

4.3 Future Context

The land to the south of the Site is consented to deliver up to 223 dwellings. The illustrative layout of which is shown on the plan opposite. This will effectively alter the contextual environment to the south from that of a golf course to that of a residential settlement edge.

Refer to **Figure 4.7** - Future local context.

- Site Boundary
- 1

Settlement
- 2

Treebelts / Woodlands
- 3

Agricultural Land
- 4

Commercial / Farmsteads
- 5

School
- 6

Golf Courses
- 7

Allotments
- 8

Recreation Ground



Figure 4.7 - Aerial photograph illustrating future contextual landscape (fabrik 2025)

4.4 Site and Immediate Context Appraisal

The Site is bound by Cucumber Wood Ancient Woodland and the associated western woodland belt to the north with Reading Golf Course to the north beyond. Reading Golf Course and the well treed route of Kidmore End Road, with farmland and the dwellings on Crawshay Drive sit beyond to the north-east while the well treed rear gardens associated with the dwellings of Brooklyn Drive sit to the east. The existing ground of Reading Golf Course sits to the south and has been consented for up to 223 dwellings. Considering the implementation of the compensatory tree planting to be delivered as part of the permitted residential scheme, woodland enclosure will increase in the long term.

There are no definitive Public Rights of Way that cross the Site. With the exception of the emerging Locally Valued Landscape designation, there are no landscape designations either at the national or regional level covering the Site.

A series of representative photos which illustrate the prevailing Site conditions and the contextual townscape and landscape are set out on the following pages and within the visual assessment section.

Figure 4.8 illustrates the key elements across the Site's character and associated photographs are set out overleaf.

4.4.1 Natural

Geology and Soils

The Site lies within the Bedrock geology, with Seaford Chalk Formation and Newhaven Chalk Formation. The superficial deposits are primarily sand and gravel.

The soil within the Site is similar to the ones in the wider landscape to the north, which is slightly acidic, loamy and clayey, with impeded drainage. The soil fertility is moderate to high.

Landform and Drainage

The western section of the Site is well related to and contiguous with the ridgeline plateau on which Emmer Green sits.

Overall levels fall from approximately 80m AOD adjacent to the dwellings on Highdown Hill Road west of the Site, and fall north-eastwards to approximately 65m AOD at the head of the secluded dry valley.

The natural topography of the Site has been modified in places to provide level surfaces at the teeing ground and bunkers and where the spoil has been used around them, resulting in a series of uncharacteristic hummocks across the natural profile.

Vegetation Cover

The boundaries of the Site are often vegetated, comprising of Cucumber Wood Ancient Woodland and the western woodland belt to the north, which obscures the views into the Site; the overgrown hedgerow along Kidmore End Road to the east; and the collection of trees and understorey planting north of Brooklyn Drive.

The trees within the Site and on the Site boundaries are apparent in the local landscape. Consistent with the local area,

where trees often sit behind and between the built form, setting the built form into a well treed landscape.

There are also several TPOs within the Site boundary comprising of Ash, Pine, Cherry, and Oak trees, along with the mixed tree wooded area within the eastern portion of the Site, and Cucumber Wood towards the north.

Key Natural Elements, Features and characteristics

The key landscape features of the Site comprise of individual and groups of trees laid out on a broadly north to south alignment; the valley slopes; and the head of the dry valley is in the north-east.

There are no significant detracting features within the Site. The skyline within the Site is often formed by Cucumber Wood and associated woodland belts to the north; the dwellings set amongst trees to the east and west; and the trees within Reading Golf Course to the south and the countryside beyond to the north-east.

In the future the visual horizon to the south will be replaced by a combination of dwellings and trees consistent with that to the east and west.

4.4.2 Cultural / Social

Land Use

The Site comprises the middle section of what used to be Reading Golf Club and contains a number of trees and tree groups, allowing the green spaces to be set between a framework of trees and the trees to form a landscape buffer to the neighbouring dwellings of Brooklyn Drive. There is no existing built form within the Site, however, the Site will abut the new built edge from the consented scheme in the future.

Currently the Site consists purely of grassland and is frequently used by dog walkers with multiple access points available from the northeast and northwest, as well a pathway from the south. From within the Site, the various dense layers of trees work as an effective buffer limiting visibility outwards of the Site, except towards the northeast where the topography allows clear views towards Crawshay Drive.

