

Introduction

For the purposes of this report, a Key View is defined as a view which allows Eversley's landscape qualities to be easily appreciated. The views are all from publicly accessible locations. Landscape qualities are characteristics of the landscape that are valued. They contribute positively to the distinctive character and sense of place within the Parish and should be conserved and enhanced.

This report will be used to support policy within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. It is anticipated that future development proposals will respect the views identified in this report and enhance them wherever possible. In this way the identification of Key Views will help to conserve Eversley's distinctive character and sense of place when faced with planning or development matters.

Eversley Landscape Qualities

Eversley is a historic wooded lowland landscape, characterised by a rich mosaic of farmland, woodland, and small-scale rural settlement. Its origins as part of a royal forest are still legible in its structure, vegetation, and sense of enclosure.

Eversley is characterised as a Lowland Mosaic (Medium Scale) landscape, defined by:

- A patchwork of farmland and woodland
- Mixed agricultural land uses
- Areas of heathland and rough pasture
- Small to medium-sized irregular fields

This landscape type reflects low-grade, often acidic soils, limiting intensive agriculture and encouraging woodland and grazing uses.

Land Use and Field Pattern

Mixed farmland and woodland mosaic is the defining feature. Fields tend to be:

- Irregular and organic in pattern
- Enclosed by hedgerows and tree belts

Land uses include:

- Pasture and grazing
- Woodland and forestry
- Equestrian uses

This reflects a long history of small-scale agricultural management.

Vegetation and Woodland

Strong presence of:

- Broadleaved woodland
- Hedgerows and mature trees
- Evidence suggests the area was historically more heavily wooded, reinforcing its forest origins

Settlement Pattern

Historic Landscape Character:

- Strong association with the former Royal Forest of Eversley
- Contains a wide variety of historic landscape types, including:
- Remnant parklands (e.g. estate landscapes such as Warbrook House)

Historic field systems

- Conservation areas (e.g. Eversley Cross, Church Farm) reflect its historic value

Perceptual and Experiential Qualities

Key Landscape Features

- Hedgerows and tree-lined field boundaries
- Broadleaved woodland blocks
- River corridors and water features
- Village greens as focal points in settlements
- Historic parkland and estate landscapes

Approach

To determine which views to include, we evaluated them against five core criteria:

- **Visual Quality:** Aesthetic merit, striking or picturesque features, and compositions featuring strong natural or built elements.
- **Distinctiveness:** Unique compositions or character that stand out in the local landscape, including prominent topography or landmark buildings.
- **Cultural & Historical Value:** Strong associations with local heritage, such as views toward listed buildings, historic sites, or landscapes celebrated in art and literature.
- **Accessibility:** Viewpoints located within publicly accessible areas, including public footpaths, open spaces, and roads.
- **Vulnerability:** Susceptibility to development pressure, visual intrusion, or cumulative landscape change

At its May 2026 meeting, the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group undertook an initial review of potential locally valued views and identified 12 views for further consideration, in addition to the key views already identified in the Conservation Area Proposal Statement, adopted on 11 March 2002. Figures 1 – 5 below show the location of these views within the parish.

The views were identified to reflect a range of important landscape views and visual relationships across the parish, including those experienced from public rights of way, roads and other publicly accessible locations. Collectively, they represent a range of landscape characteristics and contribute to the rural character, visual amenity and sense of place of Eversley.

