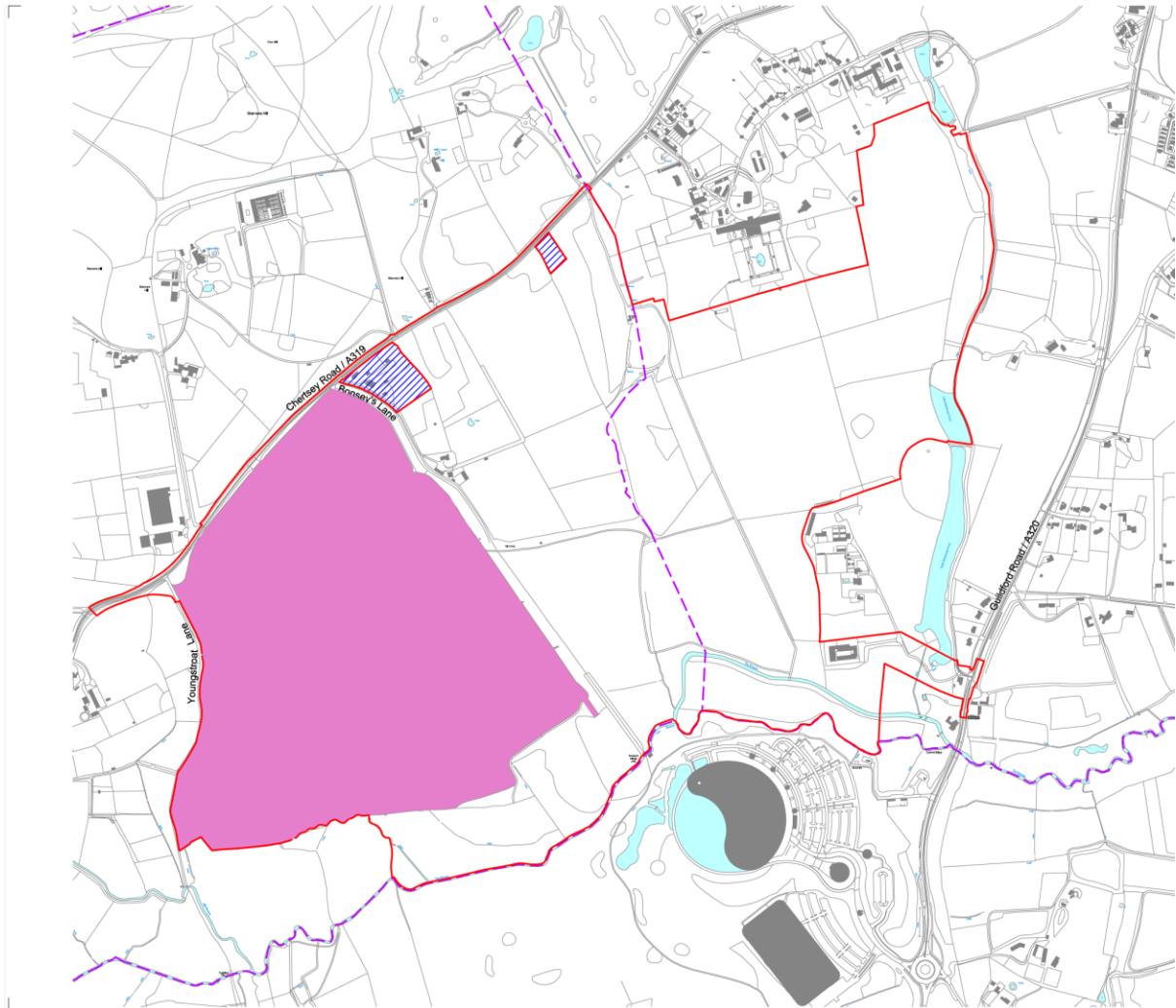



Source: *Employment Land Supply Assessment (ELSA) (2023)*

*Michael Evans MRTPI*

*Jigsaw Planning and Development Ltd*

# Appendix 1 : Agreed Previously Developed Designation



	<p><b>Surrey Heath Borough Council</b></p> <p><b>Pre-Submission Surrey Heath Local Plan (2019 – 2038) : (Regulation 19)</b></p> <p><b>Representation Form</b></p>	<p>Ref:</p> <p><b>(For official use only)</b></p>
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**Please return to:** [planning.consultation@surreyheath.gov.uk](mailto:planning.consultation@surreyheath.gov.uk)  
OR  
Planning Policy and Conservation, Surrey Heath Borough Council,  
Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 3HD.

**By 12.00 noon 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024 NO LATE REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

This form has two parts:  
Part A – Personal Details  
Part B – Your representation(s). (Please be aware that this together with your name will be made publicly available)  
**Please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make.**

Surrey Heath Borough Council's Privacy Statement is [here](#).

**Please read the separate guidance notes before completing this form.**

## Part A

1. Personal Details*		2. Agent's Details (if applicable)	
*If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.			
Title	Mr	Mr	
First Name	Daniel	Michael	
Last Name	Barrington	Evans	
Job Title (where relevant)	Director of Real Estate Westcore Europe	Director	
Organisation (where relevant)	ADP Fair Oaks Ltd	Jigsaw Planning and Development Ltd	
Address Line 1		Office 29A Minster Chambers	
Line 2		Church Street	
Line 3		Southwell	
Post Code		NG25 0HD	
Telephone Number		[REDACTED]	



E-mail Address

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Do you wish to be notified of when any of the following occurs? (place an X in the box to indicate which applies)

	Yes	No
• The Pre-Submission Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination?	Yes	
• The independent examiner's recommendations are published?	Yes	
• The Local Plan has been adopted?	Yes	

Please note that your formal comments (known as representations) and your name will be made available on the Council's website. All other details in Part A of this form containing your personal details will not be shown.

The Council cannot accept confidential comments as all representations must be publicly available.

## Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Your representation should cover all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations following this publication stage.

After this stage, further submission will only be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.

**Name or Organisation :**

### 3. To which part of the Pre-Submission Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph  Policy  Other, e.g. policies map, table, appendix

### 4. Do you consider the Pre-Submission Local Plan is? (place an X in the box to indicate which applies)

4.(1) Legally compliant (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text" value="X"/>	No	<input type="text"/>
4.(2) Sound (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text"/>	No	<input type="text" value="X"/>
4.(3) Complies with the Duty to Co-operate (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text" value="X"/>	No	<input type="text"/>

5. Please give details of why you consider the Pre-Submission Local Plan is not legally compliant or does not meet the tests of soundness or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Pre-Submission Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments. You are advised to read our Representations Guidance note for more information on legal compliance and soundness.

Please refer to supporting Composite Statement

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

6. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Pre-Submission Local Plan legally compliant and sound, having regard to the matters you have identified at 5 above. (Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination)

You will need to say why each modification will make the Pre-Submission Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

Please refer to supporting Composite Statement

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

**Please note** your representation should cover succinctly all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify your representation and your suggested modification(s). You should not assume that you will have a further opportunity to make submissions.

**After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Planning Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.**

7. If your representation is seeking a modification to the Pre-Submission Local Plan, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

No, I do not wish to participate at the oral examination

Yes, I wish to participate at the oral examination

Please note - whilst this will provide an initial indication of your wish to participate in the examination, you may be asked at a later point to confirm your request to participate.

8. If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

The representations raise important and fundamental planning issues which should be explored at Examination

**Please note** - the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination. You may be asked to confirm your wish to participate when the Inspector has identified the matters and issues for examination.

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## REPRESENTATIONS TO THE REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION ON THE SUBMISSION SURREY HEATH LOCAL PLAN PREFERRED OPTIONS (2019-2038) RESPONSES ON BEHALF OF FAIROAKS ADP LTD (September 2024)

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## REPRESENTATIONS TO THE REGULATION 19 CONSULTATION ON THE SUBMISSION SURREY HEATH LOCAL PLAN PREFERRED OPTIONS (2019-2038) RESPONSES ON BEHALF OF ADP Fairoaks Limited (September 2024)

### 1. Executive Summary

These representations focus on employment-related considerations for the redevelopment and expansion of the Strategic Employment Site (SES) designation at Fairoaks Business Park. The aim is to advocate for additional employment designation at this location. Key points include:

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#### 3. Need for Expanded SES

A larger SES designation is necessary to allow space for decanting and protecting existing jobs while encouraging the development of modern, higher-order employment opportunities in line with the aspirations of Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC).

4. Exceptional Connectivity and Lack of Environmental Constraints  
Fairoaks Business Park offers excellent connectivity to the wider region and lacks the environmental constraints that restrict much of the borough. The current SES proposal misses the opportunity to create a high-quality employment park in this well-situated area.
5. Release from Greenbelt  
The presence of large, outdated buildings and developed land means the site does not serve the purposes of the Greenbelt, making it a candidate for release under exceptional circumstances. It has previously been agreed with Surrey Heath that large expanses of the immediate surrounding areas are deemed to be “previously developed land”. See Appendix 1

2. Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy  
ADP Fairoaks Ltd Position: Object
- 2.1 Oversimplified Development Focus

Policy SS1 directs new development to the west of the borough, stating that the east is constrained by environmental designations and Greenbelt. This view is oversimplified, as Fairoaks Business Park has no significant environmental constraints, but is limited by Greenbelt designation, which can be reconsidered.

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Fairoaks is a rare site in the east of the borough without major environmental constraints, providing unrivalled opportunity to meet economic goals in the Local Plan.

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The updated Employment Land Technical Paper (2023) outlines the need for employment floorspace in Surrey Heath. However, the spatial strategy underestimates growth ambitions, relying too heavily on redevelopment, which often replaces rather than grows existing employment space.

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While Fairoaks has been elevated from a Locally Important Employment Site to a Strategic Employment Site, the tight definition of land limits its potential for promoting modern employment uses. This missed opportunity is exacerbated by the fact that much of the surrounding land is previously developed and associated with the airfield.

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3. ER1: Economic Growth and Investment  
ADP Fairoaks Ltd Position: Support with Modifications

3.1 Employment Composition and Growth

Nearly 90% of Surrey Heath's businesses in 2019 were micro-businesses, driving local economic growth. The Local Plan should support their needs and allow for flexibility in response to changes in economic circumstances.

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Fairoaks is under pressure for additional employment land, particularly for the film and media industry. It is within the "Golden Triangle" of media interest, close to the M25, M3, and Heathrow. There is evidence that low vacancy rates for employment land in the borough could hinder growth unless more land is designated for employment.

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The shape and disposition of existing buildings at Fairoaks make redevelopment challenging. Any redevelopment would also displace small businesses, which are key to the local economy.

3.5 Call for Policy Modifications

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4. ER2: Strategic Employment Sites  
ADP Fairoaks Ltd Position: Support, Subject to Enlarged SES Designation

4.1 Fairoaks' SES Designation Welcomed

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The tightly drawn SES boundaries significantly limit practical redevelopment. The current layout and uncoordinated historical

placement of buildings make it difficult to achieve modern employment needs within the designated area. See illustration below.

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Much of the land that could be included in an expanded SES is already classified as previously developed, meaning it serves little Greenbelt function. Precedents exist for enlarging previously developed sites in the Greenbelt, such as the inclusion of Chobham Business Centre.

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### 5. Policy GBC1: Development of New Buildings within the Greenbelt ADP Fair Oaks Ltd Position: Support

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This policy aligns with long-standing national and local Greenbelt principles, and no changes are requested. However, Fair Oaks' designation as a Strategic Employment Site within the Greenbelt creates tension that should be resolved.

#### 5.2 Exceptional Circumstances at Fair Oaks

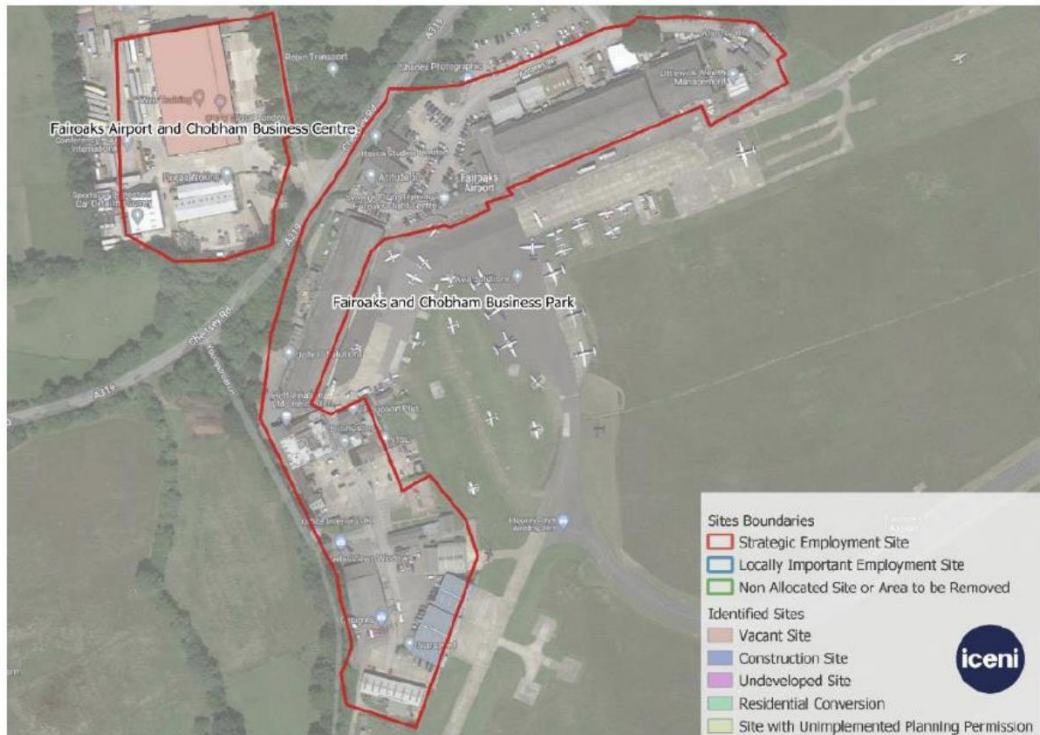
Exceptional circumstances, such as low Greenbelt performance, employment growth, and previously developed land, justify removing Fair Oaks from the Greenbelt to enable its SES role.

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6. East Sheet Policies Map  
ADP Fairoaks Ltd Position: Amend  
6.1 Requested Amendments

- Enlarge the SES designation for Fairoaks and Chobham Business Centre.
- Remove these areas from the Greenbelt designation to facilitate strategic employment growth

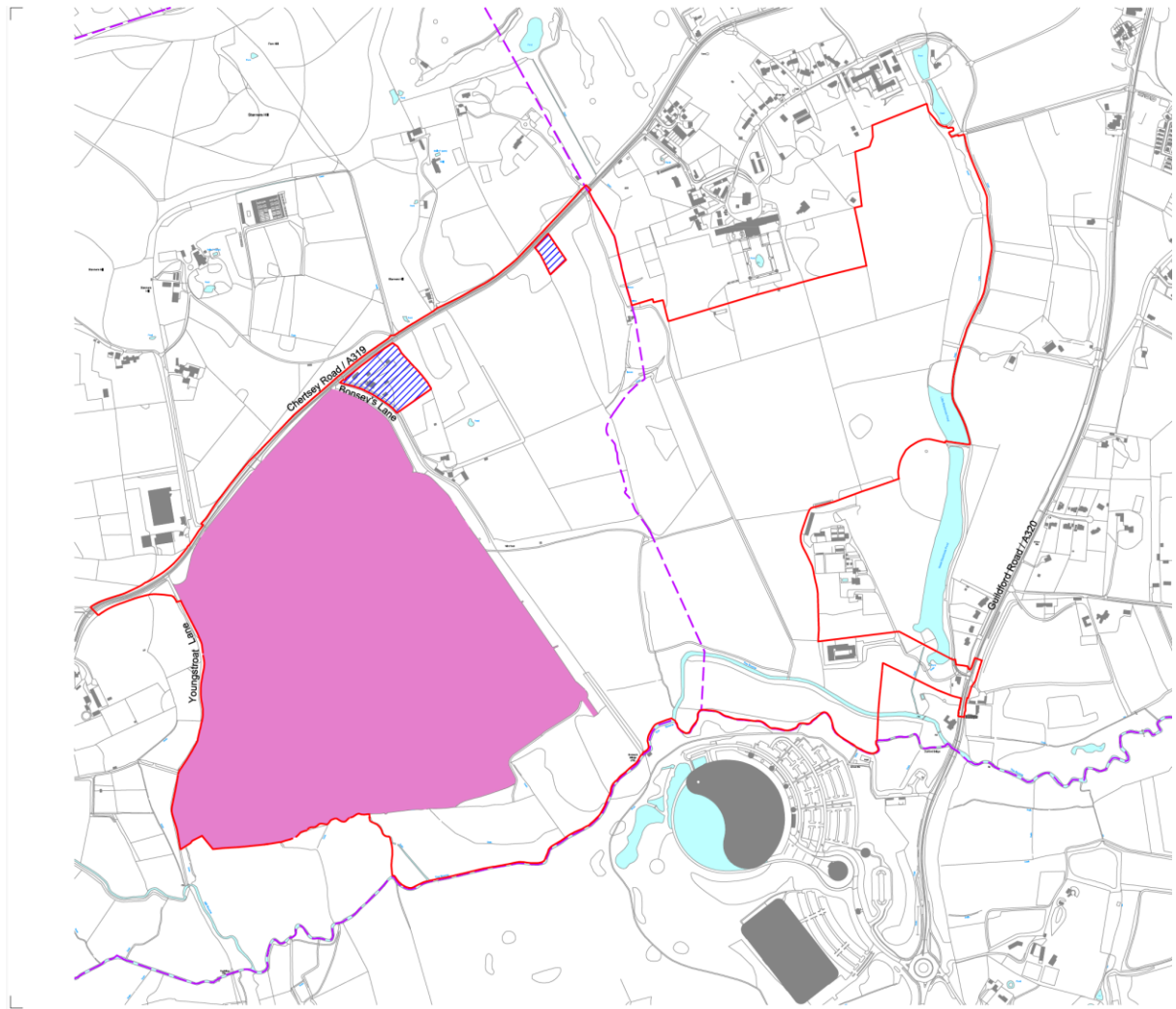
**Figure 3.1 Fairoaks Airport and Chobham Business Centre**



Source: *Employment Land Supply Assessment (ELSA) (2023)*

Appendix 1 : Agreed Previously Developed Designation





## 2 Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy

ADPF Position: OBJECT

2.1 Policy SS1 contains the spatial strategy for SHBC over the proposed plan period. This identifies that new development will be directed to the west of the Borough, as shown on the Policies Map. Policy SS1 states that the east of the Borough is heavily constrained by environmental designations and Green Belt and has limited

capacity to accommodate new development. It is considered that this is an oversimplistic view of the Borough.

2.2 In terms of Fairoaks Airport, it enjoys the unusual position within the Borough of having no significant environmental constraints. It is however washed over by Greenbelt designation and it is this policy constraint which is capable of reinterpretation. Therefore, this is a rare opportunity in the east of the Borough to achieve the economic objectives of the local plan which the spatial plan policy should embrace.

2.3 The Employment Land Technical Paper update (2023) sets out employment floorspace need projections for Surrey Heath. The Spatial Strategy plans to meet the employment land needs of the Borough, as part of the Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Functional Economic Area, principally by protecting and supporting employment uses within designated Strategic and Locally Important Employment Sites, along with support for new employment uses, at suitable locations beyond these areas.

2.4 This approach is considered to significantly under provide for the growth ambitions of the Borough. To rely upon the redevelopment of existing employment sites to such an extent is not a reflection of growth but mainly a replacement of existing floor space.

2.5 It is welcomed that the Regulation 19 plan has acknowledged that the Fairoaks site serves a more strategic employment role by its elevation from a Locally Important Employment Site (at Regulation 18 Stage) to a Strategic Employment Site designation.

2.6 However, by tightly defining the extent of land and buildings associated with this designation, this represents a significant missed opportunity to promote modern, high order employment uses in this favoured accessible location. This is particularly regrettable given that a significant proportion of the land surrounding the built development as existing is previously developed in association with the airfield.

2.7 As currently phrased, the policy is considered to be unsound and not positively prepared.

It is requested that the policy be amended in the following terms by the addition of reference to Fairoaks airport.

*c) Much of the east of the Borough is constrained by environmental designations*

*and Green Belt and will have limited capacity to accommodate new development. Development opportunities in this area will be focused in:*

*i. Lightwater village;*

*ii. Bisley, Chobham, West End and Windlesham villages, which are inset within the Green Belt.*

*iii, Fair Oaks Airport*

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### 3 ER1 Economic Growth and Investment

ADPF Position. SUPPORT WITH MODIFICATION/ADDITION

3.1 The supporting justification for this policy highlights helpful background in terms of employment within the Borough. It is notable that;

*As of 2019, Nomis highlighted that nearly 90% of businesses in the Borough were micro businesses, driving future economic growth in Surrey Heath. It is important that these types of organisations are supported and encouraged.*

*The Surrey Heath Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028 provides an ambitious road map for good growth and prosperity of the local economy from 2023 to 2028. It identifies opportunities for accelerated economic growth and resilience....*

*National planning policy sets out the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. This should be achieved through the identification of sites to meet forecasted employment needs over the plan period. The NPPF also states the Local Plan should also be flexible enough to accommodate needs that are not projected over the*

*plan period, enabling a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.*

3.2 Whilst the policy can be welcomed in general terms, it nevertheless heavily relies on the protection and redevelopment of existing employment sites. This is not adding to the overall growth and availability of employment sites rather replacing existing ones through redevelopment.

3.3 The employment land supply ambitions set out in local plan represent minimum aspirations. It is not clear that this will cater for employment growth for not only the Borough itself but any wider opportunities which arise. There is evidence that there is very low vacancy of employment land and premises within the Borough. The justification text of this policy also highlights the need to protect existing employment land from the pressure from redevelopment for housing purposes, due to high local house prices. Coupled with the environmental and greenbelt constraints, employment land is at a premium and additional growth would strengthen the local economy if additional employment land were to be allocated.

3.4 In terms of Fairoaks airport, there is consistent and documented pressure for additional employment land to service the buoyant film and media industry. This is a national demand and it is imperative sufficient opportunities be made within the local plan to accommodate such inward investment.

3.5 Fairoaks benefits from an exceptional geographical location within the defined golden triangle of film and media interest being close to the M25, M3 corridors and Heathrow Airport. The economic and locational benefits of this have been demonstrated to the Council by supporting evidence at both regulation 18 stage of the local plan and through the submission of a planning application for two film studios which currently is awaiting determination.

3.6 As part of the exercise in attempting to accommodate such film demand at Fairoaks, extensive investigations were made in order to first of all attempt to redevelop the existing airport buildings, within the current Major Developed Site designation.

3.7 However, the impractical physical shape of the available land together with an uncoordinated historical disposition of existing buildings, meant this was extremely difficult to achieve in practical terms.

3.8 Furthermore, such an approach would have displaced many of the small business sector tenants who make up a significant portion of the site, occupying smaller cost-effective buildings for their operation. In short, any redevelopment of this land would have displaced many important small business employers to the detriment of the overall economic benefit of redevelopment. This runs counter to the intentions of the policy as phrased.

3.9 This exercise illustrated how difficult it is to rely upon redevelopment of existing employment sites to accommodate modern employment needs. Any existing employment site simply needs additional breathing space around it in order to decant/retain existing employees or risk losing them altogether.

3.10 Many points contained in these overall representations are interrelated in the sense of the economic strategy needs to interplay with allocations of sufficient practical size for new employment designations, together with the removal of other constraints such as greenbelt tests.

3.11 It is requested that the policy be modified to include additional points a) and 1f)

Policy ER1: Economic Growth and Investment

1) The sustainable growth and retention of businesses and inward investment into SurreyHeath will be supported by:

a) supporting the development and intensification of Employment Uses in

Strategic and Locally Important Employment Sites, *including expansion to facilitate a strengthened employment role and/or retention of existing on site employment.*

b) preventing a net loss of existing floorspace in Employment Use in Strategic and

Locally Important Employment Sites;

c) supporting proposals for intensification of, or new employment uses elsewhere

in the Borough where it does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on local

amenity including through transport movements, emissions, hours of operation

and lighting and is compliant with other development plan policies;  
d) encouraging the growth of small and micro businesses by protecting employment units capable for use by a small business or industry and supporting the siting of small to medium size employment units in Strategic and Locally Important Employment sites or other appropriate locations;  
e) encouraging development of the rural economy in accordance with Policy ER5 (Rural Economy).

*f) removing designated employment sites from the Greenbelt*

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#### 4 ER2. STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT SITES

ADPF POSITION. SUPPORT Subject to enlarged SES Designation

4.1 The designation of Fair Oaks as a strategic employment site is welcomed. This marks a positive improvement from the Regulation 18 stage of the local plan and recognises the strategic importance of the site both in terms of function and location.

4.2 Many of the points made in these representations overlap and it is therefore important to reiterate the severe difficulties in achieving meaningful development of the existing defined SES at Fair Oaks, if it is to be so tightly constrained to existing building footprint.

4.3 The justification text for this policy is inaccurate in respect of the current function of the majority of the designated SES site. The site contains very few aviation related employees with the majority now being a diverse mix of small businesses covering a wide range of sectors together with film and media representation. There is very little interrelationship with the current operational airfield itself.

4.4 The recognition that the site can deliver the strategic employment ambitions of the SHBC economic development strategy is welcomed. However, the tightly drawn nature of the currently defined SES means that the redevelopment confines render

impractical. The site is awkwardly shaped with a range of outbuildings historically unrelated to any comprehensive or workable layout.

4.5 Fairoaks benefits from an exceptional geographical location within the defined golden triangle of film and media interest being close to the M25, M3 corridors and Heathrow Airport. The economic and locational benefits of this have been demonstrated to the Council by supporting evidence at both regulation 18 stage of the local plan and through the submission of a planning application for two film studios which currently is awaiting determination.

4.6 As part of the exercise in attempting to accommodate such film demand at Fairoaks, extensive investigations were made in order to first of all attempt to redevelop the existing airport buildings, within the current Major Developed Site designation.

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4.8 Furthermore, such an approach would have displaced many of the small business sector tenants who make up a significant portion of the site, occupying smaller cost-effective buildings for their operation. In short, any redevelopment of this land would have displaced many important small business employers to the detriment of the overall economic benefit of redevelopment.

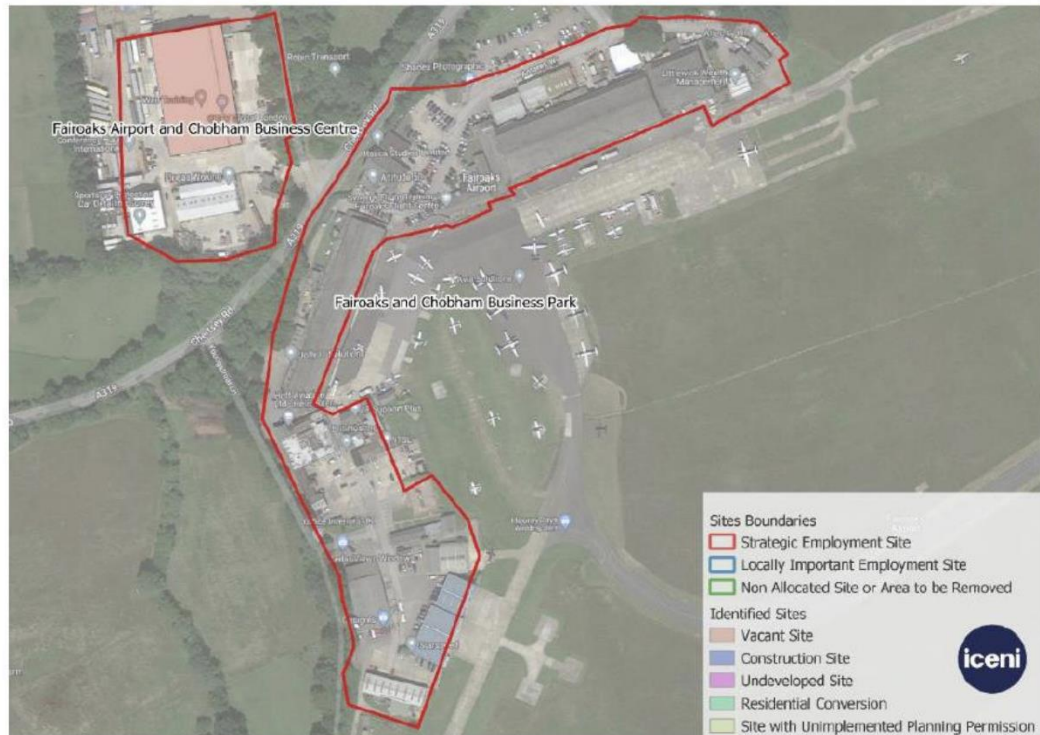
4.9 This exercise illustrated how difficult it is to rely upon redevelopment of existing employment sites to accommodate modern employment needs, without additional land being available around existing built form. Any existing employment site simply needs additional breathing space around it in order to decant/retain existing employees or risk losing them altogether.

4.10 .Precedent has been set for the enlargement of previously defined major developed sites in the greenbelt. In the current development plan the area is tightly constrained as major developed site relating to the buildings on the southeast side of the A319.

The Regulation 18 and now Regulation 19 proposals have incorporated additional land into that designation across the A319 in the form of the Chobham Business Centre.

4.11 This demonstrates that the authority is prepared to be flexible about the precise boundaries of new designations and in fact has included land around the existing building opposite for inclusion in this now SES designation. This contrasts with the consistent request for similar breathing space to be given around Fairoaks.

**Figure 3.1 Fairoaks Airport and Chobham Business Centre**



Source: *Employment Land Supply Assessment (ELSA) (2023)*

4.12 In the case of Fairoaks, much of the land which would logically be incorporated into an expanded SES is not performing any significant greenbelt function. This has been demonstrated in supporting evidence with the planning application.

Instead, a significant area is able to be classified as previously developed land, a categorisation more recently highlighted by the intention to identify grey belt land within current greenbelt designations and as an insert into the NPPF 2024, currently under consultation.

4.13 Whilst the NPPF 2024 revisions are not yet published the draft version and Ministerial statements are material considerations and the plan is unsound without recognition of this direction of travel. The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) have alerted other authorities of



this position where Local Plans are being advanced in order not to risk a finding of unsoundness from the outset.

4.14 In conclusion, no changes or requested to the policy wording of ER2 and this allocation as an SES is supported. However, ADPF do request that the site is significantly enlarged by formal designation on the Policies Map 34 East Sheet, together with its removal from the Greenbelt.

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## 5 Policy GBC1: Development of new buildings within the Greenbelt

ADPF POSITION. -SUPPORT

5.1 This policy reflects long-standing local and national planning policy and no changes are requested to the phrasing suggested.

5.2 The justification text with regard to this policy confirms that some 43% of the Borough is covered by greenbelt designation. In terms of approval of planning applications, inappropriate development must demonstrate very special circumstances in order to overcome this high test.

5.3 Where existing buildings in the greenbelt have a parallel designation, there is a tension between the two ambitions. This is the case at Fair Oaks where the intention to designate a Strategic Employment Site, which is to remain washed over by Greenbelt, means that there is potential conflict between the two positions.

5.4 This is undesirable and avoidable. The opportunity exists in the review of the local plan to apply a different perspective whereby a Strategic Employment Site should be removed from any Greenbelt designation. To do so would still need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances but this is a lower and achievable threshold in this location.

5.5 These exceptional circumstances can ably be demonstrated here at Fair Oaks by the evidence already provided in terms of low performance against the purposes of Greenbelt, employment growth in line with the ambitions of the Surrey Heath Economic Development Strategy and use of previously developed land.

These are provided with supporting attached reports.

1 Fair Oaks Studios Economic Impact Analysis March 2023 by Saffery Champness

2 Land at Fair Oaks Green Belt Review June 2023 by LDA Design

3 Land at Fair Oaks Landscape and Visual Appraisal June 2023 by LDA Design

5.6 Whilst no change is requested to the policy wording, the East Sheet Policies Map, should be revised to exclude an expanded Fair Oaks and Chobham Business Centre SES from the Greenbelt.

