

CHICHESTER LOCAL PLAN REVIEW 2035

LANDSCAPE GAP ASSESSMENT FOR CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL MAY 2019



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Appendix 1: Gap Assessment Tables

1. Overall context and scope

- 1.1 Chichester District Council appointed The terra firma Consultancy Limited in June 2018 to produce a Landscape Gap Assessment to inform the evidence base for the emerging Chichester Local Plan. The aims of the Study are:
1. To examine 'gaps' between settlements located along the A259 in the East-West Corridor and any other potential gaps that should be protected from development to help maintain the identity of individual settlements.
 2. To consider the impact of potential development on designated landscapes including the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and how long-distance and open views, with key landscape features, can be protected. This considered not only for the summer months but also for the period of winter coverage when foliage and landscape may appear and be perceived differently.
 3. Make recommendations for enhancing and strengthening the landscape character of the gaps including through the provision of green infrastructure
- 1.2 This study explores various areas which may be appropriate for local gaps in principle. It is accepted that the precise boundaries of the gaps will be defined in either a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, to follow on from the Local Plan Review, or through Neighbourhood Plans. The Study will also assist in assessing the suitability of sites through the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment process.
- 1.3 There is increasing pressure for development in the plan area, particularly in the East/West corridor where transport links are good and infrastructure provides a firm basis for sustainable development. Equally the proximity of the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the South Downs National Park in this area are key environmental constraints that need to be taken into account.
- 1.4 The development strategy in the Preferred Approach version of the Local Plan Review focuses the majority of planned sustainable growth at Chichester and within the east-west corridor. In meeting the needs of strategic development the plan also seeks to conserve and enhance local distinctiveness, character and cohesion of existing settlements.
- 1.5 Beyond the main area of development at Chichester city the plan area is characterised by many settlements with their own distinct identities and patterns. This includes the villages and settlements that extend along the A259 from Chichester to Emsworth, such as Fishbourne, Bosham, Chidham and Hambrook, Southbourne and Hermitage.

1.6 Maintaining the individual identities of communities is an important priority for the Council. The most obvious way of achieving this is keeping them physically separate from each other and areas outside the plan area (e.g. Emsworth) to the west and Bognor and the Coastal West Sussex Urban Belt to the east. Development over recent years has tended to cause some merging of settlements. The Council considers that designating areas between settlements as countryside gaps to be kept free of urbanising development may be an appropriate way of seeking to prevent further loss of local identity. This study marks the first step in looking at the potential for the introduction of gaps between various settlements across the plan area.

2. Selection and boundary criteria

2.1 Chichester District Council identified the key settlements where potential gaps needed assessing. These settlements were:

- Chichester and Lavant
- Nutbourne and Bosham
- Bosham and Fishbourne
- Fishbourne and Chichester
- Hermitage and Southbourne
- Southbourne and Hambrook
- Bognor and Chichester

Policy context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2 The updated National Planning Policy Framework was published in February 2019. Paragraph 2 of the NPPF states that the NPPF '*must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions*'.

2.3 Sections of the NPPF that provide support for a 'Gap policy' include:

- Paragraphs 7-10 set out what is meant by sustainable development. Paragraph 8 describes the 3 overarching objectives of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 8 makes it clear that these objectives are '*interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways*'.

- Section 3 sets out various core planning principles which should underpin plan-making. Paragraph 15 states that *'the planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.'*
- Paragraph 17 states, among other things that *'the development plan must include strategic policies to address each local planning authority's priorities for the development and use of land in its area'*.
- Paragraph 20 requires that strategic policies *'should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for, among other things, the conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure'*.
- Paragraph 170 makes it clear that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, amongst other things, *'protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity...(in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)'*.
- Paragraph 171 states that *'plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries'*.

2.4 National Planning Practice Guidance which provides additional guidance on how the NPPF should be applied states that *'one of the core principles in the National Planning Policy Framework is that planning should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Local plans should include strategic policies for the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including landscape. This includes designated landscapes but also the wider countryside'* (PPG - Natural Environment Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 8-001-20140306).

CDC Planning Policy

- 2.5 The Local Plan Review will include a review of the development management policies set out in the adopted Chichester Local Plan: Key Policies 2014-2029. Currently there is no specific policy relating to landscape or the protection of gaps alone, however the following policies and text are relevant.
- 2.6 Paragraph 3.5 of Vision for Places -The East-West Corridor states that *'Strategic development to the east and west of the city will seek to conserve and enhance the local distinctiveness, character and cohesion of existing settlements whilst recognising the important role of the city as the major focus for employment, shopping and leisure... The relationship between the National Park*

and significant natural areas to the south, especially Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, will be carefully managed by maintaining and enhancing the countryside between settlements’.

- 2.7 Policy 2 – states there is ‘a presumption in favour of sustainable development within the Settlement Boundaries which will be reviewed through the preparation of Development Plan Documents and/or Neighbourhood Plans, reflecting’, amongst other things, ‘the following general approach: 1. Respecting the setting, form and character of the settlement; 2. Avoiding actual or perceived coalescence of settlements’.
- 2.8 Policy 48 – Natural Environment contains various criteria relating to landscape character, openness of views, including in relation to the setting of the South Downs National Park, and the need to retain the identity of settlements.
- 2.9 Policy 43 – Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) states in criteria 3 that either individually or cumulatively development should not lead to actual or perceived coalescence of settlements or undermine the integrity or predominantly open and undeveloped, rural character of the AONB and its setting.
- 2.10 Policy 47 – Heritage and Design again makes reference to the need to ensure the individual identity of settlements is maintained, and the integrity of predominantly open and undeveloped character of the area, including the openness of the views in and around Chichester and Pagham Harbours, towards the city, the Cathedral, local landmarks and the South Downs National Park, is not undermined. There is further reference to the issue of coalescence in Policy 2 Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy under Settlement Boundaries.
- 2.11 Policy 45 – considers ‘Development in the Countryside’ that occurs beyond settlement boundaries and must meet a demonstrable need that cannot be met within or on the edge of an existing settlement boundary.
- 2.12 Appendix A – refers to green infrastructure. Although it is not intended as policy, it provides guidance as to issues and approaches to be considered through the development of masterplans and in planning applications. It is based on the guiding principles for green infrastructure of connectivity and multifunctionality to create a robust and coherent network of green spaces.

Emerging Policies from the Preferred Approach version of the CDC Local Plan Review 2035

- 2.13 The Preferred Approach version of the plan includes a number of policies that relate to landscape and protection of gaps.

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- 2.14 Policy S26 – Natural Environment contains various criteria relating to protecting the distinctive local landscape character, the openness of views in and around the coast, designated environmental areas and the setting of the South Downs National Park.
- 2.15 Policy S24 – Countryside states that outside settlement boundaries development will be permitted in the countryside provided that it meets certain criteria including conserving and, where possible, enhancing the key features and qualities of the rural and landscape character of the countryside setting.
- 2.16 Policy S22 – Historic Environment requires that the significance of heritage assets within the plan area is conserved or enhanced to ensure the long term protection and enjoyment of the historic environment including by protecting and managing all heritage assets, archaeological sites and historic landscapes, designated and non-designated assets, and their setting in accordance with legislation and national policy.
- 2.17 Policy S20 – Design requires all proposals for new development to be of high quality design that should respond positively to the site, surroundings and context, should physically and visually integrate with its surroundings and should incorporate and/or link to high quality Green Infrastructure and landscaping.
- 2.18 Policy S13 – Chichester City Development Principles includes reference to protecting views of the cathedral.
- 2.19 Policy S29 – Green Infrastructure states that the Council will seek to ensure development should reinforce and enhance the role of green infrastructure.
- 2.20 Policy DM19 considers ‘Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)’ and requires that development (individually or cumulatively) does not lead to coalescence of settlements or undermine the integrity and open, undeveloped rural character of the AONB and its setting and responds to, rather than detracts from, the distinctive character and special qualities of the AONB.
- 2.21 Policy DM22 – considers ‘Development in the Countryside’ that occurs beyond settlement boundaries and must meet a demonstrable need that cannot be met within or on the edge of an existing settlement boundary.
- 2.22 Policy DM20 – Development around the Coast states that development should provide recreational opportunities that do not adversely affect the character, environment and appearance of the coast and Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and that there are measures for mitigation of any detrimental effects including where appropriate the improvement of existing landscapes relating to the proposal.
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- 2.23 Policy DM27 – Historic Environment states that proposals should conserve and enhance the settings of designated and non-designated heritage assets including Historic Parks or Gardens and respect existing designed or natural landscapes. The policy also makes reference to the need to ensure the individual identity of settlements is maintained, and the integrity of predominantly open and undeveloped character of the area, including the openness of the views in and around Chichester and Pagham Harbours, towards the city, the Cathedral, local landmarks and the South Downs National Park, is not undermined.
- 2.24 Policy DM28 – Natural Environment contains various criteria relating to landscape character, openness of views, including in relation to the setting of the South Downs National Park, the tranquil and rural character of the area and the need to retain the identity of settlements.
- 2.25 Policy DM31 – Trees, Hedgerows and Woodlands contains criteria relating to conserving and enhancing existing valued trees, hedgerows and woodlands.
- 2.26 Policy DM32: Green Infrastructure states that all development will be expected to contribute towards the provision of additional green infrastructure, and the protection and enhancement of existing green infrastructure.

Boundary criteria

- 2.27 It is recommended that the following approach be taken in determining what constitutes the size of the gap necessary to prevent coalescence and maintain the separate identity of the settlements within Chichester District Council.
- 2.28 The core criteria have been adapted from the ‘criteria for gaps’ recommended by the Partners for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) in their Policy Framework for Gaps, December 2008. PUSH is a partnership of Hampshire County Council, the unitary authorities of Portsmouth, Southampton, Isle of Wight and district authorities of Eastleigh, East Hampshire, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, New Forest, Test Valley, Winchester. Although Chichester District Council does not fall directly within the PUSH area it is a neighbouring authority that shares similar complex settlement patterns and population pressure and therefore the identified criteria for gaps are considered relevant.
- 2.29 The additional criteria have been developed based on consideration of relevant landscape and visual assessment techniques and on principles set out in the NPPF for defining Green Belt boundaries which are also considered useful.
- 2.30 Core criteria:

1. The designation is needed to retain the open nature and/or sense of separation between settlements
2. The land to be included within the gap performs an important role in defining the settlement character of the area and/or separating settlements at risk of coalescence
3. The Gap's boundaries should not preclude provision being made for the development proposed in the Chichester Local Plan Review, subsequent site allocations DPD or Parish Neighbourhood Plans
4. The Gap should include no more land than is necessary to prevent the coalescence of settlements having regard to maintaining their physical and visual separation.

2.31 Additional criteria:

1. The extent of a gap will be determined partly by the nature of the landscape of the gap e.g. existing openness and enclosure
2. When identifying boundaries of a gap physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent will be chosen where possible such as woodlands, hedgerows, tree belts, waterways, highways and railway lines.
3. The important role a gap may play in the provision of green infrastructure and the opportunity to create new landscape features which contribute to green infrastructure and link with and relate to existing landscape features will be considered, this will also be a relevant consideration when deciding the extent of the boundaries.
4. The perception of visual separation will be assessed which will include the experience from either side of the gap but also from more distant views, notably to and from the designated landscapes (SDNP and Chichester Harbour AONB) to ensure their protection. The report will include an identification of key views.

2.32 A secondary consideration will be the contribution a gap makes to the setting of a designated landscape and the setting of the settlement and conservation areas will be assessed including key views to historic features, landmarks, views in and around.

2.33 The Gap Assessment Tables (Appendix 1) were used to test the criteria and identify areas that contributed to the physical or visual separation of settlements.