Enclosure

The Site and immediate surrounding area sit within Reading Golf Club which is historically classified as recreational sports ground with a null enclosure type.

Time Depth

The Site was historically a field, as part of the wider countryside in the area. The boundaries of the Site gradually formed and were defined by settlement expansion in Caversham and Emmer Green to the east, south and the west. Following this, the Site was used as a man-made and manicured golf course with the natural profile being modified to accommodate the tees and bunkers. Whilst further north beyond Tanners Lane, remains as countryside today.

4.4.3 Perceptual Qualities

The golf course forms a manicured landscape between the settlement edge and therefore creates a transitional, fringe landscape, with a contrast between the rural field patterns beyond to the north and the suburban domestic scale edge to the south. The consented development to the south of the Site in the golf course will set the Site within a built context to the east, south and west. Buildings in close proximity to the Site are predominantly one to two storey height, with pitched roofs and comprise a range of building styles and materials.

Due to the combination of surrounding built form, intervening layers of vegetation and boundary vegetation, the perception of this green finger is limited to a localised geographic area around the Site itself.

Tranquillity / Remoteness

When active as a golf course, the Site was highly managed, with remnants of wildness associated with the BAP priority habitat to the east. It's location on the settlement edge with construction activity to the south, together with movement across the course, reduces the sense of tranquillity.

Function

The Site performs a role in providing a landscape setting to the settlement edge.

Whilst the Kidmore End Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Sensitivity Study concludes that the whole of the Local Valued Landscape is of Medium landscape value, due to its relationship with the settlement edge and physical and visual enclosure, the landscape value is at the lower end of the scale.

Nighttime Character

The Site and the landscape of the Golf Course beyond are predominantly dark due to its current use.

Lighting influences on the Site from the surrounding environment include the following:

- External amenity lighting from the neighbouring dwellings on Brooklyn Drive, Kidmore End Road, Eric Avenue and Highdown Hill Road;
- Lighting associated with the road corridors and new dwellings to the south;
- Street lights along Grove Road to the west;
- Security, motion activated lighting associated with the storage barn in Cucumber Wood.

Overall therefore, whilst the night-time character of the Site itself is predominantly dark, it is influenced by the lighting in the surrounding townscape to the east, west and the new residential area to the south.



Figure 4.8 – Site landscape appraisal (fabrik, 2025)

4.0
Landscape Character

4.5 Internal Visual Survey

A visual inspection of the Site was conducted on 6th March 2025.

Figure 4.9 illustrates the internal photographic viewpoint locations.



Site Boundary
Viewpoint location

Figure 4.9 – Plan illustrating internal Site photograph location points (fabrik, 2025)



Photograph – Viewpoint A
 View looking south-west from the edge of Cucumber Wood, illustrating the character and nature of the visual enclosure. Dwellings on Highdown Hill Road are discernible through the layers of trees.



Photograph – Viewpoint B
 View looking east from the edge of Cucumber Wood, illustrating the character and context to the Site. Dwellings along Crawshay Drive are apparent at the ridge line. Trees and vegetation to the north of Brooklyn Drive obscure the built form behind.

-  Site boundary
-  Photo location





Photograph – Viewpoint C
View looking north-east across the north-eastern section of the Site towards Kidmore End Road and Crawshay Drive. Again, dwellings along Crawshay Drive are apparent.



Photograph – Viewpoint D
View looking north-west towards Cucumber Wood from the southern boundary of the Site, illustrating the visual enclosure provided by Cucumber Wood and the western tree belt. Distant wooded ridgelines are just discernible filtered between the intervening vegetation. Wider views reveal the development of Emmer Green Drive being conducted towards the south of the Site.

 Site boundary
 Photo location





Photograph – Viewpoint E
View looking north-east across the Site from the south-western corner of the Site boundary. The layers of trees within and outside the Site form a visual enclosure for the immediate landscape. Again, wider views reveal the fence boundary of the current development towards the south.



Photograph – Viewpoint F
View looking south-east from the north-western edge of the Site illustrating the character and nature of the visual enclosure to the Site. Dwellings on Brooklyn Drive are discernible at the distance.