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## 6 EAST SHEET POLICIES MAP

### ADPF POSITION –AMEND


6.1 It is requested that the East Sheet Policies Map is amended to incorporate the following changes;

1 The designation of a larger Strategic Employment Site at Fair Oaks and Chobham Business Centre

2 The enlarged SES is removed from Greenbelt designation

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*Michael Evans MRTPI  
Jigsaw Planning and Development Ltd*

	<p><b>Surrey Heath Borough Council</b></p> <p><b>Pre-Submission Surrey Heath Local Plan (2019 – 2038) : (Regulation 19)</b></p> <p><b>Representation Form</b></p>	<p>Ref:</p> <p><b>(For official use only)</b></p>
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**Please return to:** [planning.consultation@surreyheath.gov.uk](mailto:planning.consultation@surreyheath.gov.uk)  
OR  
Planning Policy and Conservation, Surrey Heath Borough Council,  
Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, Surrey GU15 3HD.

**By 12.00 noon 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024 NO LATE REPRESENTATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

This form has two parts:  
Part A – Personal Details  
Part B – Your representation(s). (Please be aware that this together with your name will be made publicly available)  
**Please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make.**

Surrey Heath Borough Council's Privacy Statement is [here](#).

**Please read the separate guidance notes before completing this form.**

## Part A

1. Personal Details*		2. Agent's Details (if applicable)	
<i>*If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.</i>			
Title	Mr		Mr
First Name	Daniel		Michael
Last Name	Barrington		Evans
Job Title (where relevant)	Director of Real Estate Westcore Europe		Director
Organisation (where relevant)	ADP Fair Oaks Ltd		Jigsaw Planning and Development Ltd
Address Line 1			Office 29A Minster Chambers
Line 2			Church Street
Line 3			Southwell
Post Code			NG25 0HD
Telephone Number			[REDACTED]

E-mail Address

---

Do you wish to be notified of when any of the following occurs? (place an X in the box to indicate which applies)

	Yes	No
• The Pre-Submission Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• The independent examiner's recommendations are published?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• The Local Plan has been adopted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please note that your formal comments (known as representations) and your name will be made available on the Council's website. All other details in Part A of this form containing your personal details will not be shown.

The Council cannot accept confidential comments as all representations must be publicly available.

## Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Your representation should cover all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations following this publication stage.

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**Name or Organisation :**

ADP Fair Oaks Ltd

3. To which part of the Pre-Submission Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph

Policy

SS1:ER1:  
ER2:GBC1:

Other, e.g.  
policies map,  
table, appendix

East Sheet Policies  
Map

4. Do you consider the Pre-Submission Local Plan is? (place an X in the box to indicate which applies)

4.(1) Legally compliant (please refer to guidance notes)

Yes

X

No

4.(2) Sound (please refer to guidance notes)

Yes

No

X

4.(3) Complies with the Duty to Co-operate (please refer to guidance notes)

Yes

X

No

5. Please give details of why you consider the Pre-Submission Local Plan is not legally compliant or does not meet the tests of soundness or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Pre-Submission Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments. You are advised to read our Representations Guidance note for more information on legal compliance and soundness.

Please refer to Part B Individual sheets for each Policy

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

6. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Pre-Submission Local Plan legally compliant and sound, having regard to the matters you have identified at 5 above.  
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(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

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**No**, I do not wish to participate at the oral examination

**Yes**, I wish to participate at the oral examination

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4.(2) Sound (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text"/>	No	<input type="text" value="X"/>
4.(3) Complies with the Duty to Co-operate (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text" value="X"/>	No	<input type="text"/>

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Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy

ADPF Position: OBJECT

Policy SS1 contains the spatial strategy for SHBC over the proposed plan period. This identifies that new development will be directed to the west of the Borough, as shown on the Policies Map.

Policy SS1 states that the east of the Borough is heavily constrained by environmental designations and Green Belt and has limited capacity to accommodate new development. It is considered that this is an oversimplistic view of the Borough.

In terms of Fair Oaks Airport, it enjoys the unusual position within the Borough of having no significant environmental constraints. It is however washed over by Greenbelt designation and it is this policy constraint which is capable of reinterpretation. Therefore, this is a rare opportunity in the east of the Borough to achieve the economic objectives of the local plan which the spatial plan policy should embrace.

The Employment Land Technical Paper update (2023) sets out employment floorspace need projections for Surrey Heath. The Spatial Strategy plans to meet the



employment land needs of the Borough, as part of the Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Functional Economic Area, principally by protecting and supporting employment uses within designated Strategic and Locally Important Employment Sites, along with support for new employment uses, at suitable locations beyond these areas.

This approach is considered to significantly under provide for the growth ambitions of the Borough. To rely upon the redevelopment of existing employment sites to such an extent is not a reflection of growth but mainly a replacement of existing floor space.

It is welcomed that the Regulation 19 plan has acknowledged that the Fair Oaks site serves a more strategic employment role by its elevation from a Locally Important Employment Site (at Regulation 18 Stage) to a Strategic Employment Site designation.

However, by tightly defining the extent of land and buildings associated with this designation, this represents a significant missed opportunity to promote modern, high order employment uses in this favoured accessible location. This is particularly regrettable given that a significant proportion of the land surrounding the built development as existing is previously developed in association with the airfield.

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

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As currently phrased, the policy is considered to be unsound and not positively prepared.

It is requested that the policy be amended in the following terms by the addition of reference to Fair Oaks airport.

*c) Much of the east of the Borough is constrained by environmental designations and Green Belt and will have limited capacity to accommodate new development. Development opportunities in this area will be focused in:*

*i. Lightwater village;*

*ii. Bisley, Chobham, West End and Windlesham villages, which are inset within the Green Belt.*

*iii, Fair Oaks Airport*

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

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**Name or Organisation :**

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Paragraph  Policy  Other, e.g. policies map, table, appendix

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4.(2) Sound (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text"/>	No	<input type="text" value="X"/>
4.(3) Complies with the Duty to Co-operate (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text" value="X"/>	No	<input type="text"/>

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ER1 Economic Growth and Investment  
ADPF Position. SUPPORT WITH MODIFICATION/ADDITION

The supporting justification for this policy highlights helpful background in terms of employment within the Borough. It is notable that;

*As of 2019, Nomis highlighted that nearly 90% of businesses in the Borough were micro businesses, driving future economic growth in Surrey Heath. It is important that these types of organisations are supported and encouraged.*

*The Surrey Heath Economic Development Strategy 2023-2028 provides an ambitious road map for good growth and prosperity of the local economy from 2023 to 2028. It identifies opportunities for accelerated economic growth and resilience....*

*National planning policy sets out the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. This should be achieved through the identification of sites to meet*

*forecasted employment needs over the plan period. The NPPF also states the Local Plan should also be flexible enough to accommodate needs that are not projected over the plan period, enabling a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.*

Whilst the policy can be welcomed in general terms, it nevertheless heavily relies on the protection and redevelopment of existing employment sites. This is not adding to the overall growth and availability of employment sites rather replacing existing ones through redevelopment.

The employment land supply ambitions set out in local plan represent minimum aspirations. It is not clear that this will cater for employment growth for not only the Borough itself but any wider opportunities which arise. There is evidence that there is very low vacancy of employment land and premises within the Borough.

The justification text of this policy also highlights the need to protect existing employment land from the pressure from redevelopment for housing purposes, due to high local house prices. Coupled with the environmental and greenbelt constraints, employment land is at a premium and additional growth would strengthen the local economy if additional employment land were to be allocated.

In terms of Fairoaks airport, there is consistent and documented pressure for additional employment land to service the buoyant film and media industry. This is a national demand and it is imperative sufficient opportunities be made within the local plan to accommodate such inward investment.

Fairoaks benefits from an exceptional geographical location within the defined golden triangle of film and media interest being close to the M25, M3 corridors and Heathrow Airport.

The economic and locational benefits of this have been demonstrated to the Council by supporting evidence at both regulation 18 stage of the local plan and through the submission of a planning application for two film studios which currently is awaiting determination.

As part of the exercise in attempting to accommodate such film demand at Fairoaks, extensive investigations were made in order to first of all attempt to redevelop the existing airport buildings, within the current Major Developed Site designation.

However, the impractical physical shape of the available land together with an uncoordinated historical disposition of existing buildings, meant this was extremely difficult to achieve in practical terms.

Furthermore, such an approach would have displaced many of the small business sector tenants who make up a significant portion of the site, occupying smaller cost-effective buildings for their operation. In short, any redevelopment of this land would have displaced many important small business employers to the detriment of the overall economic benefit of redevelopment. This runs counter to the intentions of the policy as phrased.

This exercise illustrated how difficult it is to rely upon redevelopment of existing employment sites to accommodate modern employment needs. Any existing employment site simply needs additional breathing space around it in order to decant/retain existing employees or risk losing them altogether.

Many points contained in these overall representations are interrelated in the sense of the economic strategy needs to interplay with allocations of sufficient practical size for new employment designations, together with the removal of other constraints such as greenbelt tests.

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

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It is requested that the policy be modified to include additional points a) and 1f)

Policy ER1: Economic Growth and Investment

1) The sustainable growth and retention of businesses and inward investment into SurreyHeath will be supported by:

a) supporting the development and intensification of Employment Uses in Strategic and Locally Important Employment Sites, *including expansion to facilitate a strengthened employment role and/or retention of existing on site employment.*

b) preventing a net loss of existing floorspace in Employment Use in Strategic and Locally Important Employment Sites;

c) supporting proposals for intensification of, or new employment uses elsewhere in the Borough where it does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on local amenity including through transport movements, emissions, hours of operation and lighting and is compliant with other development plan policies;

d) encouraging the growth of small and micro businesses by protecting employment units capable for use by a small business or industry and supporting the siting of small to medium size employment units in Strategic and Locally Important Employment sites or other appropriate locations;

e) encouraging development of the rural economy in accordance with Policy ER5 (Rural Economy).

*f) removing designated employment sites from the Greenbelt*

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

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**Yes**, I wish to participate at the oral examination

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**Name or Organisation :**

### 3. To which part of the Pre-Submission Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph  Policy  Other, e.g. policies map, table, appendix

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4.(3) Complies with the Duty to Co-operate (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes <input type="text" value="X"/>	No <input type="text"/>

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ER2. STRATEGIC EMPLOYMENT SITES  
ADPF POSITION. SUPPORT Subject to enlarged SES Designation

The designation of Fair Oaks as a strategic employment site is welcomed. This marks a positive improvement from the Regulation 18 stage of the local plan and recognises the strategic importance of the site both in terms of function and location.

Many of the points made in these representations overlap and it is therefore important to reiterate the severe difficulties in achieving meaningful development of the existing defined SES at Fair Oaks, if it is to be so tightly constrained to existing building footprint.

The justification text for this policy is inaccurate in respect of the current function of the majority of the designated SES site. The site contains very few aviation related employees with the majority now being a diverse mix of small businesses covering a wide range of sectors together with film and media representation.

There is very little interrelationship with the current operational airfield itself.



The recognition that the site can deliver the strategic employment ambitions of the SHBC economic development strategy is welcomed. However, the tightly drawn nature of the currently defined SES means that the redevelopment confines render impractical. The site is awkwardly shaped with a range of outbuildings historically unrelated to any comprehensive or workable layout.

Fairoaks benefits from an exceptional geographical location within the defined golden triangle of film and media interest being close to the M25, M3 corridors and Heathrow Airport.

The economic and locational benefits of this have been demonstrated to the Council by supporting evidence at both regulation 18 stage of the local plan and through the submission of a planning application for two film studios which currently is awaiting determination.

As part of the exercise in attempting to accommodate such film demand at Fairoaks, extensive investigations were made in order to first of all attempt to redevelop the existing airport buildings, within the current Major Developed Site designation.

However, the impractical physical shape of the available land together with an uncoordinated historical disposition of existing buildings, meant this was extremely difficult to achieve in practical terms.

Furthermore, such an approach would have displaced many of the small business sector tenants who make up a significant portion of the site, occupying smaller cost-effective buildings for their operation. In short, any redevelopment of this land would have displaced many important small business employers to the detriment of the overall economic benefit of redevelopment.

This exercise illustrated how difficult it is to rely upon redevelopment of existing employment sites to accommodate modern employment needs, without additional land being available around existing built form. Any existing employment site simply needs additional breathing space around it in order to decant/retain existing employees or risk losing them altogether.

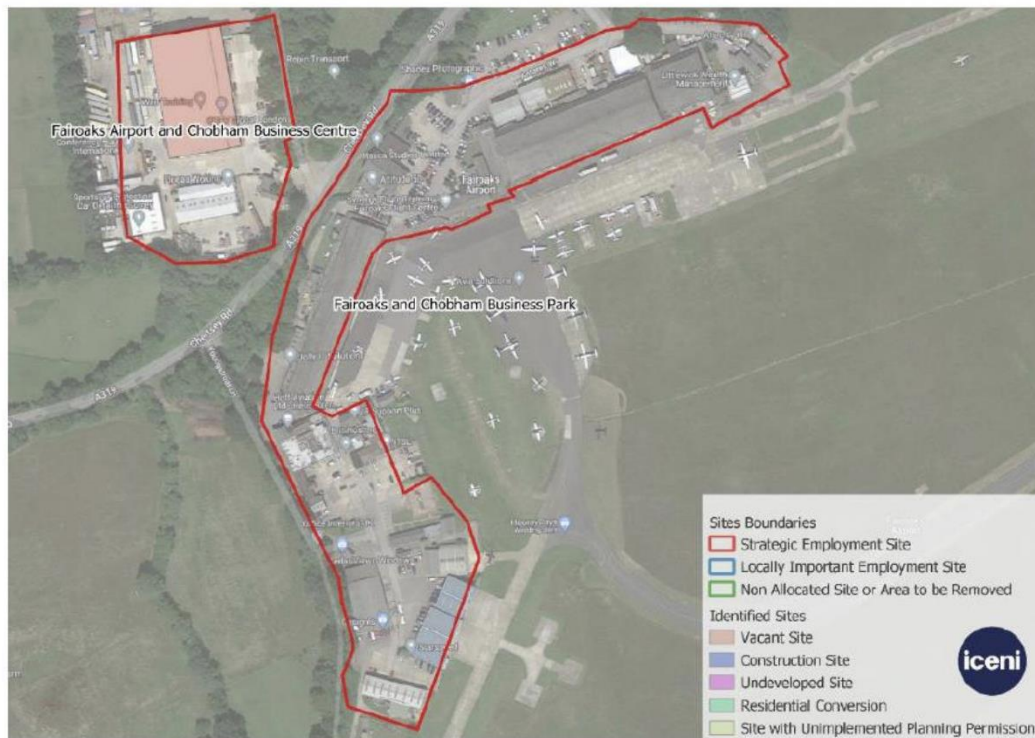
.Precedent has been set for the enlargement of previously defined major developed sites in the greenbelt.

In the current development plan the area is tightly constrained as major developed site relating to the buildings on the southeast side of the A319.

The Regulation 18 and now Regulation 19 proposals have incorporated additional land into that designation across the A319 in the form of the Chobham Business Centre.

This demonstrates that the authority is prepared to be flexible about the precise boundaries of new designations and in fact has included land around the existing building opposite for inclusion in this now SES designation. This contrasts with the consistent request for similar breathing space to be given around Fairoaks.

**Figure 3.1 Fairoaks Airport and Chobham Business Centre**



Source: *Employment Land Supply Assessment (ELSA) (2023)*

In the case of Fairoaks, much of the land which would logically be incorporated into an expanded SES is not performing any significant greenbelt function. This has been demonstrated in supporting evidence with the planning application. Instead, a significant area is able to be classified as previously developed land, a categorisation more recently highlighted by the intention to identify grey belt land within current greenbelt designations and as an insert into the NPPF 2024, currently under consultation.

Whilst the NPPF 2024 revisions are not yet published the draft version and Ministerial statements are material considerations and the plan is unsound without recognition of this direction of travel. The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) have alerted other authorities of this position where Local Plans are being advanced in order not to risk a finding of unsoundness from the outset

6. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Pre-Submission Local Plan legally compliant and sound, having regard to the matters you have identified at 5 above.  
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In conclusion, no changes or requested to the policy wording of ER2 and this allocation as an SES is supported. However, ADPF do request that the site is significantly enlarged by formal designation on the Policies Map 34 East Sheet, together with its removal from the Greenbelt

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

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Policy GBC1: Development of new buildings within the Greenbelt  
ADPF POSITION. -SUPPORT

This policy reflects long-standing local and national planning policy and no changes are requested to the phrasing suggested.

The justification text with regard to this policy confirms that some 43% of the Borough is covered by greenbelt designation. In terms of approval of planning applications, inappropriate development must demonstrate very special circumstances in order to overcome this high test.

Where existing buildings in the greenbelt have a parallel designation, there is a tension between the two ambitions.

This is the case at Fair Oaks where the intention to designate a Strategic Employment Site, which is to remain washed over by Greenbelt, means that there is potential conflict between the two positions.

This is undesirable and avoidable. The opportunity exists in the review of the local plan to apply a different perspective whereby a Strategic Employment Site should be removed from any Greenbelt designation. To do so would still need to demonstrate

exceptional circumstances but this is a lower and achievable threshold in this location.

These exceptional circumstances can ably be demonstrated here at Fairoaks by the evidence already provided in terms of low performance against the purposes of Greenbelt, employment growth in line with the ambitions of the Surrey Heath Economic Development Strategy and use of previously developed land.

These are provided at;

- 1 Fairoaks Studios Economic Impact Analysis March 2023 by Saffery Champness
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- 3 Land at Fairoaks Landscape and Visual Appraisal June 2023 by LDA Design



STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

## Fairoaks Studios Economic Impact Analysis

29 March 2023

**Saffery Champness**  
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

LDĀDESIGN

## Land at Fair Oaks Airport, Surrey

Green Belt Review  
June 2023

^ Worton Rectory Park  
Oxford  
OX29 4SX  
United Kingdom  
T 01865 887 050

W [www.lda-design.co.uk](http://www.lda-design.co.uk)

LDA Design Consulting Ltd  
Registered No. 09312403  
17 Minster Precincts, Peterborough, PE1 1XX

LDĀDESIGN

## Land at Fair Oaks Airport, Surrey

Landscape and Visual Appraisal  
June 2023

A 17 Minster Precincts  
Peterborough  
PE1 1XX  
United Kingdom  
T 01733 310 471

W [www.lda-design.co.uk](http://www.lda-design.co.uk)

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Whilst no change is requested to the policy wording, the East Sheet Policies Map, should be revised to exclude an expanded Fair Oaks and Chobham Business Centre SES from the Greenbelt.

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

**Please note** your representation should cover succinctly all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify your representation and your suggested modification(s). You should not assume that you will have a further opportunity to make submissions.

**After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Planning Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.**

7. If your representation is seeking a modification to the Pre-Submission Local Plan, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

**No**, I do not wish to participate at the oral examination

**Yes**, I wish to participate at the oral examination

Please note - whilst this will provide an initial indication of your wish to participate in the examination, you may be asked at a later point to confirm your request to participate.

8. If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

The representations raise important and fundamental planning issues which should be explored at Examination

**Please note** - the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination. You may be asked to confirm your wish to participate when the Inspector has identified the matters and issues for examination.

## Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Your representation should cover all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations following this publication stage.

After this stage, further submission will only be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.

**Name or Organisation :**

### 3. To which part of the Pre-Submission Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph  Policy  Other, e.g. policies map, table, appendix

4.(1) Legally compliant (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text" value="X"/>	No	<input type="text"/>
4.(2) Sound (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text"/>	No	<input type="text" value="X"/>
4.(3) Complies with the Duty to Co-operate (please refer to guidance notes)	Yes	<input type="text" value="X"/>	No	<input type="text"/>

5. Please give details of why you consider the Pre-Submission Local Plan is not legally compliant or does not meet the tests of soundness or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Pre-Submission Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments. You are advised to read our Representations Guidance note for more information on legal compliance and soundness.

Where existing buildings in the greenbelt have a parallel designation, there is a tension between the two ambitions.

This is the case at Fairoaks where the intention to designate a Strategic Employment Site, which is to remain washed over by Greenbelt, means that there is potential conflict between the two positions.

This is undesirable and avoidable. The opportunity exists in the review of the local plan to apply a different perspective whereby a Strategic Employment Site should be removed from any Greenbelt designation. To do so would still need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances but this is a lower and achievable threshold in this location.

These exceptional circumstances can ably be demonstrated here at Fairoaks by the evidence already provided in terms of low performance against the purposes of Greenbelt, employment growth in line with the ambitions of the Surrey Heath Economic Development Strategy and use of previously developed land.

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

6. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Pre-Submission Local Plan legally compliant and sound, having regard to the matters you have identified at 5 above.  
(Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination)  
You will need to say why each modification will make the Pre-Submission Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

EAST SHEET POLICIES MAP

ADPF POSITION –AMEND

It is requested that the policies map is amended to incorporate the following changes;

- 1 The designation of a larger Strategic Employment Site at Fair Oaks and Chobham Business Centre
- 2 The enlarged SES is removed from Greenbelt designation

(Continue on a separate sheet / expand box if necessary)

**Please note** your representation should cover succinctly all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify your representation and your suggested modification(s). You should not assume that you will have a further opportunity to make submissions.

**After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Planning Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.**

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**No**, I do not wish to participate at the oral examination

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STRICTLY PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

# Fairoaks Studios Economic Impact Analysis

29 March 2023

**Saffery Champness**

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



# Contents

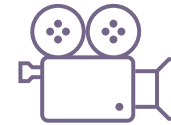
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# Summary

# Summary

- ❖ Fairoaks Studios will offer 131,500 sq. ft. of stage space, along with over 138,000 sq. ft. of workshops, production offices and ancillary spaces, for a total footprint of 269,000 sq. ft to UK and global film and TV productions.
- ❖ Fairoaks Studios is ideally positioned within the UK's 'golden triangle' of leading film studios – bounded by Pinewood Studios, Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden, Elstree Studios, Shepperton Studios and Longcross Studios.
- ❖ Fairoaks Studios location in relation to the M25, M3, Heathrow and Woking Station would leverage the advantages of having the UK's largest and deepest crew base within proximity whilst attracting support services
- ❖ The construction of Fairoaks Studios will generate 670 job years, including 300 job-years directly within the building industry.
- ❖ When fully operational, Fairoaks will be able to host over £165 million annually in film and TV production activity and will become a major hub of employment within Surrey Heath.
  - ❖ 1,070 film and TV crew and cast members will be employed on site daily
  - ❖ 680 full-time equivalent (FTE) supply chain jobs will be generated, along with further 440 FTEs of induced impact employment across the wider UK economy.
- ❖ In total, Fairoaks Studios is forecast to generate 2,190 FTEs of additional employment annually.
- ❖ With a diverse range of occupations and suppliers involved film and TV production, there is high potential for a large share of the employment at Fairoaks Studios to be filled by local residents.



1,000+ crew and cast on site daily



2,190 FTEs of total employment impact



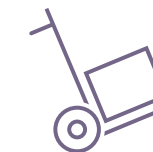
Export-driven employment



High-productivity jobs



Above-average pay



Diverse range of occupations and suppliers





# 1. Background

# About Fairoaks Studios

Fairoaks Studios would make use of existing buildings on the site by fitting them out for workshop space whilst also adding 6 purpose-built stages to the site, plus associated office space, workshop space and ancillary spaces.

- 1 x 30,000 sq. ft stage
- 2 x 24,000 sq. ft. stages
- 1 x 20,000 sq. ft. stage
- 2 x 16,000 sq. ft. stages
- 1 x refurbishment of Hangar B into workshops with a total of 23,500 sq. ft.
- 37,000 sq ft. office space
- 61,000- sq. ft. workshop spaces
- 17,500 sq. ft. ancillary spaces (i.e. central hub and security)

Once completed, Fairoaks Studios could offer in excess of **131,500 sq. ft of stage space** and have an overall footprint of 269,000 sq. ft.

# Factors in the selection of studio facilities

The UK has a number of significant advantages which help to stimulate both indigenous screen content production as well as attract international production.

- The most important of these factors are:
- A stable and highly effective tax relief regime for film and HETV production.
- A stable and well-funded subsidy system for film and TV production. (BBC licence fee, other Public Service Broadcasters, Lottery, Regions and Nations).
- Strong creative industries that underpin the UK's screen sector.
- A wealth of indigenous creative talent and a highly skilled workforce.
- A wide variety of locations from bustling cityscapes to remote mountains.
- A stable and liberal political and business environment characteristic of a mature market-led democracy.
- A currency which, from the perspective of overseas investors, is at favourable levels in relation to the dollar and euro.
- The English language.
- Excellent flight connections to almost anywhere in the world via four major London airports.

Together, these competitive advantages have led to a mutually beneficial relationship between the UK and major production companies around the world. As a consequence, the UK has become a global hub for the screen industries but strongly centred on London, the South East and in particular the 'golden triangle'.

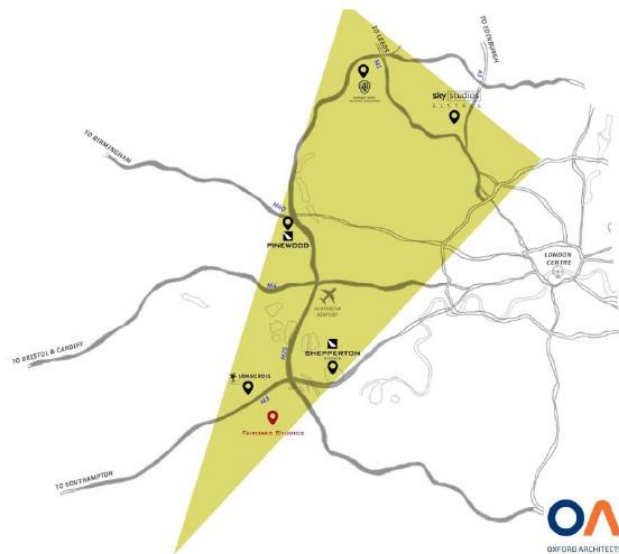


# The UK's “golden triangle” of studio facilities

The Fairoaks Studios site is ideally located within the UK's ‘golden triangle’ of film and TV studios to the West of London. The golden triangle comprises many of the UK's largest studio complexes, including:

- Pinewood Studios 504,000 sq. ft.
- Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden 560,000 sq. ft.
- Shepperton Studios 400,000 sq. ft.
- Sky Studios Elstree 306,000 sq. ft.
- Longcross Studios 96,000 sq. ft.
- Elstree Studios 91,000 sq. ft.

As such, it represents the largest concentration of film and TV studio facilities, workers and production-service supplier businesses in the UK.



The Golden Triangle – West London

## Why the golden triangle

1. Facilities in the south east of England have hosted some of the highest-profile and most commercially successful film and TV productions of all time.
2. Film and television production depends on a highly skilled craft and technical workforce to make productions and London & the South East of England is home to the largest film and high-end television crew base outside of North America, a significant proportion of which live within the golden triangle, between 15 and 45 minutes of the established Studios identified above.
3. Ease of access to production facilities are a major feature of the golden triangle. The locational advantages of Fairoaks specifically include road and railway accessibility and nearby airports.
4. The region not only benefits from the UK's largest crew base, it also provides ease of access to leading creative talent, iconic locations and cutting-edge production, post-production, and visual effects facilities, all of which contribute to the area's reputation as one of the best places in the world to produce high-end content.
5. The UK has seen a period of significant investment in Film and TV studios throughout the UK, though as access to skilled crew remains a significant consideration for Producers, approximately 80% of new studio space delivered over the past three years, has been located within the golden triangle / metro London.



## 2. Economic impact analysis

# Introduction

The following section presents the analysis of projected economic impact of the proposed Fairoaks Studios development.

The economic impact analysis separately assesses the impacts generated by

- (i) Studio construction
- (ii) Production of film and TV programmes at the studio.

## Types of economic impact:

Estimates are provided for the direct, indirect, induced and total economic impact.

- **Direct** economic impact refers to the employment and GVA generated directly within the construction, studio operations and film and TV production industries.
- **Indirect** economic impact refers to the increased employment and GVA experienced by supplier businesses when construction firms, a studio facility and film and TV producers purchase supplies and services from other industries (e.g. equipment hire, security services, electricity).
- **Induced** economic impact refers to the increased employment and GVA experienced within the local or UK economies, when workers employed on account of the direct and indirect impacts spend their earnings within the local or UK economies (e.g. purchases of new automobiles or off-site lunches).
- **Total** economic equals the sum of direct, indirect and induced economic impacts.

## Additionality and net economic impact:

In accordance with HM Treasury Green Book guidance, the economic impact analysis takes into account the impact of deadweight, displacement, leakage and multiplier effects to arrive at estimates of the net economic impact of Fairoaks Studios.

- **Deadweight:** In accordance with the analysis and findings in BFI (2021) *Screen Business 2021*, we assume 16% deadweight for film and TV production. That is, 16% of production activity at Fairoaks Studio would occur in the UK in absence of the studio facility.
- **Displacement:** In accordance with ready-reckoner ratios published by English Partnerships (2008), we have assumed a low rate of displacement of 25%. That is, 25% of the employment generated by Fairoaks Studios' construction or film and TV production would draw workers from other industries.
- **Leakage:** Economic modelling using data on the structure of the local workforce to estimate the portion of economic activity that is not retained within the local economy.
- **Multiplier effects:** Economic modelling takes into account the structure of the regional and local economies to estimate multiplier effects including induced impact.

# Studio construction

Fairoaks Studios will consist of:

- 131,500 sq. ft. of stages (purpose-built)
- 837,500 sq. ft. of workshops, office space and ancillary space

In total, 269,000 sq. ft of usable space will be built.

Build costs currently averaging £350 per sq. ft.

Total estimated construction cost: **£94.2 million**

This construction spending will generate a net<sup>1</sup> (additional) impact of **1,170 full-time equivalents (FTEs)** of employment and **£78.3m in gross value added (GVA)** for the UK economy.

This total impact includes:

- 350 FTEs and £19.8m in GVA directly with the UK construction sector (**direct impact**)
- 560 FTEs and £30.7m in GVA within the construction sector supply chain (**indirect impact**)
- 260 FTEs and £17.8m in GVA across the wider UK economy (**induced impact**)



Economic impact of construction of Fairoaks Studios, UK economy

		Gross	Net <sup>1</sup>
Employment (FTEs)	Direct	470	350
	Indirect	750	560
	Induced	350	260
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,570</b>	<b>1,170</b>
GVA (£m)	Direct	39.7	29.8
	Indirect	40.9	30.7
	Induced	23.7	17.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>104.3</b>	<b>78.3</b>

Source: Saffery Champness / Nordicity estimates based on data from Fairoaks and ONS

1. Includes adjustments for deadweight, displacement (25%), leakage and multiplier effects

# Film and TV production

Saffery Champness / Nordicity research indicates that, on average, a 20,000 sq. ft. soundstage (running at 80% capacity utilisation) would be able to host £18 million in annual film and TV production spending.

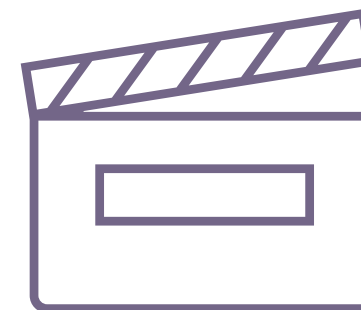
Fairoaks Studios' 131,500 sq. ft. of stage space would, therefore, be able to host **£118.3 million annually in film and TV production** spending. This would increase to £185.8 million, if Fairoaks was able to operate at 90% utilisation.



Based on economic analysis published by the BFI in *Screen Business 2021*, this level of film and TV production spending will generate a total of **3,490 FTEs of employment** and **£166.1 million in GVA** for the UK economy, including 1,700 FTEs and £84.8 million in GVA directly within the film and TV production industry.

The analysis found in *Screen Business 2021* also indicates that, given the inward investment nature of the vast majority of film and TV production in the UK, an estimated 84% of this production spending is likely to be additional to the UK economy (i.e. 16% deadweight).