3. Application of landscape character assessment in the identification of gap boundaries and opportunities for green infrastructure

3.1. The following published landscape assessments have been used to assist in the assessment of the gaps and to inform the recommended location and form of green infrastructure within the gaps:

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- West Sussex County Council Landscape Character Assessment (WSCCLCA)
 - Chichester District AONB Landscape Capacity Study
 - Chichester District Landscape Capacity Study Extension
 - Chichester District Landscape Capacity Study 2018 (undertaken concurrently with this gap assessment)
 - South Downs National Park Authority Integrated Landscape Character Assessment
 - Future Growth of Chichester (FGoC)
 - Chichester Harbour AONB Landscape Character Assessment (CHAONBLCA)

3.2. These published assessments identify Landscape Character Areas (LCA's). In particular the gap assessment will include consideration of:

- The boundaries to each LCA
- The key characteristics of each LCA
- The inter-relationship between one LCA and another
- The visual character of each LCA and intervisibility between LCAs; and between the LCAs and the adjoining urban landscape
- The Strategy and guidelines for each LCA
- The visual sensitivity of each LCA
- Key sensitive elements of the LCAs
- The role of the LCA in forming the urban setting.

Principles of green infrastructure

3.3. Chichester District Council will seek to take opportunities to contribute to the green infrastructure through planning policies and obligations on development to enhance gaps and their context. In designing new green infrastructure it is recommended that it should:

- Be in keeping with local landscape character and maintain local distinctiveness
- Be substantial enough to be permanent and become a key feature of the landscape
- Have links with existing landscape features
- Be an addition to carbon offset and climate change amelioration

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- Be multifunctional – in addition to its landscape and visual attributes it should contribute to the enhancement of the ecological and recreational resource; provide shelter and noise attenuation; contribute to the conservation and enhancement of tranquility in the gap; and if opportunities arise to contribute to the local economy
 - Contribute to the effectiveness of the gap in preventing coalescence and maintaining the separate identity of the settlements.

4. Proposed Landscape Gaps within Chichester Local Plan Review Area

- Chichester and Lavant
- Nutbourne and Bosham
- Bosham and Fishbourne
- Fishbourne and Chichester
- Hermitage and Southbourne
- Southbourne and Hambrook
- Bognor and Chichester

5. Chichester and Lavant

Potential location of gap map:

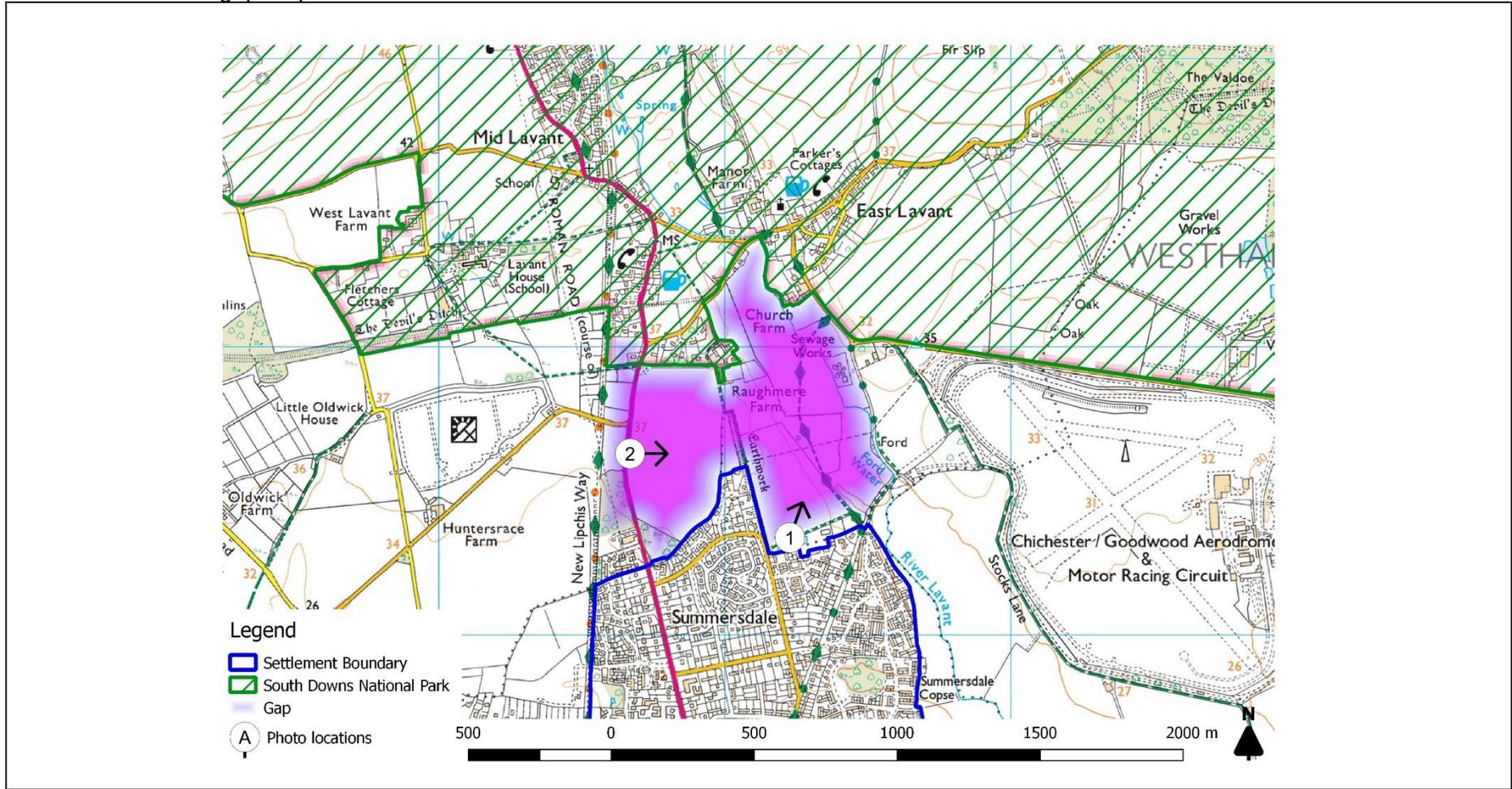


Figure: Chichester and Lavant

Photographs:



Photo 1: View over the area from footpath adjacent to northern edge of Chichester looking north to The Trundle on skyline within the SDNP



Photo 2: View over the area from Lavant Road looking north-east to The Trundle on skyline within the SDNP

Landscape gap description

5.1. The Chichester and Lavant gap comprises an area of the upper coastal plain and includes part of the Lavant Valley floor crossed by the course of the River Lavant winterbourne in the east. The landscape is predominantly open arable fields with some open pasture along the valley floor. There are some small pockets of pasture/grazed fields close to the settlement edges and some wooded copses. Many hedgerows are gappy or have been lost altogether.

Existing landscape character, visual context and key views

5.2. The gap is rural in character with few urban influences. The landscape of the gap has an open character with some wooded copses and hedgerows providing visual containment. The adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation limiting the intervisibility between the settlements, contributing to their perceived separation. This perceived separation is further enhanced in places by successive layers of vegetation. The gap forms part of a very gently undulating arable and pasture landscape continuing to the north, east and west, with visual links with the South Downs National Park to the north. The hedgerows, trees and woodland on the northern edge of Chichester partially compartmentalise the southern end of the gap. Hedgerows and buildings on the south-western edge of Lavant partially compartmentalise the north-eastern end of the gap.

5.3. The gap can be perceived from Lavant Road (A286) and a number of public rights of way crossing and close to the gap including from the West Sussex Literary Trail. There are views to and from the South Downs National Park adjacent to the north including long rural views to the distinctive chalk ridge and SDNP identified landmarks (Goodwood racecourse stadium and The Trundle). The gap is also visible in views from the SDNP representative identified view 11 St Roche's Hill (The Trundle) and 45 Stoke Clump. The openness of the gap also allows positive views to the listed buildings on the edge of Lavant. Views to the Chichester Entrenchments Scheduled Monument which falls within the gap can also be appreciated from within the area.

Recommendation

5.4. This gap forms part of the former strategic gap between Chichester and Lavant. The gap forms part of the local gap identified in the Lavant Neighbourhood Plan 2016 – 2031.

5.5. It is very important that the area between Chichester and Lavant is retained as open countryside. The gap is essential to prevent the coalescence of Chichester and Lavant and maintain the separate identities of these settlements.

5.6. Comments:

1. Provides an important area of undeveloped countryside between the large built up area of Chichester City and the small rural village of Lavant which falls within the South Downs National Park
2. The present gap between Chichester and Lavant is already narrow (300m at its narrowest point)
3. The gap provides a key contribution to the perceived separation of the two settlements. People travelling north through the extensive urban area of Chichester benefit from the perception of travelling through a reasonable stretch of open countryside before reaching the rural village of Lavant.
4. The openness of the gap can also be perceived from a number of public rights of way crossing and close to the gap
5. Development in this area would be conspicuous and could block valued views. The open character of the landscape provides positive open views between the settlements across open countryside and to the SDNP which contribute to perceived separation of the settlements and their rural settings. These views crossing the area include valued views:
 - Priority view identified in FGoC: 'Public footpath along the northern edge of Chichester'
 - Key view 8 identified in Lavant Neighbourhood Plan 2016 – 2031: 'View from the footpath north of Summersdale towards Lavant and the Trundle'
6. The gap is also visible in views from the SDNP representative identified view 11 St Roche's Hill (The Trundle) and 45 Stoke Clump where its important contribution of the separation of the settlements can be appreciated.
7. The openness of the gap contributes to the open landscape setting of the Entrenchments Scheduled Monument and adjacent listed buildings

Guidelines, landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure

1. Any proposed development should not visually, perceptually or physically lead to coalescence of settlements
2. The Lavant Neighbourhood Plan states that '*outdoor sport and recreation and other community uses will be supported unless the use will have a significant detrimental impact on the openness of the Local Gap and wider landscape*'. Careful consideration of any structures associated with the outdoor sport and recreation and other community uses must be carefully considered to ensure they do not have a detrimental impact on the landscape and the openness of the gap.
3. Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area including retaining the rural setting of designated and historic features including the Entrenchments Scheduled Monument and adjacent listed buildings
4. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape. Use new trees, woodland and hedgerow planting as appropriate.
5. Conserve hedgerows and allow for the growth of hedgerow trees.
6. Ensure the positive open views to the SDNP are retained including valued views
7. Retain all good and moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features

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8. Ensure the vegetated edges of the existing settlements are retained and protected including the screening provided by successive layers of vegetation
 9. Conserve and enhance the rural setting of the settlements and the SDNP
 10. Retain other vegetated areas where they contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
 11. Restore lost field boundaries and connecting woodland
 12. Enhance the ecological value of the valley floor and river
 13. Conserve and manage distinctive habitats including stream sides and woodland
 14. Promote good management of important village and roadside trees. Plant new tree features in villages
 15. Avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials
 16. Promote long-term management of woodland blocks/copses
 17. Retain the legibility and setting of PROW network
 18. Conserve rural character of lanes

6. Nutbourne and Bosham

Potential location of gap map:

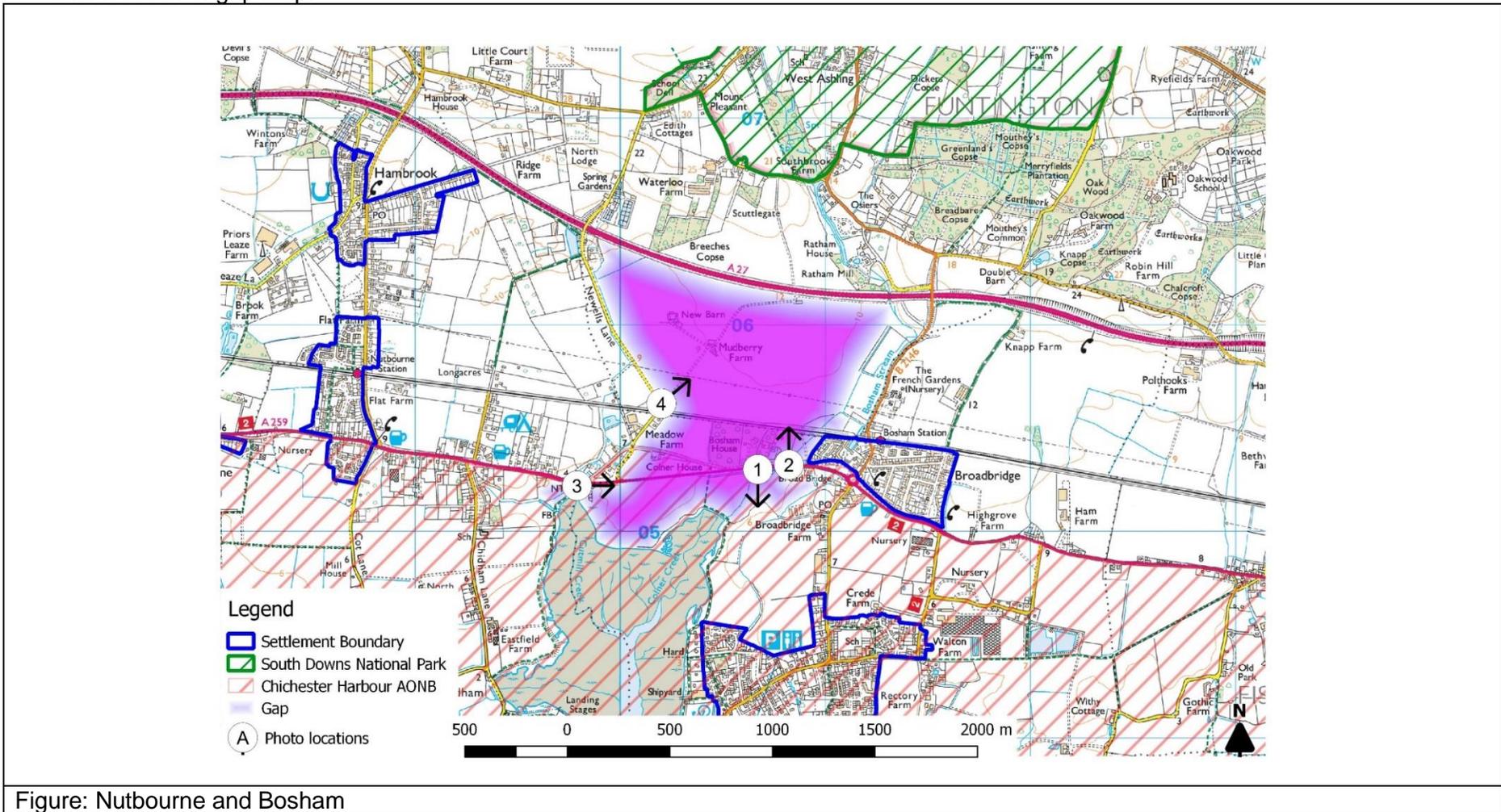


Figure: Nutbourne and Bosham

Photographs:



Photo 1: View over the gap from A259 looking south across AONB



Photo 2: View over the gap from gateway on A259 looking north with the hills within the SDNP on skyline



Landscape gap description

- 6.1. The Nutbourne and Bosham gap comprises an area of low lying gently sloping coastal plain landscape extending to the harbour edge with the area to the south of the A259 falling within the Chichester Harbour AONB. The landscape is predominantly large scale open arable fields with some hedgerows, treelines and wooded copses providing intermittent enclosure. Some small scale pasture fields occur on the settlement edges. A limited amount of low density settlement is scattered across the area, including largely scattered farmsteads and houses. The railway line crosses the area east-west, partly contained by vegetation. The gap provides separation between the settlements of Nutbourne and Bosham.

Existing landscape character, visual context and key views

- 6.2. The gap is strongly rural in character with a few urban influences. The landscape within the AONB to the south of the A259 has a particularly undisturbed and intimate character with a predominantly unsettled, open channel edge. The landscape of the gap is open (in general) in character with some hedgerows, treelines and wooded copses providing some visual containment. The adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation limiting the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation. This perceived separation is further enhanced in places by successive layers of vegetation. The gap forms part of a low lying gently sloping coastal plain landscape forming an integral part of the wider harbour landscape of the AONB to the south, east and west. The open character of the gap provides open views across the arable landscape on either side of the A259 with visual links across the Bosham Channel within Chichester Harbour AONB which forms part of the gap to the south. The northern side, to the north of the A259, is broken up in places by some low density settlement in a well treed landscape setting, particularly perceived along the A259. This low density settlement does not undermine the overall integrity of the gap. Further to the north beyond the railway line are large scale open arable fields, containing the isolated Mudberry Farm and New Barn.
- 6.3. The key places where the predominantly open and undeveloped land within the gap can be perceived is from the busy A259, the coastal path, train line and Chidham Lane. The gap can also be perceived from the harbour within the AONB, the Chidham and Bosham peninsular and other roads running north from the A259 within and close to the gap including Newells Lane and Ratham Lane (more open in winter). Hedgerows and settlement along A259 intermittently restrict views. In places there are long open views to the hills within the South Downs National Park to the north as well as panoramic views of the harbour pool to the south and the distinctive landmark spire of Bosham Church within the AONB. A number of these are valued views identified in The Bosham Neighbourhood Plan and the Chidham and Hambrook Neighbourhood Plan. These open views contribute to the perceived separation of the settlements. The openness of the gap contributes to the open landscape setting of the AONB and a number of listed buildings. The open arable fields to the north of the railway line form part of the wider separation of the settlements allowing long views to the hills within the South Downs National Park and from within the area there are views to the Chichester Cathedral landmark spire.

Recommendation

- 6.4. This gap forms part of the former strategic gap between Chichester and Emsworth.
- 6.5. It is important that the area between Nutbourne and Bosham is retained as open countryside. The gap is essential in preventing the coalescence of the settlements and maintaining their separate identities.

6.6. Comments:

1. Provides an important area of predominantly undeveloped countryside between the built up area of Nutbourne and Bosham, part of which falls within the AONB
2. The landscape of the gap within the AONB has a particularly undisturbed and intimate character with a predominantly unsettled, open channel edge
3. The gap provides a key contribution to the perceived separation of the settlements particularly experience by people travelling along the busy A259, the coastal path, the train line and Chidham Lane
4. Although there is a substantial width between the main built up areas of the settlements (2km), the present gap is already partly fragmented by built form particularly to the north of the A259 and at the western end near the main settlement area of Nutbourne meaning the perceived and actual separation of the settlements is vulnerable to further erosion, particularly around the A259
5. The perceived separation experienced along the A259 is particularly effective where open fields occur on both sides of the road increasing the feeling of openness with visual links to the AONB
6. The gap is important in the wider part it plays as part of a succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of the string of settlements between Chichester and Emsworth.
7. The openness of the gap can also be perceived from the harbour of the AONB, the Chidham and Bosham peninsular and from roads crossing and close to the gap
8. Development in much of this area would be conspicuous and could block valued views. The open character of the landscape provides positive open views between the settlements across open countryside including across the AONB and to the SDNP. This contributes to the perceived separation of the settlements and their rural settings. These views include valued open long views across the gap to the hills within the SDNP, the harbour channel and Bosham Church identified in The Bosham Neighbourhood Plan and the Chidham and Hambrook Neighbourhood Plan
9. The openness of the gap contributes to the open landscape setting of the AONB and a number of listed buildings

Guidelines, landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure

1. Any proposed development should not visually, perceptually or physically lead to coalescence of settlements
2. Conserve the undisturbed and intimate character of the AONB landscape and predominantly unsettled, open channel edge
3. Conserve the open, rural and tranquil character of the area
4. Particularly conserve open fields where they occur on both sides of the A259 which increases the perception of openness and separation between the settlements
5. Conserve and manage the diverse existing natural landscape features, including mudflats, salt marsh, sand dunes, shingle banks, woodland, rifees and ditches.

6. Consider opportunities to enhance and link to the Strategic Wildlife Corridor identified by Chichester District Council at Broadbridge
7. Encourage the planting of new small woodlands and hedgerows behind the waters edge.
8. Promote the control of growth along the waters edge of alien plants such as Common Cord-grass (*Spartina anglica*), green algae and Sargassum seaweed, which restrict the development of endemic saltmarsh plants.
9. Maintain, restore and enhance floodplain woodland and associated species, including native black poplar, where appropriate.
10. Maintain and strengthen the existing landscape framework through hedgerow and native tree planting, especially around settlements
11. Create a new large scale tree and hedgerow framework to complement the open, intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining important views.
12. Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts.
13. Conserve and link existing hedgerows and trees. Retain all good and moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features.
14. Restore field boundaries through shelter belt planting. Encourage bold tree planting adjacent to roads to enhance both the visual and wildlife value of these areas.
15. Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements.
16. Encourage landscape enhancements around villages and on their approaches.
17. Strengthen the landscape framework and filter the views of the urban edge through planting of woodland, tree and shrub belts and groups. Use these to screen and unify disparate suburban elements, especially along roadside verges, on village edges and around glasshouses.
18. Encourage and promote land management schemes to increase species-rich grassland areas.
19. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape.
20. Conserve characteristic views including views to the water. Ensure the positive open views to the SDNP, AONB and landmark features are retained including valued views
21. Ensure the vegetated edges of the existing settlements are retained and protected including the screening provided by successive layers of vegetation
22. Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area and retain the rural setting of designated and historic features including listed buildings
23. Conserve existing grassland headlands and encourage provision of additional areas
24. Conserve and enhance the rural open setting of the settlements and the AONB
25. Retain other vegetated areas where they contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
26. Retain the legibility and setting of PROW network
27. Conserve rural character of lanes including the sunken lanes

7. Bosham and Fishbourne

Potential location of gap map:

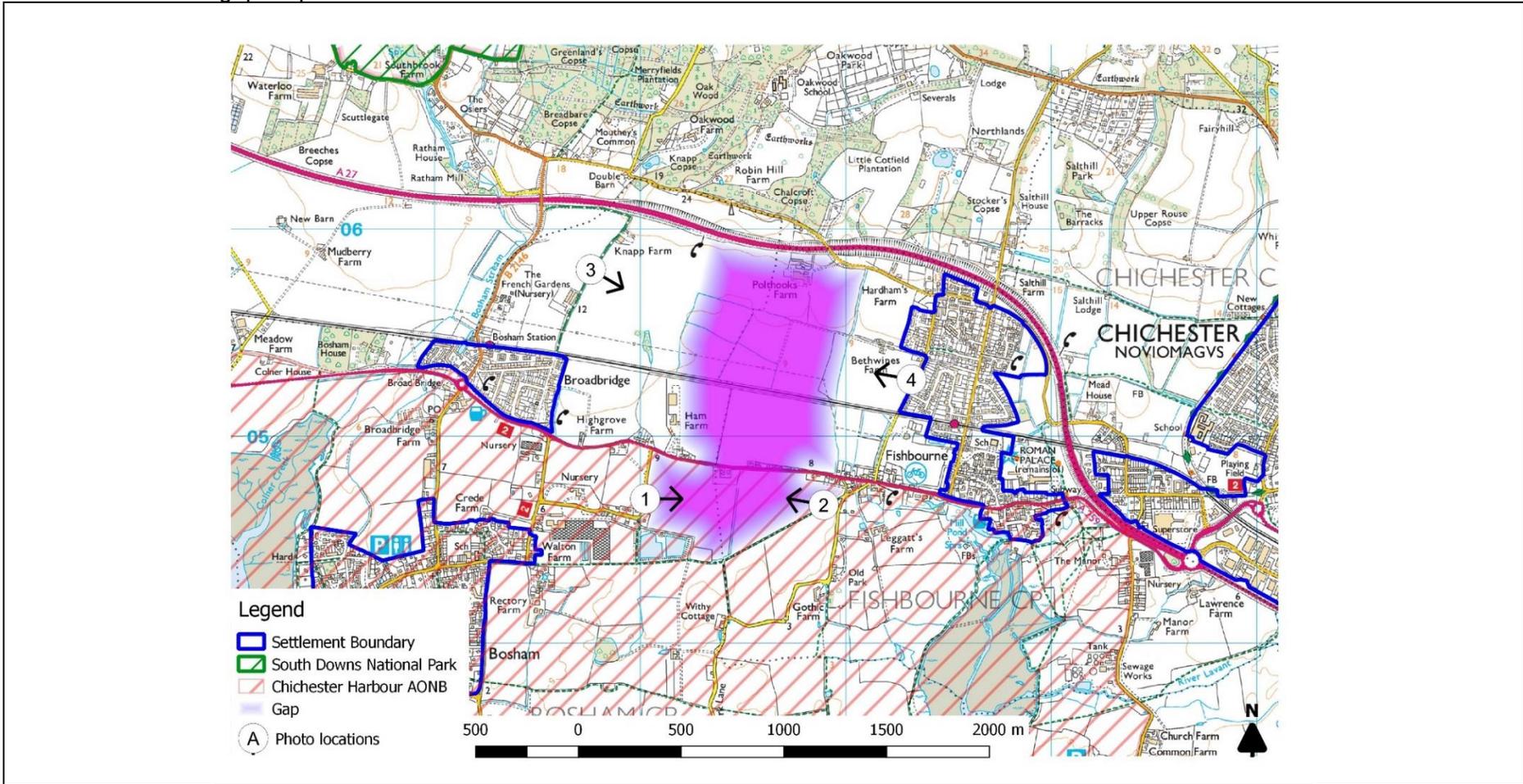


Figure: Bosham and Fishbourne

Photographs:



Photo 1: View over the gap from Chequer Lane (within the AONB) looking east across open fields. Fishbourne village is screened by successive layer of vegetation



Photo 2: View over the gap from footpath west of Old Park (within the AONB) looking north-west across open fields towards A259



Photo 3: View over gap - priority view to Chichester Cathedral from PRow between Broadbridge and Knapp Farm across sub-area identified in FGoC



Photo 4: View from Blackboy Lane looking west towards open fields of gap

Landscape gap description

7.1. The gap between Bosham and Fishbourne comprises an area of low lying flat coastal plain landscape with the area to the south of the A259 falling within the Chichester Harbour AONB. The landscape is predominantly large scale open arable fields with some degraded hedgerows and treelines providing intermittent enclosure. Some limited settlement falls within the gap adjacent to the A295 and Polthooks Farm in the north. The gap provides separation between the settlements of Broadbridge/Bosham and Fishbourne.