 Site boundary
 Photo location



5.0

Visual Assessment

5.1

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

The extent to which the Site is visible from the surrounding landscape is based on grading of degrees of visibility. It has been determined through a visual inspection of the Site and its context from roads, public rights of way and properties.

Seasonal change in existing evergreen and deciduous plant material will affect the available views. Typically views will be different through the seasons with a greater sense of enclosure in the summer months when deciduous trees are in leaf. The viewpoint photography was completed on 6th March 2025. Winter views have therefore been provided.

Figure 5.1 provides a Zone of Theoretical Visibility, based on assumed development parameters of 10m. In reality, views towards the Site are filtered by the intervening built form and layers of vegetation. Representative viewpoints from the Study Area are presented on **Figure 5.2**, with the degree of openness identified. Photographs from each location, along with a description of each view, are then provided.

The photographs have been taken in line with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 6/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (Landscape Institute, 2019) and are presented at the same scale and resolution, with viewpoint location plans for reference. Full size extracts, presented in accordance with TGN 6/19 can be provided at request.

The Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (Landscape Institute, 2019) has informed the approach to the assessment of residential visual amenity, within the scope of this report.

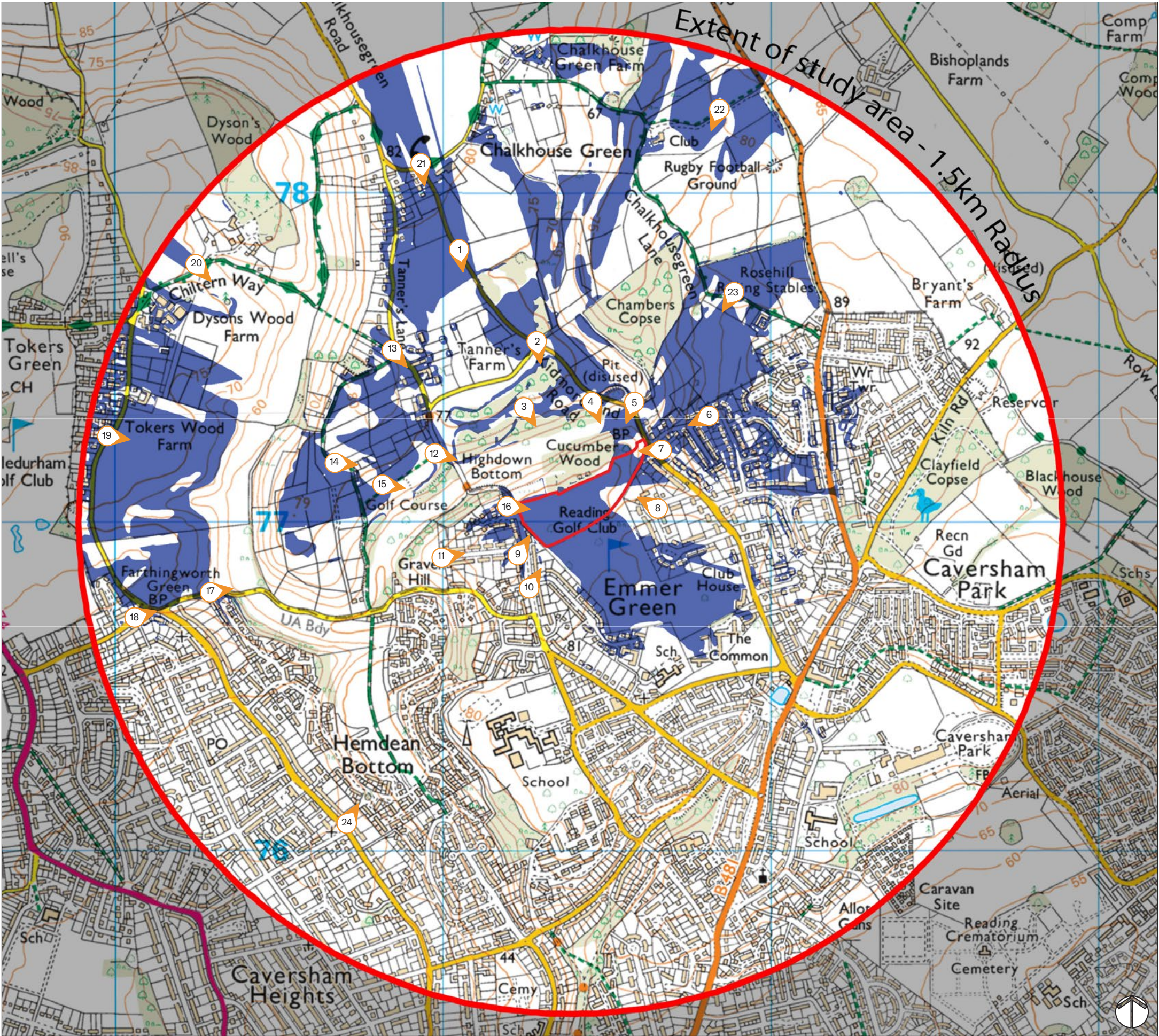
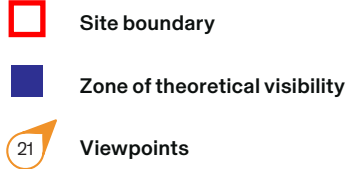