After taking into displacement (25%), therefore, the **net (additional) economic impact of film and TV production** at Fairoaks Studios would be an estimated **2,190 FTEs** and **£104.7 million in GVA**, annually, including 1,070 FTEs of employment and £53.5m in GVA directly within the UK's film and TV production industry.



Annual economic impact of film and TV production at Fairoaks Studios

		Gross	Net <sup>1</sup>
Employment (FTEs)	Direct	1,700	1,070
	Indirect	1,090	680
	Induced	700	440
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3,490</b>	<b>2,190</b>
GVA (£m)	Direct	84.8	53.5
	Indirect	48.0	30.3
	Induced	33.2	20.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>166.1</b>	<b>104.7</b>

Source: Saffery Champness / Nordicity estimates based on data from Fairoaks, BFI, Screen Business 2021 and ONS

1. Includes adjustments for deadweight (16%), displacement (25%), leakage and multiplier effects



# Export-driven employment

With 1,700 full-time crew and cast employed on site, Fairoaks Studios will have a significant positive impact on Surrey Heath's employment picture. This direct impact employment, alone, will expand the local employment base by 3.2% over the estimated 54,000 people already employed by businesses based in Surrey Heath.

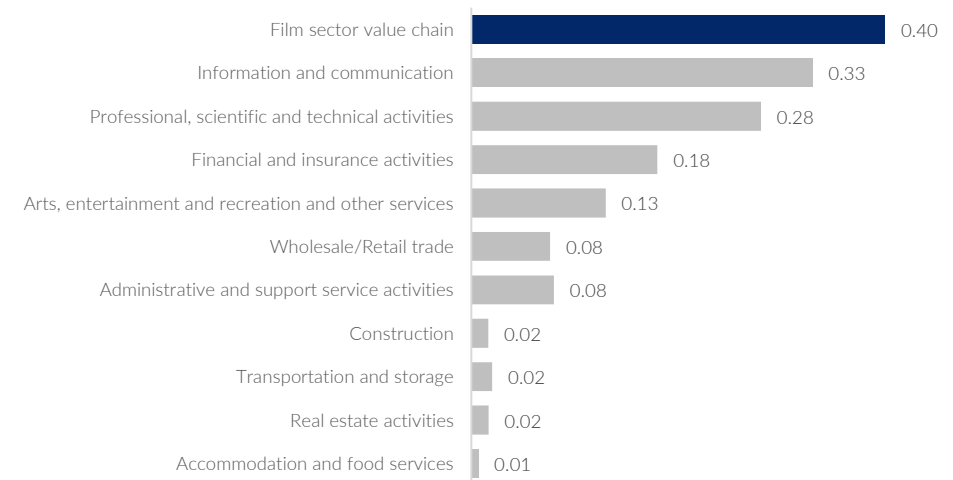
In so far as local businesses benefit from the supply chain and induced impact employment generated by Fairoaks Studios, it would add help grow the local employment base by 6.4%, by creating an **additional 3,500 full-time jobs** within the local economy.

This will, by and large, be export-driven employment – and further integrate Surrey Heath into the global economy.

Statistics published by the BFI indicate that film and TV production is one of the most export-intensive services industries in the UK. Moreover, in 2022, the UK's film and HETV production industry attracted £5.4 billion in inward investment. Indeed, 86% of all film and HETV production spending in the UK in 2022 was financed by inward investment producers.

In this post-Brexit era, the ability of Surrey Heath to further leverage the global economy will help to buffer its local economy from domestic downturns and diminished demand from EU countries.

Ratio of exports to GVA, 2019



Source: BFI (2021) *Screen Business 2021*. P. 69.

**£5.4bn** Inward investment in UK film and HETV production industry in 2022.

**86%** Inward investment share of total UK film and HETV production expenditures in 2022.

Source: BFI (2023) *Film and other screen sectors production in the UK: Full Year 2022*

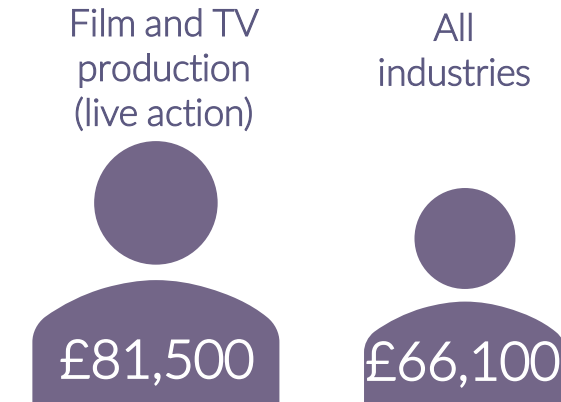
# High-value jobs

The employment of Fairoaks Studios will consist of high-value jobs that not only deliver high GVA-per-worker but also pay above average.

According to the BFI, film and TV production displays above-average rates of labour productivity. In 2019, live action film and TV production generated £81,500 in GVA per FTE, or 23% higher than the economy-wide average of £66,100.

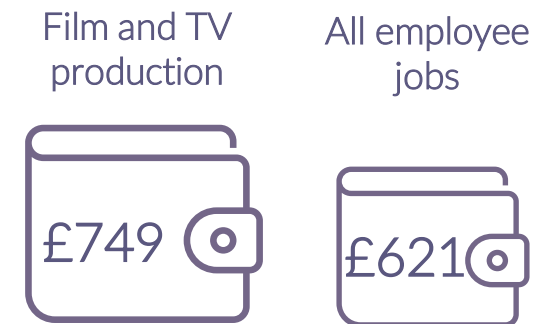
This high rate of productivity is reflected in higher-than-average earnings paid in film and TV production. In 2022, people employed in the UK's film and TV production industry earned a weekly average pay of £749 per week (excluding overtime) or 21% higher than the economy-wide average of £621 per week.

## GVA per FTE (productivity), 2019



Source: BFI (2021) *Screen Business 2021*. P. 23.

## Average weekly earnings, 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics (2022) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

# Economic diversity

## Occupational diversity

Film and TV production employs wide range of occupation and skills – from writers to camera operators, make-up artists, accountants, electricians and painters.

Fairoaks Studios will create employment opportunities for the local workforce across a wide range of occupations and skills, ensuring that there are opportunities available to a wide swathe of local residents to work in film and TV production.

Fairoaks Studios is building relationships with further educational establishments and exploring the concept of apprenticeships.

### Selected film and TV production roles

Seamstress	Construction coordinator	Leatherman
Costume maker	Assistant art director	Greensman
Concept artist	Assistant location manager	1st assistant director
Props buyer	Set decorator	Post-production supervisor
Set costumer	Payroll accountant	Special effects tech
Production assistant	Location manager	Assistant prop master
Assistant accountant	Assistant editor	Line producer
Grip	Assistant production coordinator	Rigger
Financial controller	Painter	Costume assistant
Set dresser	Set dressing storeman	Carpenter
Art director	Clerk	Production coordinator
Art assistant	Props maker	Production manager
Set designer	Production accountant	Set dressing buyer
Props hand	Dolly grip	Storyboard artist
Graphics designer	Post-production coordinator	Art coordinator
Electrician	Props coordinator	Make-up artist
Assistant set decorator	Costume coordinator	Generator operator

Source: Saffery Champness

## Supply chain diversity

The film and TV production supply chain also draws upon a very broad range of different industries – from catering to accommodation, building supplies, vehicle and equipment hire, and property security. These supply chain expenditures can often reach and even exceed 25% of a film or TV programmes production budget.

Fairoaks Studios will also generate local demand for many of the supplies and services offered by Surrey Heath’s small businesses.

### Illustration of supply chain expenditures on HETV production

Supply chain expense category	Share of total production budget
Materials - art department	8%
Equipment hire	4%
Travel/Transport	3%
Hotel/Living	3%
Picture/Sound post-production	2%
Location fees and production facilities	2%
Insurance/Finance/Legal	2%
Other production costs	2%
Materials – wardrobe, make-up, hair	1%
Special effects	1%
Music	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29%</b>

Source: Saffery Champness



## Appendix A: Overview of the UK's film and TV production industry and forecast

# High-end TV (HETV) production in the UK

High End Television (HETV)<sup>1</sup> production in the UK has experienced strong growth since the creation of the HETV Tax Relief in April 2013. Between 2013 and 2019, annual spending on HETV production in the UK increased five-fold, from £415 million to over £2.2 billion. That growth has accelerated following the pandemic and reached £4.3 billion in 2022.

Growth in spending has been mirrored by annual increases in the number of produced projects – including TV series and single episode programmes. Between 2013 and 2019, the annual number of HETV projects filmed in the UK more than tripled (from 51 to 166). Between 2019 and 2021, the annual number of projects jumped by a further 42% to a record 235 projects, before dipping to 195 projects in 2022.

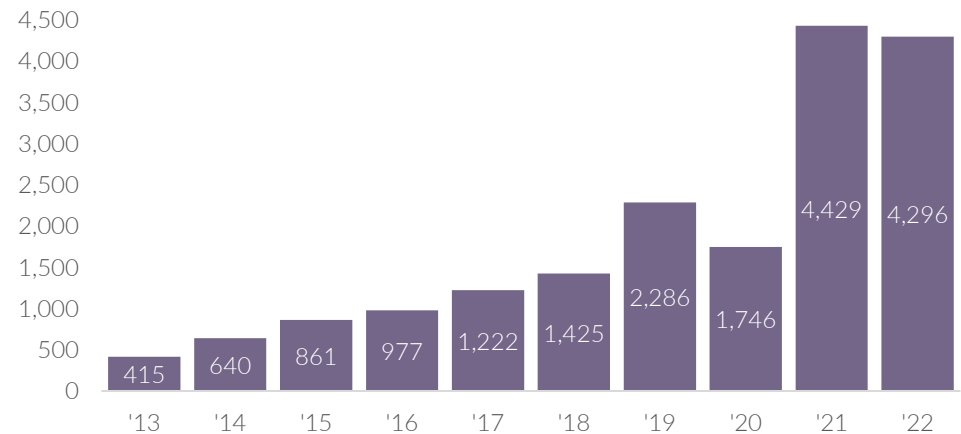
The growth in HETV production expenditures has outpaced the number of projects in recent years. Between 2019 and 2022, the average HETV project budget rose from £13.8 million to £22.0 million.

The strong growth in the UK's HETV production over the past five years has been largely driven by growing demand from the global subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) services, which are investing unprecedented amounts in content in order to attract subscribers.

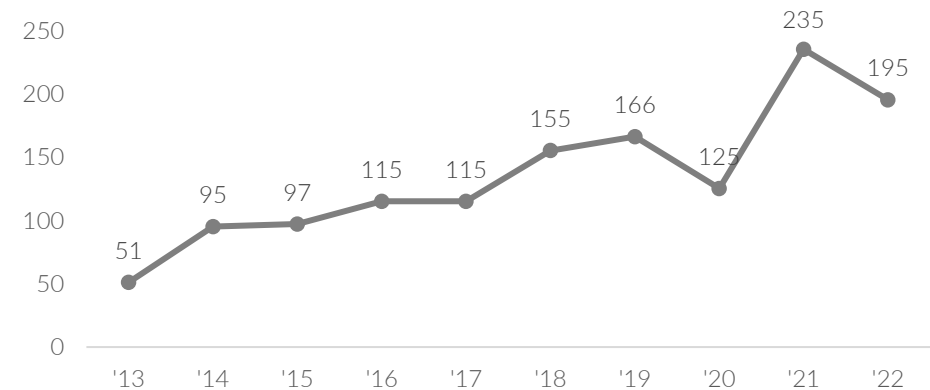
Our ongoing research of industry developments and discussions with commissioning studios indicate that spending on HETV production in the UK will continue to grow strongly in coming years.

1. High-end Television (HETV) production includes television dramas, comedies or documentaries with a minimum budget of £1 million per slot time hour and a broadcast slot length of more than 30 minutes.

HETV production in the UK (£m)



Annual number of HETV projects produced in the UK



Source: BFI and Saffery Champness forecasts

# Film production in the UK

The UK continues to be one of Hollywood's preferred destinations for filming big-budget feature films. Between 2017 and 2019, spending on film production in the UK exceeded £2 billion annually. Although it dipped in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic and its impact on both production and cinema audiences, production rebounded in 2022 to just under £2 billion.

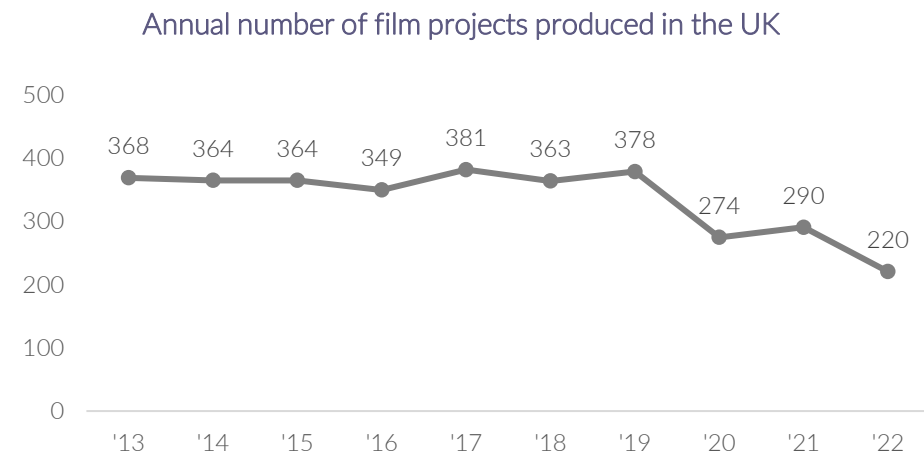
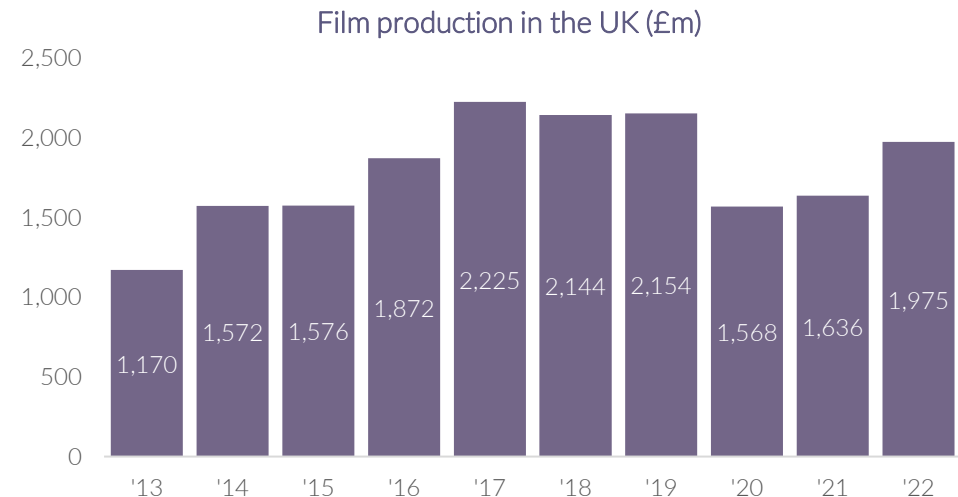
Film production in the UK grew strongly in the years leading up to 2019 – with spending increasing by 10.7% per annum between 2013 and 2019. The vast majority of this growth came from inward investment projects. These big-budget productions are more likely to need largescale, bespoke studio space. As a result of the pandemic, however, the annual level of film production in the UK dropped to just under £1.6 billion.

Following the reopening of film production in the UK in July 2020, annual production levels did not immediately rebound to pre-pandemic levels (in the same way that HETV production did). Initially, with the uncertainty surrounding the return of cinemagoers, film producers may have avoided committing to the theatrical release of their films (a condition to qualify for the UK Film Tax Relief).

Many SVODs, meanwhile, may have elected to produce their long-form film content through the HETV tax relief. In fact, according to the BFI, in 2022, £939 million in 'long-form' production was made through the HETV tax relief rather than film tax relief. Adding this amount to the film tax relief production would bring the total value of long-form feature content to over \$2.9 billion in 2022.

Prior to the pandemic, approximately 350-380 films were produced in the UK annually, of which big-budget US studios films accounted for 18-20.

However, in 2022, the UK hosted the production of 220 films, including 14 US studio films.



Source: BFI and Saffery Champness forecasts

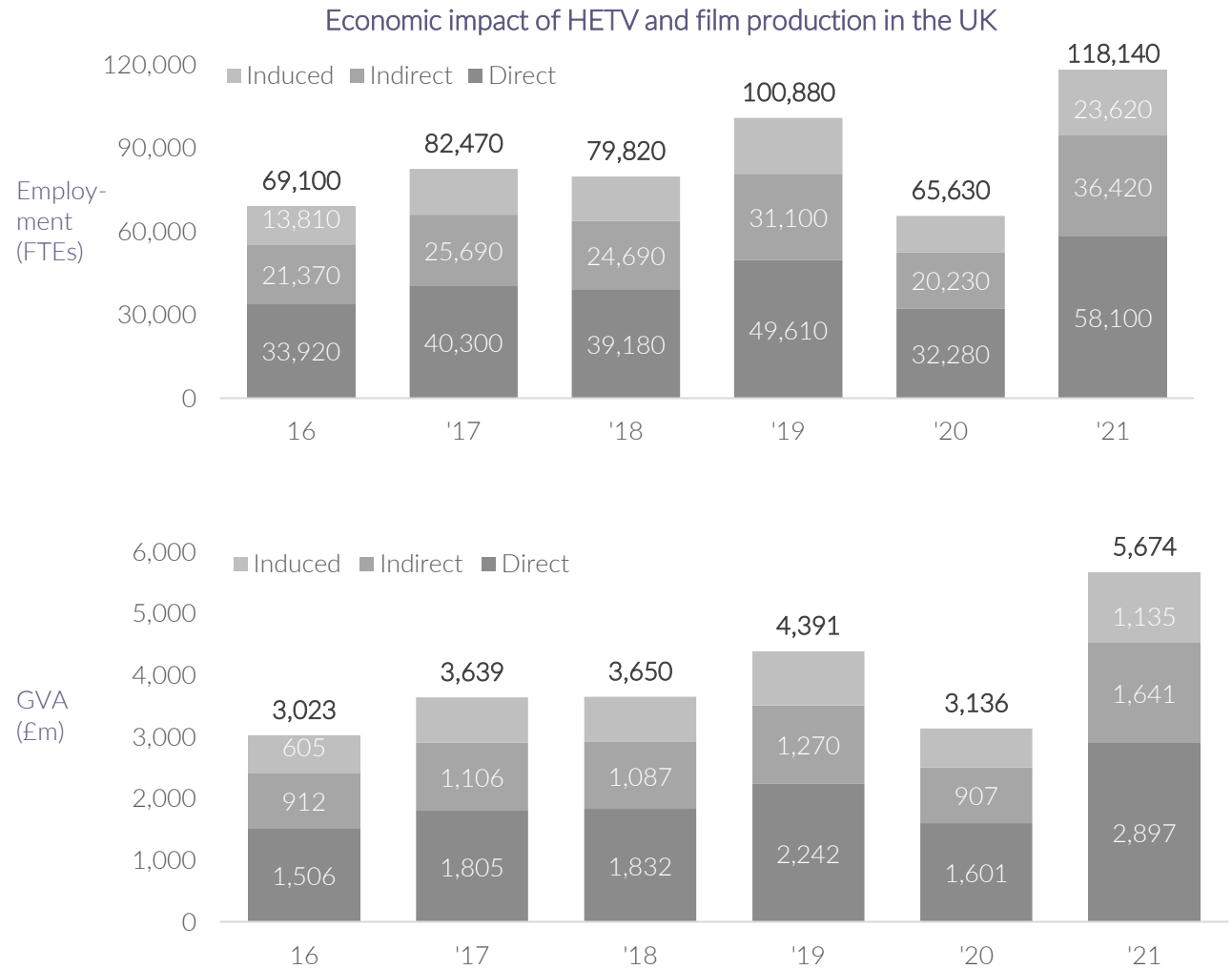
# Employment and GVA in the UK screen sector

According to statistics published by the BFI, film and HETV production in the UK generated over 118,000 full-time equivalents (FTEs) of employment and nearly £5.7 billion of gross value added (GVA) for the UK economy 2021.\*

This total economic impact included estimated direct employment of 58,100 FTEs (i.e. employment in crew and cast positions within the film and TV production industry) and just under £2.9 billion in GVA directly within the film and TV production industry.

Within the supply chain to film and TV production projects (e.g. equipment suppliers, accommodation and food, timber, financial and legal services), a further 36,420 FTEs and £1.6 billion in GVA was generated.

Induced economic impacts across the wider UK economy led to 23,620 FTEs of employment and £1.14 billion in GVA.



\* Whilst the BFI has not published employment and GVA estimates for 2020 and 2021, the economic multipliers found in Screen Business have been used to extrapolate the employment and GVA in those years.

Source: Saffery Champness / Nordicity estimates based on data from BFI and Screen Business 2021

# Global film and HETV production trends

Global SVOD platforms have begun to introduce ad-based options to maintain their subscriber and revenue growth, whilst continuing to expand their content spending over the next 5-10 years

Spending on the production of film and HETV production in the UK is underpinned by the growth of SVOD platforms such as Netflix, Amazon and Disney+.

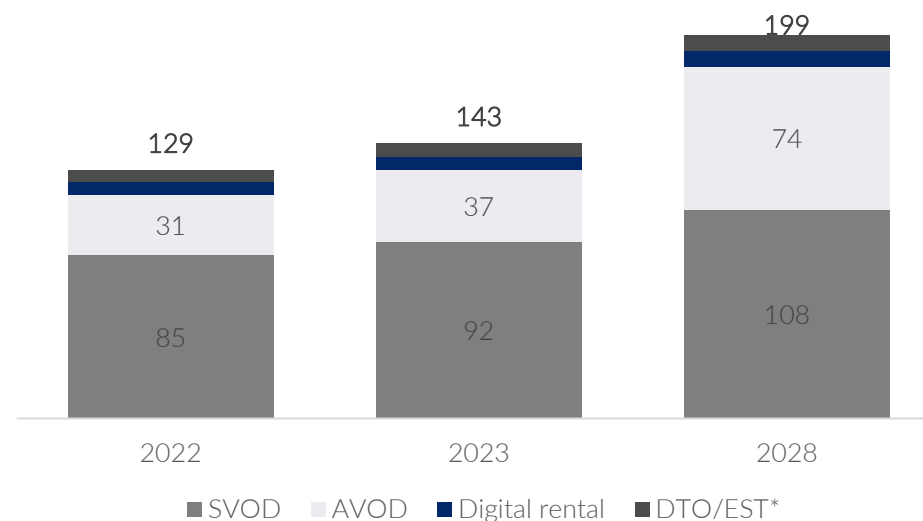
According to Ampere Analysis, Netflix, Amazon, Disney+, Apple and HBO Max will spend a combined USD23 billion on original content in 2023 – a 10% increase over 2022 and 50% higher than their spending in 2019.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the recent slowdown in subscriber growth at the global SVODs, the advertising video on demand (AVOD) services is expected to further drive the growth of the global streamers.

According to Digital TV Research, global online (over-the-top (OTT)) TV revenues are expected to increase by 11% in 2023 to £143 billion. By 2028, global online TV is forecast to reach £199 billion – 54% higher than in 2022.<sup>2</sup>



Global online OTT revenue (£ bn)



Source: Digital TV Research, see <https://www.broadcastprome.com/news/svod-drives-content-spend-to-reach-220bn-in-2021-ampere-analysis/>  
 \* Download to own / electronic sell-through



1. Barker, A and Grimes C. (2022) Big budget blockbusters arrive amid fears of 'peak TV'. Financial Times. 25 Aug 2022.

2. BroadcastPro (2022) Global OTT revenues to reach \$243bn by 2028. 29 Nov 2022



# Demand analysis – Forecast

HETV and film production in the UK is forecast to increase from £6.3 billion in 2022 to between £7.5 billion and £8 billion by 2026.

## High-growth scenario:

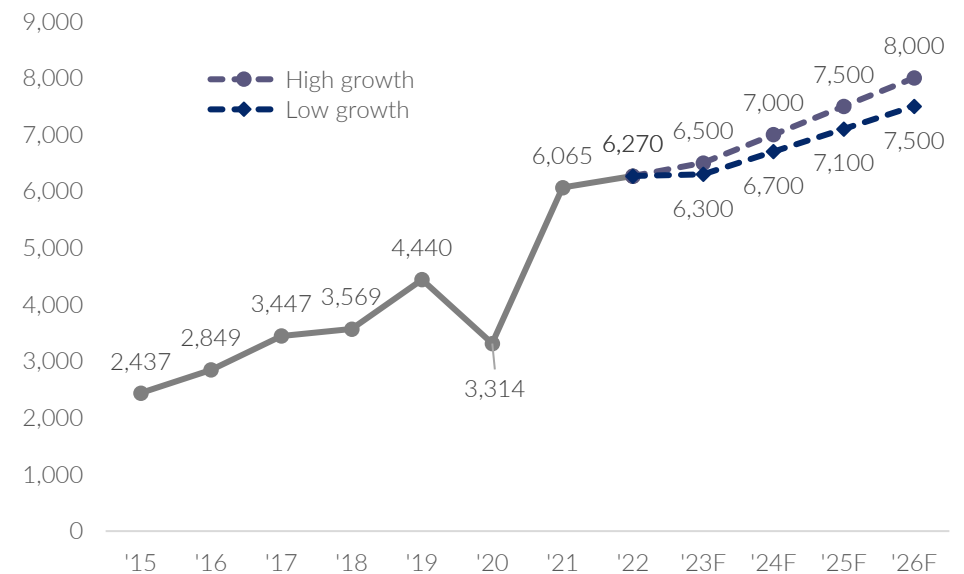
Interviews with the Hollywood commissioning studios suggest that annual spending (measured in real 2021 money) could increase to £8 billion by 2026.

## Low-growth scenario:

Following Netflix and other SVODs announcements of slowing subscriber growth, Digital TV Research revised downwards its forecast of global growth. It forecasts that the number of global SVOD subscribers will increase from 1.2 billion in 2021 to 1.69 billion in 2027 – or 5.9% growth p.a.

Taking SVOD subscriber growth as an indicator of growth in the global film and TV production market – from which the UK attracts production – implies that HETV and film production spending in the UK could increase to £7.5 billion in 2026.

Forecast of annual spending on HETV and film production in the UK (£m)



Source: BFI and Saffery Champness / Nordicity forecast



## Appendix B: UK studio market assessment

# Soundstage demand forecast

An additional 1.92 million square feet of soundstage space would be required in the UK by 2026 to accommodate the forecast increase in HETV and film production spending.

Saffery Champness research indicates that, on average, the production activity associated with £20 million in film and TV production expenditures would require a 20,000 sq. ft. soundstage (at a 95% capacity utilisation rate).<sup>1</sup>

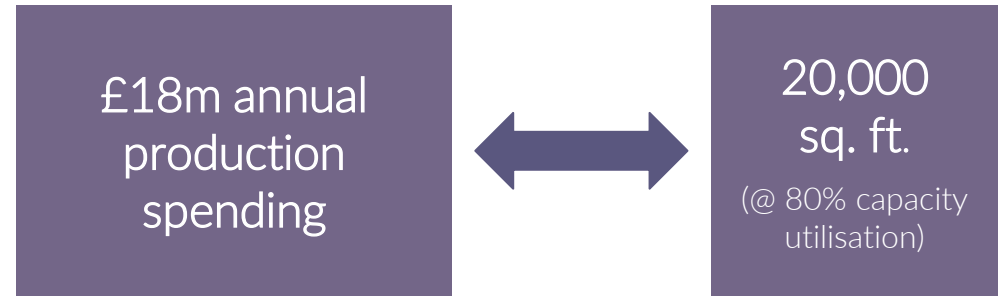
The 95% capacity utilisation rate reflects the tight supply marketplace that has characterised the UK stage market in recent years. Looking forward, as more stage supply comes online, the capacity utilisation rate should stabilise at around 80%. This is lower than 95% but still financially viable for stage operators.

**At 80% capacity utilisation rate, £18 million in film and TV production expenditures would require a 20,000 sq. ft. of stage space.**

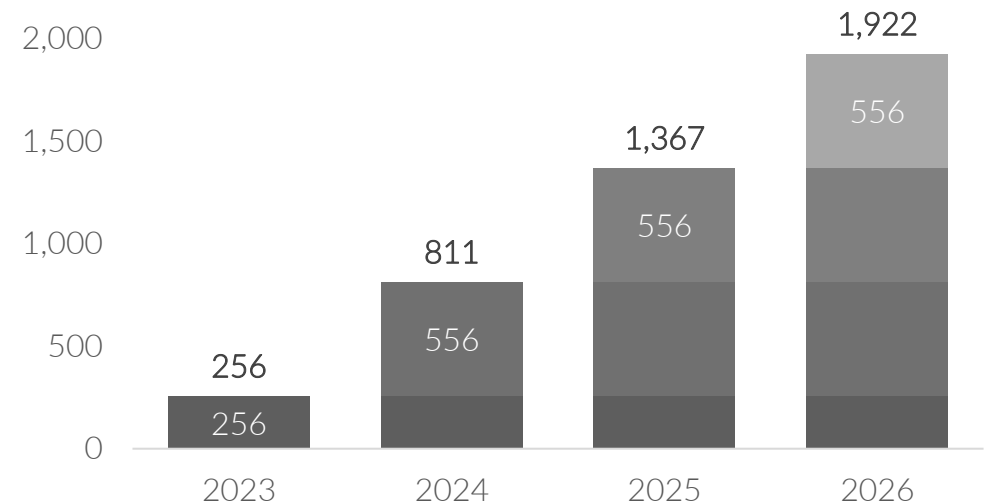
Based on this relationship between production spending and soundstage requirements, the UK would need to add 256,000 sq. ft of soundstage space in 2023 and a further 556,000 sq. ft. annually in 2024, 2025 and 2026 in order to have added 1.92 million sq. ft. of soundstage space to accommodate the forecast demand (i.e. forecast in HETV and film production spending).

This additional 1.92 million sq. ft. will only meet the increased demand from HETV and film producers. The growth in the production of entertainment and unscripted programming will require additional soundstage space.

1. Note that in 2022, the UK hosted £6.27 billion in HETV and film production, with an estimated 6 million sq. ft. of stage space – the equivalent of £20.9 million per 20,000 sq. ft. of stage space, running at 95% capacity utilisation.



Projected additional soundstage space required to meet forecast increase in film and HETV production spending (000s sq. ft.)



Source: BFI , Digital TV Research, interview with producers, and Saffery Champness forecasts

# Soundstage demand forecast (cont'd)

The advantages that studio facilities offer compared to on-location filming suggest that as a larger share of filming activity in the UK migrates to soundstages, the demand for additional stage space will increase to over 2.8 million sq. ft. by 2026.

The existing 'static' relationship between film and HETV production spending, and required stage capacity assumes that the way that films and TV programmes are made remains unchanged. However, recent trends in production methods suggest that studio facilities should continue to capture an increasing share of filming days and production spending.