Existing landscape character, visual context and key views

- 7.2. The gap is rural in character with few urban influences. The landscape of the gap is open in character with some degraded hedgerows and treelines providing some visual containment. The adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation limiting the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation. This perceived separation is further enhanced in places by successive layers of vegetation. The gap forms part of a low lying flat coastal plain landscape continuing to the south, east and west. The open character of the gap provides open views across the arable landscape on either side of the A259 with visual links to the hills within the South Downs National Park and Chichester Harbour AONB which forms part of the gap to the south. The visual continuity of the gap is partly broken up in places by the scattered farms, houses, nurseries/garden centre, particularly perceived along the A259, however these do not undermine the overall integrity and openness of the gap.
- 7.3. The key places where the predominantly open and undeveloped land within the gap can be perceived is from the A259, the train line and Chequer Lane. The gap can also be perceived from Blackboy Lane to the east, Clay Lane to the north, Brooks Lane (and bridleway) and from a number of public rights of way crossing and close to the gap. The openness of the gap is potentially perceived in long views from the South Downs National Park to the north. Hedgerows and settlement along A259 intermittently restrict views, with filtered views possible through the hedges in winter months. In places there are long open views to the hills within the South Downs National Park to the north. There are some open views from the A259 where there are breaks in the hedgerow to the open arable fields within the AONB, however tree belts and settlement restrict views to the Harbour. These open views contribute to the perceived separation of the settlement. The openness of the gap contributes to the open landscape setting of the AONB, Fishbourne conservation area and listed buildings. There also long views to the Chichester Cathedral landmark spire across the area. The open arable fields to the north of the railway line form part of the wider separation of the settlements also allowing long views to the hills within the South Downs National Park and from within the area to the Chichester Cathedral landmark spire.

Recommendation

- 7.4. This gap forms part of the former strategic gap between Chichester and Emsworth.
- 7.5. It is important that the area between Broadbridge/Bosham and Fishbourne is retained as open countryside. The gap is essential in preventing the coalescence of the settlements and maintaining their separate identities.
- 7.6. Comments:

1. The gap provides an important area of predominantly undeveloped countryside between the built up area of Broadbridge/Bosham and Fishbourne, part of which falls within the AONB
2. The gap provides a key contribution to the perceived separation of the settlements particularly experienced by people travelling along the A259, the train line and Chequer Lane
3. The width of the gap means people travelling along the A259 perceive a reasonable stretch of open countryside between the settlements, contributing to their perceived separation and separate identities
4. Currently the existing low density settlement within the gap does not undermine the overall integrity and openness of the gap. However, the partial fragmentation of the gap resulting from this settlement does mean the perceived and actual separation of the settlements is vulnerable to further erosion, particularly around the A259
5. The perceived separation experienced along the A259 is particularly effective where open fields occur on both sides of the road increasing the feeling of openness with visual links to the AONB
6. The gap is important in the wider part it plays as part of a succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of the string of settlements between Chichester and Emsworth.
7. The openness of the gap can also be perceived from a number of public rights of way crossing and close to the gap, including from sensitive viewers within the AONB
8. Development in much of this area would be conspicuous and could block valued views. The open character of the landscape provides positive open views between the settlements across open countryside including across the AONB, to the South Downs National Park and to Chichester Cathedral spire. This contributes to the perceived separation of the settlements, their individual identities and rural settings.
9. The openness of the gap contributes to the open landscape setting of the AONB, Fishbourne conservation area and listed buildings

Guidelines, landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure

1. Any proposed development should not visually, perceptually or physically lead to coalescence of settlements
2. Particularly conserve open fields where they occur on both sides of the A259 which increases the perception of openness and separation between the settlements
3. Maintain and strengthen the existing landscape framework through hedgerow and native tree planting
4. Create a new large scale tree and hedgerow framework to complement the open, intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining important views.
5. Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts.
6. Conserve and link existing hedgerows and trees. Retain all good and moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features.

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7. Restore field boundaries through shelter belt planting. Encourage bold tree planting adjacent to roads to enhance both the visual and wildlife value of these areas.
 8. Consider opportunities to enhance and link to the Strategic Wildlife Corridors identified by Chichester District Council at Fishbourne and Broadbridge
 9. Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements.
 10. Encourage landscape enhancements around villages and on their approaches.
 11. Strengthen the landscape framework and filter the views of the urban edge through planting of woodland, tree and shrub belts and groups. Use these to screen and unify disparate suburban elements, especially along roadside verges, on village edges and around glasshouses.
 12. Encourage and promote land management schemes to increase species-rich grassland areas.
 13. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape.
 14. Ensure the positive open views to the SDNP, AONB and Chichester Cathedral spire are retained including valued views
 15. Ensure the vegetated edges of the existing settlements are retained and protected including the screening provided by successive layers of vegetation
 16. Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area and retain the rural setting of designated and historic features including the Fishbourne Conservation Area and adjacent listed buildings
 17. Conserve and enhance the rural open setting of the settlements and the AONB
 18. Retain other vegetated areas where they contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
 19. Retain the legibility and setting of PROW network
 20. Conserve rural character of lanes

8. Fishbourne and Chichester

Potential location of gap map:

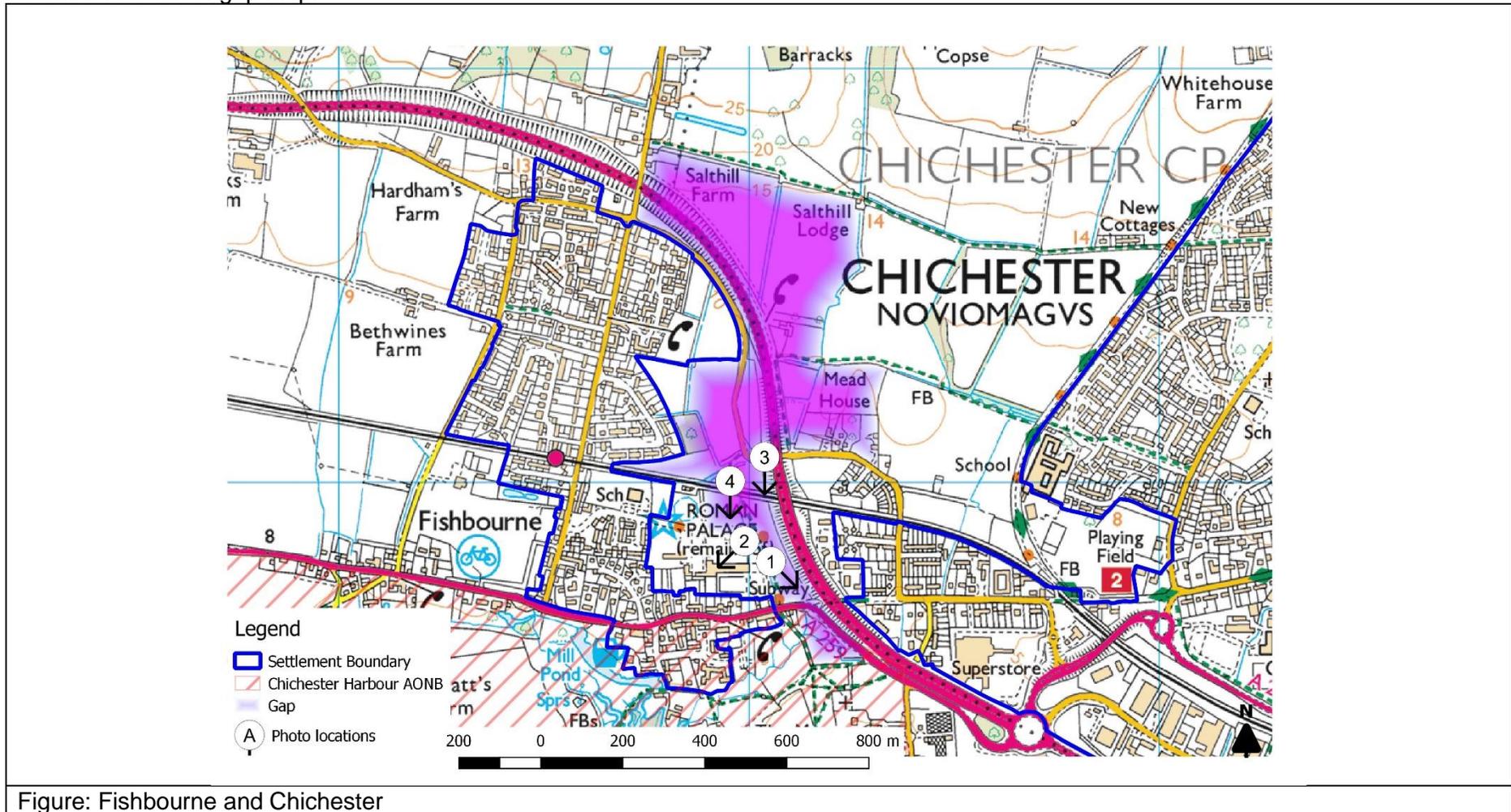


Figure: Fishbourne and Chichester

Photographs:



Photo 1: View over the gap from public right of way crossing area looking south-east across



Photo 2: View over the gap from public right of way crossing area looking south-west towards Fishbourne Roman Palace



Landscape gap description

- 8.1. The Fishbourne and Chichester gap comprises an area of low lying flat landscape coastal plain landscape. The Chichester Harbour AONB lies adjacent to the south of the area, south of the A259. The landscape is predominantly small to medium scale pasture/paddock fields with some land appearing unmanaged and is adjacent to the Fishbourne Roman Palace Scheduled Monument in the south. The fields are enclosed by boundary vegetation, including along roads, and the area is partially contained by the built edge of Fishbourne to the west and tree belts along the A27 which divides the gap in two. The gap is crossed by the train line and Clay Lane. The gap provides separation between the settlements of Fishbourne and Chichester (including the strategic development area west of Chichester). The area of fields to the west of the A27 provides the most effective contribution to the separation. However, open fields and vegetation to the north and east of the A27 also make a contribution to the perceived

separation experienced from along Clay Lane and public rights of way (north and east of the A27) as well as contributing to the rural setting of the settlements and their separation from the A27.