Figure 5.1 – Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Munro Studios, 2025)

5.0

Visual Assessment

5.2 Visual Assessment

The visual summary demonstrates that due to the combination of topography, vegetation and built form, the Site is extremely well contained in the landscape, where the most significant, open views occur in close proximity to the Site from both transient and static receptors. These views are often seen in the context of the built form on the settlement edge.

Overall therefore in visual terms, the Site does not contribute significantly to the setting of the Chilterns National Landscape. Furthermore, the Site does not lie within a strategic viewing corridor as identified in policy; nor is it visible from a scenic viewpoint identified on the OS.

Public Rights of Way

With the exception of Sustrans Cycle Route No. 5, which follows Highdown Hill Road to the west, none of the Public Rights of Way in the Study Area are long distance recreational routes or National Trails. Open/partial views of the vegetation on the western edge of the Site occur for those receptors (on foot or bike) using the Sustrans Route No. 5. Refer to representative viewpoints 9 and 16. Views of the Site from much of the path are truncated though (VPs 10, 12, 13)

Beyond the immediate environs to the Site, views of the Site are wholly obscured from the network of PRowWs in the local area due to the combination of topography and vegetation. Cucumber Wood and the woodland belt to the west provide significant visual enclosure to the Site in views from the north and north-west. Refer to viewpoint 12-15 and 20, 22, 23.

Visitor Attractions / Scenic Viewpoints

Due to the combination of topography and vegetation, views of the Site are limited to the immediate local environs. There is no intervisibility between the Site and the CNL (refer to internal viewpoint D) and external viewpoints 20 and 21.

Transport Corridors

Fleeting, open/partial views across part of the Site beyond the intervening roadside vegetation occur from Kidmore End Road to the east; and the predominantly residential streets of Highdown Hill Road to the west and Crawshay Drive to the east respectively. Views from the residential streets occur in the context of the existing residential built form. Refer to representative viewpoints 5, 6, 8 and 9.

Once past the Site, views rapidly diminish due to the combination of road alignment or the sunken nature of the

road and intervening built form or vegetation. On many parts of Kidmore End Road and Tanners Lane, views are often obscured by the combination of intervening topography and vegetation, in particular, that related to Cucumber Wood. Refer to representative viewpoints 1, 2, 7, 10, 11 and 13.

Views of the Site from the wider transport corridors are truncated due to the intervening topography and the layers of vegetation. Refer to viewpoint 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 24.