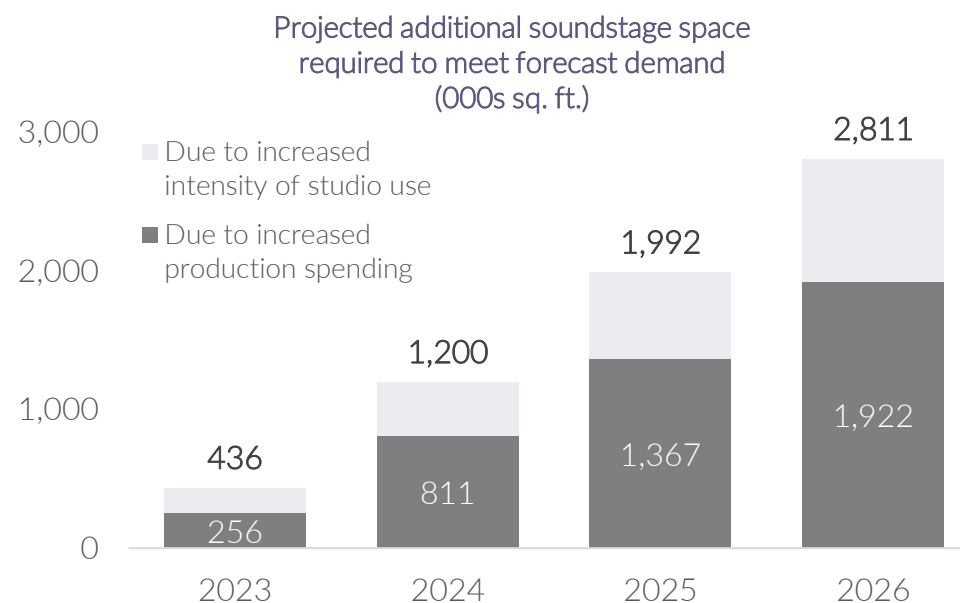
Purpose-built studio facilities (particularly studio 'campuses' with large backlots) offer a number of advantages over location filming, and even temporary studio facilities or alternative spaces (e.g. warehouses).

## Key advantages of filming at studio facilities vs. on-location

- Increased use of visual effects, which favour soundstages with green screens over location filming.<sup>1</sup>
- Use of more sophisticated props and elaborate sets, which favours the nearby workshop facilities offered by major studio complexes.<sup>2</sup>
- Concerns about content piracy and star performers' privacy means producers will avoid filming on location.<sup>1</sup>
- By filming at studios as opposed to on location, producers can minimise their use of heavy vehicles and generators, and thereby reduce their carbon footprint.<sup>1</sup>
- Substantial backlot space to construct sets that will offer producers more control over logistics, security and the environment.<sup>1</sup>

Sources: (1) Goldsmith, Jill (2021), "Soundstage Czar Michael Hackman on real estate's latest craze: 'In every market where we open, demand has exceeded supply'", *Deadline*, 21 December 2021. (2) PwC (2018), *Review of the UK film and high-end TV production facility market: key findings*, prepared for Shepperton Studios, August 2018.

Conservatively assuming that, by 2026, the 'migration' of location filming to studios facilities accounts for 10% of overall production spending (i.e. existing film and HETV production and the forecast growth in film and HETV production) would generate demand for an additional 889 sq. ft of stage space by 2026. This raises the overall forecast of soundstage demand to **2.81 million sq. ft.**



Source: BFI, Digital TV Research, interview with producers, and Saffery Champness forecasts

# Current supply of stage space

A shortage of studio space has been recognised as one of the key factors – along with skills shortages – limiting the growth of UK film and HETV production, in a market where demand for content creation is outstripping capacity to deliver that content.

The stage market is comprised

- **purpose-built soundstages:** including expansions to established sites;
- **conversions:** where buildings have been refurbished and repurposed for studio use (e.g. former warehouses, factories or airfield buildings); and
- **temporary stages** (i.e. ‘pop-ups’ or ‘meanwhile’ space): which can be cost-effective and quick to build, demountable and portable, and can provide interim solutions, though their lifetime can be more than a decade.

The demand for space has seen a number of new studios come online since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, at least some of which are temporary constructions (see box opposite).

There is currently over **4.2m sq. ft.** of stage space in the UK configured as **152 stages** of at least 20,000 sq. ft. area. However, HETV and feature film producers desire a minimum height of 30 ft and so this is reduced to just over **3.6m sq. ft.** (configured as **134 stages**).

Moreover, many producers are now seeking a ‘premium’ height clearance of at least 40 ft, of which there is currently **2.2m sq. ft.** (configured as **81 stages**).

Of the current supply of 3.6m sq. ft., 1.4m sq. ft. is in conversion or temporary-type space (39%), However, this reduces to only 600,000 sq. ft. or 28% in the premium category.

## Newly opened studio facilities or stages

1. Arborfield Studios \*
2. Bovingdon Airfield Studios \*
3. The Depot \*
4. Farnborough Film Studios \*
5. Garden Studios †
6. Hoddesdon Film Studios \*
7. OMA Film Studios
8. Pinewood (West – 5 new stages)
9. OMA:X Film Studios
10. Shinfield Studios
11. Sky Studios Elstree
12. Troubadour Meridian Water Studios \*
13. Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden (3 new stages)
14. Winnersh Film Studios \*

\* Temporary stages

† Includes a virtual production stage

# Planned supply of stage space

There is substantial activity across the UK, concentrated in the South East, as new stages are being built or in planning. Our research found that there is nearly 5.6m sq. ft. of stage space announced to be built across the UK configured as 231 stages.

When this list was reviewed to identify those with stage spaces that met the requirements of large- budget filmmakers and high-end television producers (20,000 sq. ft. or larger), we found that there was over **4.9m sq. ft.** of stage space announced to be built across the UK configured as **200 stages**.

This included all of the planned stages at Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden, Pinewood and Shepperton, regardless of any particular stage's actual size. In our view, this approach better recognises that these three studio facilities are suitable in their entirety for the production of feature films and HETV projects.

Each of these stage space developments were assessed as to how likely they were to be added to the future stock of stage space against which Denham Studios Studio would be competing.

The three questions used as part of our traffic light system to establish a more accurate estimate of the amount of development actually to be built, were:

1. Had financing been announced and was it credible?
2. Had planning permission been granted?
3. Had construction started?

**Red** – 0%, yes to none of the three questions

**Amber** – 50%, yes to at least one; and

**Green** – 100%, yes to all three.

As a result of our traffic light 'reality check' assessment, our analysis suggests that, of the announced stage supply projects that meet the dimensional

criteria, nearly one-half (49%) was so speculative that it should be discounted (nearly 2.4m sq. ft. of stage space).

**Therefore, we estimate a total of 2.5m sq. ft. of stage space is likely to be built across the UK**

There are a number of major developments recently announced where we have insufficient information yet to add them to the quantum of potential future supply accurately. These include:

- Greystoke Land plan a 650,000 sq. ft development at Holyport in Buckinghamshire.
- Home Of Productions (HOP) Studios and Quartermaster Entertainment's plan to build a 1.3m sq. ft. studio facility in Central Bedfordshire.

## Long-term leases

It is also worth noting that much of the new studio space that will be built within the so-called Golden Triangle of Leavesden-Pinewood-Shepperton, will not be available in the open market, as the space is being taken by long-term leases.

**Indeed, 1.1m sq. ft. of announced or recently delivered stage space development has already been committed:**

- Shepperton (452,000 sq. ft) to Netflix and Amazon Prime;
- Sky Studios Elstree (307,000 sq. ft) to Sky and NBC Universal;
- Pinewood (170,000 sq. ft.) to Disney; and
- SEGRO Park (163,000 sq. ft.) to Netflix.

Additionally, Netflix already has long-term leases at Longcross and Shepperton Studios, the latter being its UK production hub since 2019.

# Studios in Metro London

The 'golden triangle' of Leavesden-Pinewood-Shepperton is at the centre of a concentration of screen content production space in 'Metro London' that many overseas productions favour.

- Metro London – Greater London, Herts, Bucks, Berks and Surrey – has **2.6m sq. ft.** of stage space configured as **113 stages** that are >20,000 sq. ft and have a height of >30 ft. **but 25 stages or 700,000 sq. ft.** is alternative space
- Of all of the announcements of new stage space that we have collated, and where there is sufficient data, **4.1m sq. ft is intended for Metro London configured as 160 stages** but when assessed through our RAG reality check, we believe **2.2m sq. ft. of stage space is more likely to be delivered.**



Largest studio facilities in the UK  
(based sum of existing and planned stage space)

No.	Studio	Existing	Planned	Total
1	Pinewood Studios	607,588	600,000	1,207,588
2	Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden	470,000	281,000	751,000
3	Shepperton Studios	170,204	451,644	621,848
4	Sunset Waltham Cross Studios	0	550,000	550,000
5	Sky Studios Elstree (incl new extension)	306,515	200,000	506,515
6	Hertswood Studios	0	490,000	490,000
7	Shinfield Studios	109,460	322,540	432,000
8	Marlow Film Studios	0	425,000	425,000
9	Belfast Harbour Studios	65,340	296,000	361,340
10	Sky Studios Elstree	306,515	200,000	506,515
11	Eastbrook Studios	0	264,000	264,000
12	Edinburgh Caledonia Film Studios (Gartcosh)	0	220,329	220,329
13	SEGRO Park	0	163,000	163,000
14	Cardington Studios	128,500	0	128,500
15	Bray Studios	20,000	91,977	111,977

Source: Saffery Champness research

# Summary of current supply

Current stage space supply in UK  
(>20,000 sq. ft. & >30 ft. ceiling height)

3.6m sq. ft.                      134 stages

Current stage space supply in Metro London  
(>20,000 sq. ft. & >30 ft. ceiling height)

2.6m sq. ft.                      113 stages

... and without alternative stage space  
(>20,000 sq. ft. & >40 ft. ceiling height)

1.9m sq. ft.                      88 stages

Current premium stage space supply in Metro  
London

(>20,000 sq. ft. & >40 ft. ceiling height)

1.8m sq. ft.                      71 stages

... without alternative stage space  
(>20,000 sq. ft. & >40 ft. ceiling height)

1.3m sq. ft.                      53 stages

It should also be noted that:

1. Metro London comprises Greater London and the surrounding counties of Berks, Bucks, Herts, Kent and Surrey (i.e. Metro London).
2. 27% (or 700,000 sq. ft.) of current stage space that is at least 20,000 sq. ft. and 30 ft. high in Metro London is not purpose-built but alternative space as conversions or temporary
3. And 27% (or 500,000 sq. ft.) of current premium stage space that is at least 20,000 sq. ft. and 40 ft. high in Metro London is also not purpose-built but alternative space as conversions or temporary
4. A number of alternative stages have recently become available, providing much needed capacity, and are being used by major studios and the global streamers. But as more purpose-built stages become available close to West London, some of these alternative spaces without a USP, will find it more difficult to complete and may be displaced from the market. Indeed, some of the recent temporary stages developed are demountable and can readily be moved to new sites.
5. The main alternative spaces in Metro London are:

- Arborfield Studios
- Bovingdon Airfield Studios
- Cardington Studios
- Farnborough Film Studios
- Hoddesdon Studios
- ITV Studios Bovingdon
- London Metropolitan Studios
- Longcross Studios
- The Wharf Studios London
- Troubadour Meridian Water Studios
- Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden



# Summary of planned supply

Announced stage developments in UK  
(all sizes)

5.6m sq. ft.                      231 stages

Announced stage developments in UK  
(>20,000 sq. ft. & >30 ft. ceiling height)

4.9m sq. ft.                      200 stages

Expected increase in UK

(RAG adjusted) (>20,000 sq. ft. & >30 ft. ceiling height)

2.5m sq. ft.

Announced stage developments in Metro London

(>20,000 sq. ft. & >30 ft. ceiling height)

4.1m sq. ft.                      160 stages

Expected increase in Metro London

(RAG adjusted) (>20,000 sq. ft. & >30 ft. ceiling height)

2.2m sq. ft.

It should also be noted that:

1. 4.1m sq. ft. of the 5.6m sq. ft. of stages of all sizes announced are located in Greater London and the surrounding counties of Berks, Bucks, Herts, Kent and Surrey (i.e. Metro London).
2. All new developments where the height is known are at least 40ft:
  - Eastbrook Studios (Dagenham) – 60-69 ft
  - Edinburgh Caledonia (Gartcosh) - up to 60 ft
  - Pinewood, East and West - up to 70 ft
  - Shinfield (Reading) -59-71 ft
  - Sky Studios Elstree - 59-69 ft and
  - WBSL (Watford) - 40-50 ft

# Stage market assessment

Forecast demand for additional soundstage space in the UK in 2026

2,811,000 sq. ft.

Forecast increase in supply in the UK of additional soundstage >20k sq. ft and 30 ft high

2,497,000 sq. ft.

Surplus/(Deficit) in soundstage space supply  
(315,000 sq. ft.)

Maximum loss of alternative space from Metro London displaced by purpose-built space

(712,000 sq. ft.)

Forecast demand for soundstage space (2,811,000 sq. ft.) exceeds the forecast increase in planned supply (2,497,000 sq. ft.) indicating that the UK will likely face a shortage of 315,000 sq. ft. in 2026.

This shortage would be further exacerbated (and therefore be even larger) due to the:

1. Existing supply of lower grade soundstages or alternative spaces coming out of use before 2026 (a maximum of 700,000 sq. ft is alternative space in Metro London).
2. Continued growth in film and TV production in the UK beyond 2026.
3. Growth in the demand for soundstage space from the entertainment and unscripted production segments, not specifically included in our film and HETV demand forecast.
4. The desire of producers to move to a 40 ft. clearance height for stages, which would displace some of the current stage space within our supply estimate with only  $\geq 30$  ft clearance (a maximum 800,000 sq. ft is 20,000 sq. ft. in area but between 30-40ft. in height).
5. Some of more recent announcements may not be delivered by the end of 2026 and therefore the extra capacity would only become available later in the decade.

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# Land at Fairoaks Airport, Surrey

Green Belt Review  
June 2023

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8263\_GreenBeltReview

Version: 0.1  
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Comment FINAL

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with ISO 9001:2015.

## 1.0 Introduction

This report presents the finding of a Green Belt Appraisal (GBA) for a proposed film studio development ('the Proposed Development') on land at Fairoaks Airport, Surrey.

The Proposed Development would comprise the construction of two film studio buildings of similar height to those currently found on site, alongside an area of car parking and a backlot made up of hardstanding.

LDA Design was commissioned by Jigsaw Planning and Development to undertake this GBA, the purpose of which is to assess, in general terms, the suitability of the Site for the Proposed Development in relation to the purposes and function of the Green Belt (as defined by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)).

The GBA forms part of a suite of documents being submitted to Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC) as part of the Outline Planning Application for the Proposed Development.

This GBA should be read in conjunction with the separate Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) that considers the effects of the Proposed Development on landscape character and views / visual amenity.

Supporting figures are included at the end of this report.

### 1.1. Site Location and Context

*Refer to Figure 1: Site Location and Figure 2: Designations*

The Proposed Development Site ('the Site') is located within the operational Fairoaks Airport, approximately 2km north of Woking and 3km east of central Chobham (see Figure 1). The Development Site itself covers an area of approximately 6.6ha.

Fairoaks Airport is located within the eastern area of Surrey Heath Borough Council administrative area. Woking Borough Council and Runnymede Borough Council lie to the south and east (as shown on Figure 2).

Fairoaks Airport is made up of an area of grassed airfield, used primarily for the taxiing and parking of light aircraft. Two large airport buildings lie to the north and west of the airfield, adjacent to other smaller airport buildings and the main car park. Some of these buildings relate to the operation / use of airfield, however, many of these are used for other employment uses. The A319 (Chertsey Road) runs along the northern boundary of the airport.

Fairoaks Airport is set within a rural area, and the wider landscape is mainly comprised of small fields bound by belts of trees or areas of woodland, interspersed with clusters of small settlements. The McLaren Technology Centre and the publicly accessible McLaren Park lie adjacent to the south-eastern boundary of Fairoaks Airport.

No statutory or non-statutory (local) landscape designations cover the Fairoaks Airport site. The entire Fairoaks Airport Site lies within the Green Belt, albeit the built up / employment area of is designated as Major Development Site (MDS) in the Green Belt



## **1.2. Approach to the Appraisal**

This Green Belt Report considers the contribution the Development Site makes to the purposes of the Green Belt. The purposes are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as set out in **Section 2** below.

This Green Belt Report reviews and utilises the assessment methodology and findings of the Surrey Heath Borough Council Green Belt Review (2022) and is supplemented with independent desk and field studies undertaken by LDA Design.

## 2.0 Policy Context

### 2.1. National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published in March 2012 and sets out the Government’s planning policies for England. The latest revision was published in July 2021.

Section 13 of the NPPF provides guidance in respect of Green Belt land, confirming that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policies is *“to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence.”*

Paragraph 134 identifies the five purposes of Green Belt land as follows:

- 1) *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- 2) *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- 3) *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- 4) *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- 5) *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

Paragraph 140 states that *“once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans.”*

Paragraph 142 states that *“when drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account.”*

Paragraph 143 identifies how plans should define Green Belt boundaries. This includes not including land which is unnecessary to keep permanently open; and define new boundaries using recognisable, physical features.

Paragraph 148 refers to proposals affecting the Green Belt. It states that:

*“When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. ‘Very special circumstances’ will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.”*

### 2.2. National Planning Practice Guidance

The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Green Belt provides further guidance in relation to matters of openness and compensatory improvements to the Green Belt.

In relation to openness, it states at Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 64-001-20190722 that relevant considerations include:

- *“openness is capable of having both spatial and visual aspects – in other words, the visual impact of the proposal may be relevant, as could its volume;*
- *the duration of the development, and its remediability – taking into account any provisions to return land to its original state or to an equivalent (or improved) state of openness; and*

- *the degree of activity likely to be generated, such as traffic generation.”*

In relation to improvements, it states at Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 64-002-20190722 that policy-making authorities should make provision for enhancing the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt land. This could include:

- *“new or enhanced green infrastructure;*
- *woodland planting;*
- *landscape and visual enhancements (beyond those needed to mitigate the immediate impacts of the proposal);*
- *improvements to biodiversity, habitat connectivity and natural capital;*
- *new or enhanced walking and cycle routes; and*
- *improved access to new, enhanced or existing recreational and playing field provision.”*

## 2.3. Local Planning Policy

Adopted local planning policy is contained within the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2012) document and the 2000 Local Plan (extant saved policies). Policies of relevance are set out below:

### 2.3.1. Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2012)

#### **Policy CP1: Spatial Strategy**

Which states that *“Within the countryside the current extent of the Green Belt (as shown on the Proposals Map) will be maintained.”*

#### **Policy DM1: The Rural Economy**

This policy states that within the countryside, including the green belt, the council will support proposals for *“...the re-use, adaptation or conversion of buildings for economic purposes where: ... (iii) The scale and use of any diversification or economic purpose including cumulative impact and any associated ancillary development does not conflict with wider countryside and Green Belt objectives.”*

### 2.3.2. 2000 Local Plan (extant saved policies)

#### **Policy RE17: Major Developed Site in the Green Belt**

Policy RE17 identifies Fairoaks Airport as a ‘Major Developed Site’ within the Green Belt, noting that all development at the airport will be subject to Policy M21, see below.

#### **Policy M21: Development at Fairoaks Airport**

This policy states that infilling within the MDS should:

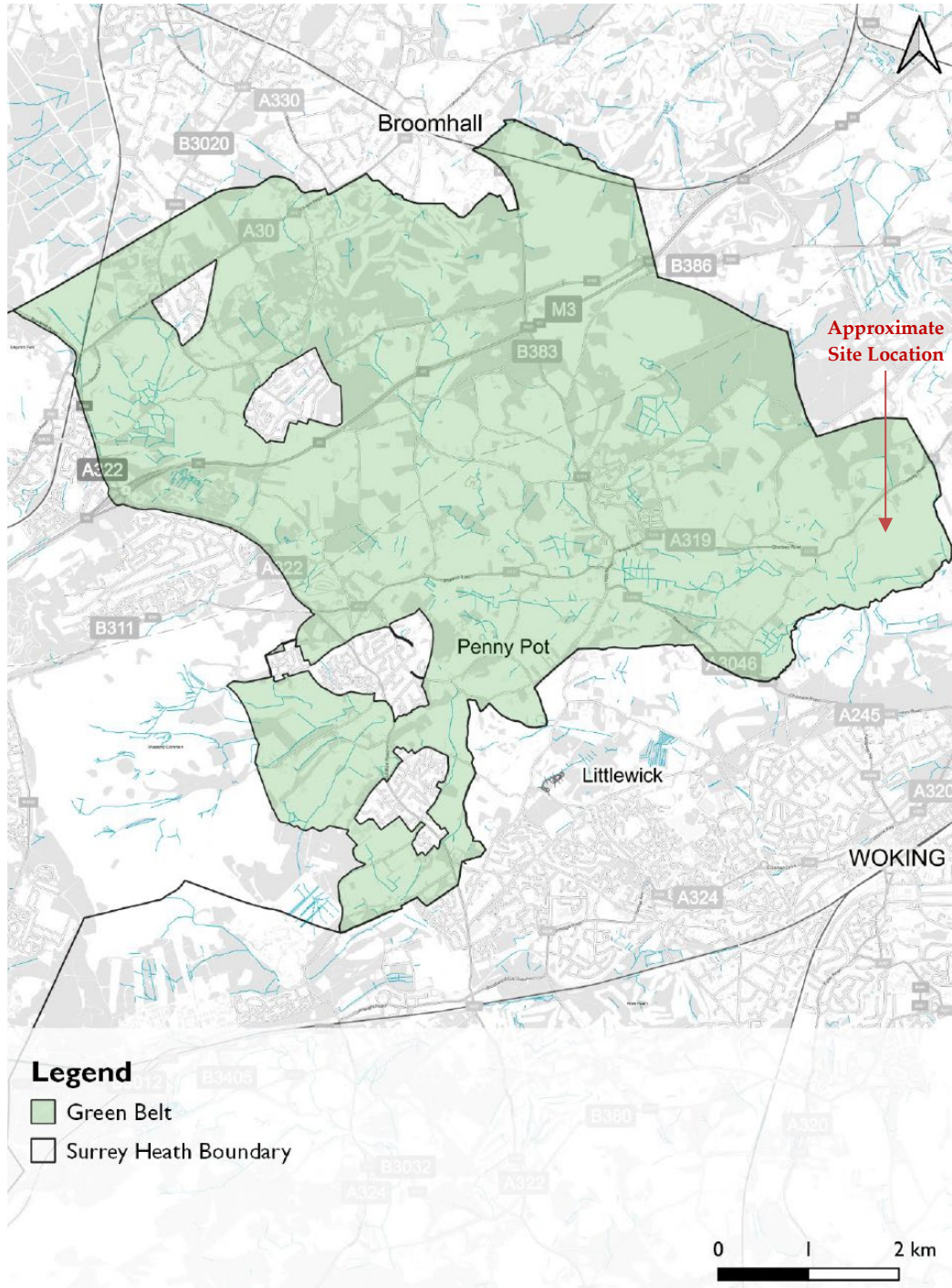
- *“(a) Have no greater impact on the Green Belt than the existing development;*
- *(b) Not exceed the general height of the existing buildings; and*
- *(c) Not lead to a significant increase in the developed proportion of the site or give rise to off-site infrastructure problems.”*

It further states that any redevelopment should:

- *“(d) Have no greater impact than the existing development on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, and where possible have less;*
- *(e) Contribute to the achievement of the objectives for the use of the land in the Green Belt;*
- *(f) Not exceed the general height of the existing buildings;*
- *(g) Not occupy a larger area of the site than the existing buildings;*
- *(h) Ensure that the new buildings are located to have regard to the openness of the Green Belt, existing landscape features and the need to integrate with the surroundings;*
- *(i) Be part of a comprehensive scheme for long-term development within the Major Developed Site; and*
- *(j) Not give rise to off-site infrastructure problems or adversely affect the amenities of nearby residents.”*

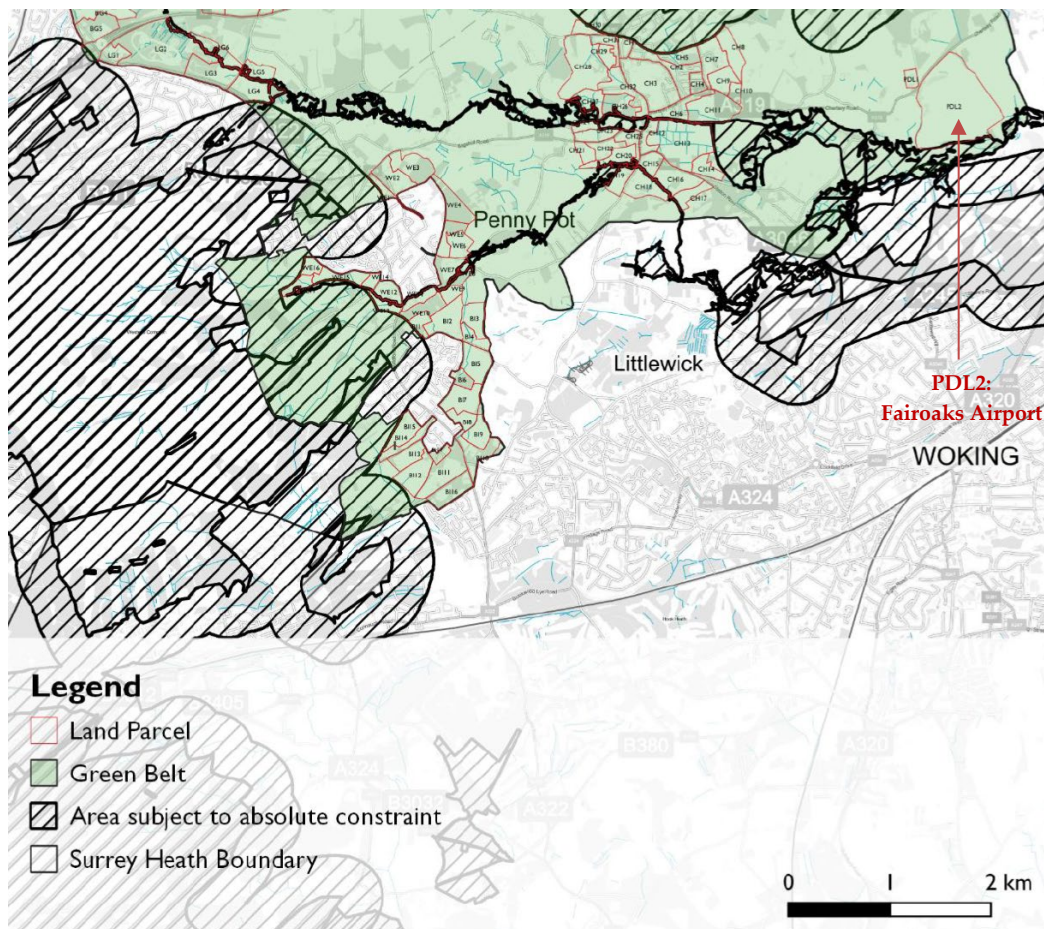
### 3.0 Green Belt Function Analysis

The Surrey Heath Borough Council Green Belt Review identifies the extent of green belt within Surrey Heath, noting that over 44% of land within Surrey Heath is designated as Green Belt. This is shown on **Plate 1** below.



*Plate 1: Extract from Surrey Heath Green Belt Review (2022) showing the extent of metropolitan green belt designated within Surrey Heath.*

The 2022 review comprises a two-part study; in part one the review identifies land parcels within the Green Belt and assesses these against Green Belt purposes 1-4 as set out in the NPPF, part two then considers how the release of areas of Green Belt land could impact upon the integrity and function of the wider Green Belt.



*Plate 2: Extract from Surrey Heath Green Belt Review (2022) showing the land parcels for assessment.*

Fairoaks Airport and the Development Site lie within parcel PDL2: Fairoaks Airport. The parcel, shown on **Plate 2** above, encompasses the full extent of the existing airport including all buildings and development.

Against the four relevant Green Belt purposes, PDL2 is assessed to perform as follows:

Purpose	Level of function	Criteria	LDA Comments
<b>Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas</b>	No Appreciable Function	<i>“Land parcels will be close to a large built-up area but do not provide the nearest effective zone of constraint to the expansion of the area. Land parcels are not adjacent or close</i>	LDA Design agree with this assessment as PDL2 is not located close or adjacent to any large built-up areas.

		<i>to the defined large, built-up areas and do not provide a zone of constraint to the sprawl of such an area."</i>	
<b>Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging</b>	Functions Weakly	<i>"The parcel is considered to play a very limited role in preventing the merging or erosion of the actual or perceived gap between settlements. The parcel may fall within a location where there is a broad gap between settlements where there is no perception of connectivity. Alternatively, features within the parcel may contribute significantly to a sense of connection between settlements."</i>	The review defines towns within the Borough, identifying Chobham (2km east) and Woking (1.5km south) as the nearest towns. LDA Design agree with this assessment as the vegetation with local fields and along Horsell Common limits the perception of connectivity between the settlements.
<b>Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</b>	Functions Weakly	<i>"The parcel exhibits some characteristics of the open countryside, however urbanising features are likely to be prevalent and/or parcels may be subject to urbanising influences from neighbouring land. The openness of the parcel is compromised."</i>	LDA Design agree with this assessment as the built form and operational nature of Fair Oaks Airport has an urbanising influence.
<b>Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns</b>	No Appreciable Function	<i>"The land parcel does not form part of the setting or contribute to the special character of any historic town by reason of its character, views, inter-visibility, topography, features or landscape."</i>	LDA Design agree with this assessment as PDL2 does not form of setting of any historic town.
<b>OVERALL RATING:</b>	<b>Low Function</b>	<b><i>"Functions weakly against at least two Purposes."</i></b>	LDA Design agree with this assessment – PDL2 has a 'low' Green Belt function overall.

Overall it is concluded that the Fair Oaks Airport site has a limited Green Belt function.

Within this context, the Proposed Development occupies a small area of parcel PDL2 that is closely associated with the existing built / employment area at Fair Oaks Airport. The Proposed Development would form a minor extension the existing Fair Oaks employment area / designated MDS (Policies RE17 and M21 – refer to **Section 2**), forming part of a consolidated employment area within the Green Belt.

### 3.1. Assessment of the Proposed Development Against Green Belt Criteria

Using the same methodology found within the Surrey Heath Borough Council Green Belt Review, the Site has been assessed by LDA Design against the relevant Green Belt purposes to determine the impact of the Proposed Development on the Green Belt.

**Purpose 1: To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas**, has not been considered further as the Green Belt review concludes PDL2 is not located close or adjacent to any large built-up areas, as identified within the green belt review. This would not change as a result of the Proposed Development.

**Purpose 4: To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns**, has not been considered further as the Green Belt review concludes parcel PDL2 has no appreciable function against this purpose. This would not change as a result of the Proposed Development.

#### 3.1.1. Purpose 2: To prevent neighbouring towns from merging

As noted above, the Green Belt review first defines towns within the Borough, identifying Chobham (2km east) and Woking (1.5km south) as the nearest towns. It further states that parcels that prevent development within a narrow gap (<1km) between identified settlements have the greatest capacity to prevent neighbouring towns from merging. Ottershaw, located 1.7km north-east of the airport is not included within the study, however it could be considered as a neighbouring town.

The northern boundary of Woking is highly screened by a woodland belt along Horsell Common. This provides a strong sense of visual separation for any development to the north of Woking, and as such development in PDL2 would not play an appreciable role in merging with the town of Woking.

Chobham and Ottershaw lie broadly on an east to west axis and are separated by a distance of approximately 4-5km; this is classified as a 'broad gap' (>3km) within the green belt review. The landscape between the two towns is largely rural, typically comprised of fields with strong tree boundaries. There is a large area of woodland at Stanners Hill directly north of PDL2, and a strong woodland belt along the western boundary of Ottershaw. These field boundaries and areas of woodland limit visibility between the two towns and create a strong sense of visual separation.

PDL2, by its nature as an airport, is a largely open landscape and is broadly comprised of the employment area in the north/north-west and the large, open airfield to the south. There is limited vegetation within the site, however vegetation within the local fields and intermittently along the edge of the parcel limit long-distance views to and from the parcel.



The Proposed Development would largely maintain the existing landscape pattern of PDL2 and would slightly extend the employment area in the north/north-west whilst maintaining the open airfield to the south.

Should the Proposed Development be consented, the character and spatial structure of the host Green Belt parcel would remain largely unchanged and the overall **'level of function' would remain unchanged.**

### 3.1.2. Purpose 3: To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment

The Green Belt review states that within Surrey Heath Purpose 3 focuses on the open character and degree of urbanising features within and surrounding each parcel.