Existing landscape character, visual context and key views

- 8.2. The gap is rural in character although is affected by urbanising elements and has a neglected and unmanaged appearance in places. The landscape of the gap is enclosed in character with boundary vegetation, including along roads, and the area is partially contained by the built edge of Fishbourne to the west and tree belts along the A27 crossing the gap providing some visual containment. The adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation and the visual barrier provided by the A27 on a raised embankment with adjacent tree belts restricts intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation. This perceived separation is further enhanced by successive layers of vegetation. The gap forms part of a low lying flat coastal plain landscape forming part of the setting of Chichester and Fishbourne, however, it is severed from the wider landscape by the A27 and surrounding built form. The south-western pattern of fields forms a coherent wedge of rural landscape between Fishbourne's eastern edge and the A27 and the fields in the south contribute to the setting of the AONB, Fishbourne Conservation Area, listed buildings and Fishbourne Roman Palace Scheduled Monument.
- 8.3. The key places where the undeveloped land within the gap can be perceived is from the Clay Lane which directly links to Chichester, the A259, the public right of way crossing and bounding the area, the train line, National Cycle Route 2 crossing southern end of area and from adjacent to the Fishbourne Roman Palace Scheduled Monument. Boundary vegetation, including along roads, and the built edge of Fishbourne to the west and tree belts along the A27 restrict views in places. In places there are views across the pasture/paddock fields within the gaps which contribute to the perceived separation of the settlements. Highways planting restricts views from A27. There is some intervisibility with the AONB to the south.

Recommendation

- 8.4. This gap forms part of the former strategic gap between Chichester and Emsworth.
- 8.5. It is important that the area between Fishbourne and Chichester is retained as open countryside. The gap is essential in preventing the coalescence of the settlements and maintaining their separate identities.
- 8.6. Comments:
1. Provides an important area of predominantly undeveloped countryside between the built up area of Fishbourne and Chichester
 2. The present gap between Chichester and Fishbourne is already narrow (200m at its narrowest point)

3. People travelling west through the extensive urban area of Chichester benefit from the perception of travelling through a reasonable stretch of open fields along Clay Lane before reaching the smaller settlement of Fishbourne.
4. The gap provides a key contribution to the perceived separation of the settlements particularly experience by people travelling along Clay Lane, the public right of way crossing and bounding the area, the train line, National Cycle Route 2 crossing the gap and the A259
5. The perceived separation experienced along Clay Lane is particularly effective where open fields occur on both sides of the road increasing the feeling of openness
6. The gap is important in the wider part it plays as part of a succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of the string of settlements between Chichester and Emsworth.
7. Development in much of this area would be conspicuous from the roads and public rights of way
8. The open character of the landscape contributes to the rural setting of the settlements and provides some separation between the settlements and the A27.
9. The openness of the gap contributes to the open landscape setting of the AONB, Fishbourne Conservation Area, listed buildings and Fishbourne Roman Palace Scheduled Monument.
10. The vegetation and open fields form part of the Strategic Wildlife Corridors identified by Chichester District Council

Guidelines, landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure

1. Any proposed development should not visually, perceptually or physically lead to coalescence of settlements
2. Particularly conserve open fields where they occur on both sides of Clay Lane to increase the perception of openness and separation between the settlements
3. Maintain and strengthen the existing landscape framework through hedgerow and native tree planting
4. Create a new large scale tree and hedgerow framework to complement the open, intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining important views.
5. Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts.
6. Conserve and link existing hedgerows and trees. Retain all good and moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features.
7. Restore field boundaries through shelter belt planting. Encourage bold tree planting adjacent to roads to enhance both the visual and wildlife value of these areas.
8. Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements.
9. Encourage landscape enhancements around villages and on their approaches.
10. Strengthen the landscape framework and filter the views of the urban edge through planting of woodland, tree and shrub belts and groups. Use these to screen and unify disparate suburban elements, especially along roadside verges and on village edges

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11. Encourage and promote land management schemes to increase species-rich grassland areas.
 12. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape.
 13. Ensure the vegetated edges of the existing settlements are retained and protected including the screening provided by successive layers of vegetation
 14. Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area and retain the rural setting of designated and historic features including the Fishbourne Conservation Area, Fishbourne Roman Palace Scheduled Monument and adjacent listed buildings
 15. Conserve and enhance the rural open setting of the settlements and the AONB
 16. Retain other vegetated areas where they contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
 17. Retain the legibility and setting of PROW network
 18. Conserve rural character of lanes
 19. Consider opportunities to enhance and link to the Fishbourne Strategic Wildlife Corridor identified by Chichester District Council which cross the gap

9. Hermitage and Southbourne

Potential location of gap map:

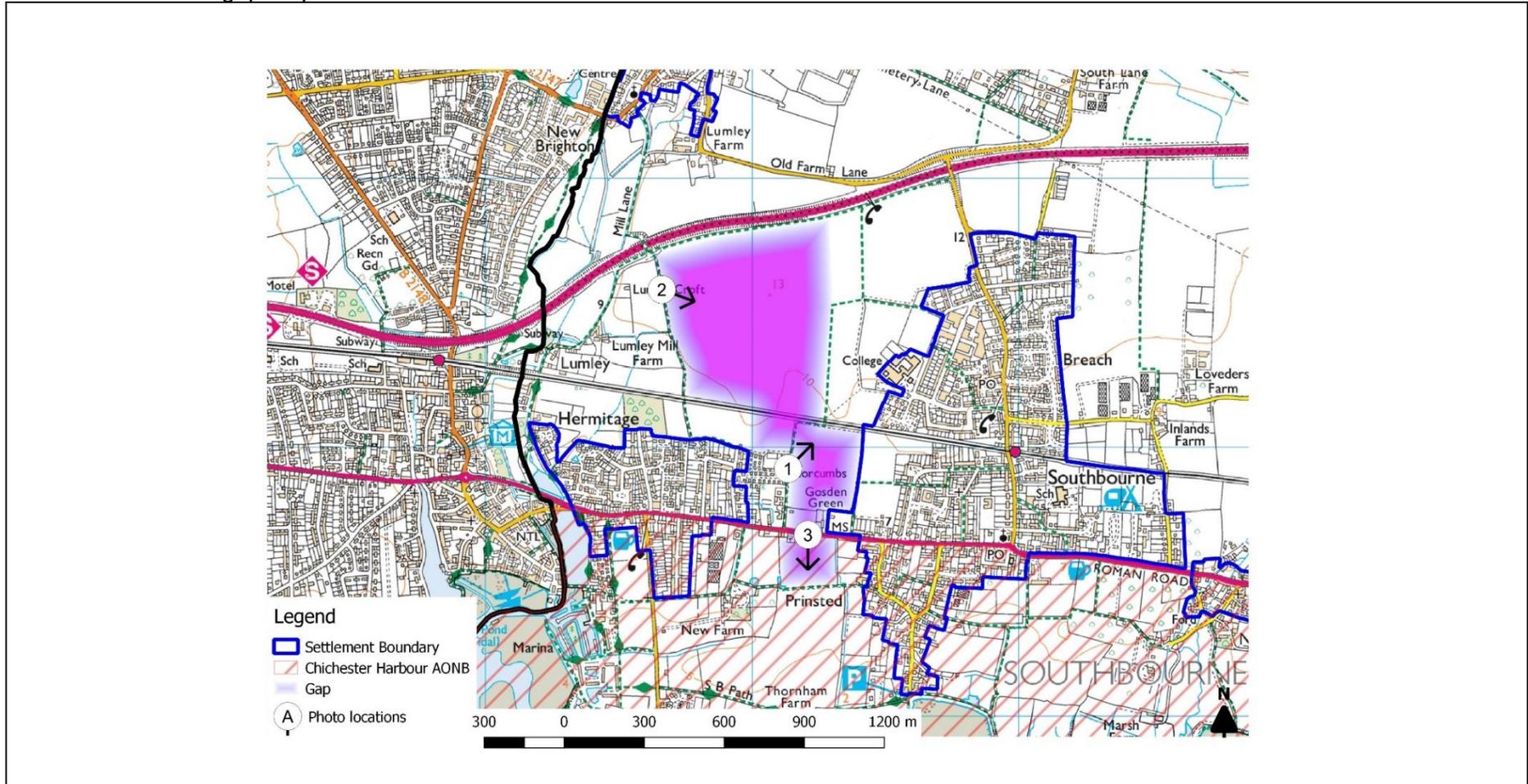


Figure: Hermitage and Southbourne

Photographs:



Photo 1: View over the gap from public right of way east of Hermitage looking north-east towards Southbourne and to hills within the South Downs National Park on skyline



Photo 2: View over the gap from public right of way east of Lumley towards Hermitage and Southbourne



Photo 3: View over the gap from A259 looking south across fields within the AONB

Landscape gap description

- 9.1. The gap between Hermitage and Southbourne comprise an area of low lying flat coastal plain landscape with the area to the south of the A259 falling within the Chichester Harbour AONB. The landscape is predominantly large scale open exposed arable fields with a limited hedgerow network, although some hedges, trees and woodland blocks towards the edges of the gap providing some enclosure. Some limited settlement along the A259 falls within the gap. The gap provides separation between the settlements of Hermitage and Southbourne as well as contributing to the wider separation of Prinsted and Hermitage.

Existing landscape character, visual context and key views

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- 9.2. The gap is rural in character with a few urban influences. The landscape of the gap is open in character with a limited hedgerow network although some hedges, trees and woodland blocks towards the edges of the gap providing some visual containment. The adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation limiting the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation. This perceived separation however does not benefit from successive layers of vegetation making the gap vulnerable to erosion. The gap forms part of a low lying flat coastal plain landscape continuing to the south, east and west. The open character of the gap provides open views across the arable landscape on either side of the A259 with visual links to the hills within the South Downs National Park and Chichester Harbour AONB which forms part of the gap to the south. The visual continuity of the gap is partly broken up along the A259 by houses and small holdings, particularly perceived along the A259.
- 9.3. The key places where the predominantly open and undeveloped land within the gap can be perceived is from the public rights of way crossing the open fields and along the settlement edges, from the train line and the A259. In places there are long open views to the hills within the South Downs National Park to the north. The openness of the gap is potentially perceived in long views from the South Downs National Park to the north. Hedgerows and settlement along the A259 partially restrict views, particularly to the north at the narrowest part of the gap. Hedgerows limit views from the A259 across the AONB to the south, although open views area afforded through field gates where there are glimpsed views to boat masts which contribute to the perceived separation of the settlement. The gap to the north of the A259 can be appreciated in views from the AONB to the south. The openness of the gap contributes to the open landscape setting of the AONB and a number of listed buildings and allows views to Southbourne church spire. The open arable fields to the north of the railway line form part of the wider separation of the settlements also allowing long views to the hills within the South Downs National Park.

Recommendation

- 9.4. This gap forms part of the former strategic gap between Chichester and Emsworth.
- 9.5. It is important that the area between Hermitage and Southbourne is retained as open countryside. The gap is essential in preventing the coalescence of the settlements and maintaining their separate identities.
- 9.6. Comments:

1. The gap provides an important area of predominantly undeveloped countryside between the built up area of Hermitage and Southbourne, part of which falls within the AONB
2. The open field immediately to the north of Tuppenny Barn and the A259 provides important separation between the settlements. The strong straight boundaries along Tuppenny Lane and the new settlement edge running northwards from Tara Perry Road to the railway line enhance the separation. Fields further to the north contribute to the wider separation of the settlements.
3. The present gap between Hermitage and Southbourne is already narrow (250m at its narrowest point) to the north of A259
4. The gap provides a key contribution to the perceived separation of the settlements particularly experienced by people travelling along the A259, the train line and a number of public rights of way including from sensitive viewers (e.g. walkers along the public rights of way) within the AONB
5. Few open views across the countryside between the settlements from the A259, particularly to the north, means the perceived separation of the settlements is limited from this road.
6. The partial fragmentation of the gap resulting from the existing low density settlement around the A259 means the perceived and actual separation of the settlements is vulnerable to further erosion
7. The gap is important in the wider part it plays as part of a succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of the string of settlements between Chichester and Emsworth.
8. Development in much of this area would be conspicuous and could block valued views. The open character of the landscape provides positive open views between the settlements across open countryside including across the AONB, to the South Downs National Park and to Southbourne church spire. This contributes to the perceived separation of the settlements, their individual identities and rural settings. These views include positive long views across the gap to the hills within the South Downs National Park
9. The openness of the gap contributes to the open landscape setting of the AONB and listed buildings

Guidelines, landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure

1. Any proposed development should not visually, perceptually or physically lead to coalescence of settlements
2. Maintain and strengthen the existing landscape framework through hedgerow and native tree planting
3. Create a new large scale tree and hedgerow framework to complement the open, intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining important views.
4. Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts.
5. Conserve and link existing hedgerows and trees. Retain all good and moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features.
6. Restore field boundaries through shelter belt planting. Encourage bold tree planting adjacent to roads to enhance both the visual and wildlife value of these areas.

