

west of crawley  
strategic location area action plan



# Urban | Rural Fringe Study for Crawley

August 2006

**LDADesign**

for



**Horsham  
District  
Council**



## Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Setting the Scene - Crawley and its Setting
- 3.0 What do we have? - West and North-West Crawley
- 4.0 Landscape Capacity
- 5.0 Urban Extension Development Options
- 6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations
- 7.0 References
- 8.0 Appendix - Methodology for Judging Landscape Capacity

## Drawings

- 2309P/01B - Landform
- 2309P/02\_01B - Environmental, Cultural and Planning Baseline 1 of 2
- 2309P/02\_02B - Environmental, Cultural and Planning Baseline 2 of 2
- 2309P/03 - Context of Crawley – Growing the Right Way
- 2309P/04C - Landscape and Urban Assessment
- 2309P/05D - Landscape Capacity
- 2309P/06C - Urban Extension Development Options
- 2309P/07B - Treatment of Urban Fringe/ Green Infrastructure

## Photographs

- 2309P/Panel\_A - Landscape Character
- 2309P/Panel\_B - Landscape Character
- 2309P/Panel\_DrevB - Potential Development Zones

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Brief/Aim of the Study

The adopted West Sussex Structure Plan identifies the western side of Crawley to accommodate a Strategic Development Location of up to 2500 homes and associated uses and infrastructure. LDA Design was commissioned by Horsham District Council (HDC) and Crawley Borough Council (CBC) to undertake a comprehensive Urban/Rural Fringe study of West and North West of Crawley to assist and inform the masterplanning and formulation of a Joint Area Action Plan for this development.

The aim of the study is to support and inform the two authorities in their work in order to develop the detailed masterplanning for the development in accordance with the advice given at national, regional and county level. The Area of Study (which can be seen on drawing 2309P/01B), as defined in the two Councils' Core Strategies, includes areas of attractive countryside and urban areas of distinctive character. HDC and CBC recognise how important it is that the existing urban edge is sensitively integrated into the new development, and that the new development itself is sympathetically incorporated into the countryside and landscape.

### 1.2 Methodology

The methodology has been shaped by the brief for the project, and by detailed discussions that LDA Design had with HDC and CBC at the project inception meeting on 17 May 2006.

The study methodology is structured as follows:

#### 1.2.1 Stage One: Baseline Studies

This consists of the study of relevant planning or other documents provided by HDC and CBC, including site appraisal information and submissions by the promoters of development in west and north-west Crawley. A wide range of environmental baseline information was supplied by HDC and CBC, such as public rights of way, landform, landscape character assessment information, townscape information, information on retail/educational/community facilities within the town, Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), Listed Buildings, and designated nature conservation or other heritage sites. All this information was carefully analysed in terms of its relevance to the project.

#### 1.2.2 Stage Two: Site Appraisals

This work focussed on two aspects.

Firstly we carried out a strategic analysis of the whole of Crawley and its landscape setting to identify the characteristics of the town and its setting. This provided broader contextual information to help guide our more detailed work in west and north-west Crawley, ensuring that our recommendations contribute positively to the structure and character of the town.

Secondly we looked at the study area of west and north-west Crawley in detail. This focussed on identifying important views, containment, areas of visual or environmental sensitivity, open space and other links and movement patterns, areas of especially high quality, etc. We identified different forms of urban edges and the relevance of any gateways to the settlement.

#### 1.2.3 Stage Three: Analysis

This stage of the project involved integrating the judgements gained from the desk studies and site appraisals. The analysis stage took account not only of the environmental constraints emerging from this process (policy constraints, landscape and visual sensitivity, designated sites, connectivity with the town, urban form issues, etc.) but also our judgements on the potential of different areas to create a high quality development.

### 1.2.4 Stage Four: Proposals

This stage represented a creative step forward from Stage Three, specifically involving the identification of proposals for the growth and enhancement of west and north-west Crawley. Advice is given on integration of the new development into the existing urban edge and the surrounding countryside. In addition areas which should be protected or areas where there are opportunities for enhancement to the existing environment are identified.

### 1.2.5 Study Areas

The following three study areas are referred to in this report:

1. Crawley and its setting. This refers to the whole town and its landscape setting, covering the area shown on drawings 2309P/01B, 02\_01B, 02\_02B and 03.
2. West and north-west Crawley. This refers to the west and north-west side of the town and its setting, covering the area shown on drawings 2309P/04C, 05D, 06C and 07B.
3. The Area of Study. This refers to the Area of Study (which is shown as a blacked dashed line on drawing 2309P/01B), as defined in the two Councils' Core Strategies.

## 2.0 Setting the Scene - Crawley and its Setting

This section is a brief analysis of Crawley and its setting. It concludes with a strategy for the growth of Crawley, and for the protection or enhancement of the landscape surrounding the town. The principle objective is to gain an understanding of the characteristics of the town and its setting so that recommendations for an urban extension can be made in a way that protects and strengthens the qualities and character of the town and surrounding countryside.

### 2.1 Summary of Policy Context

HDC and CBC are currently developing their respective Local Development Frameworks. HDC agreed the Core Strategy and Site Specific Allocations of Land documents in September 2005 and both documents were submitted to the Secretary of State in November 2005. CBC submitted the Core Strategy documents to the Secretary of State in late May 2006. No Site Specific Allocations of Land document is being prepared by the Borough Council.

Both Councils' Core Strategies support joint working on the Strategic Development Location West and North West of Crawley as identified in the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan. The Strategic Development Location will accommodate up to 2500 homes and associated uses and infrastructure. The precise location of development will be determined through the joint working in a broad 'Area of Study' to the West and North West of Crawley, most of which is located within the administrative boundary of Horsham District. The Area of Study has been identified in the two Councils' Core Strategies of their respective Local Development Frameworks and the masterplanning details for development will be set out in a Joint Area Action Plan.

The adopted West Sussex Structure Plan (2001 – 2016), Crawley Borough Council's Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy May 2006 and Horsham District Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Submission Document November 2005 identify the potential need for a relief road around the north-western side of Crawley in conjunction with the development of the Strategic Location.

*"The development of the Strategic Development Location West of Crawley should incorporate appropriate transport infrastructure, potentially including a relief road between the A264 east of Faygate connecting with the existing A23 north of Manor Royal and south of Lowfield Heath roundabout, the form and location of which would be determined through the Joint Area Action Plan."* (Crawley Borough Council Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy Policy W2).

The extent of landscape and townscape assessed within this report covers an area greater than the Area of Study identified in the two Councils' Core Strategies of their respective Local Development Frameworks, and covers the areas shown on the drawings at the back of this report.

### 2.2 A Brief Background to Crawley's Growth

In order to understand the character of Crawley 'new town' we have reviewed the town's development in response to the surrounding environment and the political and planning decisions which have shaped the place over time. A brief history is set out below.

#### 2.2.1 Old Crawley

Crawley began as a Saxon village. However by the 13th Century Crawley had grown into a small market town. This was partly due to the fact that it lay almost halfway along an important road (A23) running from London to the South coast. It was the advent of the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway in 1848 that started the real growth of the town. In 1930 an aerodrome was built at Gatwick. This was taken over by the RAF during the Second World War but returned to civilian use afterwards.

### 2.2.2 The 'new town' of Crawley

Crawley was one of the original new towns designated under the New Towns Act, 1946, as part of the planning of the London region after the Second World War.

In 1947 the decision was formally made that houses and factories should be built on 6,000 acres in the area. A Development Corporation was set up with powers to build infrastructure such as roads, drains and sewers. Many council houses were also built but it was planned that Crawley should have a 'social mix' with both council and private housing.

The idea was to create a town centre and nine neighbourhoods (there are 13 today with proposals for a 14th neighbourhood to the north east of the town), each of which were to be, to some extent, self-sufficient with its own shops, churches, schools and leisure facilities. Four of the neighbourhoods which lie close to the Area of Study are described in section 3.8 of this report.

In the 1950s an industrial estate was built north-east of Crawley (Manor Royal Industrial Estate). New industries included engineering, electronics, printing and plastics. In 1958 the aerodrome at Gatwick was made an international airport. In the late 1950s and 1960s air travel became much more common and so Gatwick Airport expanded rapidly.

### 2.3 Landform

The landform around Crawley can be seen on drawing 2309P/01B. Crawley is sited at the junction of the Low and High Weald Character Areas (as defined by the Countryside Agency). The Low Weald located to the north, west and encompassing the urban extent of Crawley is typically low lying to gently undulating. This contrasts with the steep ridges and valleys of the High Weald to the south and east.

The underlying geology has had a strong influence on the development of the rolling landform and landscape character. The rolling landform, combined with the extensive pattern of trees, woods and forests, creates a relatively enclosed landscape with few vantage points with panoramic views across the landscape or town.

Man made landform features include the Arun Valley Railway Line which crosses the lower section of the study area (generally at grade) running north east to south west linking the settlements of Crawley, Horsham and Billingshurst to the south west.

### 2.4 Landuse

The landscape surrounding Crawley is deeply rural in places, but is influenced by the presence of Crawley, Gatwick Airport, industrial activities and urban fringe land uses in others.

Land use in the wider area is predominantly pastoral due to the heavy, poorly drained soils; however there are pockets of arable farmland on the lighter soils on higher ground or where drainage has been improved.

To the north of the town there is a large industrial estate known as Manor Royal. The area is devoted to light industry and offices with a number of hotels providing accommodation for Gatwick Airport users. Within the wider setting of the Industrial estate there are a number of farms and a network of arable fields. Some fields are also used for grazing horses.

Woodlands are a characteristic feature of the landscape setting of Crawley. To the south and east the countryside is exceptionally heavily wooded. To the west and north-west woodlands are less extensive but remain a prominent feature.

In close proximity to the industrial area to the immediate north of the Area of Study is Gatwick Airport; this was sited on the flatter plain between Crawley and Horley to the north.