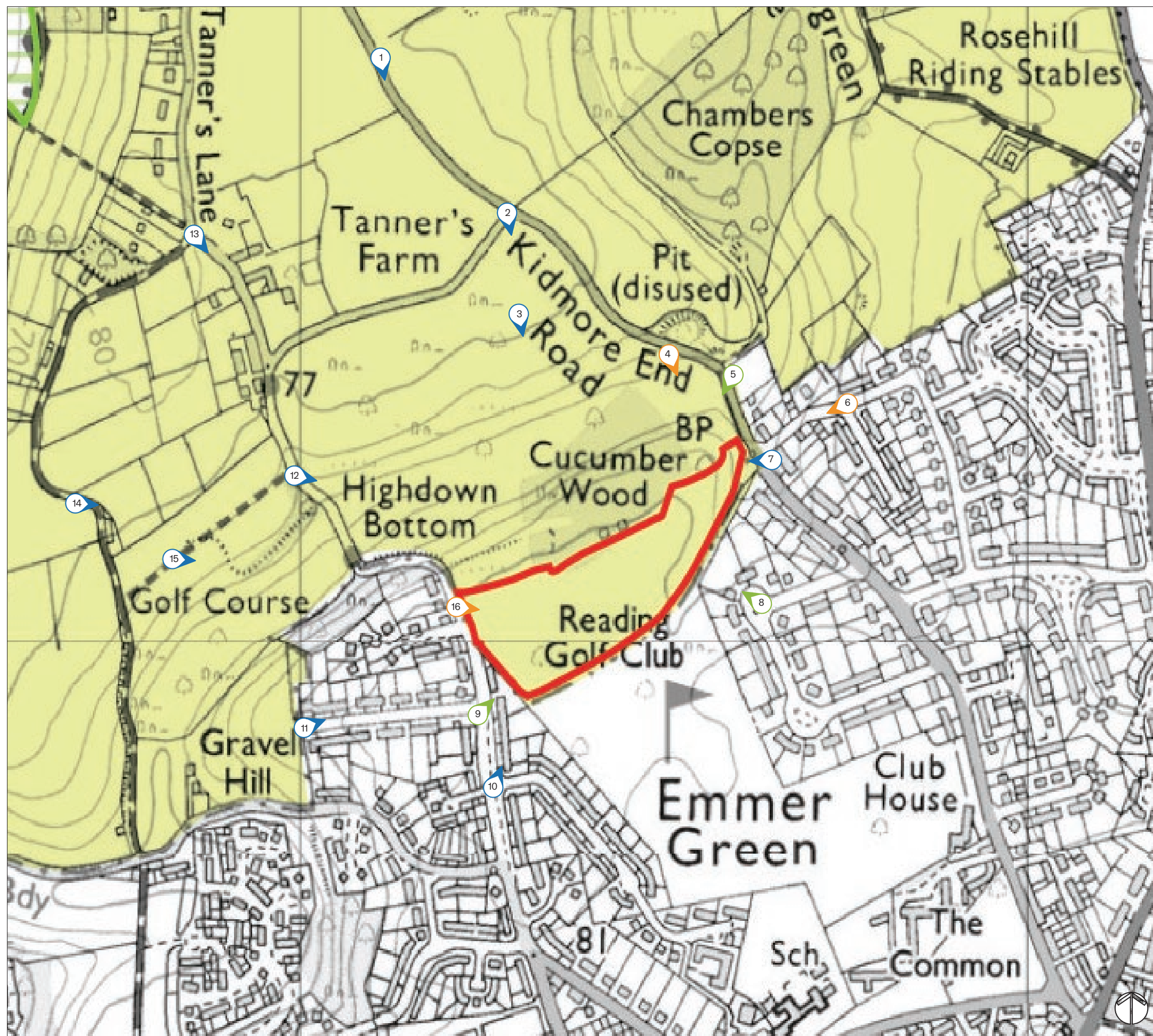
Residential

Due to the extensive layers of vegetation beyond the Site boundaries, open/partial views across the Site only occur from those residential receptors immediately adjacent to the Site at Emmer Green (namely the collection of dwellings on Highdown Hill Road to the west, Brooklyn Drive to the south-east, Kidmore End Road and around Crawshay Drive to the east). Views are predominantly of the established trees, with the greens evident between; or of the western boundary vegetation; or the valley slopes framed by trees either side. Views are often limited to views of a small part of the Site only. These properties do not lie in a designated townscape and none of the buildings are Listed. Refer to internal photographs A-D and F and external viewpoint 6, 8, 9 and 16.

Views of the Site from the rest of the residential receptors in the wider context are truncated due to the combination of built form, topography and the layers of vegetation, including those from Highdown Avenue near Gravel Hill, the southern section of Highdown Hill Road and Tanners Lane in the local context; Tokers Green Lane, Chalkhouse Green Road, Shepherds Lane and Kidmore Road in the wider context. Refer to viewpoints 7, 10, 11, 13, 18, 19, 21, and 24.