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7. Consider opportunities to enhance and link to the Strategic Wildlife Corridor identified by Chichester District Council at Hermitage
 8. Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements.
 9. Encourage landscape enhancements around villages and on their approaches.
 10. Strengthen the landscape framework and filter the views of the urban edge through planting of woodland, tree and shrub belts and groups. Use these to screen and unify disparate suburban elements, especially along roadside verges, on village edges and around glasshouses.
 11. Encourage and promote land management schemes to increase species-rich grassland areas.
 12. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape.
 13. Ensure the positive open views to the SDNP and AONB are retained
 14. Ensure the vegetated edges of the existing settlements are retained and protected
 15. Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area and retain the rural setting of designated and historic features including listed buildings
 16. Conserve and enhance the rural open setting of the settlements and the AONB
 17. Retain other vegetated areas where they contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
 18. Retain the legibility and setting of PROW network
 19. Conserve rural character of lanes

10. Southbourne and Hambrook

Potential location of gap map:

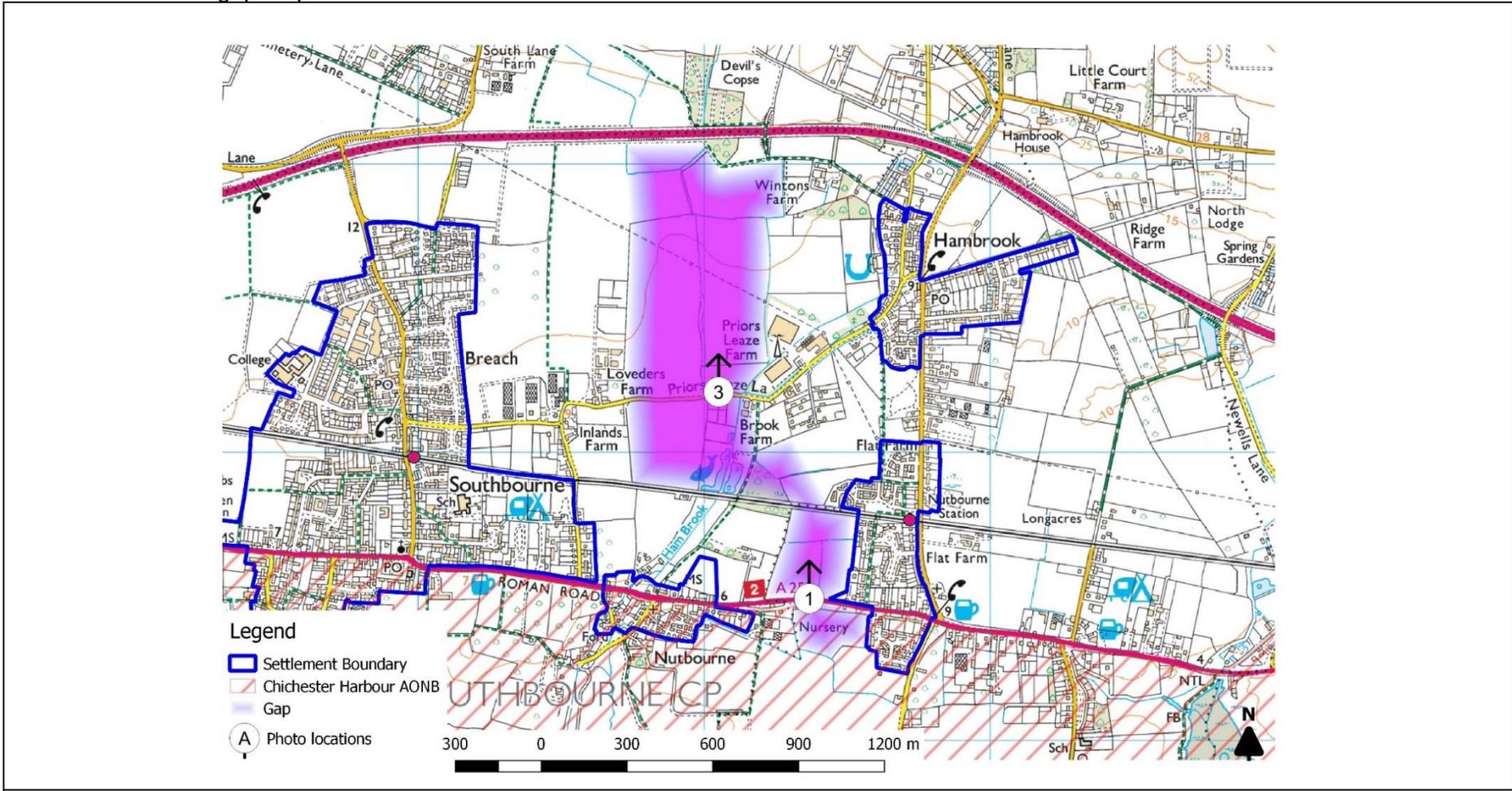


Figure: Southbourne and Hambrook

Photographs:



Photo 1: View over gap through field gate off A259 looking north across arable field to Nutbourne's settlement edge



Photo 2: View towards the gap from public right of way south of Nutbourne within AONB looking north across open arable fields



Photo 3: View over the gap from Priors Leaze Lane looking north to large farm buildings at Priors Leaze Farm

Landscape gap description

10.1 The Southbourne and Hambrook gap comprises an area of low lying gently sloping coastal plain formed of two main parts to the north and south of the A259. The gap also provides separation between Nutbourne East and Nutbourne West. The southern area falls within the AONB and comprises an arable field semi enclosed by a wooded copse, hedgerows and the settlement edge of Nutbourne with an open southern boundary on its western side. This field forms part of a pattern of more open arable fields extending southwards to the open harbour edge to the south. To the north of the A259 the gap comprises open arable fields and some more semi-enclosed pasture/grazed fields of mixed scale, a water course, fishery and a small woodland block, divided by the railway line. The main settlement of Nutbourne West is orientated east-west with Nutbourne East orientated north-south. To the east the gap between Hambrook and Nutbourne East is already narrow, comprising a field of public open space west of Broad Road, with low density housing along Broad Road to the east already joining the two settlements. Chichester Grain Farmers (agroindustry), Brook Farm and a Travelling Showpeople's site adjoin the northern part of the gap to the east. The gap provides separation between the settlements of Southbourne and Hambrook/Nutbourne, Nuthbourne East and West but does not include the remaining narrow gap between the settlements of Nutbourne and Hambrook.

Existing landscape character, visual context and key views

10.2 The gap has a rural character, although in places this is being eroded by a few suburbanising influences. The landscape to the south, within the AONB and has a notably strong rural character. The landscape of the gap, particularly to the north, is semi enclosed by hedgerows and tree lines providing visual containment including along the settlement edges with some more open arable fields to the south of the train line and in the north. The adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation limiting the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation. This perceived separation is further enhanced by the successive layers of vegetation within the gap, particularly in the north. In the south the gap forms part of a low lying gently sloping coastal plain landscape forming part of the wider harbour landscape of the AONB to the south, east and west. In the south the gap has good visual continuity with the wider AONB landscape. The open fields immediately north of the A295 contribute to the open setting of the AONB. Low density settlement to the south of the A259 means Nutbourne East and West are practically joined together but for one field. The perceived separation of these two settlements is however aided by the low density settlement being set in a well treed landscape setting.

10.3 The key places where the land within the gap can be perceived is from the A259, Priors Leaze Lane, the train line, public rights of way crossing the gap, public rights of way within the AONB to the south and to the east of Southbourne. Hedgerows and settlement along A259 restrict views in places. In places the gap provides open views across fields within the area, more open in winter months, including to the hills within the SDNP to the north. There are glimpses of Prinstead and Nutbourne Channels from the southern part of the gap including from along the A259. These open views contribute to the perceived separation of the

settlement. The gap is also visible in characteristic views from within the AONB across the open landscape of the Chidham peninsula to the south. The openness of the gap provides some contribution to the open setting of a cluster of listed buildings along the A259.

Recommendation

10.4 This gap forms part of the former strategic gap between Chichester and Emsworth.

10.5 It is important that the area between Southbourne and Nutbourne/Hambrook is retained as open countryside. The gap is essential in preventing the coalescence of the settlements and maintaining their separate identities as well as the separation of Nutbourne East and West.

10.6 Comments:

1. Provides an important area of undeveloped countryside between the built up area of Southbourne and Nutbourne/Hambrook, the southern part of which falls within the AONB
2. The landscape of the gap within the AONB has a good rural character and forms part of a pattern of more open arable fields extending southwards to the open harbour edge to the south
3. The gap provides a key contribution to the perceived separation of the settlements particularly experienced by people travelling along the busy A259, Priors Leaze Lane, the train line, public rights of way crossing the gap, public rights of way within the AONB to the south and to the east of Southbourne
4. The gap is also perceived in characteristic views from within the AONB across the open landscape of the Chidham peninsula to the south.
5. Forms a narrow separation between Nutbourne East and Nutbourne West. Low density settlement to the south of the A259 means Nutbourne East and West are practically joined together but for one field. The perceived separation of these two settlements is aided by the well treed landscape setting of the low density settlement. The perceived separation is however vulnerable to erosion e.g. from vegetation loss and the potential increase in building density.
6. The open fields immediately north of the A295 contribute to the open setting of the AONB.
7. The gap is important in the wider part it plays as part of a succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of the string of settlements between Chichester and Emsworth.
8. Development in much of the northern and southern area of the gap would be conspicuous, particularly from the public right of way crossing the gap, and could block characteristic views. The open character of the landscape provides positive views between the settlements across open countryside including across the AONB and to the SDNP. This contributes to the perceived separation of the settlements and their rural settings.

9. The openness of the gap contributes to the wider character of the AONB and the setting of a cluster of listed buildings along the A259
10. The vegetation and open fields form part of the Strategic Wildlife Corridor at Nutbourne crossing the area identified by Chichester District Council

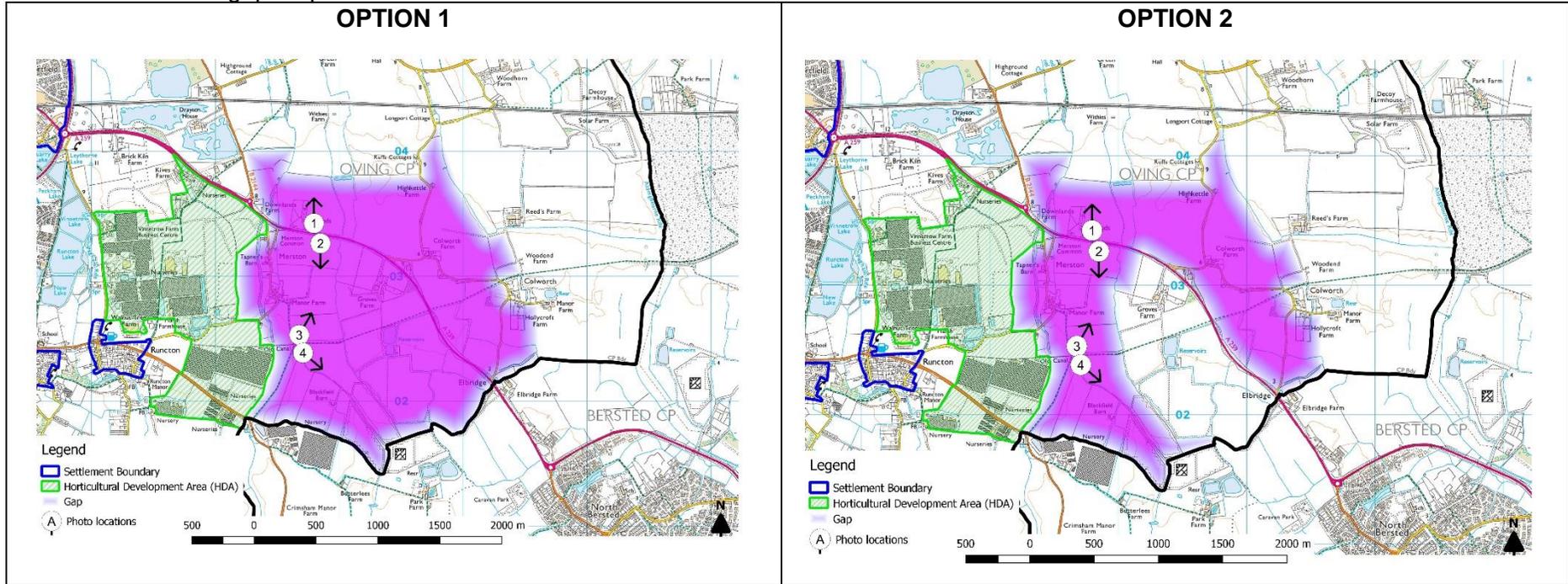
Guidelines, landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure

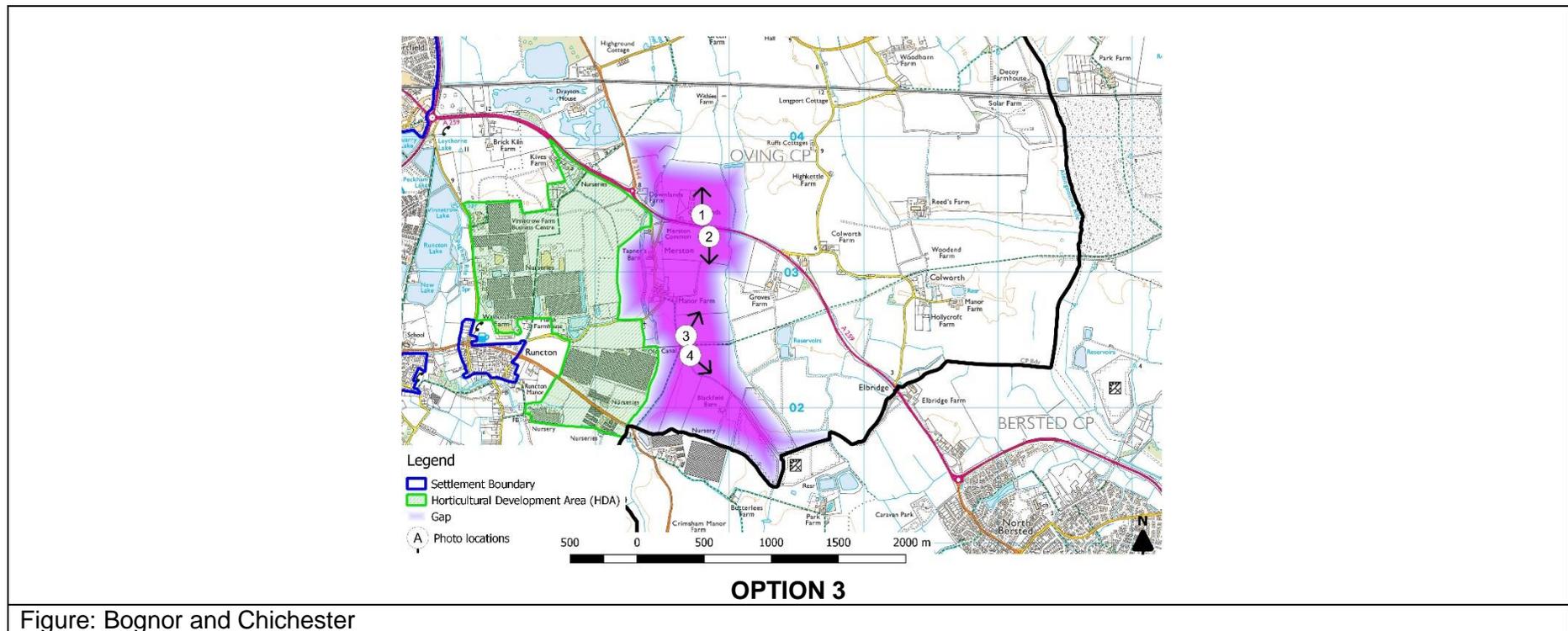
1. Any proposed development should not visually, perceptually or physically lead to coalescence of settlements
2. Conserve the character of the AONB and the contribution the gap makes to its setting and the pattern of more open arable fields extending southwards to the open harbour edge to the south
3. Conserve the long views to Chichester Harbour AONB
4. Create a new large scale tree and hedgerow framework to complement the open, intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining important views.
5. Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts.
6. Conserve and link existing hedgerows and trees.
7. Restore field boundaries through shelter belt planting, especially around horse paddocks.
8. Establish landscape management plans for urban edges.
9. Encourage the creation of new suburban woodlands, with community involvement if possible, for recreation and to link up with existing woodlands to the north.
10. Encourage bold tree planting adjacent to roads to enhance both the visual and wildlife value of these areas.
11. Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements.
12. Encourage landscape enhancements around villages and on their approaches.
13. Strengthen the landscape framework and filter the views of the urban edge through planting of woodland, tree and shrub belts and groups. Use these to screen and unify disparate suburban elements, especially along roadside verges, on village edges and around glasshouses.
14. Encourage and promote land management schemes to increase species-rich grassland areas.
15. Ensure any new development is well integrated into the wider landscape.
16. Conserve characteristic views including positive views to the SDNP and across the AONB
17. Ensure the vegetated edges of the existing settlements are retained and protected including the screening provided by successive layers of vegetation
18. Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area and retain the rural setting of designated and historic features including listed buildings
19. Conserve and enhance the rural open setting of the settlements and the AONB

20. Retain other vegetated areas where they contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
21. Retain the legibility and setting of PROW network
22. Conserve rural character of lanes
23. Consider opportunities to enhance and link to the Strategic Wildlife Corridor identified by Chichester District Council which crosses the gap

11. Bognor and Chichester

Potential location of gap map:





Photographs:



Photo 1: View over the gap from A259 looking north across large scale arable fields with the hills within the SDNP on skyline



Photo 2: View over the gap from A259 looking south across large scale arable fields



Landscape gap description

11.1. Three options for the Chichester and Bognor gap were considered comprising areas of low lying coastal plain landscape. The landscape is predominantly open large scale arable fields with straight drainage ditch systems, a low density of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with occasional shelterbelts. Horticultural development adjoins the area and option 1 includes some reservoirs and an area of polytunnels around Groves Farm and continuing eastwards to the district boundary. The areas contain some low density settlement including the traditional settlement at Merston strung out along Marsh Lane and some isolated farms. The gap is crossed by the line of the former Arundel to Chichester Canal and the Chichester Flood Relief Channel flood plain lies along western boundary.

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- 11.2. Land identified as part of two local gaps in Arun District Council's Local Plan (2018) adjoins part of the Chichester District Council's boundary immediately to the south of the gap. In addition Arun District Council's Strategic Development Area (SD3) extends from Bognor's settlement edge south-west of the A259 to Chichester District Council's boundary. Although Chichester's main built up area lies further to the west, the Chichester District Council's Horticultural Development Area adjoins the gap to the west containing substantial areas of large scale horticultural development.
- 11.3. Option 1 proposes the largest gap which extends in one continuous area from Chichester District Council's Runcton Horticultural Development Area to Chichester District Council's boundary and the adjoining Arun District Council's local gaps and Strategic Development area (SD3). The openness of the gap is however somewhat undermined by the area of existing polytunnel development around Groves Farm and extending to Chichester District Council's boundary to the south-east.
- 11.4. Option 2 is similar to Option 1 however it excludes the area of polytunnel development around Groves Farm and extending to Chichester District Council's boundary to the south-east.
- 11.5. Option 3 is the smallest of the three gap options stretching from the Chichester District Council's southern boundary across the A259 and includes a small area of open fields north of the A259. The area does not include the polytunnel development.

Existing landscape character, visual context and key views

- 11.6. All three gap options are rural in character with few suburban influences except some influence of large scale horticultural development. The landscape of the all three gap options has a predominantly open character with some treelines and hedgerows providing visual containment. Intervisibility between the settlements of Bognor and Chichester is restricted by the intervening horticultural development and successive layers of vegetation contributing to their perceived separation. All three gap options form part of a of low lying coastal plain landscape continuing in all directions with visual links with the South Downs National Park to the north. Overall the open arable fields form a strong consistent landscape pattern allowing long open views across the area.
- 11.7. All three gap options can be perceived from the A259 and a number rural lanes and public rights of way crossing and close to the gap options. There are long rural views to the South Downs National Park the north including to the distinctive chalk ridge and SDNP identified landmarks (Goodwood racecourse stadium, Halnaker Windmill and The Trundle). The openness of the gap options also allows positive views to the listed buildings in Merston including Grade I St Giles' church.

Recommendation

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- 11.8. This gap forms part of the former strategic gap between Chichester and Bognor.
- 11.9. Bearing in mind the pressure for development, it is important the area between Chichester and Bognor is retained as open countryside to retain the character of the area. Although the distance between the settlements is reasonably large the gap is considered essential to prevent the coalescence of these two large built up areas. Maintaining their separate identities in an area already influenced by large scale horticultural development and under pressure for new development will be key.
- 11.10. Comments:
1. Provides an important area of undeveloped large scale open countryside between the large built up area of Chichester City and large built up area of Bognor
 2. There is currently a gap between the main settlement areas. Although this may be considered reasonably substantial, the proposed gap options provide a means of protecting the perceived separation of these two settlements. People travelling through the extensive urban areas of both Chichester and Bognor and connecting along the A259 benefit from the perception of travelling through a stretch of open countryside before reaching the other settlement area.
 3. The openness of the gap options can also be perceived from a number of public rights of way crossing and close to the gaps options.
 4. Development in this area would be conspicuous and could block valued views. The open character of the landscape provides positive open views between the settlements across open countryside and to the SDNP which contribute to perceived separation of the settlements and their rural settings.
 5. The openness of the gap options contribute to the open landscape setting of the listed buildings in Merston including Grade I St Giles' Church.
 6. Option 1: This option allows for a substantial stretch of gap along the A259 that would contribute to the perceived sense of separation between the large built up areas of Chichester and Bognor along this key route.
 7. Option 2: If this is the preferred option development within the area of existing polytunnels will need to ensure it does not undermine the visual and perceptual separation of the settlements.
 8. Option 3: While this option should ensure the physical separation of the settlements and will retain key open views across the gap from the A259, it is limited in size and so provides limited contribution to the perceived sense of separation between the large built up areas of Chichester and Bognor along this key route.