The review defines 'countryside' as *"open land that exhibits a rural character"*, and 'openness' as *"the extent to which countryside can be considered open from an absence of urbanising features rather than from a landscape character perspective, where openness might be influenced by through topography and presence (or otherwise) of woodland and hedgerow cover."* 'Urbanising features' are considered to be *"built forms of development or other building operations normally associated with urban land uses."*

At present, urbanising features within the parcel comprise the existing built / employment area in the north-west and associated airport infrastructure, such as the runways and taxiways. Outside PDL2, the small industrial estate on the opposite side of the A319 and the McLaren Technology Centre to the south-east are notable urbanising features within the wider landscape.

The Green Belt review assesses the level of function of a parcel by estimating the percentage of the parcel containing urbanising features. At present, the level of function is classified as 'functions weakly' which equates to a parcel containing 16% urbanising development or above. These percentages are considered in combination with the qualitative elements of the form, texture and character of development within the parcel, alongside urbanising features outside the parcel.

Should the Proposed Development be consented, it will form an extension to the existing employment area. The qualitative elements of the Proposed Development have been designed to be in keeping with the existing urbanising features and as such the level of function of parcel PDL2 will be most affected by the extent of urbanising development within the parcel. It is estimated that approximately 16-20% of the existing parcel is comprised of the aforementioned urbanising features; urbanising features within the Proposed Development would comprise approximately 7% of the total parcel, taking the total percentage of urbanising features to approximately 23-27%.

The next level of function, where the Green Belt parcel is described as having 'no appreciable function', is reached when *"the land parcel is dominated by urbanising features and exhibits no notable characteristics of the open countryside."* The Proposed Development would not result in urbanising features dominating PDL2 and the character of these features would be in keeping with the existing character of the parcel and located within the same area of the parcel.

Should the Proposed Development be consented, the open character and degree of urbanising features within host Green Belt parcel would remain largely unchanged and the overall **'level of function' would remain unchanged.**

#### 4.0 Summary and Recommendations




Overall, the Proposed Development would not alter the performance of Green Belt parcel PDL2 against the four assessed Green Belt purposes. The overall rating of PDL2 would remain unchanged from that assessed within the Surrey Heath Borough Council Green Belt Review.

PDL2 functions as an area of Green Belt that provides a limited role in preventing the coalescence of minor towns to the north of Woking, alongside providing a limited role in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

Whilst it is determined that the Proposed Development would not affect the function of the Green Belt, it is recommended that the design of the Proposed Development is carefully considered to ensure it integrate well with the existing built / employment area and enhances landscape fabric.



LEGEND

-  Site Boundary
-  Major Developed Site in Green Belt
-  Study Area (0.5 and 1km)

# LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 1: Site Location

ISSUED BY	Oxford	T: 01865 887050
DATE	June 2023	DRAWN SHa
SCALE @A3	1:10,000	CHECKED SHa
STATUS	Final	APPROVED PL

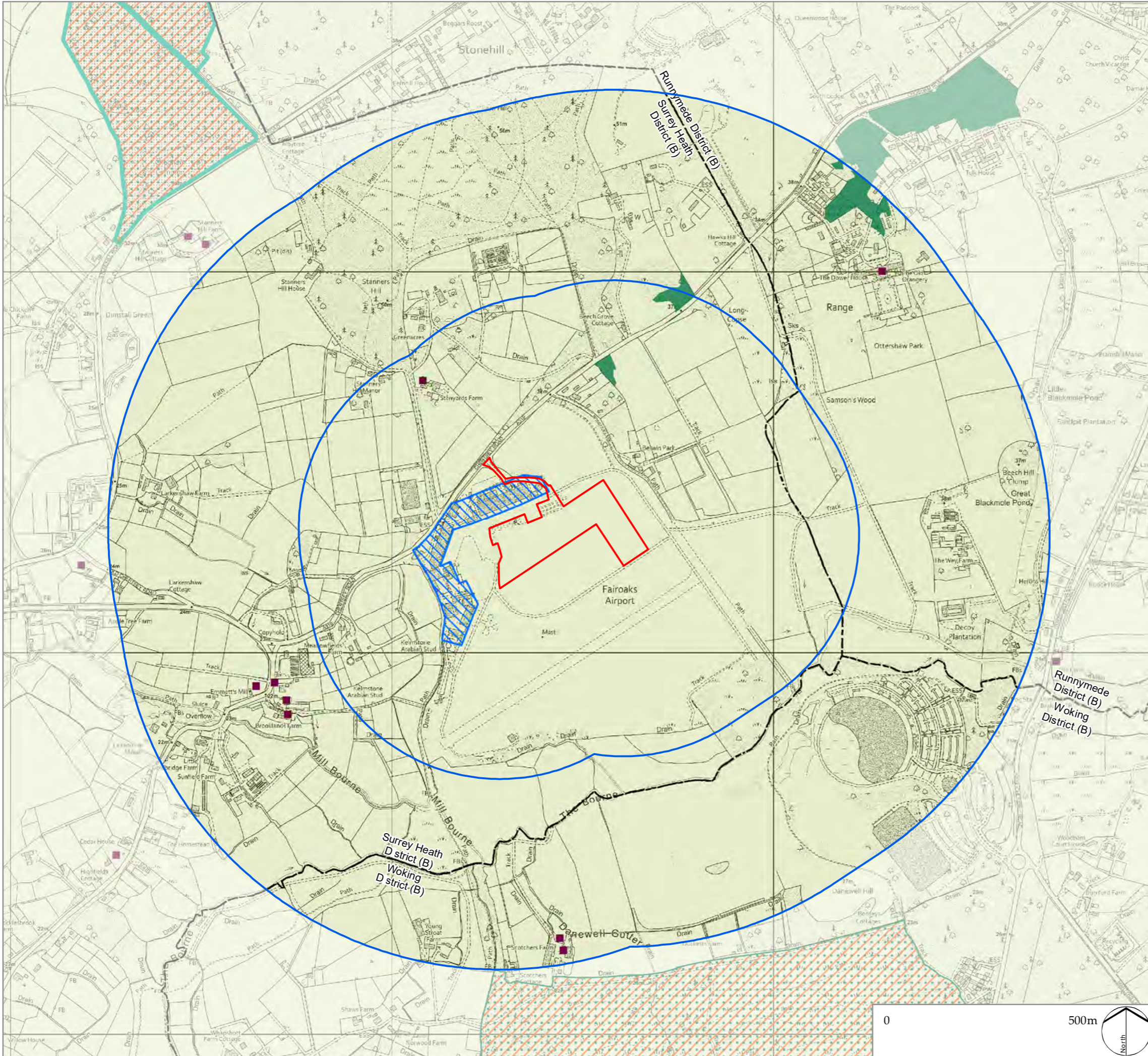
**DWG. NO. 8632\_001**

No dimensions are to be scaled from this drawing.  
All dimensions are to be checked on site.  
Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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Sources: Ordnance Survey





LEGEND

-  Site Boundary
-  Major Developed Site in Green Belt
-  Study Area (0.5 and 1km)
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  National Nature Reserve
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Special Protection Area (SPA)
-  Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
-  Green Belt

# LDĀ DESIGN

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 2: Designations

ISSUED BY	Oxford	T: 01865 887050
DATE	June 2023	DRAWN SHa
SCALE @A3	1:10,000	CHECKED SHa
STATUS	Final	APPROVED PL

**DWG. NO. 8632\_002**

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Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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Sources: Ordnance Survey, Historic England, Natural England



# Land at Fairoaks Airport, Surrey

Landscape and Visual Appraisal  
June 2023

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8632\_LVA

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Version: 0.1  
Version date: June 2023  
Comment Final

This document has been prepared and checked in accordance with ISO 9001:2015.

## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Overview

This report presents the finding of a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) for a proposed film studio development ('the Proposed Development') on land at Fairoaks Airport, Surrey.

The Proposed Development would comprise the construction of two film studio buildings of similar height to those currently found on site, alongside an area of car parking and a backlot made up of hardstanding.

LDA Design was commissioned by Jigsaw Planning and Development to undertake this LVA, the purpose of which is to assess, in general terms, the suitability of the Site for the Proposed Development from a landscape and visual perspective; and to make recommendations for the design of the Proposed Development.

The LVA forms part of a suite of documents being submitted to Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC) as part of the Outline Planning Application for the Proposed Development.

This LVA should be read in conjunction with the separate Green Belt Appraisal that considers the suitability of the Site for the Proposed Development in relation to the purposes and function of the Green Belt.

Supporting figures are included at the end of this report.

### 1.2 Site Location and Context

*Refer to Figure 1: Site Location and Figure 2: Designations*

The Proposed Development Site ('the Site') is located within the operational Fairoaks Airport, approximately 2km north of Woking and 3km east of central Chobham (see Figure 1). The Development Site itself covers an area of approximately 6.6ha.

Fairoaks Airport is located within the eastern area of Surrey Heath Borough Council administrative area. Woking Borough Council and Runnymede Borough Council lie to the south and east (as shown on Figure 2).

Fairoaks Airport is made up of an area of grassed airfield, used primarily for the taxiing and parking of light aircraft. Two large airport buildings lie to the north and west of the airfield, adjacent to other smaller airport buildings and the main car park. Some of these buildings relate to the operation / use of airfield, however, many of these are used for other employment uses. The A319 (Chertsey Road) runs along the northern boundary of the airport.

Fairoaks Airport is set within a rural area, and the wider landscape is mainly comprised of small fields bound by belts of trees or areas of woodland, interspersed with clusters of small settlements. The McLaren Technology Centre and the publicly accessible McLaren Park lie adjacent to the south-eastern boundary of Fairoaks Airport.



No statutory or non-statutory (local) landscape designations cover the Fair Oaks Airport site. The entire Fair Oaks Airport Site lies within the Green Belt, albeit the built up / employment area of is designated as Major Development Site (MDS) in the Green Belt.

### 1.3. Approach to the Appraisal

*Refer to Figure 1: Site Location and Figure 6: Zone of Theoretical Visibility Study*

The LVA provides a proportionate study to assess the suitability of the Site for the Proposed Development and makes recommendations for the design.

The methodology used for this LVA is informed by best practice guidance including Natural England's 'Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (2014) and 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment' (GLVIA) (3rd Edition, 2013) produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

The LVA has been informed by a desk study of the key relevant planning policy, guidance documents, and mapping data; and field study (undertaken in December 2022) to confirm the Site characteristics and understand the local context.

The study area for this appraisal extends to 1km from the site (as shown on Figure 1). Based on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility for the Proposed Development (see Figure 6) this is considered sufficient to assess the suitability of the Site for employment development of the type and scale proposed.

The study area comprises the Site and immediate context as described above, including: the wider Fair Oaks Airport, McLaren Technology Centre and McLaren Park, Stanners Hill and broad areas of agricultural land.

## 2.0 Baseline Conditions

### 2.1. Planning Policy Overview

*Refer to Appendix 1: NPPF Extracts*

Relevant extracts from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are included at Appendix 1.

Relevant local planning policies are contained within the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies (2012) document and the 2000 Local Plan (extant saved policies).

The Site lies within an area of green belt (Policies CP1 & DM1) and is not currently allocated for development within the adopted local plan. However, the existing employment area on the airport forms part of a 'Major Developed Site' (MDS) in Green Belt, as set out within Policy RE17 and Policy M21, saved policies from the 2000 Local Plan.

This policy sets out criteria for assessment of development, including impact on the green belt, noting the design parameters within which new development should occur. In summary, these state that new development should match and maintain the existing character and form of pre-existing development within Fairoaks Airport.

### 2.2. Landscape Policy and Designations

*Refer to Figure 2: Designations*

There are no statutory or non-landscape designations on the site or within the study area (as shown on Figure 2). Matters related to Green Belt are covered within the separate Green Belt Report.

Whilst it is not within the scope of this LVA to consider heritage matters, it is noted that the Site does not contain, and is not in close proximity to, any statutory heritage designations. Within the wider study area, there are some heritage designations such as Grade II Listed Buildings and Locally Listed Heritage Assets (Runnymede Borough Council).

It is also beyond the scope of this LVA to consider ecology issues, however it is noted that to the south of Fairoaks Airport, just outside the study area and within Woking Borough Council, an area is designated as part of the 'Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area' (Policy CS7). Within Surrey Heath Borough Council, a small area of land to the south of Fairoaks Airport is designated as a 'Site of Nature Conservation Importance' under policies CP14A and B.

To the north, Stanners Hill, is designated as a 'Site of Nature Conservation Importance' under the same policies. Queenwood Golf Course, located to the east of Stanners Hill, in the north-east of the study area, is designated as a 'Site of Nature Conservation Importance' (Policy EE9). Adjacent to this is a small area of Ancient Woodland on the edge of the study area.

### 2.3. Landform and Landscape Fabric

*Refer to Figure 3: Topography and Figure 5: Access and Recreation*

As described within the introduction, Fairoaks Airport is comprised of a single runway, areas of grassland, areas of hardstanding, a control tower, hangars, ancillary units and areas of woodland / farmland to the east. The Development Site is closely associated with the existing built-up area of the airport and comprises an area of amenity grassland between one of the main hanger buildings and runway.

The Fairoaks Airport site is predominantly flat and sits at between 25-30m AOD (as shown on Figure 3). There is a slight fall across the wider airport from 30m AOD in the north to 25m AOD in the south. Within the wider study area the land rises to the north, towards the highest points at Stanners Hill (50m AOD) and Fern Hill (55m AOD). To the east, south and west the land remains relatively flat with slight undulation between 25-30m AOD.

The Fairoaks Airport site is generally well contained boundary vegetation, and dense tree cover within the surrounding landscape. However, there are gaps within the tree cover along the A319 (Chertsey Road) on the northern boundary of the airport which afford open views across the eastern portion of the airfield towards the built-up area of Woking. There are public rights of way (PRoWs) along both the eastern and western boundary of the airport (refer to Section 2.5: Access and Recreation and see Figure 5), the eastern PRoW is predominantly open where it runs through the Fairoaks Airport site.

Overall it is concluded that the Fairoaks Airport site already contains areas of built development is generally well contained in the wider landscape by surrounding vegetation.

### 2.4. Landscape Character

*Refer to Figure 4: Landscape Character and Appendix 2: Landscape Character Assessment Extracts*

The Fairoaks Airport site, and the majority of the study area, falls within the Chobham East Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland (SS8) Landscape Character Area (LCA), as defined by Surrey Landscape Character Assessment (2015). The key characteristics of this character area are described as follows: *“pastoral and arable farmland with occasional areas of woodland... Fields and paddocks, particularly within the north-western part of the character area have a good hedgerow structure along their boundaries, but some fields, mainly the larger fields to the south and east have lost their hedgerows. There are scattered farmsteads, nurseries, and very occasionally groups of low density dwellings. There are larger buildings and hangers at Fairoaks Airfield and an extensive research and development complex at the McLaren Technology Centre. Views are often limited or framed by hedgerows and tree cover, but views become more open to the south. There are limited roads, but settlement, and large buildings reduce the sense of remoteness such as around the airfield and McLaren centre.”*

Guidance related to the development of this LCA is primarily related to the conservation and management of the area. The landscape strategy is *“to conserve peaceful enclosed areas with their mosaics of heathland, woodland, and pastoral farmland, and to conserve historic villages and small scale settlement set around greens and commons, including careful consideration of the*

*impact from any further development and enhancement of recreation opportunities. There are opportunities for enhancement include management of the open heathlands and pastures to prevent encroachment by woodland and restocking hedgerows, as well as reducing visual impact of transport corridors locally.” There is no detailed guidance on the development of employment areas, however relevant guidance on built development states that proposals should “ensure that lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of existing areas of ‘dark skies’” and “ensure sympathetic siting and design of any new tall features.” Reference is also made to retention of, and opportunities for, new woodland and hedgerow planting where appropriate.*

Within the wider study area visibility of the Proposed Development would be mostly limited to the Windlebrook and Southern Bourne River Floodplain (RF5) LCA, which runs east to west along The Bourne river corridor at the south of the airport. This LCA is defined by the flood zone of the associated rivers and is noted as being “*separate and distinct from the surrounding heathland landscape Type.*” The character of the area is described as “*predominately pastoral, with wet meadows and the occasional arable fields. There are pollarded trees and riparian vegetation and woodland along the main watercourses and tributaries across the character area, and a good network of hedgerow field boundaries elsewhere. Small blocks of woodland and tree groups are scattered across the character area, with a more substantial area of tree cover at the western end of the character area, which includes part of Windlesham Arboretum. No ancient woodland is recorded.*” It is noted that “*long distance views across are generally contained by vegetation, and woodland along watercourses*” and that “*with its riparian vegetation, meadows, limited urban influence and low-key public access, the majority of the character area is relatively unspoilt and tranquil.*”

The evaluation and guidance for the area notes the largely unsettled and undisturbed ambiance of the character type due to the woodland belts that screen development on the edges of the area. Development at the margins of the area is noted as a potential force for change where “*views of development would affect the rural, secluded character of the flood plain.*” The landscape strategy for this LCA focuses on conserving the rural, secluded areas of this character type, with emphasis also placed on the conservation of heritage features and the management of pastures and arboreal vegetation. Guidance is provided for built development and states that proposals should “*avoid the location of any new large mass or bulky structures where overly visually intrusive on this character area. Subject any development to rigorous landscape and visual impact assessment, site carefully, and design to minimise impact and integrate with the rural context... Promote appropriate scale and form of boundary treatment to avoid negative visual impact of inappropriate boundaries on the rural character of the flood plain... Ensure that lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing ‘dark skies’ in the largely unsettled floodplain.*”

The Surrey Heath Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2021) considers the sensitivity of different landscapes to residential development. The Chobham East Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland LCA is considered to have ‘Low-Moderate’ sensitivity within the airport due to existing built development; traffic along A319; and intermittent aircraft movements; with ‘Moderate-High’ sensitivity across the wider area due to more limited development; good network of public rights of way; limited vehicular access; and the more visually enclosed nature of the landscape that forms a “*relatively secluded landscape with a strong rural character and sense of remoteness and tranquillity.*”

The Windlebrook and Southern Bourne River Floodplain (RF5) LCA is assessed to have a 'Moderate' sensitivity and notes that the area is *"generally more visually open than other areas of the floodplain with large-scale hangars and industrial units at Fairoaks Airport, and the intermittent taking off and landing of aircraft, having some influence on the perceived sense of remoteness and tranquillity. The area contains no nature conservation designations, has no heritage features that contribute to landscape character, and has relatively limited public access."* The assessment notes that development proposals should *"be sensitively sited and designed with, scale, form and detailing, including materials, to avoid being overly visually intrusive in the flat floodplain and to conserve the historic character of the area"* and *"retain woodland planting and hedgerow vegetation that screens existing development from the area, as well introduce additional planting to screen new development that would intrude in rural views."*

Chobham Sandy Heath and Common (SH2) LCA, located to the north of the airport around Stanners Hill would experience little to no visibility of the Proposed Development.

Field work has confirmed that these descriptions of landscape character are broadly accurate. Specifically in relation to the Chobham East Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland (SS8) LCA, it is agreed that the Fairoaks Airport site (and adjoining McLaren site) heavily influence the landscape, with a locally more 'settled' character and reduced sense of remoteness. It is also agreed that the Fairoaks Airport site has a relatively lower sensitivity to change.

It is noted that – as recorded in in relation to both Chobham East Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland (SS8) LCA and the Windlebrook and Southern Bourne River Floodplain (RF5) LCA – while the Fairoaks Airport site itself has a degree of openness, views in this local are often contained by small woodland blocks, trees and hedgerows.

It should also be noted that the ZTV study (see Figure 6) and subsequent field work confirms the limited visibility within the character areas and confirms the screening aspects provided by surrounding vegetation cover. As such any potential changes to character would be limited to the existing Fairoaks Airport site and its immediate context; and would not extend more broadly across these character areas.

Overall it is concluded that the local landscape character is influenced by the built form and operational nature of the Fairoaks Airport site; and that the Fairoaks Aripport site is not particularly sensitive to change.

## 2.5. Access and Recreation

### *Refer to Figure 5: Access and Recreation*

The Fairoaks Airport site is not publicly accessible.

There are two Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) that pass north to south along the east and western boundaries of the Fairoaks Airport site. Footpath 1 (UJ002/1/10 and UM114/1/10) begins within a small group of dwellings off the A320 to the south before passing through McLaren Park and along the eastern boundary of the airfield before terminating at the A319 to the north of the airport.

A series of bridleways connect the A3046 in the south-west to the A319 north of the airport along the western boundary of the airport, these include Bridleway 404 (UM114/404/10), 2

(UM114/2/10) and 3 (UJ002/3/10, UJ002/3/20, UJ002/3/30). These routes pass through Horsell Common, an area of Registered Common Land and Access Land within the south of the study area.

Both of these routes connect into a network of bridleways and footpaths to the north of the A319 at Stanners Hill, an area of Registered Common Land and Access land. Two footpaths (Footpath 4 (UJ002/4/10) and 113 (UJ002/4/10)) connect into the bridleway to the west of the airport and provide connections to footpaths to the west of the site.

There are no designated long-distance walking or cycle routes within the study area.

Overall it is concluded that while the Fair Oaks Airport site is not publicly accessible there are routes / spaces in close proximity to the site.

## 2.6. Views and Visual Amenity

*Refer to Figure 6: Zone of Theoretical Visibility Study and Viewpoints and Figure 7: Photographs from Representative Viewpoints*

A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Study has been prepared to indicate where the Proposed Development may be visible from within the surrounding landscape and townscape context of the Site.

The analysis was carried out using a topographic model including settlements and woodlands (with heights derived from 1m<sup>2</sup> LiDAR surface mapping data resampled to a 5m<sup>2</sup> resolution) as visual barriers in order to provide a more realistic indication of potential visibility. Buildings heights within the site were modelled at 8.5m and 18m to reflect the development parameters currently under consideration.

The ZTV study indicates that visibility is largely contained within the airport itself, with some areas of theoretical visibility in fields to the east, predominantly due to a lack of vegetation along the airport boundary, and to the south where boundary vegetation is slightly intermittent and the landform is set at a lower elevation. Theoretical visibility to the south primarily occurs within McLaren Park and the adjacent field.

The majority of theoretical visibility occurs within areas of private land, including small pockets to the north and west where the Proposed Development would be seen in the context of the existing airport buildings.

Theoretical visibility along roads within the study area would be limited to two short sections of the A319 directly to the north of the airport where breaks in the intervening hedgerows and buildings would provide glimpsed views towards the Proposed Development. This is to the east of the main airport entrance / where there is an area of green space – and no built form – between the road and airfield; and to the west of the main airport entrance, at the entrance to the Chobham Business Centre.

Theoretical visibility along PRoWs would occur along Footpath 1 (UJ002/1/10 and UM114/1/10) at the eastern end of the runway where there is no vegetation to screen the airport and in more distant views from within McLaren Park; theoretical visibility is shown along Bridleway 3 (UJ002/3/20) at the western end of the runway; and along Footpath 113

(UJ002/113/10) which runs along Mill Bourne and may have intermittent, distant views of the Proposed Development for around one quarter of its length.

It should be borne in mind the ZTV study represents a theoretical model of the potential visibility. In reality, features such as trees, hedgerows, embankments, and / or buildings found on the ground, but not accounted for within the dataset, may combine to limit visibility to a much greater degree.

Field work has therefore been undertaken to test and confirm the actual extent of visibility, which is similar in nature to the ZTV study:

- The Proposed Development would generally be visible from within the Fair Oaks Airport site itself, especially the open airfield.
- To the north visibility is limited to glimpsed views from a short section of the A319 (to the east of the main airport entrance) with views from the A319 largely screened by existing buildings and vegetation within the Fair Oaks Airport site.
- To the east visibility is limited to Footpath 1 at the eastern end of the airfield and the two field parcels immediately east of the airfield (albeit that fall within the wider curtilage of the airport and are not publicly accessible), with surrounding woodland and field boundary vegetation containing views beyond.
- To the south visibility is limited to areas of higher ground within McLaren Park, with the woodland / heathland further south containing views beyond.
- To the west visibility is limited to a short section of Bridleway 3, and there are no discernible views from Footpath 113, with tree belts and field boundary vegetation screening views.

Overall, it is concluded that the Proposed Development will be visible from a relatively limited area within the immediate context of the Fair Oaks Airport site.

## 3.0 Recommendations and Appraisal

### 3.1. Introduction

This section of the LVA considers the potential landscape and visual effects arising from the Proposed Development and necessary mitigation measures.

### 3.2. Design Principles

The LVA has been undertaken as part of the iterative design process to provide an understanding of the likely landscape and visual issues and to make recommendations for the design of the Proposed Development.

The design principles listed below are measures to help mitigate adverse landscape and visual effects along with other measures that could be deployed to deliver enhancement.

Based on the findings of the LVA, the following design principles have either been incorporated into the scheme design or will be dealt with as part of Reserved Matters:

- The location and layout of the Proposed Development relates well to the existing built / employment area.
- The height of the Proposed Development is similar in scale to the existing airport buildings.
- Ensure building materials are selected to be visually recessive and complement the treatment of the existing buildings.
- Ensure that boundary treatments are, where possible, visually permeable and coloured to match the surrounding landscape.
- Ensure any lighting is designed to minimise light spill.
- Consider opportunities for tree / hedgerow planting and new habitat creation as part of the Proposed Development.

Specially in relation to any future landscape design proposals, there is an opportunity to establish planting along the northern edge of the Development Site, which would help screen views from the A319.

Planting along the eastern and southern boundaries of the Development Site may also be beneficial in helping integrate the Proposed Development; however, the character of the southern edge of the existing built / employment area is already predominately 'open' to the adjoining airfield and careful consideration needs to be given to operational requirements associated with aircraft movements / bird strike.

### 3.3. Potential Landscape and Visual Effects

The appraisal of potential effects addresses each of the themes presented in the landscape and visual baseline presented in Section 2.0.



### 3.3.1. Landscape Designations

3.3.2. There are no statutory or non-landscape designations on the Site or within the study area, as such, no effects arising.

3.3.3. Matters related to green belt are covered within the separate Green Belt Report.

### 3.3.4. Landform and Landscape Fabric

The Proposed Development will have no effect on the landform / limited effects on landscape fabric, being located on an existing area of grassed airfield within the airport and with no loss of trees and hedgerows.

Opportunities exist to establish new planting as part of the Proposed Development and enhance the landscape fabric / structure of the Fair Oaks Airfield site.

### 3.3.5. Landscape Character

Due to the nature of the Proposed Development and existing character of Fair Oaks Airport, there would be little discernible change to the landscape character of the site and that within the wider study area.

The Proposed Development would be in keeping with the land uses, character and layout of the existing built / employment area of the Fair Oaks Airport site and would be perceived as an extension to the existing buildings and operational area.

### 3.3.6. Access and Recreation

There would be no direct changes to the local PRow network as part of the Proposed Development.

As recorded below, there would be some impact on views (and visual amenity) from two PRow, however, effects are limited in extent.

### 3.3.7. Views and Visual Amenity

Views of the Proposed Development from publicly accessible locations are predominantly limited to short stretches / areas of the A319 to the north; McLaren Park to the south; and two PRows to the east and west.

From along the A319 views would be limited to glimpsed views of the buildings and, in particular, activity on the backlot, through the intermittent vegetation along the northern boundary of the Fair Oaks Airport site. There would be additional glimpsed views to the west, looking over a field gate into the airport. The Proposed Development would be seen in the context of / largely screened by existing buildings and trees, and - given the speed of the road - views would be very fleeting.

To the south of the Site, there would be visibility from multiple areas within McLaren Park. The park is bound by a belt of trees and the Proposed Development would be visible intermittently through gaps and above the trees from locally elevated points within the park. Due to the distance, the Proposed Development would feature as a minor element

within any view and would be perceived as part of the existing buildings and operational area.

As described within Section 2.6, views from PRoWs are limited to the Footpath 1, which runs through McLaren Park and along the eastern boundary of the airport, and Bridleway 3 at the western end of the runway. The main areas of visibility will be limited to relatively short sections of the PRoWs as they pass either end of the runway, and – in the case of Bridleway – where there is a clear break in vegetation.

Where visible from these PRoW, the Proposed Development would be seen in the context of other airport buildings / operational area and the buildings would be of similar scale and layout to the existing employment area. The Proposed Development will also be seen set against and below a backdrop of surrounding trees and woodland. In addition, there will remain more open views across the airfield to the south of the Development Site and existing built / employment area.

Specifically in relation to Footpath 1, this passes in close proximity to the Development Site boundary and would look across the proposed backlot, however, as stated above – this would be from a short section of the PRoW that runs relatively close to the existing built / employment area. Activity within the backlot would also likely to be temporary / varied and at times may not be in active use.

Overall there would be no views in which the Proposed Development would be seen in isolation from the existing airport infrastructure.

### **3.4. Summary and Conclusion**

Overall, it is considered that the Proposed Development would have no significant effects on landscape fabric; landscape character; access and recreation; and views / visual amenity. or views.

The Proposed Development would be seen as a minor change to the Fair Oaks Airport site and would be in keeping with the character, layout and building heights of the existing built / employment development.



LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Major Developed Site in Green Belt
- Study Area (0.5 and 1km)

# LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 1: Site Location

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DATE	June 2023	DRAWN SHa
SCALE @A3	1:10,000	CHECKED SHa
STATUS	Final	APPROVED PL

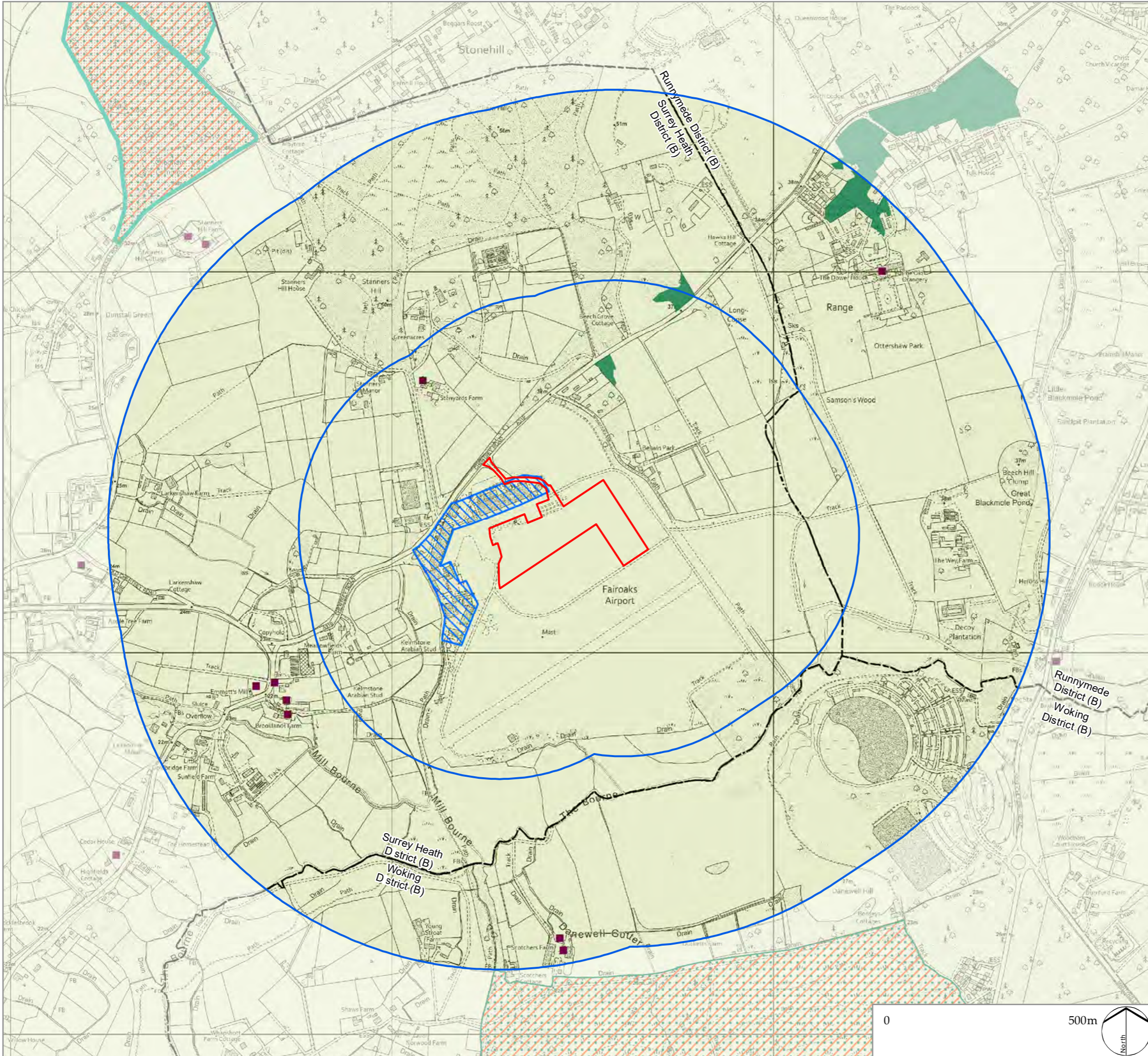
**DWG. NO. 8632\_001**

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Area measurements for indicative purposes only.