Views From Within the Golf Course

Open views of the northern edge of the Site are discerned from the eastern edge of the Golf Course, in the context of the dwellings on Kidmore End Road rising up the valley side. Refer to representative viewpoint 4. The wider area of the Site is obscured by intervening vegetation associated with Cucumber Wood, rising up the north facing valley side and up on to the ridgeline plateau (VP 3 & 15).



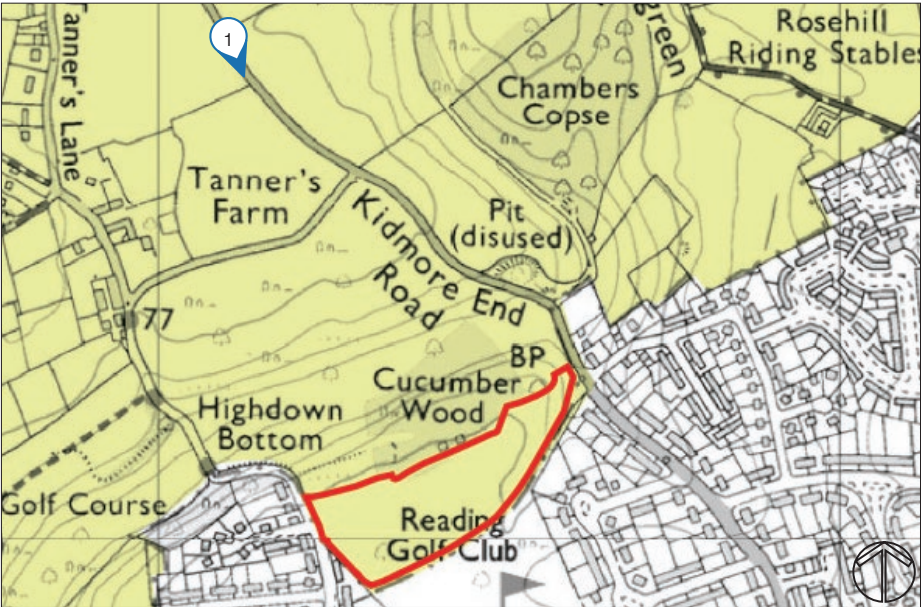
- Site boundary
- Local Valued Landscape (Kidmore End Neighbourhood Plan)
- 21 Open view location (the whole site / much of the Site is visible, or where the Site forms much of the view)
- 21 Partial view location (some of the Site is visible, or where the Site forms a small part of the wider view)
- 21 Truncated view location (the Site is obscured by intervening elements, or is difficult to perceive)

Figure 5.2 – Visual Summary from local area (fabrik, 2025)



Viewpoint 1			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Those travelling along Kidmore End Road	80m AOD	750m	View looking south-east from the northern portion of Kidmore End Road within the valued landscape. Views of the Site are wholly truncated by the intervening layers of vegetation.

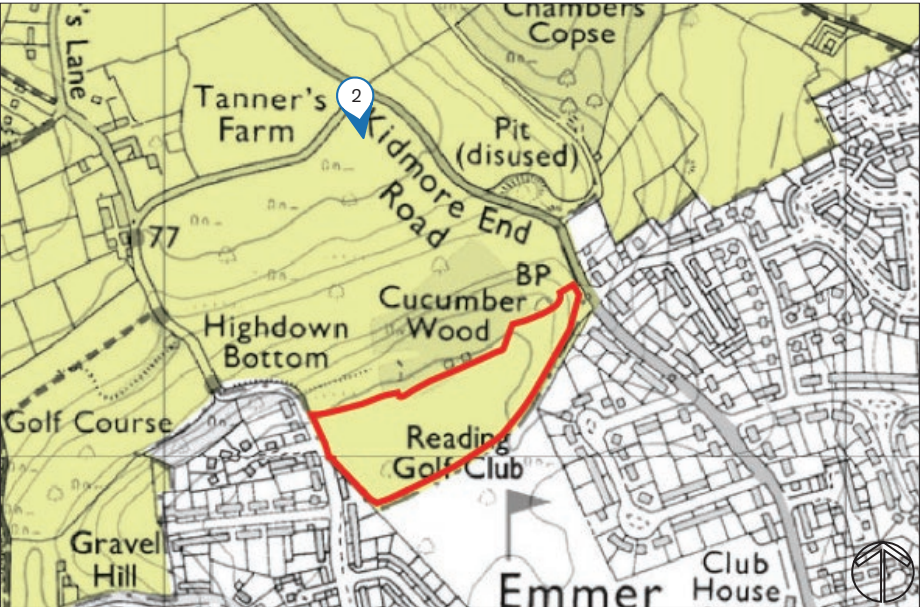
-  Site boundary
-  Local Valued Landscape (Kidmore End Neighbourhood Plan)
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view