To the south and east of Crawley within the High Weald AONB, there are large commercial conifer plantations which are interspersed with beech and oak/birch woodland.

There are a number of golf courses surrounding Crawley; these include courses near Ifield to the west, Cottessmore to the south and Shipley Bridge to the north near Gatwick Airport. Two country parks lie south of Crawley; Buchan and Tilgate Country Parks.

### 2.5 Environmental Constraints

It can be seen from drawings 2309P/02\_01B and 2309P/02\_02B that there are a diverse range of designated sites and features that contribute positively to the town and its setting. Many of these also provide potential constraints to new development, or would need careful design and mitigation to ensure that they are not harmed by development.

Designated sites and features

Drawing 2309P/02\_01B shows designated sites and features within and surrounding the town. There are a number of designated wildlife sites around Crawley including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR). The landscape also contains a number of Ancient Woodlands. These habitats and the species that they contain are sensitive to disturbance and some will have statutory protection.

The uniquely rich High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) wraps round the eastern and southern extents of the town providing a heavily wooded setting to the Crawley. Paragraph 21 of Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) states that AONBs have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, and that the conservation of the natural beauty of the landscape and countryside should be given great weight in development control decisions. Paragraph 22 of PPS7 states that major developments should not take place in AONBs, except in exceptional circumstances.

Other designated sites and features include Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's), Archaeological Sensitive Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM), Historic Parks and Gardens, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.

Planning and other potential influences on development

Drawing 2309P/02\_2B shows that there are a number of other potential influences on development around Crawley, including Strategic Gaps, potential expansion of Gatwick Airport, and noise from Gatwick Airport. Drawing 2309P/01B shows the extent of land vulnerable to flooding.

### 2.6 Access

Crawley has good communications via a network of major and minor roads including the M23 (north to the M25 and London), the A23 (to Brighton and the south coast) and the A264 (west to Horsham).

The town is also well connected to the railway system via the Horsham and Arun Valley line (London to Arundel) and Brighton Main Line (London to Brighton). There are three train stations within Crawley located in the town centre, Three Bridges and Ifield.

Gatwick International Airport is located to the north of the town. Some 90 airlines operate services to around 200 destinations. The airport is well connected internally via a monorail train which links the two terminals and externally via a comprehensive rail network (Gatwick Express a

high speed link between Gatwick Airport and London Victoria), a road system and a network of bus services.

Fastway is a bus based public transport service linking Crawley with nearby Horley and Gatwick Airport. It is a rapid transit system which uses sections of guided busway and dedicated bus lanes. This is in addition to Metrobus which is a comprehensive local bus service providing access across Crawley and West Sussex.

An extensive network of public rights of way and cycle paths provide a framework for pedestrian access and recreation to and within the countryside. These links are particularly strong to the west and north-west sides of Crawley where public rights of way run directly from the urban area out into attractive countryside. Opportunities for pedestrian access from Crawley to the countryside to the east and south of the town are, however, very limited. The M23 and A264 provide barriers to pedestrian access to the countryside; even where roads cross over the M23 pavements tend to run from Crawley up to the bridge crossings and then stop, leaving pedestrians to walk on the roads or grass verges.

### **2.7 Growing the Right Way – the Crawley Strategy**

Our conclusion from this brief analysis of Crawley and its setting is that west and north-west Crawley is the most appropriate area to consider for development of up to 2500 homes and associated uses and infrastructure. Other sides of the town possess significant constraints to development. Our analysis and conclusions for the development of Crawley are presented on drawing 2309P/03.

The town's eastern (and in part) the southern limits have extended up the M23; this forms a strong and clear barrier between Crawley and the countryside beyond the motorway, which includes the High Weald AONB. This countryside, and the AONB, should be protected and enhanced, and access links between the town and its setting improved. Development beyond the M23 would be poorly integrated with Crawley; the M23 providing a physical and physiological barrier.

The north of Crawley, between Crawley and Gatwick Airport, does have capacity for development subject to some major constraints. Manor Royal Industrial Estate and the residential areas of Langley Green and Pound Hill form the northern edge of the town. This is separated from Gatwick Airport by a narrow area of pastoral and arable land (designated as Strategic Gap in Crawley Local Development Framework (LDF)), near Lowfield Heath and Tinsley Green. The area of land is also designated as Safeguarded land within the Crawley LDF as a result of BAA's proposals, which seek to achieve additional runway capacity at Gatwick if it cannot be achieved at Stansted and Heathrow. This situation is unlikely to be resolved in advance of formally adopting a Core Strategy in 2007. In light of the uncertainty surrounding the second runway and the restriction on land use posed by noise from the airport, the land to the north of Crawley should only be considered for commercial development. This will only be considered as long as it does not prejudice the integrity of the Safeguarded land and BAA's ability to bring forward a wide spaced runway, should it be required.

The western edge of Crawley is marked by a varied landscape of gently undulating farmland, wooded ridges and valleys (see section 3.0 for detailed description). It is this western and north-western urban edge of the town, running from the A264 to the A23 north of Manor Royal where there is opportunity for growth in both development and green infrastructure terms. There are a number of environmental constraints/assets including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Ancient Woodland and Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) scattered across the wider countryside which should be carefully considered when determining zones that have capacity for development, and associated infrastructure.

### 3.0 What do we have? - West and North-West Crawley

Having considered the whole town and its landscape setting in the previous section, this section sets out a more detailed visual, landscape and urban analysis of the west and north-west side of the town and its setting. This provides baseline for analysis and creative decisions relating to development and landscape enhancement made in proceeding sections.

Drawing number 2309P/04C shows landscape character areas that form the setting to west and north-west Crawley. It also shows the character of the main road approaches into Crawley, the urban gateways and gateways to the town centre on these approaches, the character of the urban edges, and the locations of neighbourhood centres of west and north-west Crawley. These elements, along with the landform and general visibility of this side of Crawley within its landscape setting, are briefly described below.

#### 3.1 Landform

The landscape around west and north-west Crawley lies on generally low lying land 60-70 metres Above Ordnance Datum (mAOD) with localised ridges and high points up to 115 mAOD underlain by deposits of limestone and sandstone. The area is dissected by a series of small, narrow sunken streams/brooks and ponds that are frequent on the edges of fields and woodlands.

Man made landform features include the Arun Valley Railway Line which crosses (generally at grade) the flatter vale area in a south west/north east direction.

#### 3.2 Land Use

The landscape to west and north-west of Crawley has a number of uses; however it is predominantly used as pastoral/arable land. Industrial uses are concentrated to the north where the area is heavily influenced by Gatwick Airport and urban fringe uses.

To the west of Ifield there is a large area of land devoted to the golf course and country club and to the south west there is a restored inert waste disposal area.

#### 3.3 Environmental Constraints

There are a number environmental designations to the west and north-west of Crawley such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and Conservation Areas; some of which are located close to the urban edge. The surrounding landscape also contains many Ancient Woodlands, trees protected with Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and a number of Archaeological Sensitive Areas, Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM), Historic Parks and Gardens and Listed Buildings. The locations of these are shown on drawing 2309P/02\_01B. These environmental assets are a precious resource on Crawley's doorstep which can be accessed via a network of country lanes and public rights of way.

#### 3.4 Access

The west and north-western extents of Crawley are served by London Road (A23 - dual carriageway), Charlwood Road and Horsham Road (A2220/A264 - dual carriageway) along with a series of small country lanes.

The Arun Valley line (London to Arundel) runs from west to east to the town centre and beyond, connecting to the main north south line to London.

There are a number of public rights of way which cross the rolling countryside to the west and north-west of the town providing a strong framework for 'sustainable' access (see drawing 2309P/02\_02B).

### 3.5 Visual Assessment

The Area of Study is set within the lower lying land of the Low Weald. The enclosed flat to gently undulating nature of the land and wooded character restricts clear views across the western limits of Crawley. Views north towards Gatwick Airport are filtered or screened by intervening topography and woodland. The presence of the airport is generally heard before it is seen.

The western fringes of the built up area are often screened or softened by trees and, therefore, are not exposed to open views from the countryside. Houses on the urban edge can be seen from the landscape outside the town in some locations, for example at the western edge of Bewbush where trees along Spruce Hill Brook only partially screen buildings (see right side of Area A on drawing 2309P/Panel\_D). There are other limited locations on elevated public rights of way or country lanes to the north-west where buildings within Crawley can be seen above a treed rural foreground. The most distinctive landmark within the Area of Study is the spire of St Margaret's Church at Ifield.

### 3.6 Landscape Character Assessment

Understanding landscape character is fundamental to understanding what gives a landscape its distinctive identity. Where a landscape forms the setting for a settlement, landscape character assessment enables the settlement to be studied within its context, and the relationship between the settlement and its surroundings to be properly understood.

The methodology used for this landscape character assessment of Crawley is based on the most recent guidelines, laid down in "Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland", published by the Countryside Agency in 2002. The results of this landscape character assessment are shown on drawing 2309P/04C and described in section 3.6.1 below.

Landscape Character Areas are geographical areas of distinct character. These are influenced by factors such as geology, landform, land use, field, woodland, settlement and communication pattern, enclosure and views. It should be noted that there is rarely an abrupt change between adjacent landscape character areas. For example, although a geology map may show a distinct line between underlying sand and clay, this change may be less apparent on the ground, and form a gradual transition rather than a sudden change. For this reason, the boundaries between landscape character areas shown on drawing 2309P/04C should be read as indicative only. In reality the change in character between one landscape character area and the next will occur gradually over a wider area.

Landscape character assessments cover the country at different scales. Two assessments cover land within the area of this study - the national level landscape character assessment which covers the whole of England (The Countryside Agency, 1999), and a district level character assessment of Horsham (Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, 2003). These character assessments were reviewed prior to carrying out a detailed character assessment specifically aimed at informing this study. The landscapes surrounding Crawley displays the characteristics of Character Area 121: Low Weald and 122: High Weald, as set out by the Countryside Agency. The Low Weald is a broad, low lying and gently undulating clay vale. It is a small-scale intimate landscape enclosed by an intricate mix of small woodlands, a patchwork of fields and hedgerows. In contrast the High Weald is a well-wooded landscape rising above the Low Weald and deeply incised in many places to give a complex pattern of ridges and steep stream valleys.