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Sources: Ordnance Survey





LEGEND

-  Site Boundary
-  Major Developed Site in Green Belt
-  Study Area (0.5 and 1km)
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  National Nature Reserve
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Special Protection Area (SPA)
-  Ancient Semi Natural Woodland
-  Green Belt

# LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 2: Designations

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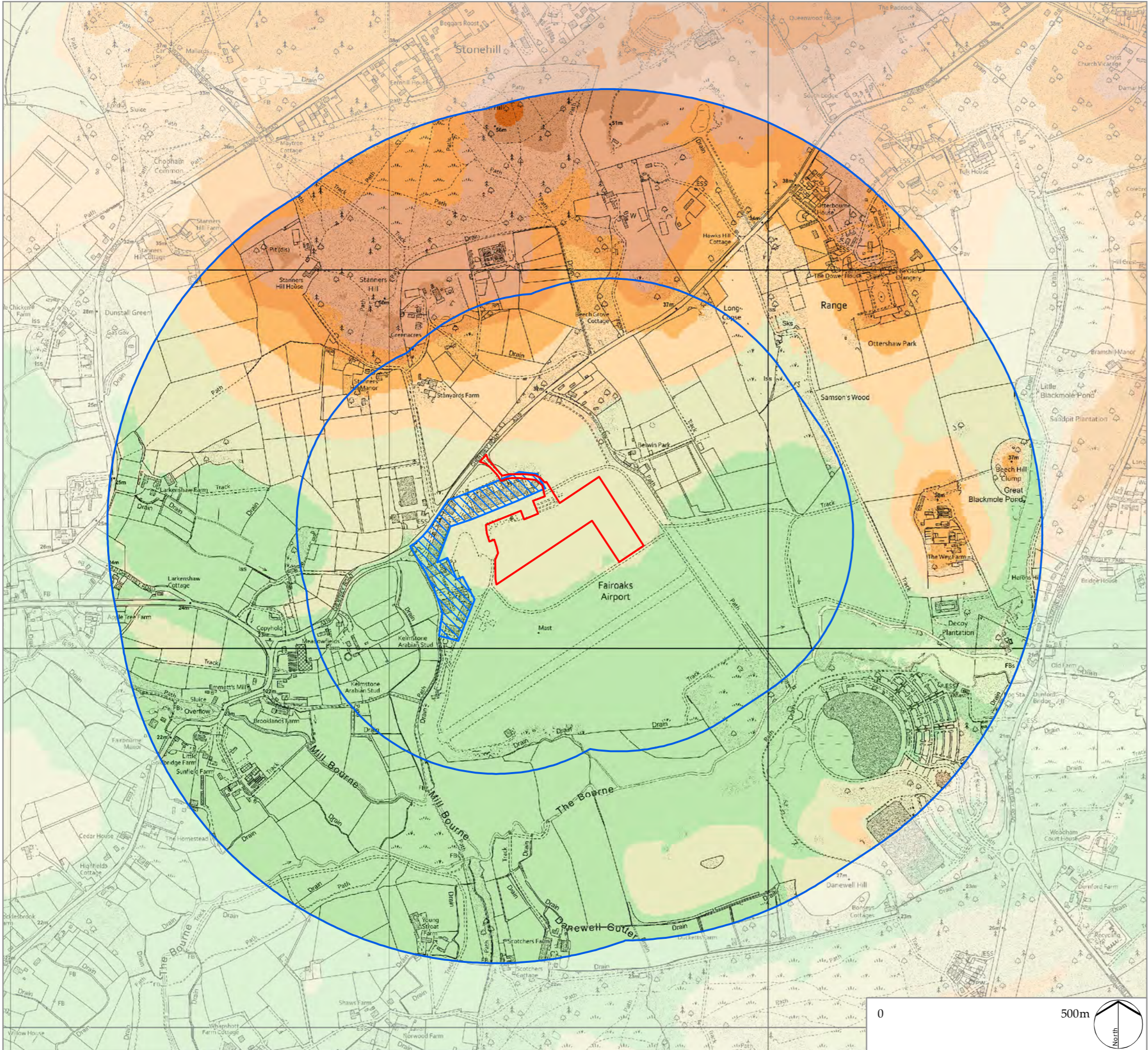
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Sources: Ordnance Survey, Historic England, Natural England















**LEGEND**

-  Site Boundary
-  Major Developed Site in Green Belt
-  Study Area (0.5 and 1km)

**Elevation (mAOD)**

-  < 15
-  15 - 20
-  20 - 25
-  25 - 30
-  30 - 35
-  35 - 40
-  40 - 45
-  45 - 50
-  50 - 55
-  55 - 60

**LDĀDESIGN**

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 3: Topography

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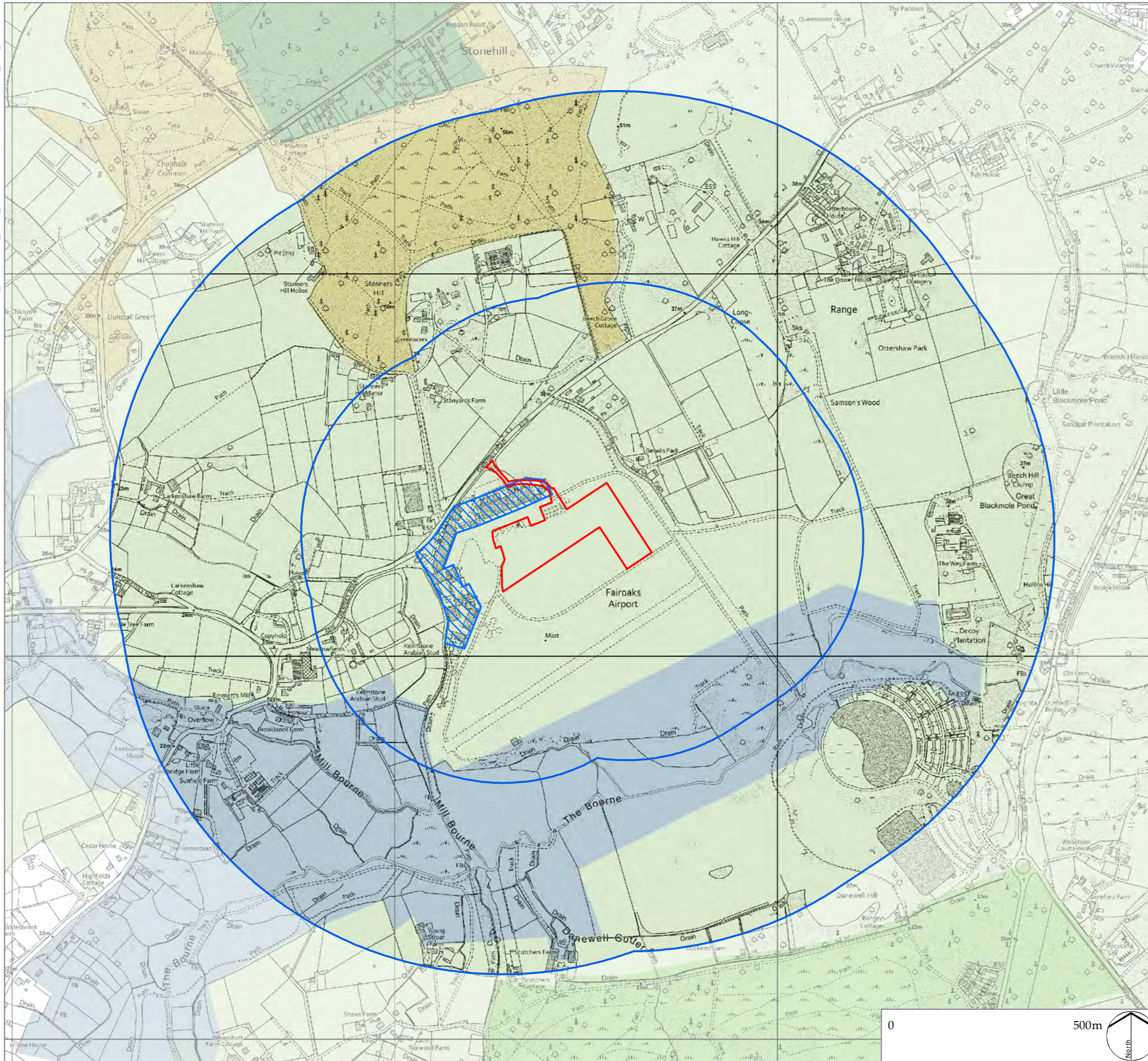
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Sources: Ordnance Survey, Environment Agency

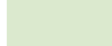








**LEGEND**

-  Site Boundary
-  Major Developed Site in Green Belt
-  Study Area (0.5 and 1km)

**Landscape Character Area**

-  Chobham East Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland
-  Chobham Sandy Heath and Common
-  Foxhill Sandy Woodland
-  Horsell North Sandy Woodland
-  Windlebrook and Southern Bourne River Floodplain

# LDĀ DESIGN

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 4: Landscape Character

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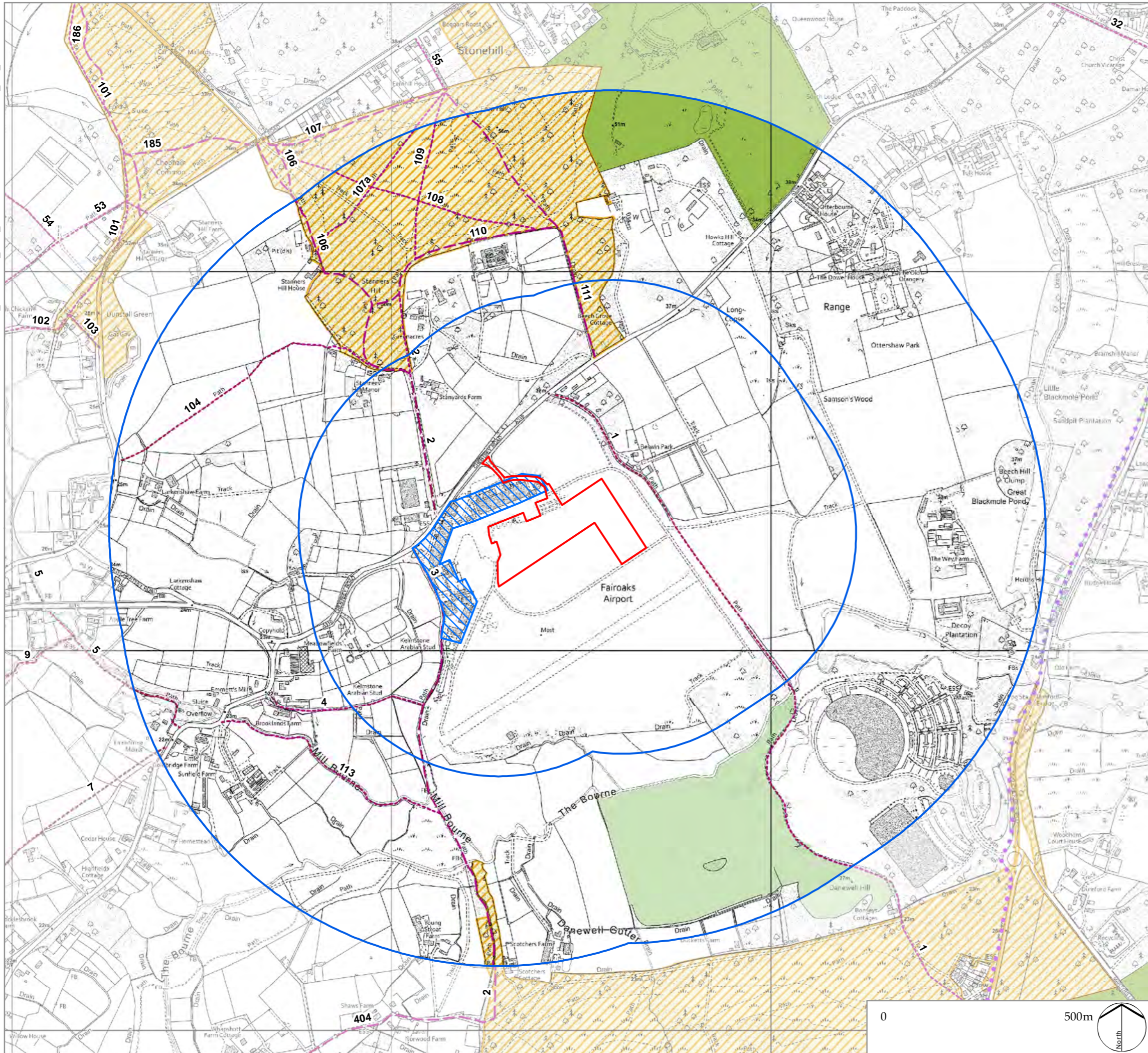
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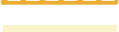



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Sources: Ordnance Survey, ADAS & Defra





- LEGEND**
-  Site Boundary
  -  Major Developed Site in Green Belt
  -  Study Area (0.5 and 1km)
  -  National Cycle Network Route
  - Public Right of Way**
    -  Footpath
    -  Bridleway
    -  Byway
    -  Restricted Byway
    -  Other route with Public Access
  -  Registered Common Land
  -  Access Land
  -  McLaren Park
  -  Golf Course

# LDĀDESIGN

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 5: Access and Recreation

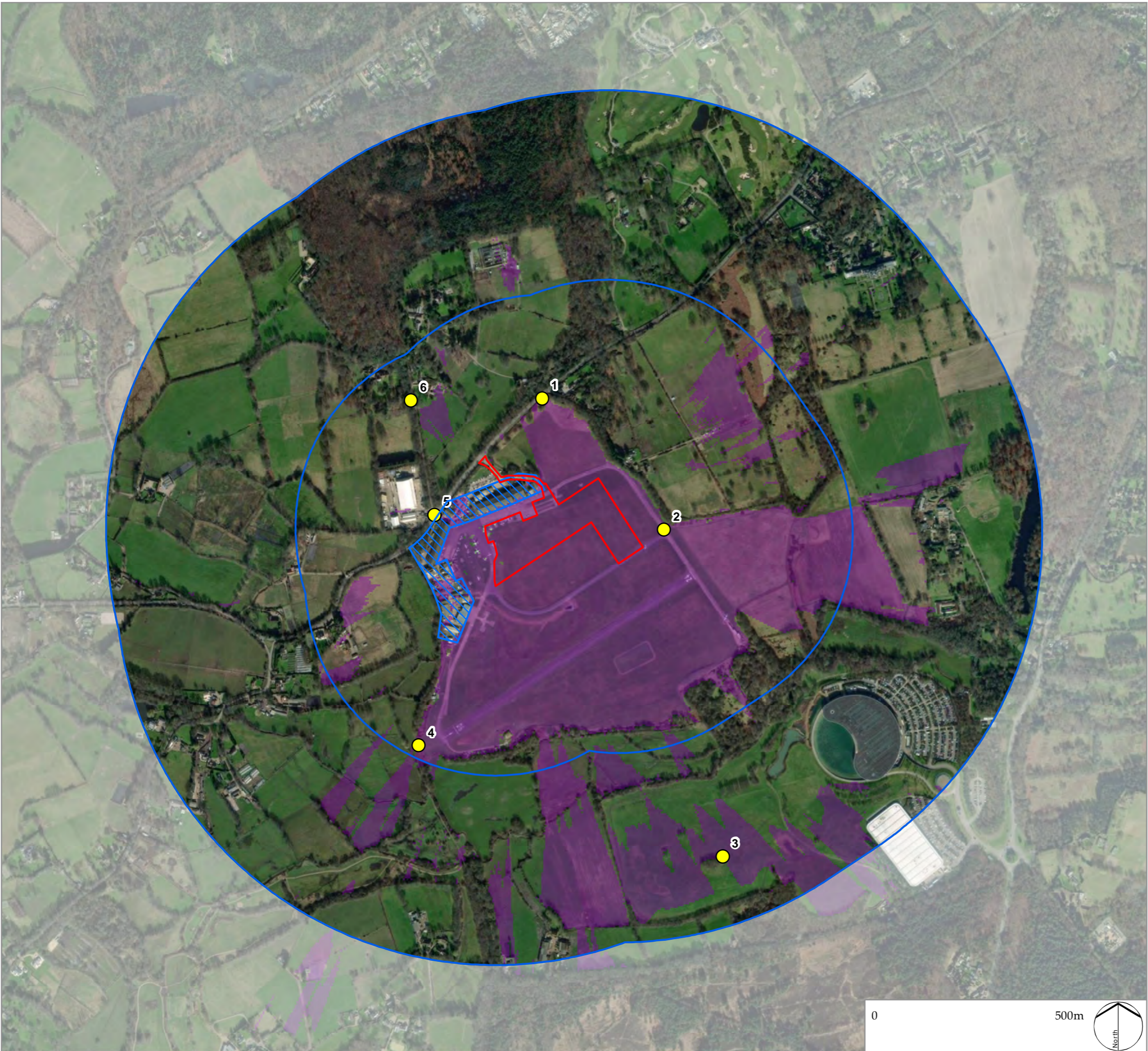
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Sources: Ordnance Survey, ADAS & Defra, Sustrans, Natural England



**LEGEND**

- Site Boundary
- Major Developed Site in Green Belt
- Study Area (0.5 and
- Zone of Theoretical Visibility (computer generated) - based on building heights of 8.5m and 18m
- Viewpoint Locations

This drawing is based upon computer generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) studies produced using the viewshed routine in the ESRI ArcGIS Suite. The areas shown are the maximum theoretical visibility, taking into account topography, vegetation and buildings which have been included in the model with the heights obtained from a LiDAR digital surface model.

Due to its resolution, the surface model does not take into account every localised feature such as walls, small hedgerows or small trees and therefore only gives an impression of the extent of visibility.

The ZTV includes an adjustment that allows for Earth's curvature and light refraction. It is based on LiDAR terrain data with a 1m<sup>2</sup> resolution, resampled to 5m<sup>2</sup> resolution.

# LDĀ DESIGN

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Figure 6: Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) Study including woodland and settlements and Viewpoints

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Photograph Viewpoint 1A: Chertsey Road along northern airfield boundary / near Bonsey's Lane



Photograph Viewpoint 1B: Chertsey Road along northern airfield boundary / near Bonsey's Lane

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DWG. NO. 8632\_007\_Photopanel

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Photograph Panel A

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Photograph Viewpoint 2: PRoW (Footpath 1) passing through east of site adjacent to taxi runway (end of Bonsey's Lane)



Photograph Viewpoint 3: McLaren Park, east side of hill top copse at junction of informal paths

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STATUS	Final	APPROVED	PL

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PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Photograph Panel B



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Photograph Viewpoint 4: PRow (Bridleway 3) at western end of runway (Youngstroat Lane)

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SCALE@A3	NTS	CHECKED	PL
STATUS	Final	APPROVED	PL

DWG. NO. 8632\_007\_Photopanel

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOSDRAWING TITLE  
Photograph Panel C

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Photograph Viewpoint 5: A319 at entrance to Chobham Business Centre



Photograph Viewpoint 6: PRoW (Bridleway 2) alongside Stanyards Cottage

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SCALE@A3	NTS	CHECKED	PL
STATUS	Final	APPROVED	PL

DWG. NO. 8632\_007\_Photopanel

PROJECT TITLE  
FAIROAKS STUDIOS

DRAWING TITLE  
Photograph Panel D

## Appendix 1. NPPF Extracts

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021) makes clear that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development (Section 2), and that design (Section 12), and effects on the natural environment (Section 15) are important components of this.

Paragraph 11 sets out that in determining applications for development this means that developments which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved. Where the development plan is not fit for the purpose of determining the application, paragraph 11 directs that the permission should be granted unless *“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”* or *“the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan”*. The areas or assets of particular importance in respect of landscape and visual matters referred to within the relevant footnote 7 are:

- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- National Parks including the Norfolk Broads;
- Heritage Coast.

The list also includes important habitats sites, irreplaceable habitats and / or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt or Local Green Space; designated heritage assets or heritage assets of archaeological interest; and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

Section 11 sets out considerations in ‘Making Effective Use of Land’ and notes in paragraph 124 that in respect of development density the considerations should include whether a place is well-designed and *“the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting ... or of promoting regeneration and change”*.

Section 12 sets out consideration in ‘Achieving well-designed places’ and indicates in paragraph 127 (Section 12) that decisions should ensure that developments:

*“a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*

*b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*

*c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*

*d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

*e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) ...*

Section 15 of the NPPF covers both ecological and landscape matters. Paragraph 174 requires that decisions should contribute by:

*“a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, ... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*

*b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*

*c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate; ...”*

In respect of valued landscapes, paragraph 175 notes that planning policy should *“distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites”*.

Paragraphs 176 – 178 require that:

*“176. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.*

*177. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development<sup>60</sup> other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:*

*a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;*

*b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and*

*c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.*

*178. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 176), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.”*

Footnote 60 notes that *“whether a proposal is ‘major development’ is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined”*.

Paragraph 85 requires decisions to ensure that *“...new development is appropriate for its location...”* including by limiting the impact of light pollution on local amenity and *“intrinsically dark landscapes”*.

### **Planning Practice Guidance for Natural Environment, July 2019**

This document is intended to explain the key issues in implementing policy to protect biodiversity, enhance green infrastructure and also contains a section on landscape. This section reiterates the policy set out in the NPPF, highlights the importance of identifying the special characteristics of locally valued landscapes and recommends the use of landscape character assessments.

With regards to National Parks, the Broads and AONBs, the guidance states that:

*“Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 and section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 require that ‘in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land’ in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, relevant authorities ‘shall have regard’ to their purposes for which these areas are designated”* (para 039). The same paragraph also requires consideration of the effects of development on the setting of AONBs.

The guidance also highlights that Natural England has published advice on Heritage Coasts. This guidance indicates that heritage coasts are *“managed to conserve their natural beauty and, where appropriate, to improve accessibility for visitors”* (para 043).

This document also provides guidance on green infrastructure, highlighting types of green infrastructure (para 004) and the benefits which they provide (005), including achieving well-designed places as *“green infrastructure exists within a wider landscape context and can reinforce and enhance local landscape character, contributing to a sense of place and natural beauty”* (para 006).

### **Planning Practice Guidance for Design: process and tools, October 2019**

The guidance should be read alongside the National Design Guide and sets out the characteristics of well-designed places and demonstrates what good design means in practice. The guidance indicates that good design relates to 10 characteristics:

- context
- identity
- built form
- movement
- nature
- public spaces
- uses
- homes and buildings
- resources
- lifespan

In respect of the determining applications and the relationship between a proposal and the surrounding context, the guidance notes that:

*“permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions ...”*

## **National Design Guide, January 2021**

The guidance sets out characteristics of *‘beautiful, enduring and successful places’* that reflect the *‘Government’s priorities and a common overarching framework’* and provides cross references to the National Planning Policy Framework.

The guidance indicates that *‘context, history and the cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments’*.

In respect of context, the guidance indicates a positive sense of place and further notes that well-designed places are:

- based on a sound understanding of the features of the site and the surrounding context, using baseline studies as a starting point for design
- integrated into their surroundings so they relate well to them
- influenced by and influence their context positively; and
- responsive to local history, culture and heritage.

The guidance indicates that identity *‘or character of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together... Local character makes places distinctive.’*

In respect of identity, the guidance further notes that well-designed places, buildings and spaces:

- have a positive and coherent identity that everyone can identify with...;
- have a character that suits the context, its history...;
- are visually attractive...

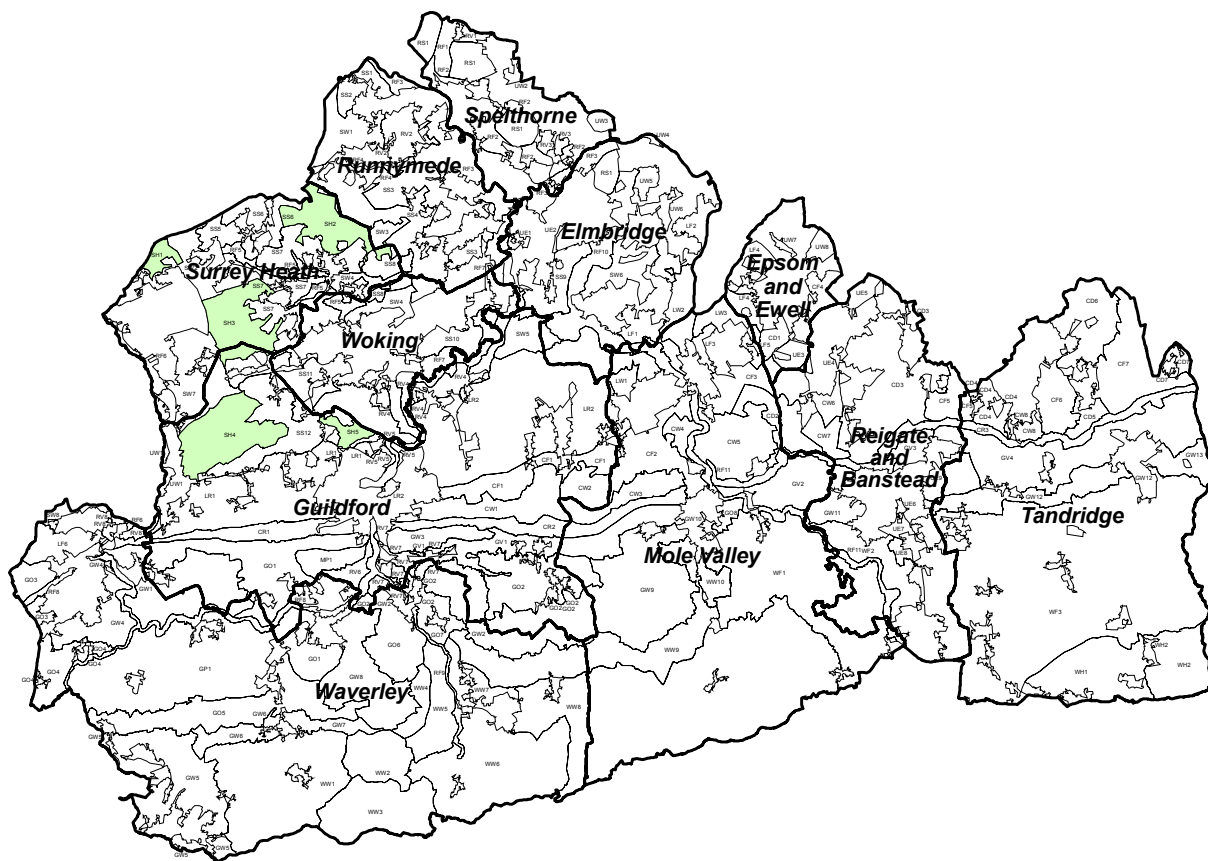
The guidance indicates that nature *‘contributes to the quality of a place, and to people’s quality of life, and it is a critical component of well-designed places.’* Natural features include *‘natural and designed landscapes, high quality public open spaces, street trees, and other trees, grass, planting and water’*.

In respect of nature, the guidance further notes that well-designed places:

- integrate existing and incorporate new natural features into a multifunctional network that supports quality of place
- prioritise nature so that diverse ecosystems can flourish to ensure a healthy natural environment that supports and enhances biodiversity
- provide attractive open spaces in locations that are easy to access



**Appendix 2. Landscape Character Assessment Extracts**



## LANDSCAPE TYPE SH: SANDY HEATH AND COMMON

### Landscape Character Areas

SH1	Deer Rock Hill Sandy Heath and Common
SH2	Chobham Sandy Heath and Common
SH3	Westend and Pirbright Sandy Heath and Common
SH4	Ash Common to Cobbetthill Sandy Heath and Common*
SH5	Whitmoor Sandy Heath and Common*

\* These Character Areas are outside Surrey Heath Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE SH: SANDY HEATH AND COMMON

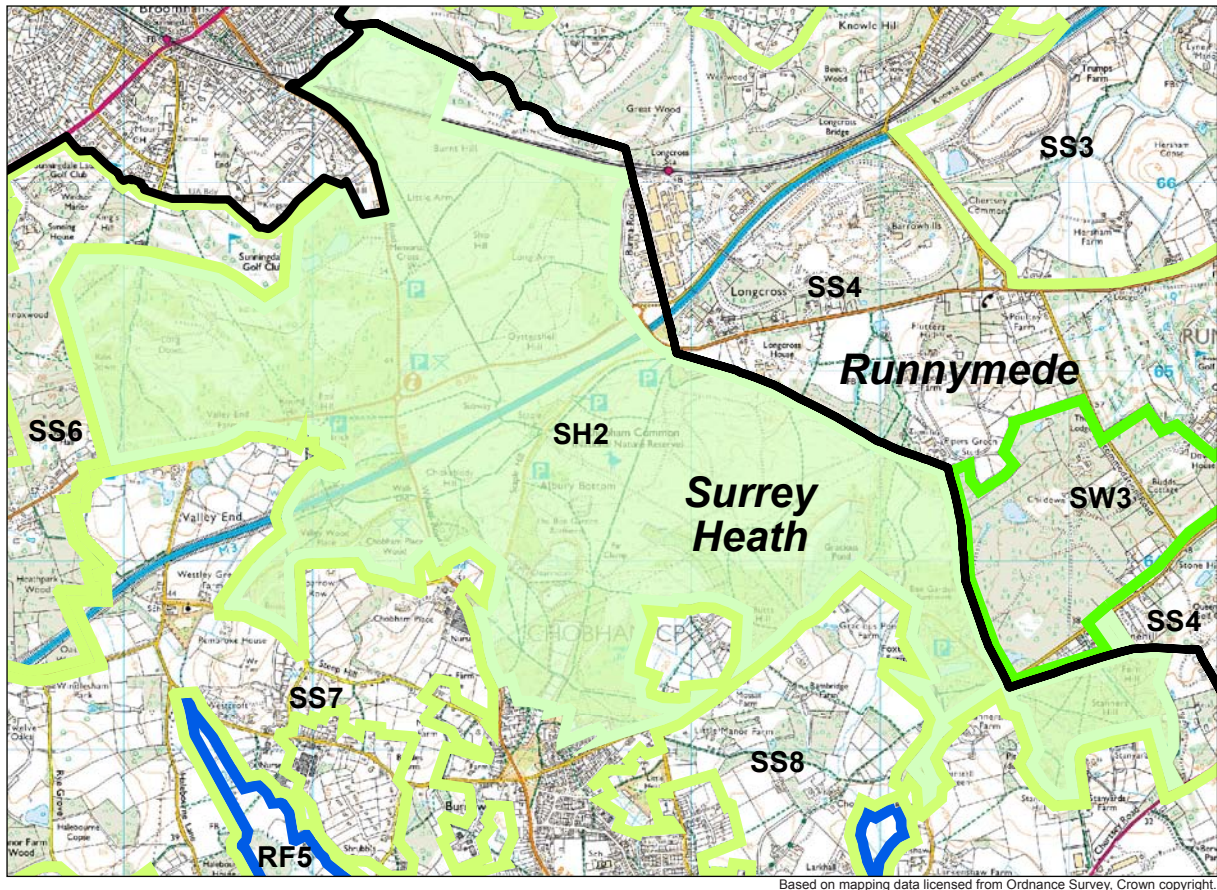
### Location and Boundaries

The Sandy Heath and Common Type comprises five dispersed character areas within the north-west part of the county, identified as largely intact heath and common, in contrast to the more developed or wooded surrounding landscape. The boundaries of the Type are based on land cover and the underlying geology.