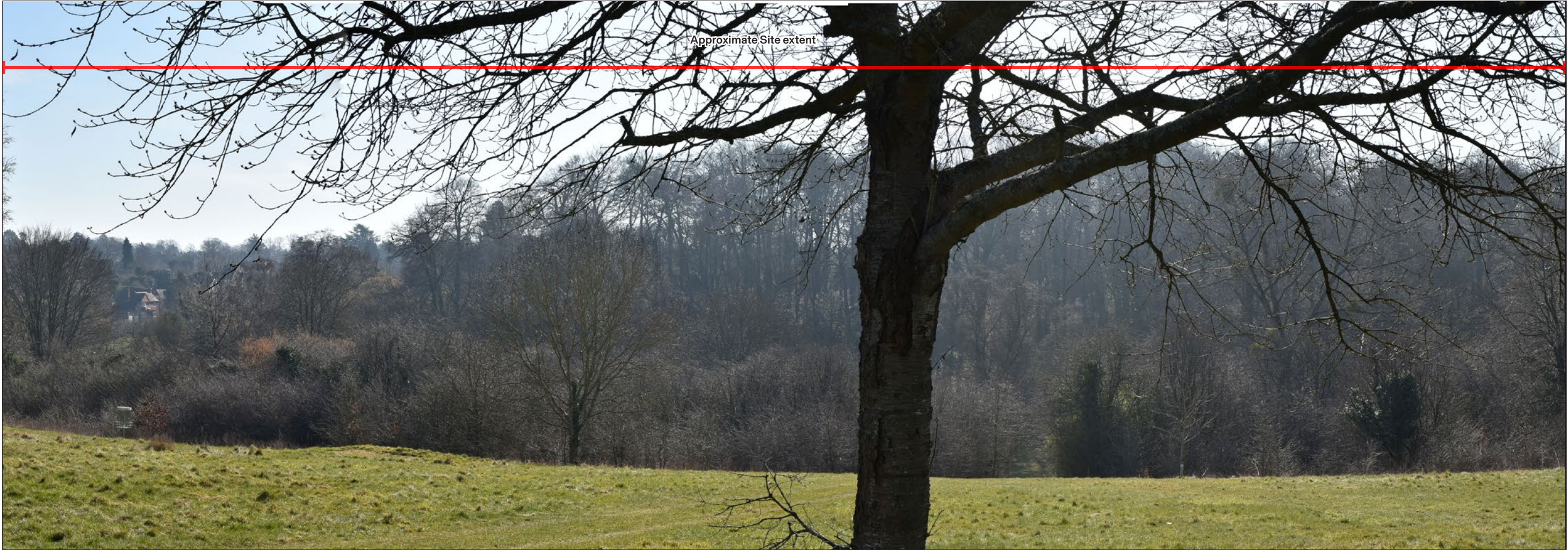




Viewpoint 2			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Those travelling along Kidmore End Road / Tanners Lane	77m AOD	450m	View looking south from Tanners Lane. Views of the Site are truncated by a combination of topography and intervening layers of vegetation associated with the northern part of the golf course.

- Site boundary
- Local Valued Landscape (Kidmore End Neighbourhood Plan)
- Viewpoint location – open view
- Viewpoint location – partial view
- Viewpoint location – truncated view





Viewpoint 3			
Receptors	Elevation	Distance from site	Description of view
Golf course users	75m AOD	300m	View looking south-east from the high point at the northern section of the golf course within the valued landscape. Views of the Site are truncated due to the trees in the foreground and Cucumber Wood Ancient Woodland in the background.

-  Site boundary
-  Local Valued Landscape (Kidmore End Neighbourhood Plan)
-  Viewpoint location – open view
-  Viewpoint location – partial view
-  Viewpoint location – truncated view