#### 3.6.1 Detailed Landscape Character Assessment

A local landscape character assessment has been carried out of Horsham District (Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment, 2003). This assessment is the most relevant to this study as it is at a more detailed scale than the national assessment. Character areas defined

within the assessment of Horsham District have been reviewed and a more detailed character assessment has been carried out for this study of west and north-west Crawley.

The character areas are shown on drawing 2309P/04C, and photographs of these areas are shown on drawings 2309P/Panel\_A and B.

The key characteristics of these landscape character areas that have the potential to be directly or indirectly affected by potential development or other changes are given below.

#### **Upper Mole Farmlands/Urban Fringe**

- Rural landscape strongly influenced by proximity of Crawley to south and Gatwick Airport to north.
- Variable field pattern and land use divided by hedgerows with small farm ponds.
- Mixed landuse ranging from industrial units and hotels/motels along the A2219, pastoral and arable across the wider area with a concentration of playing fields to the south and a caravan park to the north.
- Flat to very gently undulating landscape, crossed by the upper tributaries of the River Mole.
- Generally confined views with the exception of localised high point at Rowley Farm.
- Small blocks of woodlands and copses.
- Noise and visual intrusion due to proximity to Gatwick Airport.

#### **Upper Mole Farmlands**

- Flat to gently undulating landscape, crossed by the upper tributaries of the River Mole.
- Small to medium scale irregular field pattern divided by thick hedgerows.
- Predominantly pasture farmland.
- Small blocks of woodlands and copses.
- Distinctive field trees and farm ponds.
- Country lanes bounded by hedgerows.
- Noise and visual intrusion in the north and east of the area due to proximity of Crawley and Gatwick airport.
- Golf Course and Country Club near Ifield.

#### **Rusper Wooded Ridge**

- Undulating wooded ridges.
- Secretive wooded ghylls.
- Strong pattern of shaws and hedgerows.
- Intricate patchwork of small pasture fields.
- Narrow lanes, sunken in places.
- Linear ridgetop villages and hamlets. Farms and cottages dispersed along lanes.
- Strong historic vernacular of half timber with plaster/brick, tile hanging and weatherboarding.
- Mostly rural character.

#### **Faygate Vale**

- Relatively flat and low lying, linear character area sandwiched between the A264 to the south and railway to the north.
- Flat to gently undulating clay vale.
- Medium to large scale field pattern of arable farmland, with smaller areas of pasture bounded by well managed hedgerows.
- Isolated patches of woodland.
- Semi enclosed or open character.
- Dominance of major road and rail communication routes.
- Recently reclaimed landfill site at the edge of Crawley. Gently domed profile. Currently unvegetated.

- Small brooks.
- Small village of Faygate.
- Noise and visual intrusion from A264.

#### High Weald

- Narrow flat topped ridges and steep sided ghylls.
- Large commercial conifer plantations interspersed with beech and oak-birch woodland.
- Heathland concentrated along woodland rides (open avenues through woodland areas).
- Regular pasture and arable fields.
- Confined views.
- Steep sided wooded ghylls, with occasional waterfalls and sandstone outcrops.
- Ridgetop roads.
- A few isolated farmsteads.
- Traditional local building materials of sandstone, tile hanging and brick.

### 3.7 Urban Assessment

The progressive development of Crawley since its designation as a new town in 1946 has been rapid. The once neighbouring villages of Lowfield Heath to the north, Pease Pottage to the south, Ifield to the west and Three Bridges to the east have all since been absorbed by the expansion of Crawley. The town revolves around the main shopping area of Queen's Square, County Mall and the High Street within the town centre, with smaller 'neighbourhood parades' set up around the circumference. Unlike many other developments of the 1960s, tower blocks are notably absent in the skyline; instead the buildings are comprised of town houses, terraces and low-rise apartment blocks. The old and new parts of Crawley are connected by a network of treed roads and footways/cycle paths.

### 3.8 Neighbourhood Centres

There are four neighbourhood centres on the west and north-west side of Crawley, these are Langley Green, Ifield, Gossops Green and Bewbush. At the time of Crawley's designation as a new town the planners devised a 'neighbourhood principle'. This was based around every neighbourhood having the same basic structure, though each would develop a character of its own. Each neighbourhood would have a centre with enough shops to meet day to day needs, plus a primary school, church, community centre and public house.

A brief assessment of the existing western neighbourhoods of Crawley has been undertaken in order to understand the distinctive characteristics and facilities/services they have.

#### Langley Green

The neighbourhood was built mainly in the early/mid 1950s. It is served by two schools, a youth centre, a local shopping parade, two churches, a community and medical centre, two dental clinics, a public house and a café. There are three open/green spaces, two of which are designated as SNI's.

#### Ifield

Ifield is a former village but is now part of a neighbourhood within the town. It contains some of the most historic parts of Crawley. The old parts of Ifield have been designated as Areas of Special Environmental Quality and retain much of their old village atmosphere. Ifield Conservation Area, which is focused around St Margaret's Church, lies on the western edge of the town, overlooking meadows and designated wildlife sites which form an important and sensitive part of the setting of the west side of the town. The neighbourhood contains a number of modern and historic churches, four schools, a surgery, a dental and medical practice, two community centres, a scout hut, a Masonic Hall, a public house and a local shopping parade including a

restaurant. There are four open/green spaces two of which are designated as SNCI's. Ifield train station is located on the southern edge of the neighbourhood.

Within the southern side of Ifield, at Ifield West, there is a smaller grouping of facilities comprising a community centre building, a multi-use games area and a Tesco Express, within an area of 20th Century housing. This centre and surrounding housing is accessed by a single road running from Rusper Road to the north. It is cut off from the neighbourhood of Bewbush to the south by the railway line, the only direct link being via a bridleway underpass.

#### **Gossops Green**

This neighbourhood was built mainly in the late 1950s. It is served by two schools, a local shopping parade, two churches and a chapel/convent, a community/medical centre, an Arts Youth centre and Scout Hall, as well as a dental clinic and a public house. Public open/green spaces consist of Lea Wood SNCI and a playing field. Ifield train station is located on the northern edge of the neighbourhood.

#### **Bewbush**

The neighbourhood of Bewbush was built mainly in the 1970s to 1980s, with some newer developments taking place today. The area predominantly council housing, much of which has been bought by residents under the Right to Buy Scheme. The neighbourhood is served by two Primary schools and a children's centre, a local shopping parade, a church, a leisure/community/medical centre, a dentist and a public house. There are three open/green spaces including two gardens and a playing field.

### **3.9 Character of Urban Edges**

The way a town develops affects the form, type and appearance of its edges, and therefore the relationship of the town to the surrounding countryside. For the purposes of the study, edges are classified as:

- Positive if the edge and its immediate rural setting are attractive and integrate well. An example is where built form, vegetation, wildlife habitats, open spaces or rights of way 'feather' together in a positive way, providing a visually pleasing edge with public access and recreation opportunities between urban and rural.
- Neutral if they do not integrate so well with the landscape or have detracting features or characteristics but are softened or screened by vegetation. An example of a neutral edge is where housing adjoins countryside with limited public access or links between urban and rural, but where the overall appearance is attractive.
- Negative if they detract from the character of Crawley and its setting. Examples of negative edges include unsightly 20th/21st Century industrial development exposed to views from the countryside, or abrupt, suburban boundaries adjoining open countryside.

The town edge analysis is shown on drawing 2309P/04C.

Edges change over time, either as vegetation associated with new development matures, or with physical changes to the edge, such as by construction of new buildings or communication routes, by replacement of boundary features, or by planting or management of vegetation.

The west and north-west side of the town is an example of such change. Rapid expansion of the new town neighbourhoods from the old, much smaller settlement of Crawley in the 20th Century has created an edge which is abrupt in places, with compact suburban housing meeting countryside with little physical integration on the urban/rural boundary (e.g. at Ifield West and Bewbush), and more gradual and integrated in others (e.g. at Ifield).

At Bewbush, Ifield West and parts of Langley Green 20th Century suburban housing spreads up to abrupt urban edges which are cushioned and screened by strong landscape features such as the tree lined bridleway along Spruce Hill Brook, and dense woodland or tree belts. This is also the situation on the edge of Ifield where it meets Ifield Golf and Country Club. At Bewbush an attractive green finger with public access penetrates into the urban edge towards Ifield Mill Pond and Gossops Green.

North of the Golf and Country Club at Ifield the town is more integrated with its landscape setting, particularly around the historic village of Ifield (Conservation Area) which is now part of Crawley. This is shown as a Positive edge on drawing 2309P/04C. Here there is direct access along public rights of way from the old village core, which includes a pub and church, into the attractive meadows along Ifield Brook (including a SNCI), and further out to the pastoral and wooded valley of the River Mole. The church spire is a positive historic landmark feature visible from the setting of the town. This section of urban edge, and the way that it integrates positively with the countryside, is a special quality of Crawley which should be preserved and enhanced.

On the north-eastern side of Langley Green and at Manor Royal (shown as 'Predominantly Negative Edge' on drawing 2309P/04C), large commercial/employment buildings back onto the countryside. In some locations they are fairly well screened by trees, and in others they are more exposed.

### **3.10 Approaches and Gateways**

Approaches to and within the urban area provide the viewpoints from which many visitors see the town and gain their perception of its scale and character. Distance and travel time between open countryside and the town centre, and the character of the approaches, play an important role in determining people's perception of the character and scale of the town.

The approaches were broadly characterised as green/treed, developed or a mixture of both and key visual gateways were also identified. The results are shown on drawing 2309P/04C.