### Key Characteristics

- A generally level landscape with slight undulations underlain by a solid sandy geology.
- Well vegetated landscape with mixed woodland blocks and belts, scrub, and heathland vegetation of high ecological interest.
- Includes large areas dominated by military land use with limited, managed or no public access.
- Settlement is largely absent apart from areas of densely concentrated army barracks and camps.
- This is generally a secret and remote landscape largely hidden from view apart from occasional glimpses through woodland into a more open interior.
- Large areas of heath with poor sandy acidic soils with lack of intensive farming and low density of early human occupation.



## SH2: CHOBHAM SANDY HEATH AND COMMON

### Location and Boundaries

The Chobham Sandy Heath and Common Character Area lies to the north of Chobham, within the north-western part of the county. The character area is defined by the extent of relatively intact heath and common. Although a gradual transition in places, the surrounding character areas are settled with housing or farmland and have almost no intact heathland, or are continuous woodland.

### Key Characteristics

- A gently undulating landscape, underlain by Camberley Sand Formation Sand, Windlesham Formation Sand, Silt and Clay, and Bagshot Formation Sand, solid geology.
- The character area is formed from Chobham Common, and heathland on Stanners Hill (adjacent to the south-east of Chobham Common), an area of heathland which accommodates part of Sunningdale golf course (adjacent to the north-west of Chobham Common), plus a small extension of heath at the northern end of the character area. Although used as a golf course, the area to the north-west still retains the character of heathland.
- The character area is formed from large extensive tracts of open heath, with scrub and varying sized tree groups.
- Larger blocks of woodland tend to be located at the perimeter of the common, and often include Birch and Pine with Holly edges. There are a number of wide bands of trees across the centre character area.
- There are long open expansive views across the heath, particularly from high points, looking over scrub to woodland in the distance, such as from Staple Hill and Memorial Cross. Treed areas enclose or frame views in some places.

- Cobham Common is a well-used recreational resource for walkers and cyclists. The vast majority of the character area is Open Access Land. Public rights of way and other tracks crisscross the character area, and there are numerous car parks located off the 'B' roads and more minor roads which cross through the area.
- The Waterloo to Reading railway line runs along the northern boundary of the character area, with Longcross railway station in close proximity. However, there is no direct public access from the station to Chobham Common, and despite frequent passing services, few trains currently stop at Longcross during the week and none at the weekend.
- The majority of the 'B' roads which cross the character area are screened by roadside vegetation. However, the M3 motorway crosses broadly east-west across the middle of Chobham Common, with most of the motorway at grade or elevated, and without roadside planting. It is therefore open to the surrounding landscape, and visible from public rights of way within the vicinity.
- The vast majority of the character area is unsettled, with dwellings limited to small groups of houses surrounded by woodland near the edges of the character area.
- The vast majority of the character area is registered as Common Land, and there are two scheduled monuments – earthworks at the 'Bee Garden' on Albury Bottom, and north-west of Childown Farm.
- The character area is covered by various ecological designations, including the Thames Basins Heath Special Protection Area, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Area of Conservation and Site of Nature Conservation Interest. Chobham Common is also a Local Nature Reserve.
- This an expansive landscape of high ecological value heathland. Human influence, from roads and the M3, and recreational activity does have an effect on the character area in places, but large relatively unspoilt areas with a feeling of tranquillity and remoteness remain.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE SH: SANDY HEATH AND COMMON EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### **Key positive landscape attributes**

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Rich biodiversity of relatively intact heathland and commons, plus areas of wet heathland and valley bogs.
- Secluded character of landscape.
- Low key human intervention and recreation.
- Minimal settlement.
- Access managed by the military, commons, tracks and public rights of way combine to provide a recreational resource.

#### **Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures**

##### ***Past change***

- Regeneration of woodland on lower heathland.
- Military development of barracks, camps and ranges with associated fencing and signage.
- Transport corridors, including main roads and the M3 motorways cutting across heathland.
- Increased recreational use including car parks.

##### ***Future potential forces for change***

- Pressure for development, including expansion of military development, and recreational facilities.
- Further road development and the urbanisation of existing roads through kerbing, lighting, and signage relating to military functions.
- Further encroachment of woodland onto heathland.

### GUIDANCE

#### **Landscape Strategy**

The landscape strategy for the Sandy Heath and Common landscape is to conserve the secluded, largely unsettled character of the area and its varied heathland habitats of high biodiversity value. Elements for enhancement are the management of the balance between heathland and woodland to minimise scrub and woodland encroachment, whilst sensitively incorporating recreational usage.

#### **Landscape Guidelines**

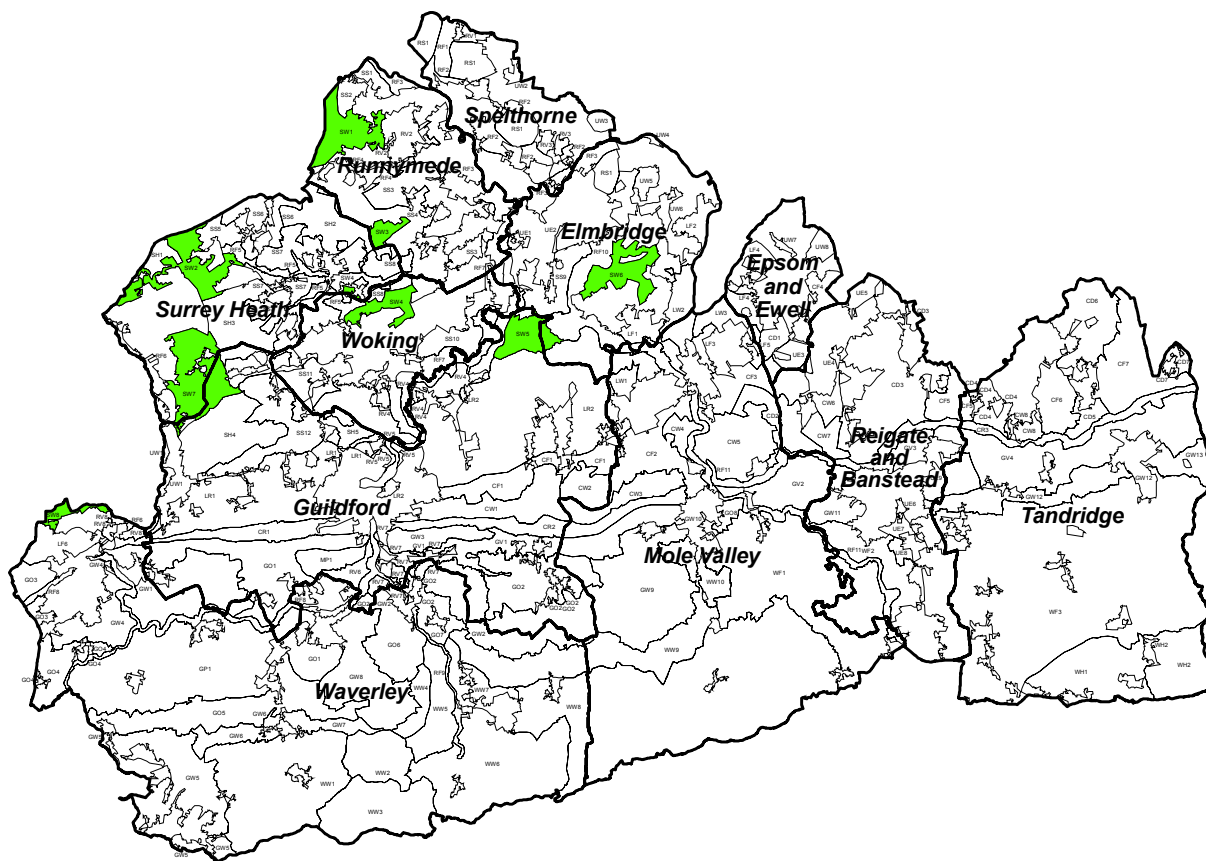
##### ***Land Management***

- Seek to conserve internationally, nationally and locally important habitats and species. This character area type coincides with Surrey's Thames Basin Heaths biodiversity opportunity area.
- Seek to preserve the integrity of the generally secluded character and areas of remoteness whilst balancing the need for recreation.
- Raise awareness of the historic dimension of the landscape, and conserve historic elements.
- Promote the control of woodland and scrub growth to minimise invasion into open heathland.
- Encourage heathland management using traditional techniques.
- Seek to conserve and restore linked water features and wetland habitats ensuring balance between drainage to prevent flooding and promotion of valuable wetland habitats.

- Encourage the adoption of landscape masterplans and estate management plans by the Ministry of Defence to conserve, preserve and enhance existing landscape features within camps and barracks, and provide a suitable plan for future replacement and addition to landscape features when development occurs.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the sense of remoteness and isolation, resisting any development which reduces or fragments both important heathland habitat and use of commons as a recreational resource.
- Manage any recreational use of the areas of high ecological importance to avoid deterioration of important habitats and disturbance of designated species, provide habitat buffer zones if necessary.
- Promote the use of appropriate plant species and boundary treatments at the edge of the military installations to integrate development into the adjacent rural character.
- Minimise small-scale incremental change such as military signage and fencing around the perimeter of the danger zone which could change the rural peaceful character of the landscape.
- Refer to Surrey design guidance: Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Associations).



## LANDSCAPE TYPE SW: SANDY WOODLAND

### Landscape Character Areas

SW1	Virginia Water Sandy Woodland
SW2	Bagshot and Lightwater West Sandy Woodland*
SW3	Foxhill Sandy Woodland
SW4	Horsell Sandy Woodland*
SW5	Wisley Sandy Woodland*
SW6	Fairmile to Esher Sandy Woodland*
SW7	Deepcut Sandy Woodland*
SW8	Bricksbury Hill to Rowhill Copse Sandy Woodland*

\* These Character Areas are outside Runnymede Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE SW: SANDY WOODLAND

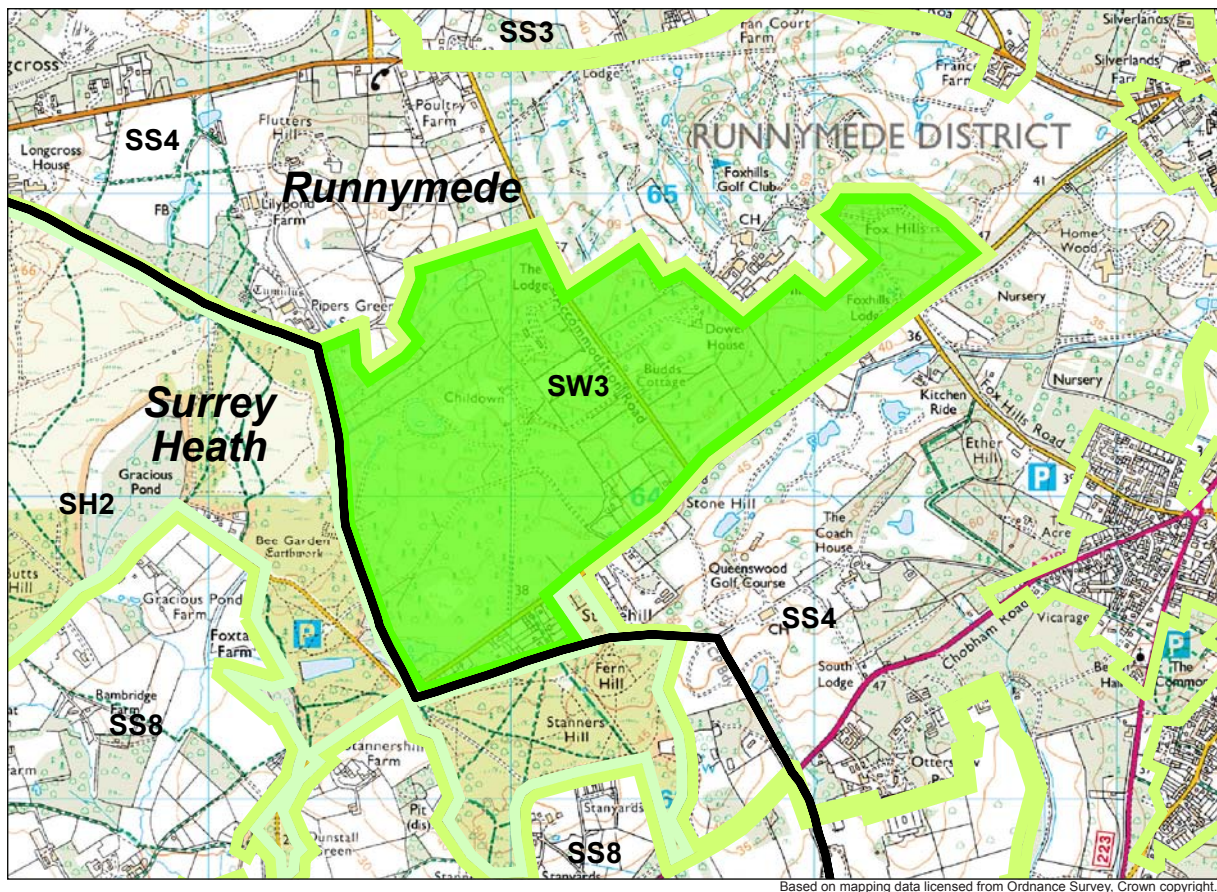
### Location and Boundaries

The Sandy Woodland Type comprises a number of dispersed character areas within the northern and western parts of the County, identified as relatively continuous tracts of woodland, with few interventions. The boundaries of the Type are based on land cover and the underlying geology.



### Key Characteristics

- An undulating landscape underlain by a solid sandy geology, and acid sandy loam soils.
- Predominately wooded with large mixed woodland blocks and plantations.
- Overall, a relatively limited amount of the woodland is recorded as ancient woodland.
- Large lakes often secluded and within woodland.
- Settlement is limited.
- In places, woodland is dissected by transport corridors, including motorways and major 'A' roads.
- An intimate, enclosed landscape, occasionally dark and oppressive within dense forest plantations.
- Designed landscapes, buildings and structures with important local historic, architectural or cultural associations.



## SW3: FOXHILL SANDY WOODLAND

### Location and Boundaries

The Foxhill Sandy Woodland Character Area is situated to the north-west of Ottershaw. The character area is an area of relatively continuous woodland, surrounded by less wooded, settled areas to the north and east, and extensive areas of intact heathland to the south and west. The character area boundary follows the edge of woodland, golf courses and Chobham Common.

### Key Characteristics

- Underlain by Bagshot Formation Sand, and Windlesham Formation Sand, Silt and Clay solid geology.
- The character area gently rises towards Foxhills to the north-east.
- The character area consists of extensive areas of mixed woodland, with a few clearings for small groups of secluded houses and isolated dwellings, and occasional ponds.
- The minor road which crosses through the woodland, is enclosed on both sides, but has occasional gated driveway entrances.
- There are tracks through the woodland, but no public rights of way.
- This is a secluded private landscape, with a sense of remoteness due to the sense of enclosure provided by woodland. However, appreciation of the remoteness and tranquillity of the woodland reduced slightly due to the fact that the road through the centre of the character area, with its occasional driveway entrances, is the main point of access and view point.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE SW: SANDY WOODLAND EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Varied woodlands, including some areas of ancient woods, with biodiversity and historic value.
- Areas of dense, dark, undisturbed woodland.
- Peaceful, mostly secluded landscape with limited settlement.
- Roads through woodland forming corridors with overhanging trees.
- Pockets of open heath and glades within the woodland.
- Sense of intimacy, with views contained by woodland.
- Significant open areas, tracks and public rights of ways combine to provide recreational resource.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past Change*

- Loss of broadleaf woodland and increase in conifer plantations.
- Regeneration of scrub and woodland on heathland commons.
- Increased use of the area for leisure leading to the creation of car parks and picnic areas (suffering problems with fly tipping), and golf courses.

##### *Future potential forces for change*

- Further regeneration of woodland in more open areas, where pastures are under grazed.
- Where surviving heathland is undermanaged.
- Pressure for further recreational facilities such as car parks and increasing use of footpaths and Open Access Land.
- Pressure for expansion of settlement and roads.

### GUIDANCE

#### Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Sandy Woodland landscape is to conserve the peaceful, intimate landscape. Opportunities for enhancement requiring management of varied woodlands to conserve their ecological and historic interest, and maintain areas of heathland.

#### Landscape Guidelines

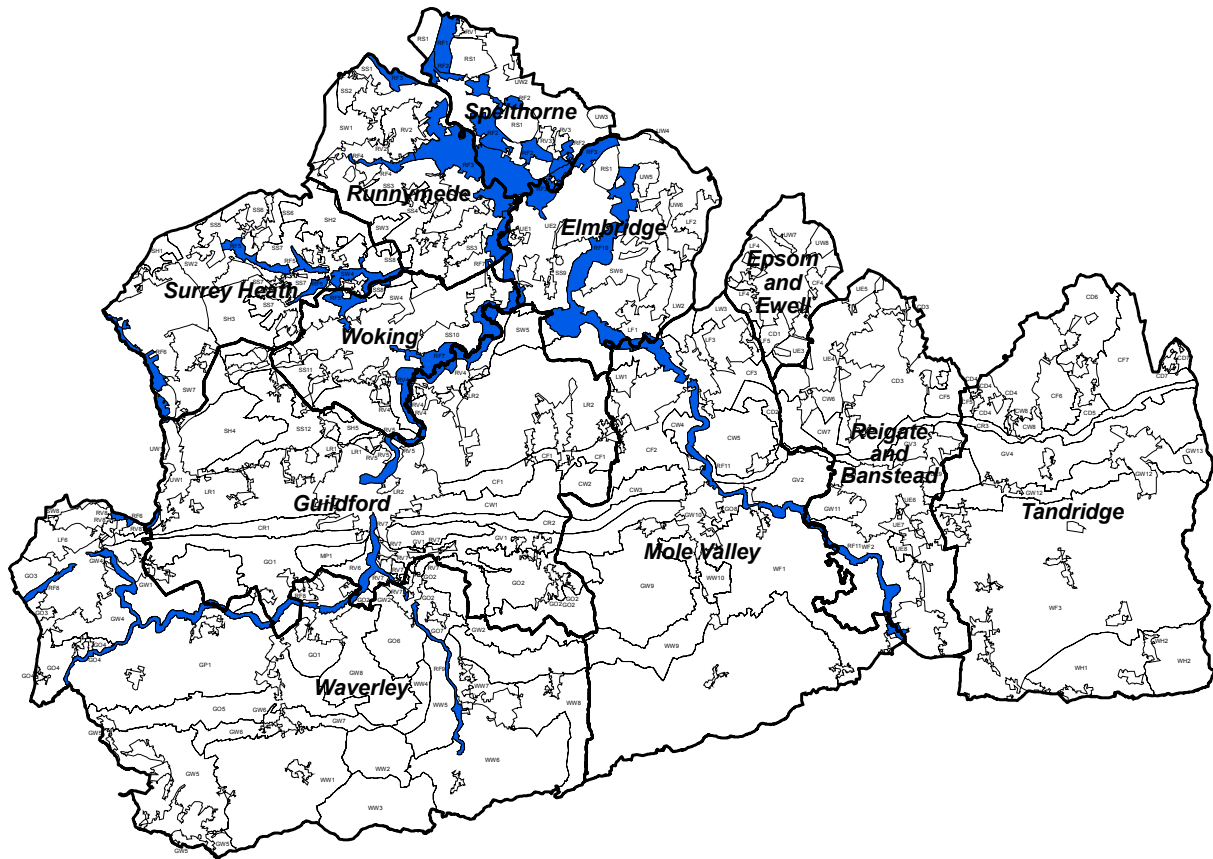
##### *Land Management*

- Raise awareness of the historic dimension and underlying archaeology of the landscape to landowners. Conserve the historic elements of the landscape.
- Conserve, enhance and restore the woodlands and heath where appropriate through effective long term management and replanting to retain their varied character and their ecological value. This character area type coincides with Surrey's Thames Basin Heaths biodiversity opportunity area. Character area SW1 links with Surrey's Thames Valley, and character area SW6 links with Surrey's Thames Basin Lowlands biodiversity opportunity areas.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing with local landowners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable woodland and the use of locally appropriate species.
- Seek appropriate siting of facilities for leisure and tourism through visitor management plan to predict and support appropriate levels of circulation and movement patterns.

- Resist the loss of rural character through the spread of urbanising features associated with leisure use such as car parks.
- Encourage appropriate surfacing, materials and signage for footpaths and car parks to retain the rural, unsettled character of the landscape.
- Removal of fly tipping as soon as possible.
- Encourage the use of suitable fence styles, in keeping with the local style or material, including metal park fencing where a local parkland character creates precedence.
- Avoid development of permanent exercise areas and siting of exercise equipment such as treadmills, pens, and jumps where this is visually intrusive on the landscape.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the sense of seclusion with sparse settlement enclosed by woodland.
- Maintain the wooded and undeveloped skyline.
- Ensure that road lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' on the ridge slopes and skyline.
- Promote the use of traditional materials and signage features with particular regard to local style and materials. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association).



## LANDSCAPE TYPE RF: RIVER FLOODPLAIN

### Landscape Character Areas

RF1	Colne River Floodplain*
RF2	Ash River Floodplain*
RF3	Thames River Floodplain*
RF4	Northern Bourne River Floodplain*
RF5	Windlebrook and Southern Bourne River Floodplain
RF6	Blackwater River Floodplain*
RF7	Lower Wey River Floodplain
RF8	Upper Wey River Floodplain*
RF9	Wey and Arun Canal River Floodplain*
RF10	Lower Mole River Floodplain*
RF11	Upper Mole River Floodplain*

\* These Character Areas are outside Woking Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

# LANDSCAPE TYPE RF: RIVER FLOODPLAIN

## Location and Boundaries

The River Flood Plain Landscape Type consists of low lying river terraces and valley bottoms following the courses of the rivers throughout the county. To the north, these include the wide floodplain of the Thames, along with associated tributaries including the Colne and Ash. The Wey and Mole have narrower floodplains snaking south towards the southern corners of the county. Boundaries are generally determined by the edge of the floodplain, as defined by the Environment Agency’s Flood Zone 2, which equates to land having between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding. The boundaries are generally taken to the nearest recognisable identifiable feature such as field boundaries and roads, however in some limited instances, such as where there are no nearby recognisable features on the ground, the boundaries follow a contour.



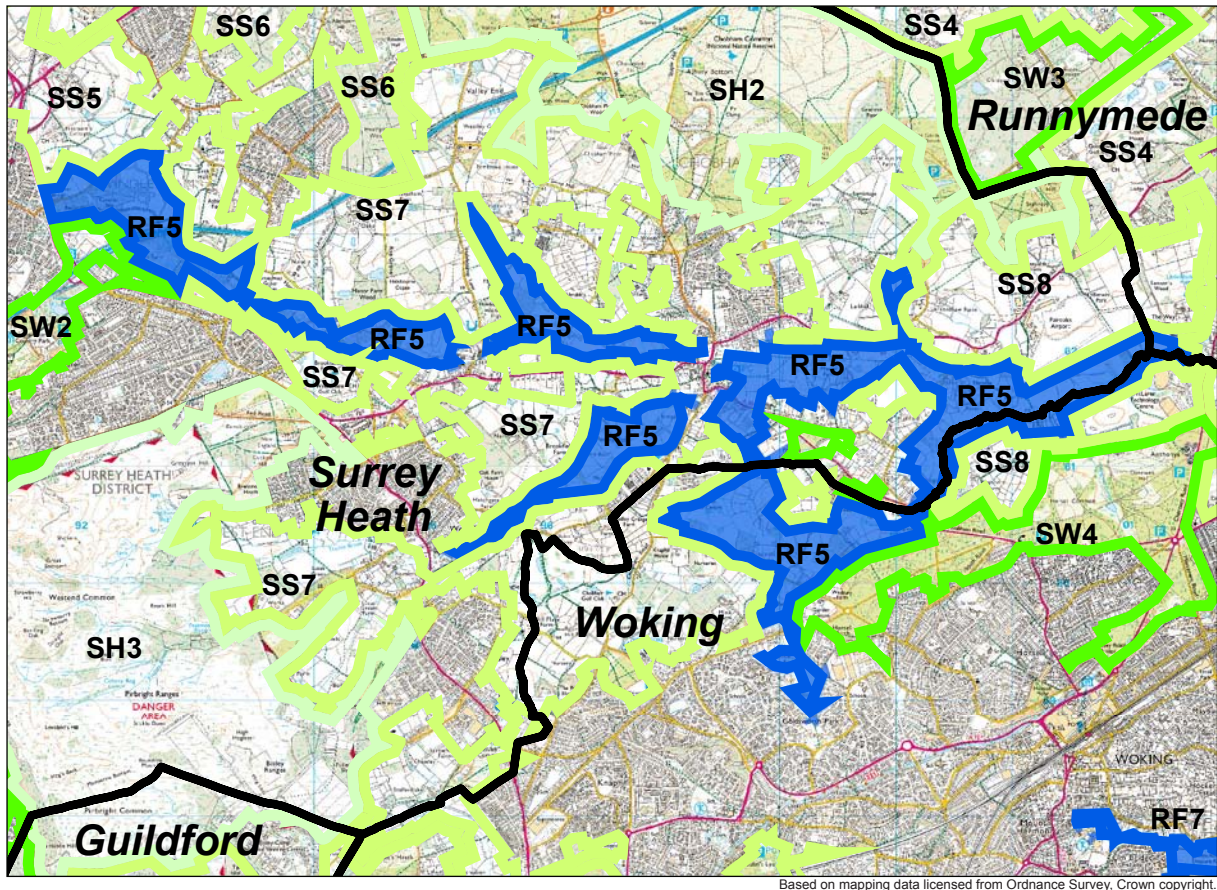
## Key Characteristics

- Low lying level areas of flood plain situated on alluvial deposits.
- Presence of water in the form of rivers, with channels, open water bodies and drainage ditches.
- Pastoral land use often with meadows grazed by cattle.
- In character areas to the north, in particular the Thames River Floodplain (Area RF3), there are significant internal and surrounding urban influences including Built Up Areas, roads and utilities.
- character areas to the south of the Thames, have few buildings apart from those associated with the river, such as mills and lock keepers cottages, plus some encroachment by large industrial units in urban areas. There is a rich ecology with areas of wetland, unimproved meadows, riparian woodland and ditch line willows.
- Historical defence lines with associated World War II structures.
- Historic importance of the Wey Navigation built in the 17th century and central to the development of Guildford, now owned by the National Trust and designated as a Conservation Area.

- River floodplain character areas are also important for preserved underlying archaeology. Evidence for early settlement has been found on the terrace gravels of the valleys of the Thames, Colne, Blackwater and Wey.
- The River Mole forms the dramatic 'Mole Gap' which cuts through the North Downs of the Surrey Hills AONB and is bounded by Box Hill to the east and Norbury Park to the West.
- The Wey and Mole have a peaceful semi-enclosed landscape with a largely secluded, rural ambience enlivened in some instances by the movement and colour of boats navigating the waterways.

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**RF5: WINDLEBROOK AND SOUTHERN BOURNE RIVER FLOODPLAIN**

**Location and Boundaries**

The Windlebrook and Southern Bourne River Floodplain is defined by flood zone associated with the Windlebrook, The Bourne, and the Mill Bourne. The character area is formed by a series of four compartments in the landscape, identifiable as river floodplain, separate and distinct from the surrounding heathland landscape Type. They are located either side of Chobham, to the east of Bagshot. Where possible, the boundary is taken to nearby easily recognisable features such as roads, field boundaries or settlement edges.

**Key Characteristics**

- Based on Bagshot Formation Sand, and Windlesham Formation Sand, Silt and Clay solid geology, with deposits of Alluvium superficial geology.
- Flat, low lying floodplain within the surrounding heathland landscape. The floodplain is dissected by settlement into four separate sections.
- The character area is predominately pastoral, with wet meadows and the occasional arable fields. There are pollarded trees and riparian vegetation and woodland along the main watercourses and tributaries across the character area, and a good network of hedgerow field boundaries elsewhere.
- Small blocks of woodland and tree groups are scattered across the character area, with a more substantial area of tree cover at the western end of the character area, which includes part of Windlesham Arboretum No ancient woodland is recorded.
- Long distance views across are generally contained by vegetation, and woodland along watercourses.
- There are relatively few roads, and no railways in the area.

- There are a number of public rights of way within the character area, allowing good access to the many watercourses.
- The character area contains a small number of dwellings, farm buildings and a nursery, and there is limited urban influence overall. The area includes the edge of Chobham Conservation Area.
- A number of areas, including Broadford Meadows, Chobham Meadows, and Bourne Fields and Young Stroat Meadows, are designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance for their species-rich grassland, wet meadows, marsh and wet woodland.
- With its riparian vegetation, meadows, limited urban influence and low-key public access, the majority of the character area is relatively unspoilt and tranquil.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE RF: RIVER FLOODPLAIN EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Peaceful, often secluded, pastoral landscapes, along meandering watercourses of the Mole, Wey and canals, contrast with the suburban and urban character of The Thames and its tributaries.
- Wide river valleys associated with their meandering watercourses.
- Dramatic landscape along the River Mole where it cuts through the downs.
- Riparian vegetation and land use, such as waterside meadows, wet woodland (eg Alder), varied grassland and occasional marsh of biodiversity interest.
- River Wey, River Wey Navigation, restored sections of the Wey and Arun Canal, River Mole, and multiple channels and waterbodies.
- Areas of intact pattern of ditches with ditchline willows.
- Often grazed by cattle, particularly the Upper Wey River Floodplain (Area RF8).
- Largely unsettled, undisturbed ambiance with woodland belts screening development on the edges of the area particularly directly to the south of Guildford.
- Historic pattern of development and infrastructure linked to the waterways, particularly infrastructure of the Wey Navigation and restored parts of the Wey and Arun Canal (locks and connected buildings).
- Rural roads with narrow stone bridges.
- Attractive islands, moorings and riverside settlement within the Thames River Floodplain area
- Setting to the historically significant Runnymede.
- Provides amenity space for urban areas within the northern part of the County and major settlements of Dorking and Guildford through which they flow.
- Provides recreation opportunities for rural access through the river valleys.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past change*

- Decline in active management of meadows and pasture on the floodplain and conversion to improved grassland.
- Fragmentation and decline of agricultural holdings.
- Extensive gravel extraction with restoration to open water.
- Encroachment by scrub into meadows.
- Lack of pollarding and loss of boundary willows.
- Introduction of horse grazing.
- Abandonment and infilling of the Wey and Arun Canal.
- Impact of development in adjacent areas.
- Encroachment of development on to valley floor.
- Development of transport corridor along River Mole through gap in the North Downs.
- Urbanisation and fragmentation within more urban areas to the north of the County.

##### *Future potential forces for change*

- Decline in active or traditional management of meadows and pastures.
- Decline in active or traditional management of meadows and pastures.
- Further fragmentation of agricultural land.
- Loss of over-mature willows and field trees.
- Pressure for intensification of horse grazing with further horse paddocks and consequent subdivision of fields and installation of shelters.
- Pressures for tourism/leisure infrastructure, including that generated from continuing restoration of the Wey and Arun Canal, which would affect the peacefulness of the character area.

- Pressures for development at the margins of the area, particularly near Guildford, Godalming, Farnham, Bramley, Cranleigh, Leatherhead and Dorking, where views of development would affect the rural, secluded character of the flood plain and from adjacent high level topography.
- Pressure for further development within the Thames and Blackwater floodplains.
- Potential for intensification of transport related activity along the River Mole where it forms a corridor through the downs.
- Pressure to upgrade rural roads and replace narrow stone bridges due to increase in traffic.
- Activities around sand and stone extraction in the Thames and Ash floodplains, and restoration of landscape.
- Abstraction, or reduced rainfall patterns creating more frequent water shortages throughout river catchment area.
- Increasing pressure for urbanisation of areas to the north of the County and along river valley sides.
- Intense rainfall patterns causing rivers to rise suddenly.
- Schemes to alleviate flood risk.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The strategy for River Floodplain is to conserve the rural, secluded areas of landscape with its river channels, pastures, wetlands and woodland, along with historic infrastructure and buildings associated with the Wey Navigation and the Wey and Arun Canal, and resist further development within the Thames and Blackwater floodplains. Elements to be enhanced are the management of the pastures, woodlands and ditchline willows associated with the river corridors, and continued restoration of the Wey and Arun Canal.