Guidelines, landscape mitigation and contribution to green infrastructure

1. Any proposed development should not visually, perceptually or physically lead to coalescence of settlements
2. Ensure any new development, including horticultural development, is well integrated into the wider landscape. Use locally appropriate and characteristic hedgerow and treeline planting as appropriate.
3. Ensure the positive open views to the SDNP and identified landmarks are retained
4. Retain all good and moderate quality tree cover and locally distinctive boundary treatments and features
5. Retain other vegetated areas where they contribute to landscape and biodiversity value
6. Ensure the vegetated edges of the existing settlements and horticultural development are retained and protected including the screening provided by successive layers of vegetation
7. Maintain and enhance the historic character of the area including retaining the rural setting of designated and historic features including the listed buildings
8. Conserve and enhance the rural setting of the settlements
9. Create a new, large scale tree and hedgerow framework which complements the open intensively farmed landscape, whilst maintaining significant views of the South Downs and local features.
10. Maintain and strengthen field boundaries such as hedgerows and shelterbelts.
11. Link up existing remnant hedgerows and tree lines to re-establish coherent field boundaries and Wildlife Corridors.
12. Encourage and promote land management schemes to increase species rich grassland areas.
13. Promote management and establishment of grassland regimes of grazing, hay cutting and silage.
14. Restore and strengthen the landscape of the gaps between settlements.
15. Encourage landscape enhancements around villages and on their approaches.
16. Establish new vegetation features by the planting of hedgerows and tree clumps in field corners and along roadsides, especially those approaching settlements.
17. Restrict extensive areas of tree planting to poorer quality agricultural land.
18. Maintain and enhance the landscape and biodiversity of rifes and other existing habitats. Reprofile banks and encourage more diverse flora by lengthening clearance cycles.
19. Enhance the visual prominence of rifes through the establishment of waterside vegetation features.
20. Retain the legibility and setting of PROW network
21. Conserve rural character of lanes

APPENDIX 1 Gap Assessment Tables

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL LANDSCAPE GAP ASSESSMENT

Chichester and Lavant	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Does the land lie between the settlements?				Forms the key area of land, already narrow, separating the settlements
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				Sewage works in the east
Is there a coherent land management pattern? (may include a number of different uses).				Predominantly open arable fields with some open pasture along the valley floor. Some small pockets of pasture/grazed fields close to the settlement edges and some wooded copses
Are there clearly defined coherent boundaries?				Many hedgerows are gappy or have been lost altogether
Is there distinct settlement character/pattern?				Associated with river valley. Chichester City is a large built up area. Lavant is a small rural village falling within the South Downs National Park (SDNP)
Is there a well-defined urban edge?				Largely defined by field pattern and partly by Entrenchments Scheduled Monument. Settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation bounding open countryside
Is the land predominantly open in character between settlements?				Open character with some wooded copses and hedgerows providing visual containment
Are there roads or footpaths linking or between the settlements?				The openness of the gap can be perceived from a number of public rights of way crossing and close to the gap and from the Lavant Road
Is there a high level of intervisibility between the settlements?				Vegetation limits the intervisibility between the settlements strengthening the perceived separation
Does the area play an important role in the provision of green infrastructure?				Forms part of the Lavant Valley floor, crossed by the River Lavant and a number of public rights of way. Contains woodland, trees and hedges that link to wider area
Are there opportunities to enhance green infrastructure?				Opportunities to enhance existing landscape structure, rural setting of the settlements and SDNP while protecting important views
Are there views to and from a designated landscape?				Visible in identified views to and from the SDNP. Views to SDNP identified landmarks from within area
Meet Criteria for Gap Designation?	Yes	No		For potential gap location see gap report map (Figure: Chichester and Lavant)

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL LANDSCAPE GAP ASSESSMENT

Nutbourne and Bosham	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Does the land lie between the settlements?				Forms part of a wider gap between the settlements
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				A limited amount of low density settlement is scattered across the area, including largely scattered farmsteads and houses
Is there a coherent land management pattern? (may include a number of different uses).				Predominantly large scale open arable fields with some hedgerows, treelines and wooded copses. Some small scale pasture fields occur on the settlement edges
Are there clearly defined coherent boundaries?				A number of open boundaries with some hedgerows and treelines
Is there distinct settlement character/pattern?				Characteristic pattern of scattered farmsteads and houses. The gap contributes to the succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of a string of settlements. Views to landmark buildings.
Is there a well-defined urban edge?				Adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation limiting the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation
Is the land predominantly open in character between settlements?				Landscape is predominantly open and large scale with some hedgerows, treelines and wooded copses providing intermittent enclosure. Open channel edge to the south within the AONB
Are there roads or footpaths linking or between the settlements?				The openness of the gap can be perceived from the coastal path, a number roads crossing and close to the gap including from the A259 and train line
Is there a high level of intervisibility between the settlements?				Vegetation limits the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation.
Does the area play an important role in the provision of green infrastructure?				Contains part of the channel edge and falls within a Strategic Wildlife Corridor identified by Chichester District Council at Broadbridge. Contains hedgerows, treelines and wooded copses that link to wider area. Crossed by coastal path.
Are there opportunities to enhance green infrastructure?				Opportunities to enhance and link to Strategic Wildlife Corridor and enhance existing landscape structure and harbour-side habitats
Are there views to and from a designated landscape?				Part of area falls within AONB with wider visual links. Long views to the hills within the South Downs National Park
Meet Criteria for Gap Designation?	Yes		No	For potential gap location see gap report map (Figure: Nutbourne and Bosham)

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL LANDSCAPE GAP ASSESSMENT

Bosham and Fishbourne	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Does the land lie between the settlements?				Forms part of a wider gap between the settlements
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				Some limited settlement falls within the gap adjacent to the A295 and Polthooks Farm in the north
Is there a coherent land management pattern? (may include a number of different uses).				Predominantly large scale open arable fields with some degraded hedgerows and treelines
Are there clearly defined coherent boundaries?				A number of open boundaries with some degraded hedgerows and treelines
Is there distinct settlement character/pattern?				Characteristic pattern of scattered farmsteads and houses. The gap contributes to the succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of a string of settlements. Views to landmark buildings.
Is there a well-defined urban edge?				Adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation
Is the land predominantly open in character between settlements?				Landscape is predominantly open and large scale with some degraded hedgerows and treelines providing intermittent enclosure
Are there roads or footpaths linking or between the settlements?				The openness of the gap can be perceived from a number of lanes and public rights of way bounding, crossing and close to the gap, including from the A259 and train line
Is there a high level of intervisibility between the settlements?				Vegetation limits the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation
Does the area play an important role in the provision of green infrastructure?				Close to the Strategic Wildlife Corridors identified by Chichester District Council at Fishbourne and Broadbridge. Contains hedgerows and treelines that link to wider area.
Are there opportunities to enhance green infrastructure?				Opportunities to enhance and link to Strategic Wildlife Corridors and enhance existing landscape structure.
Are there views to and from a designated landscape?				Part of area falls within AONB although wider visual links restricted. Long views to the hills within the South Downs National Park
Meet Criteria for Gap Designation?	Yes		No	For potential gap location see gap report map (Figure: Bosham and Fishbourne)

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL LANDSCAPE GAP ASSESSMENT

Fishbourne and Chichester	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Does the land lie between the settlements?				Comprises the majority of the narrow gap between the settlements (including the strategic development area west of Chichester)
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				Some limited low density settlement
Is there a coherent land management pattern? (may include a number of different uses).				Predominantly small to medium scale pasture/paddock fields enclosed by boundary vegetation
Are there clearly defined coherent boundaries?				Good structure of boundary vegetation and treelines
Is there distinct settlement character/pattern?				Chichester City is a large built up area. Fishbourne is a much smaller settlement and includes areas of modern housing with a linear Conservation Area and Fishbourne Roman Palace Scheduled Monument in the south.
Is there a well-defined urban edge?				Irregular edge, reasonably well contained by vegetation
Is the land predominantly open in character between settlements?				Fields are semi-enclosed by vegetation
Are there roads or footpaths linking or between the settlements?				The gap can be perceived from a number of lanes and public rights of way bounding, crossing and close to the gap, including from Clay Lane, the A259, National Cycle Route 2 and train line
Is there a high level of intervisibility between the settlements?				Vegetation and the visual barrier provided by the A27 on a raised embankment with adjacent tree belts restricts intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation
Does the area play an important role in the provision of green infrastructure?				Forms part of the Strategic Wildlife Corridors identified by Chichester District Council. Contains hedgerows and treelines that link to wider area. National Cycle Route 2 crosses area
Are there opportunities to enhance green infrastructure?				Opportunities to enhance Strategic Wildlife Corridor and enhance existing landscape structure.
Are there views to and from a designated landscape?				Forms part of setting of AONB to the south with some intervisibility
Meet Criteria for Gap Designation?	Yes		No	For potential gap location see gap report map (Figure: Fishbourne and Chichester)

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL LANDSCAPE GAP ASSESSMENT

Hermitage and Southbourne	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Does the land lie between the settlements?				Forms part of the narrow gap between the settlements in the south and part of the wider gap between the settlements in the north
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				Some limited settlement along the A259
Is there a coherent land management pattern? (may include a number of different uses).				Predominantly large scale open exposed arable fields
Are there clearly defined coherent boundaries?				A limited hedgerow network
Is there distinct settlement character/pattern?				The gap contributes to the succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of a string of settlements. Views to Southbourne Church spire
Is there a well-defined urban edge?				The adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation
Is the land predominantly open in character between settlements?				Landscape is predominantly open and large scale with a limited hedgerow network, although some hedges, trees and woodland blocks towards the edges of the gap providing some enclosure
Are there roads or footpaths linking or between the settlements?				The openness of the gap can be perceived from the A259, the train line and a number of public rights of way including from within the AONB
Is there a high level of intervisibility between the settlements?				Vegetation limits the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation.
Does the area play an important role in the provision of green infrastructure?				Contains hedgerows and treelines that link to wider area. Close to Strategic Wildlife Corridor identified by Chichester District Council at Hermitage
Are there opportunities to enhance green infrastructure?				Opportunities to enhance and link to Strategic Wildlife Corridor and enhance existing landscape structure
Are there views to and from a designated landscape?				Part of area falls within AONB with wider visual links. Long views to the hills within the South Downs National Park
Meet Criteria for Gap Designation?	Yes		No	For potential gap location see gap report map (Figure: Hermitage and Southbourne)

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL LANDSCAPE GAP ASSESSMENT

Southbourne and Hambrook	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Does the land lie between the settlements?				Forms part of the narrow gap between Nutbourne East and Nutbourne West in the south and part of the wider gap between the settlements of Southbourne and Hambrook in the north
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				Predominantly undeveloped
Is there a coherent land management pattern? (may include a number of different uses).				Predominantly semi enclosed and open arable fields with some semi-enclosed pasture/grazed fields of mixed scale, a water course, fishery and a small woodland block
Are there clearly defined coherent boundaries?				Hedgerows, some more open boundaries
Is there distinct settlement character/pattern?				The gap contributes to the succession of gaps along the East-West corridor that break up and help define the separate identities of a string of settlements.
Is there a well-defined urban edge?				The adjacent settlement edges are reasonably well contained by vegetation
Is the land predominantly open in character between settlements?				Predominantly open with southern end semi-enclosed
Are there roads or footpaths linking or between the settlements?				The gap can be perceived from the A259, Priors Leaze Lane, the train line, public rights of way crossing the gap and from within the AONB
Is there a high level of intervisibility between the settlements?				Vegetation limits the intervisibility between the settlements which contributes to their perceived separation
Does the area play an important role in the provision of green infrastructure?				Contains hedgerows, woodland and treelines that link to wider area. Forms part of the Strategic Wildlife Corridor at Nutbourne crossing the area identified by Chichester District Council
Are there opportunities to enhance green infrastructure?				Opportunities to enhance and link to Strategic Wildlife Corridor and enhance existing landscape structure
Are there views to and from a designated landscape?				Part of area falls within AONB with wider visual links. Long views to the hills within the South Downs National Park
Meet Criteria for Gap Designation?	Yes		No	For potential gap location see gap report map (Figure: Southbourne and Hambrook)

CHICHESTER DISTRICT COUNCIL LANDSCAPE GAP ASSESSMENT

Bognor and Chichester	Yes	In part	No	Comment
Does the land lie between the settlements?				Forms part of a wider gap separating the settlements and adjoins Chichester District Council's Horticultural Development Area to the east
Is the land predominantly undeveloped?				Contains some low density settlement including the traditional settlement at Merston strung out along Marsh Lane and some isolated farms
Is there a coherent land management pattern? (may include a number of different uses).				Predominantly open large scale arable fields
Are there clearly defined coherent boundaries?				Straight drainage ditch systems, a low density of hedgerows and hedgerow trees with occasional shelterbelts
Is there distinct settlement character/pattern?				Chichester City and Bognor are large built up areas. Contains the traditional settlement at Merston strung out along Marsh Lane and some isolated farms
Is there a well-defined urban edge?				Settlement edges are reasonably well contained by treelines and hedgerows
Is the land predominantly open in character between settlements?				Predominantly open character with some treelines and hedgerows providing visual containment
Are there roads or footpaths linking or between the settlements?				The openness of the gap can be perceived from a number of public rights of way and roads crossing and close to the gap options including the A259
Is there a high level of intervisibility between the settlements?				Intervisibility between the settlements of Bognor and Chichester is restricted by the intervening horticultural development and successive layers of vegetation contributing to their perceived separation
Does the area play an important role in the provision of green infrastructure?				Contains hedgerows and treelines, drainage ditch systems and rifees that link to wider area
Are there opportunities to enhance green infrastructure?				Opportunities to enhance existing landscape structure
Are there views to and from a designated landscape?				Views to the SDNP and identified landmarks
Meet Criteria for Gap Designation?	Yes		No	For potential gap location see gap report map (Figure: Bognor and Chichester)