The three main approach roads to the town within or adjoining the Area of Study are the A23 London Road (north), Charlwood Road/Ifield Road (north-west) and the A264/A2220 Horsham Road (south-west).

A positive quality of two of these roads into west and north-west Crawley (Charlwood Road/Ifield Road and the A264/A2220 Horsham Road) are their green character. Horsham Road is particularly well treed and motorists do not experience a strong urban character until they cross the Arun Valley Railway line close to the town centre. In contrast the A23 London Road to the north has a largely developed character from the urban edge to the town centre.

The urban gateways along the three main approach roads are discrete. There are no abrupt urban edges or strong landmarks along these routes which define the arrival to Crawley new town. Along Horsham Road in particular the motorist experiences a gradual progression from open countryside, past well treed urban fringe into the inner urban character of the Crawley.

## 4.0 Landscape Capacity

### 4.1 Methodology

This section looks in more detail at the landscape surrounding west and north-west Crawley, to identify the capacity of different areas to accommodate development of the nature and scale required by the Structure Plan (i.e. up to 2500 dwellings and associated uses and infrastructure). It uses the landscape character areas described in section 3.0 as a basis, dividing these into smaller areas (referred to as Zones) within the Area of Study, where it is considered that capacity varies. These Zones are shown on drawing 2309P/05D.

Firstly we look at landscape capacity of each Zone to accommodate the required development. Our methodology for this is based on the criteria for judging landscape capacity to accommodate a specific type of change given in Topic Paper 6 (Scottish Natural Heritage and The Countryside Agency (2002a)). This states that landscape capacity to accommodate a specific type of change is a function of landscape character sensitivity + visual sensitivity + landscape value. A detailed description of our methodology for assessing landscape capacity of each Zone is given in the Appendix.

Secondly we evaluate the potential for each Zone to yield good urban extensions, considering factors other than landscape capacity. This has been done by considering each Zone's advantages and disadvantages for an urban extension.

General recommendations for treatment (in terms of development or landscape protection/enhancement) of the Zones are given.

### 4.2 Zone 1 - Heavily Wooded, High Weald AONB and Tilgate Park

#### 4.2.1 Landscape Capacity

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	LANDSCAPE VALUE
<p>Landscape character sensitivity varies within the zone. In some areas to the north it is medium where it is heavily influenced by the M23 and urban fringe of Crawley.</p> <p>Moving south, deeper into the High Weald AONB, sensitivity increases to high. Here the landscape is in good condition and the zone is densely wooded around Buchan Country Park and Tilgate Forest.</p>	<p>Visual sensitivity would vary greatly across the zone as a result of its changing topography.</p> <p>In the lower lying areas views are confined by higher ground and hedgerows, trees and dense woodland, these areas of the zone have a low visual sensitivity</p> <p>Some elevated ridge top areas within the zone are exposed and have a medium to high visual sensitivity</p>	<p>Area designated as AONB</p> <p>SSSI's, SNCI, Listed Buildings, Archaeological site and Historic Park and Garden located within the zone.</p>
<p>Medium to high landscape character sensitivity</p>	<p>Low visual sensitivity</p> <p>Medium to high in some elevated ridge top locations</p>	<p>High landscape value</p>

Overall landscape capacity of Zone 1 = Low

4.2.2 Potential of Zone 1 to Yield a Good Urban Extension

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Landscape and environment	
<p>Attractive landscape could provide high quality setting for new development.</p> <p>Strong landscape framework (Woodlands/forest, trees, hedgerows, heathland, watercourses /waterfalls/waterbodies) could provide structure and green infrastructure for new development.</p> <p>Largely unaffected by the noise from Gatwick Airport.</p> <p>Two country parks provide opportunities for recreation.</p>	<p>Low landscape capacity.</p> <p>Area designated as AONB.</p> <p>SSSI's, SNCI, Listed Buildings, Archaeological site and Historic Park and Garden and Ancient Woodland are all located within the zone.</p> <p>Large areas of woodland restrict areas of open land available for development.</p>
Planning	
-	<p>Located within the Strategic Gap</p> <p>Located within AONB and separated from the rest of Crawley</p>
Access	
<p>Access onto M23 providing good road access to London and south.</p> <p>Potential road access to Crawley via the A23 and A264.</p>	<p>Public rights of way could be adversely affected by development.</p> <p>Potential adverse affects of increased road traffic on country lanes and villages.</p> <p>Limited pedestrian and vehicle access and connections across M23 into Crawley.</p>

4.2.3 Recommendations for Zone 1

Zone 1 does not have the capacity to yield a good urban extension. The zone has outstanding natural qualities which should be preserved. An urban extension up to and over 2500 houses could not be accommodated in this zone as the area is of high landscape value. The area should be preserved for recreational opportunities. Pedestrian and cycle links between Crawley and the zone should, where possible, be improved.

**4.3 Zone 2 – Open Countryside far removed from urban area – Low Weald**

**4.3.1 Landscape Capacity**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	LANDSCAPE VALUE
<p>Landscape character sensitivity is generally medium to high as the zone has a distinctive character with historic features such as drove ways, small to medium scale irregular fields divided by thick hedgerows, with pockets of ancient woodland and small field ponds accessed by sunken lanes.</p> <p>It has a largely unspoilt character which is largely unaffected by the airport. The airport is heard before it is seen.</p>	<p>Visual sensitivity varies across the zone as a result of its undulating topography and variations in woodland cover and field enclosure.</p> <p>The visual sensitivity of the zone is mostly low as the landscape has a dense woodland coverage and small irregular fields which give a strong sense of enclosure.</p> <p>Some elevated ridge top areas are more exposed and have a low to medium visual sensitivity</p>	<p>SNCI, Listed Buildings, Trees with TPO's and Historic Park and Garden's located within the zone.</p> <p>Tranquil and remote. Disturbed by noise from Gatwick Airport</p>
<p>Medium to High landscape character sensitivity</p>	<p>Low visual sensitivity</p> <p>Low to Medium in some elevated ridge top locations</p>	<p>Medium to High landscape value</p>

Overall landscape capacity of Zone 2 = Low

4.3.2 Potential of Zone 2 to Yield a Good Urban Extension

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Landscape and environment	
Strong landscape framework (pockets of woodland, trees, hedgerows and watercourses/waterbodies) to provide structure and green infrastructure for new development.	Low landscape capacity  Proximity to Gatwick airport (noise intrusion/contours)  Small areas are susceptible to flooding  SNCI, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Historic Park and Garden located within the zone  A number of trees protected by TPO's.
Planning	
-	Northern part of zone is within more than one administrative area.
Access	
Well connected to the existing urban edge via a series of Public Rights of Way	Public rights of way could be adversely affected by development  Poor road access. Potential adverse affects of increased road traffic on country lanes and villages.  Relatively remote from Crawley.

4.3.3 Recommendations for Zone 2

Zone 2 does not have the capacity to yield a good urban extension. The fringe of high value areas within this Zone, and within Zone 3, creates a barrier which would prevent easy integration of a new urban extension with Crawley. The Zone should be protected and enhanced to maintain the function of the working rural landscape and encourage access and appropriate rural recreational opportunities for the residents of Crawley.

**4.4 Zone 3 – Fine landscape incorporating important landscape features and farmland wedges linking urban edge with the wider countryside**

**4.4.1 Landscape Capacity**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	LANDSCAPE VALUE
<p>Landscape character sensitivity varies within the zone. It is generally medium to high as the area is heavily influenced by the open countryside to the west and has a mostly rural character. The area has a distinctive character with small to medium scale irregular fields divided by thick hedgerows and pockets of woodland.</p> <p>The high quality landscape to the west of Ifield, designated as a Conservation Area and SNCI has a medium to high landscape character sensitivity as it provides an unspoilt countryside setting to the historic village centre including the listed church.</p> <p>To the north of Charlwood Road the land is more influenced by Gatwick Airport. It is, however, relatively open.</p>	<p>Mostly low to medium. The landscape is quite well enclosed by higher ground to the west, the dense pattern of woodland, hedgerows, and trees, and existing urban development within Crawley.</p>	<p>SNCI, Listed Buildings, Ancient Woodland, Conservation Area, Archaeology Site and Historic Park and Gardens located within the zone.</p> <p>Close proximity to Area of Special Environmental Quality</p> <p>The northern section of the zone lacks tranquillity due to its proximity to Gatwick Airport (noise, visual intrusion of buildings and aircraft).</p>
<p>Medium to High landscape character sensitivity</p>	<p>Low to Medium visual sensitivity</p>	<p>Medium to High landscape value</p>

Overall landscape capacity of Zone 3 = Low

4.4.2 Potential of Zone 3 to Yield a Good Urban Extension

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Landscape and environment	
Strong landscape framework (pockets of woodland, trees, hedgerows and watercourses/waterbodies) could provide structure and green infrastructure for new development.	Medium to Low landscape capacity  Proximity to Gatwick airport (noise and visual intrusion)  Small areas are susceptible to flooding  SNCI, Ancient Woodlands, Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and Historic Park and Garden located within the zone. All potentially vulnerable to harm by development.  A number of trees protected by TPO's.
Planning	
-	-
Access	
Well connected to the existing urban edge via a network of Public Rights of Way	Public rights of way could be adversely affected by development.  Poor road access. Potential adverse affects of increased road traffic on country lanes and villages, and on roads within Crawley.  Railway station at Ifield.

4.4.3 Recommendations for Zone 3

Zone 3 does not have the capacity to yield a good urban extension of the scale required by the Strategic Location. This area of countryside, and the positive relationship between the urban edge and the rural landscape, is a special quality of Crawley which should be preserved. The high value sites and features should be protected and enhanced and the function of the working rural landscape maintained. Access and appropriate rural recreational opportunities for the residents of Crawley should be encouraged.