### **Landscape Guidelines**

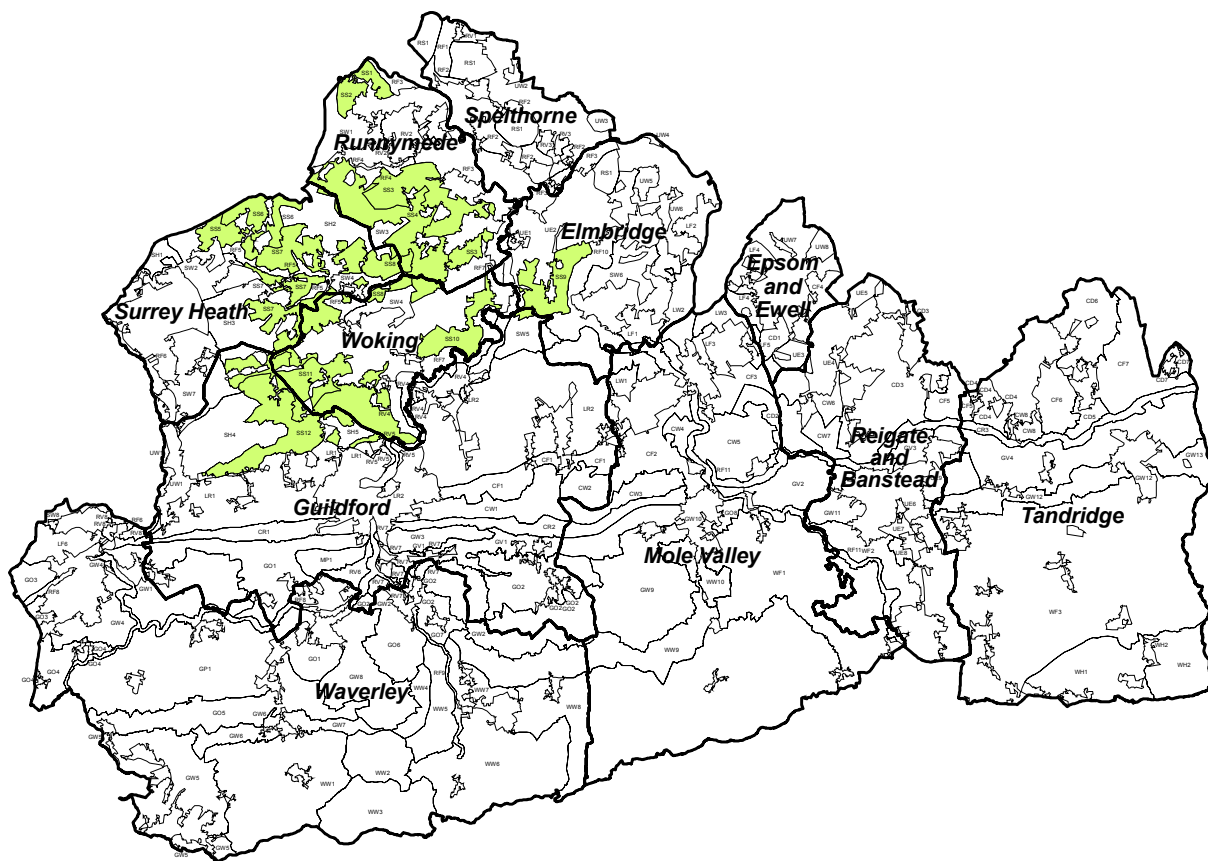
#### ***Land Management***

- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques, to conserve and enhance key landscape features such as relatively small-scale irregular field pattern, hedgerows and hedgerow trees, ditches and ditchline willows, meadows and wetlands.
- Conserve and enhance the waterside meadows and pastures with cattle grazing management, and resist the improvement of grasslands and drainage schemes which could disturb the characteristic landcover, vegetation or adversely affect ecological value.
- Protect the course of the Wey and Arun Canal to allow full restoration.
- Restoration and enhancement of worked out gravel pits. This character area type coincides with the Surrey's Rivers and Thames Valley biodiversity opportunity areas.
- Enhance A24 landscape through the Mole Gap. This area coincides with the Surrey's Rivers and North Downs biodiversity opportunity areas with potential to enhance or link together areas of high biodiversity in these areas.
- Promote strategies for the Thames and Blackwater floodplains avoiding inappropriate increase in development.
- Conserve and enhance the natural corridor and the rural setting of the Rivers Wey, Mole and Blackwater, particularly where they extend through urban areas. Ensure physical and biodiversity links to river valley character areas (Type RV) are maintained.
- Seek to ensure infrastructure associated with horses is sympathetic to the landscape character, e.g. sensitively designed fencing, and resist intensification of paddocks within the area.
- Conserve, enhance and restore riparian woodland, the stock of individual field and riverbank trees, and the blocks and bands of woodland at the edge of the area that screen development.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques with local landowners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands and the use of locally appropriate species such as willows, alder and oak trees.

- Seek to conserve and enhance the distinctive low key, rural character of leisure facilities such as the North Downs/Pilgrims Way, the Downs Link, the Wey Navigation towpath, Mole Gap Trail and other public footpath/bridleways or cyclepaths which cross the area, through the encouragement of appropriate surfacing, materials and signage.
- Seek appropriate siting of facilities and new access links for leisure and tourism through visitor management to support appropriate levels of circulation and movement patterns of different user groups.
- Encourage conservation of historic landscape pattern of meadows and waterways, and understanding of underlying archaeology.

### ***Built Development***

- Ensure any new development is sensitively sited and designed with, scale, form and detailing, including materials, which conserve the historic character and settlement pattern of the area. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association) and Building Design in the Surrey Hills (Surrey Hills AONB) where rivers flow through the greensand hills and chalk downs.
- Retain the largely undisturbed, rural character of the Wey and Mole valleys.
- Avoid any development on the course of the Wey and Arun Canal which would hamper full restoration.
- Avoid intensification of transport related development along the River Mole where it forms a corridor through the downs.
- Avoid inappropriate increase in development within the Thames and Blackwater floodplains.
- Avoid the location of any new large mass or bulky structures where overly visually intrusive on this character area. Subject any development to rigorous landscape and visual impact assessment, site carefully, and design to minimise impact and integrate with the rural context.
- Encourage the continuing provision of suitable native boundary tree belts to existing adjacent large scale development to reduce adverse impact on this sensitive character area and reduce glare and mass from long-distance viewpoints.
- Resist potential mineral workings on the plateau adjoining the Upper Wey River Floodplain (Area A2) which could adversely affect the landscape character
- Promote appropriate scale and form of boundary treatment to avoid negative visual impact of inappropriate boundaries on the rural character of the flood plain.
- Encourage the retention of woodland planting that screens settlement and roads adjacent to the area and consider additional planting to screen existing or new development that intrudes in rural views.
- Conserve the rural roads and small bridges minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing or improvements to the road network or bridges which would change their character.
- Resist urbanisation of roads through encouraging appropriate surfacing of existing pavements, enhancing the immediate landscape setting and ensuring minimum clutter.
- Ensure that lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' in the largely unsettled floodplain.
- Promote the use of traditional or rural signage features with particular regard to local style and materials.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE SS: SETTLED AND WOODED SANDY FARMLAND

### Landscape Character Areas

SS1	Cooper's Hill Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS2	Englefield Green West Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS3	Trumps Green to New Haw Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS4	Wentworth to Sheerwater Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland
SS5	Bagshot to Windlesham Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland *
SS6	Windlesham Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS7	Windlesham to Knaphill Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland
SS8	Chobham East Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland
SS9	Weybridge South Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland*
SS10	Woking to Byfleet Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland
SS11	Pirbright to Hook Heath Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland
SS12	Wyke to Mayford Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland

\* These Character Areas are outside Woking Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE SS: SETTLED AND WOODED SANDY FARMLAND

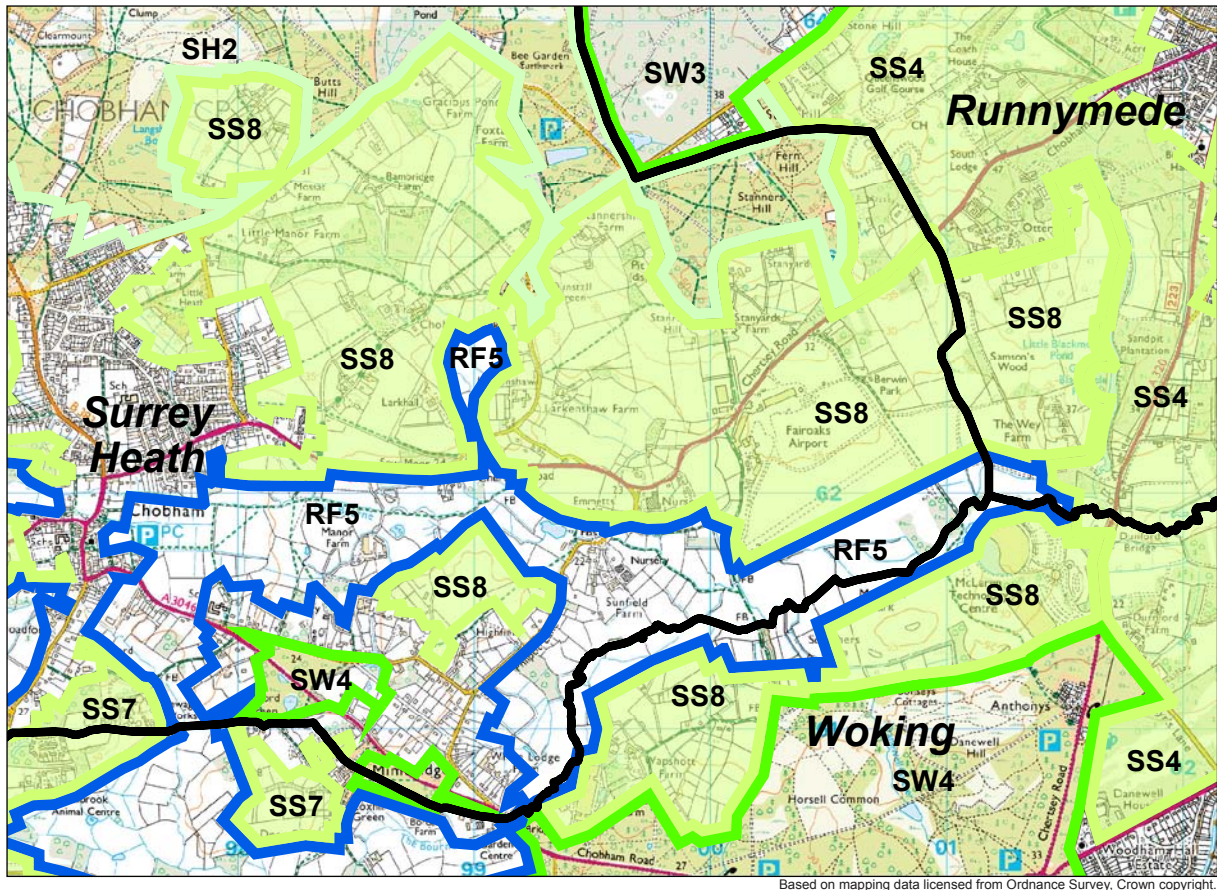
### Location and Boundaries

The Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland Landscape Type consists of a number of character areas, covering a wide area within the north-western part of the county, to the north of the Claylands. The boundaries of the areas are based on the underlying sandy geology and the land cover consisting of a mixture of farmland, woodland and settlement. Boundaries follow the edge of roads, tracks, field boundaries and woodland.



### Key Characteristics

- Rolling landscape based on the sand solid geology formations.
- Predominately farmland, with varying degrees of settlement and woodland, with the amount of these elements, along with varying field sizes, openness and the degree of other human influences including golf courses, horse paddocks, and nurseries, broadly defining the extent of each individual character area.
- Urban influence and activity from settlement and transport, increases to the north.
- To the south, settlement becomes more scattered, with dwellings often edging commons and rural roads.
- Heavily wooded in places, with heathland commons, now largely regenerated with secondary woodland, or plantation woodland creating an enclosed landscape with glimpses to pastures, open heathland and water bodies.
- A predominately intimate landscape, with intermittent views across farmland framed by woodland.
- Varied historical sites and designed landscapes including cemeteries and memorials with important local historic, architectural, cultural or military associations.



## SS8: CHOBHAM EAST SETTLED AND WOODED SANDY FARMLAND

### Location and Boundaries

The Chobham East Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland Character Area is located to the north of Woking. It consists of two parts, either side of the Bourne river floodplain. It is defined by the edges of river floodplain, the settlement edge of Chobham to the west, and areas of heathland and woodland to the north, south and east.

### Key Characteristics

- Underlain by Bagshot Formation Sand, and Windlesham Formation Sand, Silt and Clay solid geology, falling gently towards the The Bourne floodplain.
- Consists of pastoral and arable farmland with occasional areas of woodland. Fields sizes are often larger than other surrounding areas of Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland.
- Fields and paddocks, particularly within the north-western part of the character area have a good hedgerow structure along their boundaries, but some fields, mainly the larger fields to the south and east have lost their hedgerows.
- There are scattered farmsteads, nurseries, and very occasionally groups of low density dwellings. There are larger buildings and hangers at Fairoaks Airfield and an extensive research and development complex at the McLaren Technology Centre.
- Views are often limited or framed by hedgerows and tree cover, but views become more open to the south.
- A good network of public rights of way cross the character area and link the two halves of the character area together via footbridges across The Bourne.



- An 'A' road and a minor road cross through the northern half of the character area, but elsewhere vehicle access is limited to private drives and tracks.
- There are two small areas of registered common land, including Little Heath at the north-western end of the character area, which is also designated as a site of Nature Conservation Interest.
- The character area abuts part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area to the south.
- A pleasant landscape, part of the setting to The Bourne, with rights of way providing opportunities for interaction with the landscape including routes to the adjacent river itself. There are limited roads, but settlement, and large buildings reduce the sense of remoteness such as around the airfield and McLaren centre.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE SS: SETTLED AND WOODED SANDY FARMLAND EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### **Key positive landscape attributes**

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Areas of rural, intimate and peaceful character.
- Commons with their heathland vegetation of high biodiversity interest, Open Access Land which function as both a recreational resource for more built up areas to the north, and as a rural setting for villages and roadside settlement.
- Ponds and streams.
- Varied woodlands including 19th century plantations and small belts and copses giving an enclosed secret character to parts of the area.
- Areas of pastoral farmland with intact field patterns.
- Remnant historic parkland.
- Historic villages centred on greens or commons, particularly to the south of the Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland.
- Pattern of dispersed and small scale linear settlement facing onto commons or roads.
- Designed landscapes and buildings with important local historic, architectural or cultural associations, such as, Painshill Park, Foxwarren Park, Sutton Place, and those associated with the cemeteries and memorials.

#### **Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures**

##### ***Past change***

- Piecemeal linear settlement development associated with or along transport connections including railways and roads.
- Industrial developments including utilities, research centres, telecommunication establishments including masts etc.
- Increase in horse paddocks and golf courses.
- Conversion of fields for horse paddocks with consequent subdivision of the fields and installation of shelters.
- Loss of hedgerows.
- Secondary woodland encroachment onto pastures.
- Regeneration of scrub and woodland on heathland commons.

##### ***Future potential forces for change***

- Pressures for further conversion to horse paddocks.
- Increased leisure use of public rights of way network and Open Access Land.
- Increased traffic on rural road network leading to urbanisation through kerbing, lighting and signage.
- Pressure for expansion of settlement along rural roads leading to merging of villages and hamlets and loss of rural character.
- Further regeneration of woodland in more open areas, for instance where pastures are under grazed or on the surviving heathland.
- Further loss of hedgerow boundaries.

## **GUIDANCE**

### **Landscape Strategy**

The landscape strategy for the Settled and Wooded Sandy Farmland is to conserve peaceful enclosed areas with their mosaics of heathland, woodland, and pastoral farmland, and to conserve historic villages and small scale settlement set around greens and commons, including careful consideration of the impact from any further development and enhancement of recreation opportunities. There are opportunities for enhancement include management of the open heathlands and pastures to prevent encroachment by woodland and restocking hedgerows, as well as reducing visual impact of transport corridors locally.

### **Landscape Guidelines**

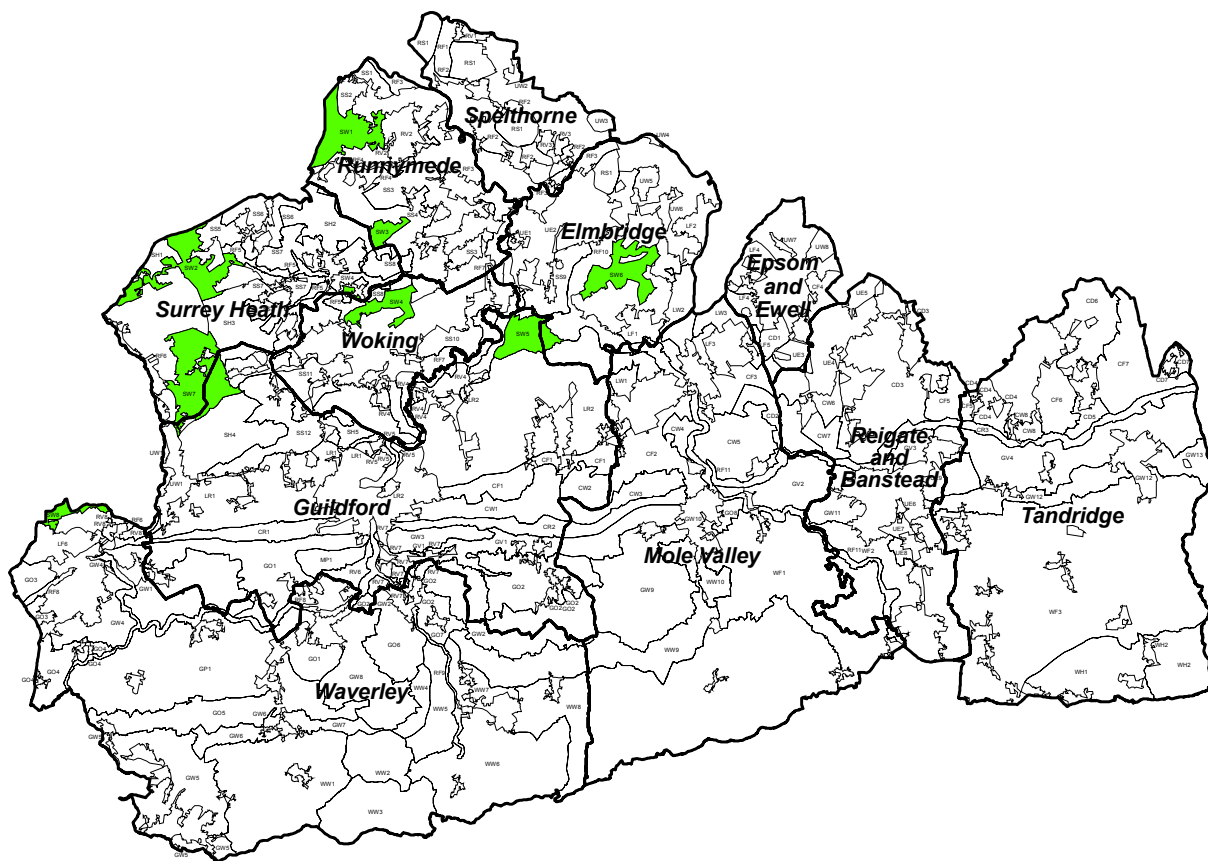
#### ***Land Management***

- Encourage landowners to maintain an appropriate management regime using traditional farming techniques where these will conserve and enhance key landscape features such as the commons, woodlands and pastures.
- Raise awareness of the historic dimension of the landscape to landowners including the commons, parklands and woodlands.
- Conserve, manage and encourage the increase of the heathland habitats, continuing to promote local community and volunteer involvement, preventing further encroachment by woodland and taking opportunities to restore and extend these habitats.
- Encourage sustainable and multi-purpose woodlands and promote traditional woodland management techniques with local landowners and the farming community.
- Promote the use of locally appropriate species such as oak, birch and Scots pine.
- Conserve and, where appropriate, encourage repair of the historic parkland to maintain and restore key elements such as parkland trees, avenues and woodland blocks.
- Enhance the hedgerows by replanting and consistent management and resist development that will result in further loss/fragmentation of hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- Encourage sensitive design and management of horse paddocks for instance in retaining hedges and resist development of other facilities such as manège that would affect the rural character of the area.
- Seek appropriate siting of facilities for leisure and tourism (such as car parks, play areas or picnic sites on the commons). Through active visitor management plans to predict and support appropriate levels of circulation and movement patterns. Ensure recreation use and facilities respect the low key rural character of the commons.

#### ***Built Development***

- Retain the pattern of villages, hamlets, isolated farmsteads and short rows of houses facing onto roads or commons set within the matrix of woodland, heathland and open farmland.
- Conserve the greens and commons that form the rural settings for villages.
- Retain the individual settlements avoiding merging these through linear development along roads.
- Ensure that new development is designed to retain tree cover that is essential to the character of this area and consider opportunities for new woodland planting to enhance existing and new development and integrate it within the landscape.
- Improve understanding of the general pattern of settlements and their relationship to the landscape and maintain development control to ensure that new development is sympathetic to the wider pattern of settlement.
- Conserve the rural roads minimising small-scale incremental change such as signage, fencing or improvements to the road network or bridges which would change their character.

- Resist urbanisation of roads within settlement through encouraging appropriate surfacing of existing pavements, enhancing the immediate landscape setting and ensuring minimum clutter.
- Ensure that lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of existing areas of 'dark skies'.
- Promote the use of traditional signage features with particular regard to local style and materials.
- Oppose the erection of new masts where they will be visually dominant and where they would adversely affect views of the wider landscape. Ensure sympathetic siting and design of any new tall features.
- Refer to Surrey design guidance: Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association).



## LANDSCAPE TYPE SW: SANDY WOODLAND

### Landscape Character Areas

SW1	Virginia Water Sandy Woodland*
SW2	Bagshot and Lightwater West Sandy Woodland*
SW3	Foxhill Sandy Woodland*
SW4	Horsell Sandy Woodland
SW5	Wisley Sandy Woodland*
SW6	Fairmile to Esher Sandy Woodland*
SW7	Deepcut Sandy Woodland*
SW8	Bricksbury Hill to Rowhill Copse Sandy Woodland*

\* These Character Areas are outside Woking Borough and therefore are not described in this document. See the Surrey Countywide document for these areas.

## LANDSCAPE TYPE SW: SANDY WOODLAND

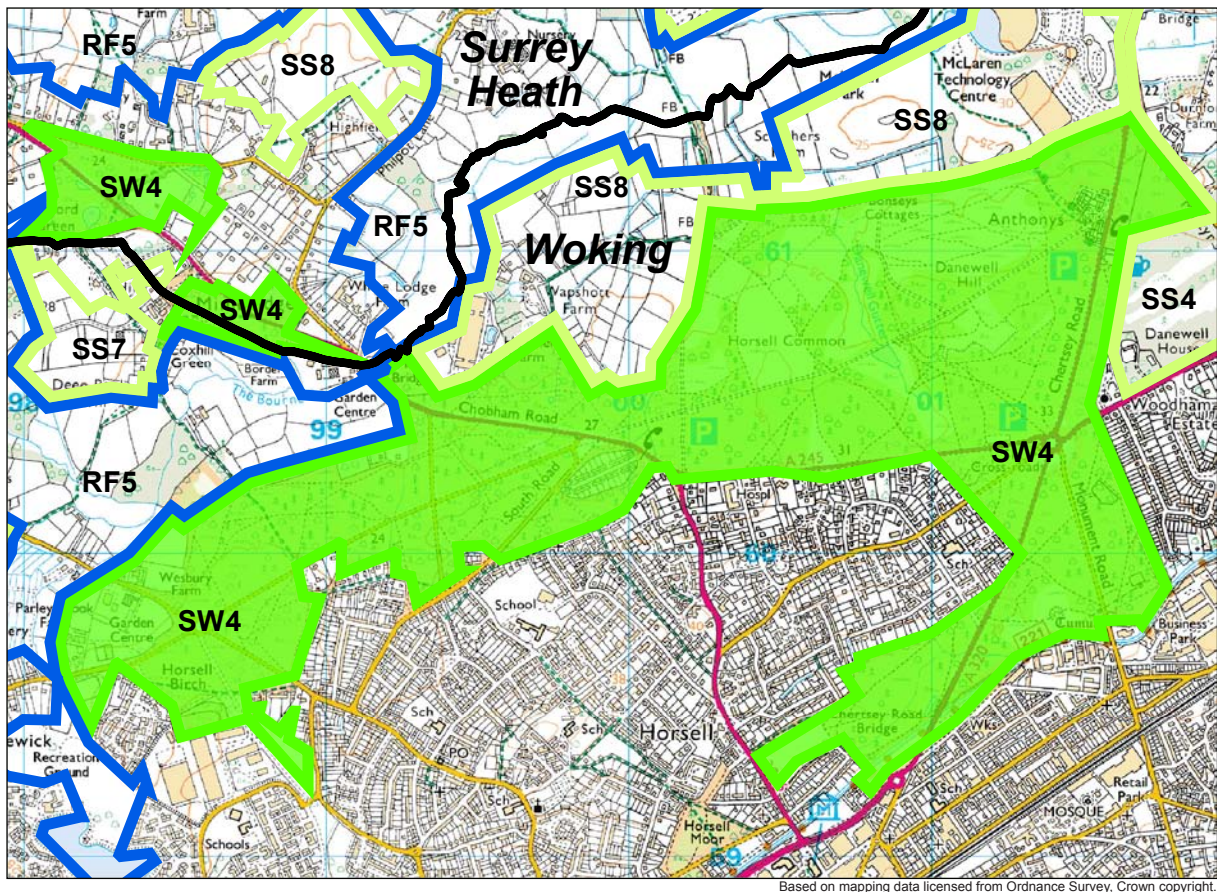
### Location and Boundaries

The Sandy Woodland Type comprises a number of dispersed character areas within the northern and western parts of the County, identified as relatively continuous tracts of woodland, with few interventions. The boundaries of the Type are based on land cover and the underlying geology.



### Key Characteristics

- An undulating landscape underlain by a solid sandy geology, and acid sandy loam soils.
- Predominately wooded with large mixed woodland blocks and plantations.
- Overall, a relatively limited amount of the woodland is recorded as ancient woodland.
- Large lakes often secluded and within woodland.
- Settlement is limited.
- In places, woodland is dissected by transport corridors, including motorways and major 'A' roads.
- An intimate, enclosed landscape, occasionally dark and oppressive within dense forest plantations.
- Designed landscapes, buildings and structures with important local historic, architectural or cultural associations.



## SW4: HORSELL SANDY WOODLAND

### Location and Boundaries

The Horsell Sandy Woodland Character Area lies directly north of Horsell, the northern part of Woking. The character area includes relatively continuous woodland with occasional large pockets of more open heathland, in contrast to the surrounding character areas which are settled with housing or farmland and have much less woodland. There are two small outlying areas, which are disconnected from the main body of the character area, by the settlement of Mimbridge.

### Key Characteristics

- Underlain by Bagshot Formation Sand solid geology.
- The character area falls very gently towards the Bourne river floodplain to the north-west.
- The character area consists of extensive areas of broadleaved, coniferous and mixed sandy woodland and plantations including Scots Pine, and includes pockets of heathland, including Horsell Common.
- The character area abuts the northern settlement edge of Horsell. A southern 'L' shaped portion penetrates into the Built Up Area until it reach the centre of Woking along the Basingstoke Canal.
- There are long views across heathland and along routes within the woodland, including attractive views within smaller woodland glades and clearings, and much more intimate, limited views within the woodland itself.
- The vast majority of the character area is Open Access Land, with a network of tracks and paths criss-crossing through the woodland and across areas of heath. A number of car parks aid recreational use of the area.
- A number of long straight roads pass through the woodland, giving motorists an impressive experience as they approach or leave the Built Up Areas to the south.
- Almost the entire character area is registered as Common Land. There are two scheduled monuments and part of the Basingstoke Canal Conservation Area to the south.

- The heath and parts of the woodland are part of the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area, and are also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Much of the remaining areas of the character area, including Horsell Common and Woodham Common, are designated as Sites of Nature Conservation Importance for their woodland and remnant heathland.
- Potential for recreational use is high, particularly in such close proximity to the large urban area of Woking. The area is well served by roads and parking areas, but the extent of their urban influence is relatively localised due to surrounding tree cover. The majority of the character area, both within woodland, and open heath surrounded by woodland, has a sense of remoteness and tranquillity.



## LANDSCAPE TYPE SW: SANDY WOODLAND EVALUATION AND GUIDANCE

### EVALUATION

#### Key positive landscape attributes

The key positive features that contribute to the character of the area and that should be conserved and enhanced are:

- Varied woodlands, including some areas of ancient woods, with biodiversity and historic value.
- Areas of dense, dark, undisturbed woodland.
- Peaceful, mostly secluded landscape with limited settlement.
- Roads through woodland forming corridors with overhanging trees.
- Pockets of open heath and glades within the woodland.
- Sense of intimacy, with views contained by woodland.
- Significant open areas, tracks and public rights of ways combine to provide recreational resource.

#### Forces for change/sensitivities/pressures

##### *Past Change*

- Loss of broadleaf woodland and increase in conifer plantations.
- Regeneration of scrub and woodland on heathland commons.
- Increased use of the area for leisure leading to the creation of car parks and picnic areas (suffering problems with fly tipping), and golf courses.

##### *Future potential forces for change*

- Further regeneration of woodland in more open areas, where pastures are under grazed.
- Where surviving heathland is undermanaged.
- Pressure for further recreational facilities such as car parks and increasing use of footpaths and Open Access Land.
- Pressure for expansion of settlement and roads.

### GUIDANCE

#### Landscape Strategy

The strategy for the Sandy Woodland landscape is to conserve the peaceful, intimate landscape. Opportunities for enhancement requiring management of varied woodlands to conserve their ecological and historic interest, and maintain areas of heathland.

#### Landscape Guidelines

##### *Land Management*

- Raise awareness of the historic dimension and underlying archaeology of the landscape to landowners. Conserve the historic elements of the landscape.
- Conserve, enhance and restore the woodlands and heath where appropriate through effective long term management and replanting to retain their varied character and their ecological value. This character area type coincides with Surrey's Thames Basin Heaths biodiversity opportunity area. Character area SW1 links with Surrey's Thames Valley, and character area SW6 links with Surrey's Thames Basin Lowlands biodiversity opportunity areas.
- Promote traditional woodland management techniques such as coppicing with local landowners and the farming community.
- Encourage sustainable woodland and the use of locally appropriate species.
- Seek appropriate siting of facilities for leisure and tourism through visitor management plan to predict and support appropriate levels of circulation and movement patterns.

- Resist the loss of rural character through the spread of urbanising features associated with leisure use such as car parks.
- Encourage appropriate surfacing, materials and signage for footpaths and car parks to retain the rural, unsettled character of the landscape.
- Removal of fly tipping as soon as possible.
- Encourage the use of suitable fence styles, in keeping with the local style or material, including metal park fencing where a local parkland character creates precedence.
- Avoid development of permanent exercise areas and siting of exercise equipment such as treadmills, pens, and jumps where this is visually intrusive on the landscape.

### ***Built Development***

- Conserve the sense of seclusion with sparse settlement enclosed by woodland.
- Maintain the wooded and undeveloped skyline.
- Ensure that road lighting schemes are assessed for visual impact and encourage conservation of the existing 'dark skies' on the ridge slopes and skyline.
- Promote the use of traditional materials and signage features with particular regard to local style and materials. Refer to Surrey design guides; Surrey Design (Surrey Local Government Association).