**4.5 Zone 4 - Land between Gatwick Airport and Langley Green**

**4.5.1 Landscape Capacity**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	LANDSCAPE VALUE
<p>Landscape character sensitivity varies within the zone. It is generally low as the area is heavily influenced by obtrusive employment development at Langley Green, Manor Royal and Gatwick Airport. It has an urban fringe character.</p> <p>Sensitivity increases to medium around the River Mole to the west where there is a strong pattern of fields and habitats and the landscape is in good condition. To the east, at Rowley Farm, the hill topped with a farmstead is a characteristic feature within a landscape otherwise strongly influenced by development.</p>	<p>Mostly low as the landscape is enclosed by development, hedgerows, trees and woodland.</p> <p>Visually enclosed from the north, south and east by development.</p> <p>The hill topped by Rowley Farm to the east is more elevated and exposed. However, it is enclosed by trees and development lower down.</p>	<p>Close proximity to some Listed Buildings.</p> <p>Some trees protected by TPOs.</p>
<p>Low to medium landscape character sensitivity</p>	<p>Low visual sensitivity</p>	<p>Low landscape value</p> <p>Medium to high around the SNCI and River Mole</p>

Overall landscape capacity of Zone 4 = High

4.5.2 Potential of Zone 4 to Yield a Good Urban Extension

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Landscape and environment	
<p>High landscape capacity</p> <p>Urban fringe character</p> <p>Few environmental constraints to restrict development</p> <p>Strong landscape framework (trees, hedgerows and watercourses) to provide structure and green infrastructure for new development.</p>	<p>Close proximity to Gatwick airport, urban edge of Crawley and A roads (noise and visual intrusion)</p> <p>Some areas are susceptible to flooding</p> <p>SNCI within the zone</p> <p>Archaeological Sites and Archaeological Sensitive Sites within zone.</p> <p>Close proximity to some Listed Buildings.</p> <p>A number of trees protected by TPOs.</p>
Planning	
-	<p>Located within the Strategic Gap</p> <p>Located within the Gatwick Safeguarded Area.</p> <p>Zone divided by two LA administrative boundaries</p>
Access	
<p>Well connected to the existing urban edge via a series of Public Rights of Way</p> <p>Potential road access to the A23</p>	<p>Public rights of way could be adversely affected by development</p> <p>Gatwick Airport provides physical barrier to north</p>

4.5.3 Recommendations for Zone 4

Zone 4 has capacity to yield a good urban extension for employment use. Noise from Gatwick Airport means that residential development is not an option. Careful design needed to protect features such as the SNCI, trees protected by TPOs, watercourses, public rights of way and the setting of the Listed Buildings, and, where possible, incorporate these and other landscape features such as hedgerows into new development to help create a high quality environment.

4.6 Zone 5 - Ifield Golf and Country Club

4.6.1 Landscape Capacity

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	LANDSCAPE VALUE
<p>Landscape character sensitivity of the golf course is medium. Beyond the golf course to the north and west, where the landscape is predominantly pasture fields, sensitivity is also medium.</p>	<p>Low within the golf course as the landscape is enclosed by development, hedgerows, trees and woodland. Increasing to medium on the northern edges where the land fronts onto Rusper Road and is more visually exposed.</p> <p>The higher southern extents of the zone are well enclosed by a dense woodland belt and the residential estate at Ifield Mill. The western edge is also partially enclosed by trees and pockets of woodland.</p>	<p>There are some designated sites and features on the perimeter of this zone including an SNCI, Ancient Woodland, Listed Buildings and some trees protected by TPOs. However, the core of the area, covered by the golf course, does not contain any designated sites or features.</p>
<p>Medium landscape character sensitivity</p>	<p>Low to Medium visual sensitivity</p>	<p>Medium landscape value</p>

Overall landscape capacity of Zone 5 = Medium

4.6.2 Potential of Zone 5 to Yield a Good Urban Extension

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Landscape and environment	
<p>Medium to high landscape capacity</p> <p>Loss of golf course and replacement by development would not adversely affect character of wider landscape.</p> <p>Few environmental constraints within core of zone to restrict development.</p> <p>Strong landscape framework (trees, hedgerows) to provide enclosure for new development.</p> <p>Close proximity to Crawley.</p>	<p>Designated sites and features on perimeter of zone.</p> <p>Golf course is a positive use of land on the edge of Crawley and would probably need to be re-developed on a suitable location.</p>
Planning	
-	-
Access	
<p>Connected to the existing urban edge and countryside via a series of Public Rights of Way</p>	<p>Public rights of way could be adversely affected by development.</p> <p>Poor road access. Potential adverse affects of increased road traffic on country lanes and villages to west and north, and on roads within Crawley.</p> <p>Road access appears to be limited to Ruser Road which might present technical difficulties.</p>

4.6.3 Recommendations for Zone 5

Zone 5 has capacity to yield a good urban extension, subject to providing road access in a manner which does not adversely affect the wider rural landscape, or add unacceptable pressure to roads within Crawley. Careful design is needed to protect features such as the SNCI, trees protected by TPOs, public rights of way and the setting of the Listed Buildings.

Potential re-location of golf course would need careful consideration.

4.7 Zone 6 - Land between Faygate and Bewbush

4.7.1 Landscape Capacity

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	LANDSCAPE VALUE
<p>Landscape character sensitivity varies within the zone. It is low between the railway line and the A264 within the former landfill site and the landscape to the immediate west. Between the railway line and the A264 sensitivity gradually increases to low to medium as the landscape becomes more rural and remote from the urban edge of Crawley and the former landfill.</p> <p>Sensitivity increases to medium to high to the north east of the zone (north of the railway) where the landscape is in good condition and there is a designated as Historic Park and Garden, Ancient Woodland and SNCI.</p>	<p>Mostly low as the landscape is generally well enclosed by development, hedgerows, trees and woodland.</p> <p>Between the railway line and the A264 the former landfill and land to its immediate west has low visual sensitivity as it is low lying and enclosed by topography, trees and Crawley.</p> <p>Visual sensitivity north of the railway line increases to medium to low where the land rises; however, woodlands to the north, west and east still provide substantial visual enclosure.</p>	<p>Landscape value varies across this zone. It is medium to low within the former landfill site, but increases to medium and medium to high in other areas.</p> <p>SSSI located close to the zone.</p> <p>Close proximity to some Listed Buildings, Archaeological Sites and a Scheduled Ancient Monument.</p> <p>SNCI, Historic Park and Garden and Ancient Woodland located within the zone.</p> <p>Close proximity to AONB.</p>
<p>Low to east and south of zone.</p> <p>Medium to high to north-west of zone.</p>	<p>Low to Medium visual sensitivity</p>	<p>Between the railway line and the A264: Former landfill site is Low to Medium landscape value. West of former landfill site Medium landscape value.</p> <p>Medium to High around the SNCI, Ancient Woodland and Historic Park and Garden.</p>

Overall landscape capacity of Zone 6 = Medium to High. Low landscape capacity in north-west of zone around Kilnwood.

4.7.2 Potential of Zone 6 to Yield a Good Urban Extension

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Landscape and environment	
<p>Medium to high landscape capacity within majority of zone.</p> <p>Former landfill site has little value to the landscape in its current condition</p> <p>Few environmental constraints to restrict development within majority of zone</p> <p>Strong landscape framework (woodlands, trees, hedgerows) to provide structure and green infrastructure for new development.</p> <p>Close proximity to Crawley.</p>	<p>SNCI, Historic Park and Garden and Ancient Woodland within the zone</p> <p>Small area is susceptible to flooding.</p> <p>Close proximity to AONB.</p> <p>Building on landfill might present technical problems.</p>
Planning	
-	West of zone lies within Strategic Gap.
Access	
<p>Potential road access from Horsham Road (A264) and Bewbush</p> <p>Potential for additional railway station along the Arun Valley line</p>	<p>Limited existing public right of connections between urban edge and the zone and wider countryside.</p> <p>A264 and railway line provide physical barriers to pedestrian movement.</p>

4.7.3 Recommendations for Zone 6

Zone 6 has capacity to yield a good urban extension without harming the character of Crawley or its setting. Careful design is needed to protect features such as the SSSI nearby and the SNCI, Ancient Woodland and the setting of the Historic Park and Garden.

4.8 Conclusions

Analysis of the landscape surrounding west and north-west Crawley shows that Zones 4, 5 and 6 could potentially yield good urban extensions, and that the landscape of Zones 1, 2 and 3 should be protected and enhanced. Our recommendations for the treatment of these areas are given in the next section.

## 5.0 Urban Extension Development Options

### 5.1 Introduction

A key and overriding objective for west and north-west Crawley (within the Area of Study and the landscape to the west, and the town to the east) is to protect and enhance the positive interface and connections between town and landscape. This is particularly important as north and north-west Crawley is the only side of the town which has such a positive relationship and interface, and this is one of the most important qualities of the town and its landscape setting.

As discussed in section 2.0 and indicated on drawing number 2309P/03, other edges of the town are separated from the countryside by physical barriers in the form of major roads (the M23 and A264) to the east and south, and employment development (Manor Royal/County Oak) and Gatwick Airport to the north. From a landscape and urban fringe perspective, this is a pattern which should not be repeated at west and north-west Crawley.

Section 2.1 describes how the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan (2001 – 2016), CBC's Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy and HDC's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Submission Document November 2005 identify the potential need for a relief road around the north-western side of Crawley, running between the A264 east of Faygate and the A23 north of Manor Royal, in conjunction with the development of the Strategic Location. The conclusion from our study is that, in a landscape/urban fringe context, such a relief road would be a negative feature, causing significant harm to the attractive landscape on the west and north-west side of Crawley, and potentially creating a physical barrier between the town and its rural setting. It would, in effect, complete the 'girdle' of barriers which already exist around approximately three quarters of the town.

The existing girdle or barriers between the town and its setting which exist on its north, east and south sides cut the town and its people off from the countryside, creating a settlement which encourages people to access the countryside by car, rather than by foot or cycle. Opportunities for safe and attractive walks or cycle rides from communities within Crawley to the countryside are limited by these barriers and this is a situation which should be avoided at west and north-west Crawley.

There may, however, be potential for new communities on the west side of town to be accessed by a bus only link. This is discussed further below (see General Recommendation 4).

The delivery of up to 2500 homes to the west and north-west Crawley should be subject to detailed landscape assessment, masterplanning, transport and landscape design, which is beyond the scope of this study. This will define the extent of development as well as the treatment of roads and sustainable transport, green infrastructure and urban edges. However, it is possible to set out some general principles and guidelines which should be followed if any of the options are delivered.

Our recommendations for development of the Strategic Location of up to 2500 homes and associated uses and infrastructure, as identified in HDC and CBC's Core Strategies and the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan, are given below. The proposed strategy for the delivery of development is shown on drawing 2309P/06C, and the treatment of green infrastructure and urban edges are shown on drawings 2309P/07B and 2309P/Panel\_E, F and G.

CBC is already carrying out studies on the existing open space provision within Crawley. The findings of these studies will assist in the master planning of new neighbourhoods enabling them to ascertain what facilities and services should be provided. Further studies are to be undertaken to identify the potential deficiencies of services and facilities in these neighbourhoods that may be compensated for in new urban extensions.

## 5.2 General Recommendations

Our general recommendations on the delivery of the Strategic Location on the west and north-west side of Crawley are as follows:

### General Recommendation 1

The delivery of up to 2500 houses and further employment development should be focussed within the three locations shown on drawing 2309P/06C. Photograph panels of these locations are shown on drawing 2309P/Panel\_D. Calculations of potential housing numbers are based on initial broad scale measurements and not on defined areas of land or actual masterplans. Further studies would need to be carried out to confirm figures, and consider options which might alter these figures such as landuse, housing type, development area and density. The figures are, therefore, indicative only and will need to be re-calculated following more detailed work.

Area A - Land between Faygate and Bewbush could potentially deliver up to 2500 homes (or potentially more).

Area B - Ifield Golf and Country Club could potentially deliver up to approximately 2000 homes.

Area C - Land between Gatwick Airport and Langley Green is suitable for employment and other non-residential development which is not impeded by noise levels from Gatwick Airport.

### General Recommendation 2

The positive interface and connections between the town and landscape which exists on the west and north-west side of Crawley should be protected and enhanced as part of the delivery of development.

### General Recommendation 3

In landscape/urban fringe terms a bypass running outside the existing urban area of Crawley, between the A264 east of Faygate and the A23 north of Manor Royal, should be avoided. It would not only form a physical and psychological barrier to the western limits of Crawley, thus completing the 'girdle' around the town, but would have an adverse impact on a high quality landscape, some elements of which would be impossible to replace or mitigate for if lost.

### General Recommendation 4

There may be potential for Area B, if it is to be developed, to be accessed via a bus only link to Area A if this would make a significant contribution to the sustainable transport network and help resolve potential traffic impacts. A narrow, carefully designed bus only route is the only form of link road we would consider acceptable through the landscape west of Crawley, and even this would only be pursued if Area B cannot be satisfactorily delivered in any other way.

If new bus only link outside the existing urban area is required to access new communities on the west and north-west side of Crawley, ensure that it is designed so that it does not create barriers between communities, or between the town and its landscape. Ensure Area A is designed to allow for a possible bus only connection to Area B in the future.

### General Recommendation 5

Consider whether traffic management issues can be dealt with by 'sustainable transport' methods such as improving public transport, encouraging cycling and walking and deterring car use.

**General Recommendation 6**

Any new development should be designed in accordance with the principles of the Shared UK principles of sustainable development. All attempts should be made to minimise the impact that new housing, employment and business use provision has on the environment. It is recommended that any new development proposals be reviewed against SEEDA's Sustainability Checklist for Developments in the South East.

**General Recommendation 7**

The Countryside Agency has published 'The countryside in and around towns: A vision for connecting town and country in the pursuit of sustainable development'. This document sets out ten key issues that should be considered when preparing proposals for development or rural enhancement near urban edges. It is recommended that any new development proposals and landscape improvements at west and north-west Crawley address and, where appropriate, incorporate these key issues.

### 5.3 Recommendations for Development Options and the Retained and Enhanced Countryside

This section gives specific recommendations for development options A, B and C and the Retained and Enhanced Countryside shown on drawing 2309P/06B. Designed sensitively, with appropriate green infrastructure, attractive urban edges, and a positive interface between town and countryside, options A, B and C could yield urban extensions which contribute positively to the town and its adjacent rural landscape.

The Town and Country Planning Association in their publication Biodiversity by Design define green infrastructure as follows:

*'Green Infrastructure is defined as the Sub-regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, greenspaces and greenway linkages. Green Infrastructure should provide (where possible) multi-functional uses, i.e., wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, as well as delivering ecological services, such as flood protection and microclimate control. It should also operate at all spatial scales from urban centres through to open countryside.'*

For the purposes of this study of west and north-west Crawley green infrastructure will also be considered at the local scale.

#### 5.3.1 A - Land between Faygate and Bewbush

Points to address in design of this potential development area include:

**Development area and road access**

- Development should be concentrated as a first priority on the former waste management and disposal site and towards the existing urban edge in the east.
- Rising arable land north of the railway line also has capacity for development. It is, however, more visually sensitive than the land to the south of the railway line, and additional vehicle and pedestrian access would need to be provided across the railway line. Owners of the railway line are likely to require a substantial financial contribution to allow access across the line.
- Low lying land west of the landfill site, which is currently in agricultural use, also has capacity for development and for use as public open space. The location of the western urban boundary and public open space should be defined by detailed landscape analysis and masterplanning, subject to a modest drawing back of the Strategic Gap notation within Horsham District, using retained countryside and public open space to preserve the separate identity of Faygate.
- Road access can potentially be provided off Horsham Road (A264) and from an existing road/roundabout at Bewbush.

- Ensure Area A is designed to allow for a possible bus only connection to Area B in the future.
- The potential to provide a new station on the railway line running through the site should be considered.
- The potential to extend the Fastway (guided bus) from Bewbush into the new development should be considered.
- The new development should be carefully designed so that it protects and enhances the character of the existing settlement whilst allowing the new development the opportunity to develop its own distinctiveness.
- Much of the site is covered by restored inert landfill. The technical issues relating to building on this, or removing it from site, would need to be addressed.

#### **Pedestrian and cycle access**

- Provide wherever possible clearly defined, safe pedestrian and cycle connections across Spruce Hill Brook into Bewbush (see drawing 2309P/Panel\_F upper photograph and section); the railway line to the landscape to the north, and the A264 to Buchanan Country Park to the south.
- Some pedestrian and cycle connections should run through the new development along green fingers, providing attractive routes for the movement of people, and habitats for the movement of wildlife (see drawing 2309P/Panel\_F upper photograph and section).

#### **Integration with the landscape**

- Development should be visually contained by existing and new woodlands and hedgerows, to minimise adverse landscape and visual impacts on the AONB, the historic park to the north-west, Faygate village to the west, and the rural landscape in general.
- The green character of the approach to Crawley along Horsham Road should be retained by extending tree planting out of the urban area along the south side of new development, and if necessary by strengthening the existing planting along this boundary (see drawing 2309P/Panel\_E upper photograph and section).
- Provide public open space to the north and west of the area (see drawing 2309P/Panel\_E lower photograph and section). This should provide a defensible boundary to the extension of Crawley and provide an attractive and accessible recreational resource for the town.
- The separate identity of Faygate should be preserved by ensuring that a green Strategic Gap remains between the new edge of Crawley and the village.
- The historic parkland at Kilnwood and the existing woodlands within the area should be protected and considered for use as public open space, subject to ecological and other constraints. The new open space should be integrated into the existing public rights of way, i.e. the bridleway along Kilnwood Lane and footpath network leading off this Lane.
- Watercourses (e.g. Spruce Hill Brook, Hopper's Brook and Bewbush Brook) should be protected from harm and considered for use as landscape features, wildlife habitats and elements for sustainable drainage, within new development and open space.

#### **5.3.2 B - Ifield Golf and Country Club**

Points to address in design of this potential development area include:

##### **Development area and road access**

- The potential development area should be contained within the existing golf course, and the small fields up to Rusper Road immediately north of the golf course.
- A potential constraint to the delivery of this area is road access. In landscape terms a bypass linking this area with the A264 (south) and/the A23 (north) would be a negative element as discussed in sections 5.1 and 5.2 and should be avoided.
- An alternative option would be to provide a bus only road to the A264 and Area A (if developed) to the south. The benefits and disbenefits of this are discussed below.

- Rusper Road provides a third option for road access to Area B. This is a minor road and additional vehicle movements might lead to unacceptable traffic levels on roads within western Crawley and on country lanes/minor roads within the countryside west of the town.
- Access onto Rusper Road from the site (in terms of sight lines) might be difficult.
- Works to upgrade Rusper Road to the standards required to accommodate the additional traffic might spoil its rural character. Care should be taken to avoid 'urbanising' this attractive rural approach to Crawley (see drawing 2309P/Panel\_G upper photograph and section).
- The golf course and country club could be re-located. Our initial appraisal identifies that land to the west of the existing golf course, rather than to the north, is our preferred area for its relocation. The rural land to the north forms the immediate setting to Ifield Conservation Area and the designated wildlife sites along Ifield Brook and should be preserved and enhanced as part of the Retained and Enhanced Countryside.

### **Pedestrian and cycle access**

- Connect to existing public rights of way which join the site to the west, north and east.
- Where possible provide new safe cycle and pedestrian routes into the countryside to the south, west and north. Two examples which should be explored are given below. These are by way of example only and further options should be considered as part of any development:
  1. The potential to provide, a new footpath/cycleway south across Hyde Hill Brook and the wooded ridge, linking to existing footpaths and bridleways which run into Ifield West and south to Spruce Hill Brook.
  2. The potential for upgrading the footpath, which runs from Rusper Road to the old village of Ifield, into a cycleway.
- Provide attractive pedestrian and cycle connections into the adjoining existing community at Ifield to the east and south. These should link to existing roads, public rights of way and safe pedestrian and cycle routes into town (see drawing 2309P/Panel F lower photograph and section).

### **Integration with the landscape**

- Existing or new strong landscape features should be used to define the urban/rural edge of new development. This might be in the form of existing or new woodlands and hedgerows, or a feature such as Rusper Road.
- Careful consideration should be given to development along Rusper Road and, although the development should present a 'green' frontage, it should not necessarily be entirely screened by dense tree planting. A potential treatment of the urban/rural edge on Rusper Road is shown on drawing 2309P/Panel G upper photograph and section.
- The area of land is already visually contained by topography and trees. This characteristic should be used and strengthened to create a visually contained development with minimal adverse landscape and visual impacts on the surrounding rural landscape and settlements.
- There are a number of designated sites and features within the surrounding area including Listed Buildings, Ifield Conservation Area, wildlife sites and ancient woodlands. These, and where appropriate their settings should, where possible, be protected from harm.
- Watercourses (e.g. Hyde Hill Brook) should be protected from harm and considered for use as landscape features, wildlife habitats and elements for sustainable drainage, within new development and open space.

### **Potential road link between Areas A and B**

One option to provide road access to Area B would be to create a local link road to the A264 and Area A (if developed) to the south. The two areas could, theoretically, be

developed in an integrated manner to deliver more than the 2500 homes and associated uses and infrastructure required by the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan. Their combined areas (which have not been defined accurately at this stage) are potentially large enough to deliver more than 2500 homes.

There are, however, significant constraints to the development of such a link road. The potential benefits and disbenefits of this are summarised below.

Potential benefits:

- Provision of road access could enable the development of Area B (Ifield Golf and Country Club) in a manner which minimises additional pressure on existing roads in west Crawley.
- Potential to divert existing traffic flow from the countryside to the west onto the A264, thus easing traffic flow in Ifield and west Crawley.
- Potential to provide an additional road from the new link road, into the existing community at Ifield West, creating a second road access into this community, and joining the new developments with Ifield West.
- The road would provide a link between new communities at Area A and B which could be used by cars, buses, cycles and pedestrians, thus helping to integrate communities on the west side of Crawley.

Potential disbenefits:

- The road would encourage people to travel by car, driving onto the A264 rather than using sustainable transport options such as foot, cycle or bus.
- The road would potentially draw people away from the existing community of Crawley by providing an easy option of travelling by car to locations outside the town.
- The road would cause very severe landscape and ecological impacts on the countryside and habitats to the west of the town, particularly the attractive wooded landscape and habitats along the elevated ridge of the Rusper Wooded Ridge landscape character area west of Ifield West (see drawing 2309P/04C).
- Funding could be a constraint to delivery of the road. If it is funded entirely by development within Areas A and B this would absorb substantial sums which could potentially be spent on other benefits to the new communities and the west and north-west side of Crawley, for example extensive green infrastructure or sustainable transport improvements.
- Delivery would potentially be ransomed by owners of land and the railway which lie between Areas A and B, unless public authorities use compulsory purchase powers.

Our conclusion is that a link road taking normal traffic would be an unacceptable solution. However, a bus only link and footpath/cycleway could be considered as part of a suitable transport strategy for Site B.

To properly test the feasibility of the development of Ifield Golf and Country Club and the potential for a new bus only link between the site and Area A and the A264, further more detailed transport, landscape and ecological studies would need to be carried out. This should consider issues such as:

- How Areas A and B might work in terms of housing numbers and phasing
- Road access options
- The feasibility of creating a bus only link between Areas B, A and the A264 in transport and engineering terms, across the railway line and wooded ridge
- Alternative transport solutions
- Transport solutions for the whole of Crawley

- The feasibility of connecting the potential bus only link to Ifield West
- Landscape impacts and design of the potential bus only link
- Ecological impacts of the potential bus only link
- Costs of the potential bus only link
- Land ownership and ransom issues related to the potential bus only link
- Feasibility of re-locating the golf course and country club
- Feasibility of delivering new or improved green infrastructure and access links within the landscape and urban areas adjacent to the new development

### 5.3.3 C - Land between Gatwick Airport and Langley Green

This area is suitable for employment development. It has capacity to accommodate development but is constrained in the type of use which it could deliver by noise from Gatwick Airport. Another potential constraint to the delivery of development is that the area might not be available if Gatwick Airport expands southwards.

Points to address in design of potential development include:

#### Development area and road access

- Road access could be provided off London Road (A23).
- The settings of Listed Buildings at Lowfield Heath should be addressed in any development proposals and, where possible, be protected from harm.
- Careful consideration should be given to development along the existing residential edge at Langley Green. Although there might be some scope for limited development along this edge, a substantial landscape area (covering land including the River Mole and SNCI) should be safeguarded between the development and the neighbourhood.
- Bonnetts Lane could provide a strong boundary to development to the west, although the location, definition and treatment of the western developed edge, and its relationship with open space and countryside, would need to be defined by more detailed studies and masterplanning.

#### Pedestrian and cycle access

- Provide improved pedestrian/cycle access to the River Mole and to the countryside to the west of Bonnetts Lane, so that users have an uninterrupted journey along the river and out into the countryside.
- Retain the public rights of way which join the site from the east and south and seek to add new links to the west.
- Provide attractive pedestrian and cycle connections and green routes through the development and into the open space and countryside, providing opportunities for people to cycle safely to and from work (see drawing 2309P/Panel G lower photograph and section).

#### Integration with the landscape

- The area contains an SNCI south of the River Mole, comprising a patchwork of fields enclosed by hedgerows, some of which are grazed, others which contain rugby pitches, and others which are being allowed to regenerate into scrub and woodland. This area should be protected from development and could form the focus of an area of green infrastructure/open space running into the new urban area (see drawing 2309P/Panel G lower photograph and section).
- The existing pattern of trees, woodlands and hedgerows is a strong feature of this area and should, where possible, be preserved and used to form a structure to development.

#### 5.3.4 Recommendations for area of Retained and Enhanced Countryside

Drawing 2309P/06C proposes a significant area of Retained and Enhanced Countryside covering all of the landscape to the west and north-west of Crawley outside the potential development areas. Drawing number 2309P/07B is a strategic drawing showing potential green infrastructure and access links, and areas of landscape close to the urban edge (defined as 'safeguarded landscape areas') which are particularly valuable areas in the immediate vicinity of the existing and potential urban edge, which should be protected from development, and which provide great potential for recreational and biodiversity improvements.

The strategy for the Retained and Enhanced Countryside should be to:

- Provide networks of new and improved publicly accessible spaces, woodlands and other green spaces which are linked to Crawley and the wider countryside by footpaths, bridleways and cycleways, forming continuous green corridors between town and country.
- Provide opportunities for active recreation, promoting exercise and health.
- Provide opportunities for outdoor education associated with, for example, wildlife habitats, farming practices or woodland management.
- Support and maintain the function of the working rural landscape, and minimise negative effects of urban fringe influences.
- Preserve the rural setting of St Margret's Church and other Listed Buildings, and Ifield Conservation Area.
- Protect and manage conservation sites and habitats including the SNCIs and Ancient Woodlands. These will be particularly sensitive to increased pressures from recreation and a larger population of residents in the area due to the delivery of the Strategic Location.
- Support existing/and develop new programmes that manage the rural/urban fringes for positive, multi-functional uses.
- Landscape character to be retained, protected and enhanced in delivery.
- Integrate management options to enhance biodiversity and control detrimental access.

#### 5.4 Best Practice

This study shows that there is great potential, alongside consideration of urban extensions, to plan positively for Green Infrastructure around and connected to the town of Crawley. The objective of the Green Infrastructure would be to give access for the people of Crawley to landscape resource on the edge of the town and outwards into the wider countryside. If these ideas are to be taken forward, it will be important to learn from the experience which has been gained in other towns. These include:

##### 5.4.1 The Peterborough Green Wheel

This project, initiated by Peterborough Environment City Trust, involves a network of dedicated cycleways and quiet roads around the city, with a series of connections, or spokes, connecting the 'wheel' through to the city centre. The Green Wheel integrates with a network of existing parks and planned new parks associated with the major new urban extensions.

##### 5.4.2 Cambridge East

One of the most exciting proposals for new Green Infrastructure can be found in Cambridge, where a series of new developments are planned on the east side of the city. The new Green Infrastructure consists of a network of green spaces which extend the 'green fingers' which already exist within the city. One of these green fingers will form part of a planned new urban extension of over 10,000 homes on the site of Cambridge Airport, and this will also include a planned new Country Park which provides a link to the countryside and network of public rights of way beyond. The network of planned green spaces within the new development extends northwards to create a link to a proposed new bridge over the A14. This, the Bridge of Reeds, is a proposed new 58m high sculptural landmark for the East of England, designed by LDA Design

and promoted by the East of England Development Agency in association with Marshall of Cambridge, the Greater Cambridge Partnership and the National Trust. The bridge, for pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders, will enable people to access a proposed new 4,000ha area of new fenland being created by the National Trust - the Wicken Fen Vision. This will enable people to access a network of footpaths, cycleways and bridleways linking Cambridge with Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve.

#### 5.4.3 Ipswich

A network of green spaces has been created around the southern margins of Ipswich, and these now form an important part of the green space provision for the town. A new Country Park and green fringe to the town is proposed as part of Crest Nicholson's planned new urban extension at Henley Gate, to the north of the town. This would be delivered in association with a proposed new urban extension of over 2,000 homes off Henley Road. The new areas of Green Infrastructure would also include playing fields to help make good the deficit which currently exists in the town and it would also include areas of more formal green space to benefit existing communities where there is a significant shortage of recreational facilities and access to open space.

#### 5.4.4 Corby

Corby is one of the growth towns within the Milton Keynes East Midlands Growth Area. New Green Infrastructure proposals have been prepared at a strategic level, commissioned by Northamptonshire County Council. More detailed proposals have been prepared for Corby, illustrating how a network of biodiversity and access links for the county as a whole can link in with the planned growth of the town. A series of urban extensions are planned around the town, and these include new open space provision and important links in the Green Infrastructure network. An example is a development of 980 homes to the south of the town by Taylor Woodrow, which includes management proposals and public access for an area of Ancient Woodland, new green fingers, new habitats and a soft green edge for the town. Footpath links through this Green Infrastructure will extend outwards into the wider countryside, consistent with the county-wide Green Infrastructure Strategy.

#### 5.4.5 Ashford

Ashford is one of the country's major Growth Areas, and a series of major new urban extensions are planned. The Borough Council, in association with the Countryside Agency, have prepared a study of the rural areas surrounding the town, with the aim of promoting multiple use of the urban-rural fringe landscape for a wide range of infrastructure purposes including flood water management, recreation and biodiversity. An innovative new delivery mechanism is being investigated to deliver this new Green Infrastructure and link it with the various development projects.

#### 5.4.6 Oude Maas, Rotterdam

Some of the best examples of multiple-use Green Infrastructure planning date from the 1970s and 1980s in Holland. One example is Oude Maas to the south of Rotterdam, which enables people to gain access to extensive areas of green space by cycling and walking from the main urban area.

#### 5.4.7 Thames Gateway

Work is currently being commissioned by the Government to investigate innovative new ways of delivering extensive areas of new environmental infrastructure within the Thames Gateway Growth Area. These include the delivery of proposals for a network or 'Green Grid' of linked green space assets. The work currently under way is investigating how traditional open space uses can be more fully integrated with flood water management, food production, energy production and commercial leisure uses. The major scale of development within Thames

Gateway should provide opportunities for reshaping the urban-rural fringe and delivering substantial new Green Infrastructure opportunities on land which is currently either inaccessible or where there is no funding to deliver the investments which are needed.

## 6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

Analysis of the whole of Crawley and its setting has identified that west and north-west Crawley is the most appropriate edge of the town for development of up to 2500 homes and associated uses and infrastructure (referred to as the Strategic Development Location), supporting proposals within the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan (2001 – 2016). It has also identified that the positive relationship and interface between this side of Crawley and its landscape setting is unique to the town; all other sides of town have physical barriers between the urban area and the landscape in the form of major roads, industrial development or Gatwick Airport. This positive relationship within west and north-west Crawley is one of the most important qualities of the town and its landscape setting.

More detailed analysis of west and north-west Crawley and its setting has identified three areas of landscape which have capacity to accommodate part of all of the Strategic Development Location. These are:

Area A - Land between Faygate and Bewbush.

Area B - Ifield Golf and Country Club.

Area C - Land between Gatwick Airport and Langley Green is recommended for employment and other non-residential development which is not impeded by noise levels from Gatwick Airport.

These three areas within the Area of Study and its immediate boundaries have capacity to accommodate development without harming the character and appearance of Crawley and its setting. Designed sensitively, with appropriate green infrastructure, attractive urban edges, and positive interface between town and countryside, they could yield urban extensions which contribute positively to the town and its adjacent rural landscape.

The remaining landscape adjoining the existing urban edge within the Area of Study is important to the setting of Crawley and should be protected and enhanced as part of the delivery of development, and as a strategic objective of the town. Objectives should be to support and maintain the function of the working rural landscape, and minimise negative effects of urban fringe influences. Access and appropriate rural recreational opportunities for the residents of Crawley should be encouraged.

The adopted West Sussex Structure Plan, CBC's Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy and HDC's Local Development Framework Core Strategy Submission Document November 2005 identify the potential need for a relief road around the north-western side of Crawley, running between the A264 east of Faygate and the A23 north of Manor Royal, in conjunction with the development of the Strategic Location. The conclusion from our study is that, in landscape and urban fringe terms, such a relief road would be a negative feature, causing significant harm to the attractive landscape on the west and north-west side of Crawley, and creating a physical barrier between the town and its rural setting. It should be avoided.

One option to provide road access to Area B (Ifield Golf and Country Club) would be to create a local bus only link to the A264 and Area A (land between Faygate and Bewbush) (if developed) to the south. Areas A and B could, theoretically, be developed in an integrated manner to deliver more than the 2500 homes and associated uses and infrastructure required by the adopted West Sussex Structure Plan.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are, however, significant constraints to the development of such a link. To properly test the feasibility of the development of Areas A and B, and the potential for a new bus only link between the two areas and the A264, further more detailed transport, landscape and ecological studies would need to be carried out.

## 7.0 References

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## 8.0 Appendix - Methodology for Judging Landscape Capacity

Landscape capacity to accommodate the proposed change is a function of landscape character sensitivity + visual sensitivity + landscape value. Reaching conclusions about capacity means making a judgement about whether the amount of change proposed can be accommodated without having unacceptable adverse effects on the character of the landscape (related to *landscape character sensitivity*), or the way that it is perceived (related to *visual sensitivity*), and without compromising the values attached to it (related to *landscape value*).

### 8.1 Landscape Character Sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity is defined as '*the extent to which a landscape type or area can accept change of a particular type and scale without unacceptable adverse effects on its character*'. (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2002) It is based on judgements about the sensitivity of aspects most likely to be affected:

Natural factors - extent and pattern of semi-natural habitat

Cultural factors - land use, enclosure pattern

Landscape condition - representation of typical character

Aesthetic factors - e.g. scale, enclosure, pattern, form/line, movement

Landscape Character Sensitivity	Definition
Low	A landscape or landscape features of low sensitivity potentially tolerant of substantial change. E.g. developed or derelict landscape setting where new development could be accommodated without adversely affecting character.
Low to medium	Between low and medium
Medium	A landscape or landscape features of moderate sensitivity reasonably tolerant of change.
Medium to high	Between medium and high
High	A landscape or landscape feature of particularly distinctive character susceptible to relatively small change. E.g. rural landscape with few uncharacteristic and detracting man made features where new development could not be accommodated without adversely affecting character.

### 8.2 Landscape Value

Landscape value is concerned with the relative value that is attached to different landscapes. In a policy context the usual basis for recognising certain highly valued landscapes is through the application of a local or national designation. Yet a landscape may be valued by different communities of interest for many different reasons without formal designation, recognising, for example, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wildness; special cultural associations; the influence and presence of other conservation interests; or the existence of a consensus about importance, either nationally or locally. In the context of this study a professional judgement has been made on the value of the landscape within the setting of a zone, giving consideration to, for example, sites or areas designated for their landscape value.

Designations which are most relevant to this study are those which are related to protection of landscape or buildings partially or wholly for their contribution to the landscape. Within the Area of Study and its setting, nationally, regionally and locally designated landscapes or features include:

National: High Weald AONB, SSSI

Local: LNR, SNCI, Historic Park and Garden, Conservation Area, Listed Buildings

Other designations which are important components of the landscape and do contribute towards landscape value, but which are not protected for their contribution to the landscape, include nature conservations sites (ancient woodland, SNCI) and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.

As part of the judgement of landscape value lies in the views of communities of interest, and obtaining these views is not part of this study, in all cases landscape value is evaluated as medium unless there is an obvious reason to give a higher or lower value (e.g. elevate because of a landscape designation, or lower because of a high degree of disturbance and degradation).

Landscape Value	Definition
Low	No relevant designations. Degraded or possibly derelict landscape.
Low to medium	Between low and medium
Medium	All landscapes unless there is an obvious reason to give a higher or lower value.  The zone lies within, or within the setting of, a relevant local designation but it is not considered that development would adversely affect it.
Medium to high	The zone lies within, or within the setting of, a relevant local designation and it is considered that development would adversely affect it.
High	The zone lies within, or within the setting of, a relevant national or regional designation (e.g. AONB)

### **8.3 Visual Sensitivity**

Visual sensitivity is based on the nature of change proposed and its interaction with visual aspects of the landscape. It is based on:

Nature of potential change - considering factors such as height, massing, colour, movement and how it would blend in with or contrast with other elements in its setting. In the case of this study professional experience is used to judge what the nature of an urban extension might be.

General visibility of potential development within the zone - considering influences of enclosing or screening elements such as landform, hedgerows, trees, woodlands, and built development.

Population - numbers and types of viewers. The sensitivity of visual receptors (or viewers) is dependent on the location and context of the viewpoint and viewing opportunities, the occupation/pastime of the receptor and the importance of the view.

**APPENDIX - METHODOLOGY FOR JUDGING  
LANDSCAPE CAPACITY**

Sensitivity of viewer:

- Low - Viewers with a passing interest in their surroundings, e.g. motorists.
- Medium - Viewers with a moderate interest in their surroundings, e.g. users of recreation facilities.
- High - Viewers with proprietary interest and prolonged viewing opportunities, e.g. a residential property or users of a public footpaths.

Visual Sensitivity	Definition
Low	<p>Nature of potential change - unobtrusive in the context of its setting</p> <p>General visibility of the potential development - enclosed, screened. Only visible from short distances.</p> <p>Population - Seen by few viewers, or predominantly by viewers with a passing interest in their surroundings, e.g. motorists</p>
Low to medium	Between low and medium
Medium	<p>Nature of potential change - moderately obtrusive in the context of its setting</p> <p>General visibility of the potential development - visible but partially enclosed or screened. Not visible from long distances.</p> <p>Population - seen by a moderate number of viewers. Seen by viewers of medium or lower sensitivity.</p>
Medium to high	Between medium and high
High	<p>Nature of potential change - highly obtrusive in the context of its setting</p> <p>General visibility of the potential development - highly visible due to the open, exposed nature of the surroundings. Might be visible from long distances.</p> <p>Population - seen by a large number of viewers. Seen predominantly by viewers of high or lower sensitivity.</p>