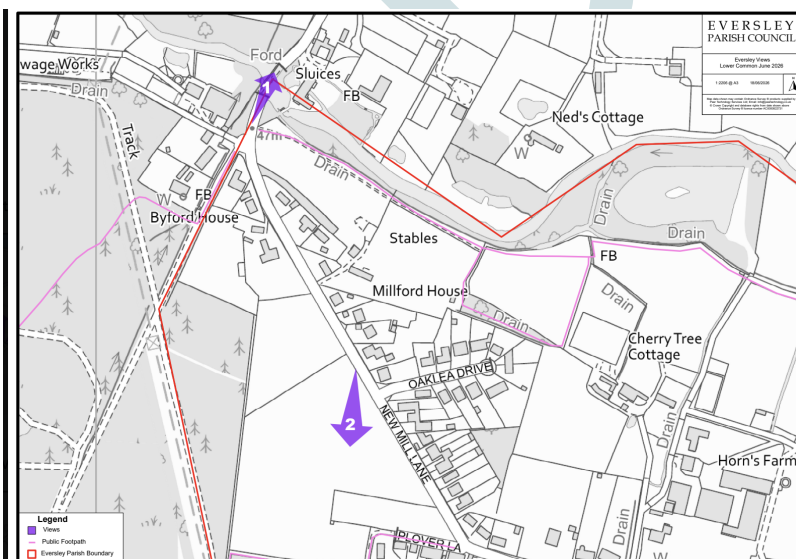


Figure 1 Lower Common Views

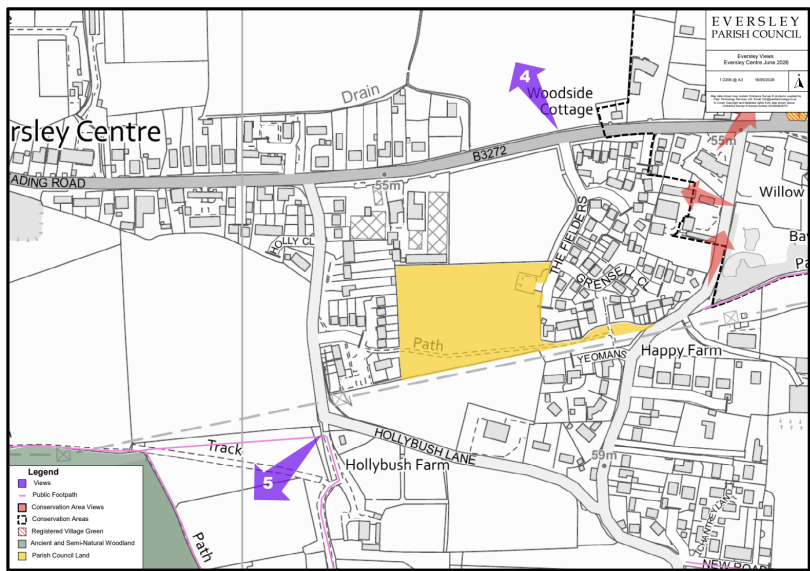


Figure 2 Eversley Centre Views

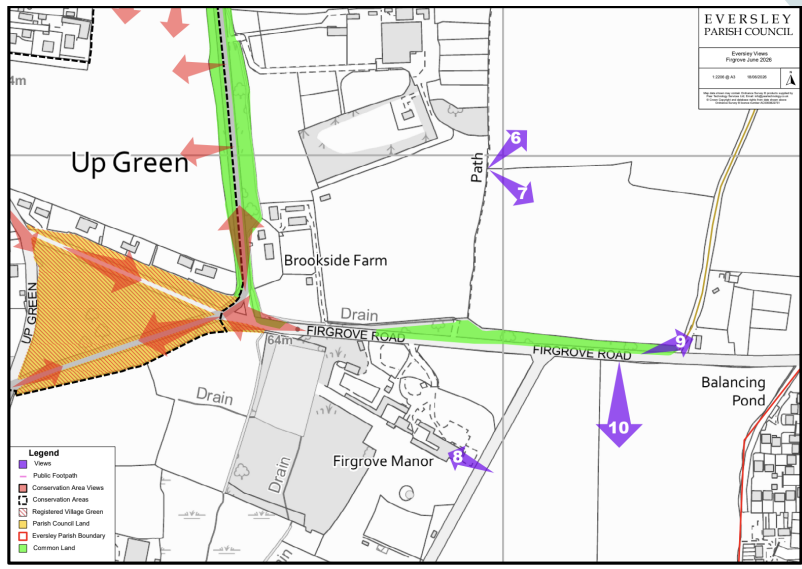


Figure 3 Firgrove Views

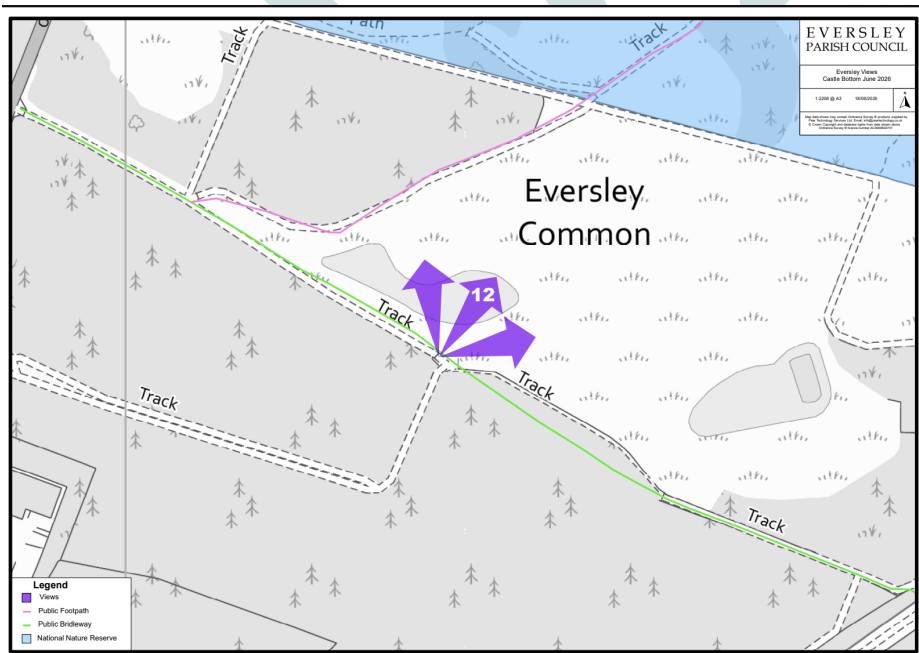


Figure 4 Kits Croft Views

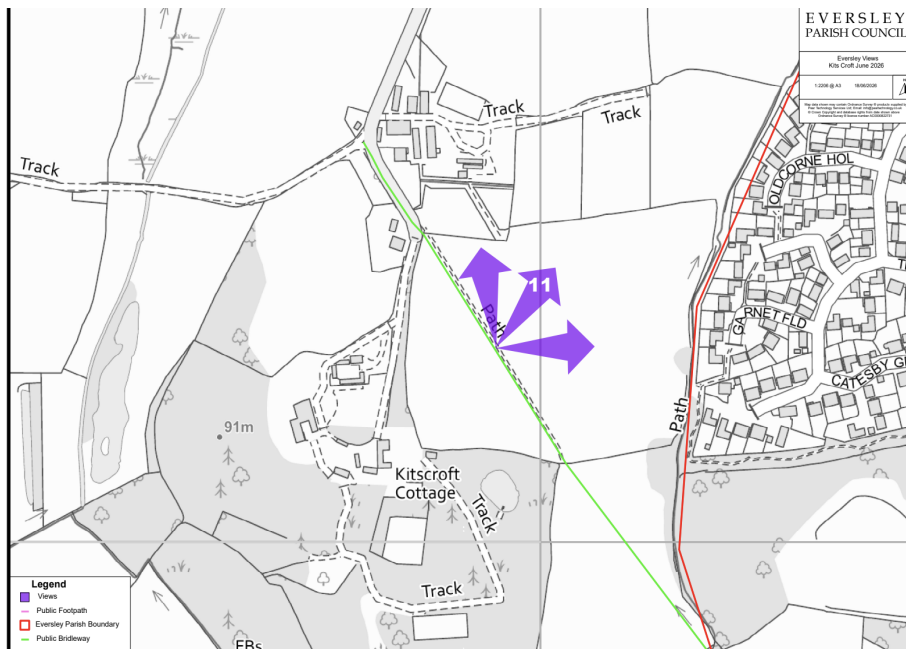


Figure 5 Eversley Woods Views

Following this initial review, the Working Group held a Teams meeting with Dave Chapman of Locality, an RTPI-qualified planning consultant, to consider each of the 12 potential Key Views in greater detail. The review considered the character, quality and significance of each view, together with its contribution to the landscape setting and visual identity of Eversley. Following this review, the list was refined, with a number of views considered not to meet the threshold for inclusion. The views identified as “**Taken forward**” were subsequently considered in greater detail and form the basis of the Key Views Assessment set out in the following sections. The original reference numbers have been retained for consistency.

No.	Location / Description	Outcome
1	The Ford at Lower Common	Not taken forward
2	Looking south from New Mill Lane towards Plover Lane	Taken forward
3	Footpath 9, looking towards Warbrook House	Taken forward
4	Reading Road Looking North across the field opposite Fielders	Not taken forward
5	Footpath 16 at Hollybush Farm, looking west towards Kingsley Road	Taken forward
6	Footpath 25, looking north towards Berkshire	Taken forward
7	Footpath 25, looking south	Taken forward
8	Kits Croft looking towards Firgrove Manor	Not taken forward
9	Looking along Firgrove Road towards Firgrove Cottage	Not taken forward
10	Firgrove Farm hayfield, viewed from Firgrove Road	Taken forward
11	Footpath 26, looking north towards Finchampstead Ridges	Taken forward
12	Footpath 11, looking north, east and west across Eversley Common Woods	Taken forward

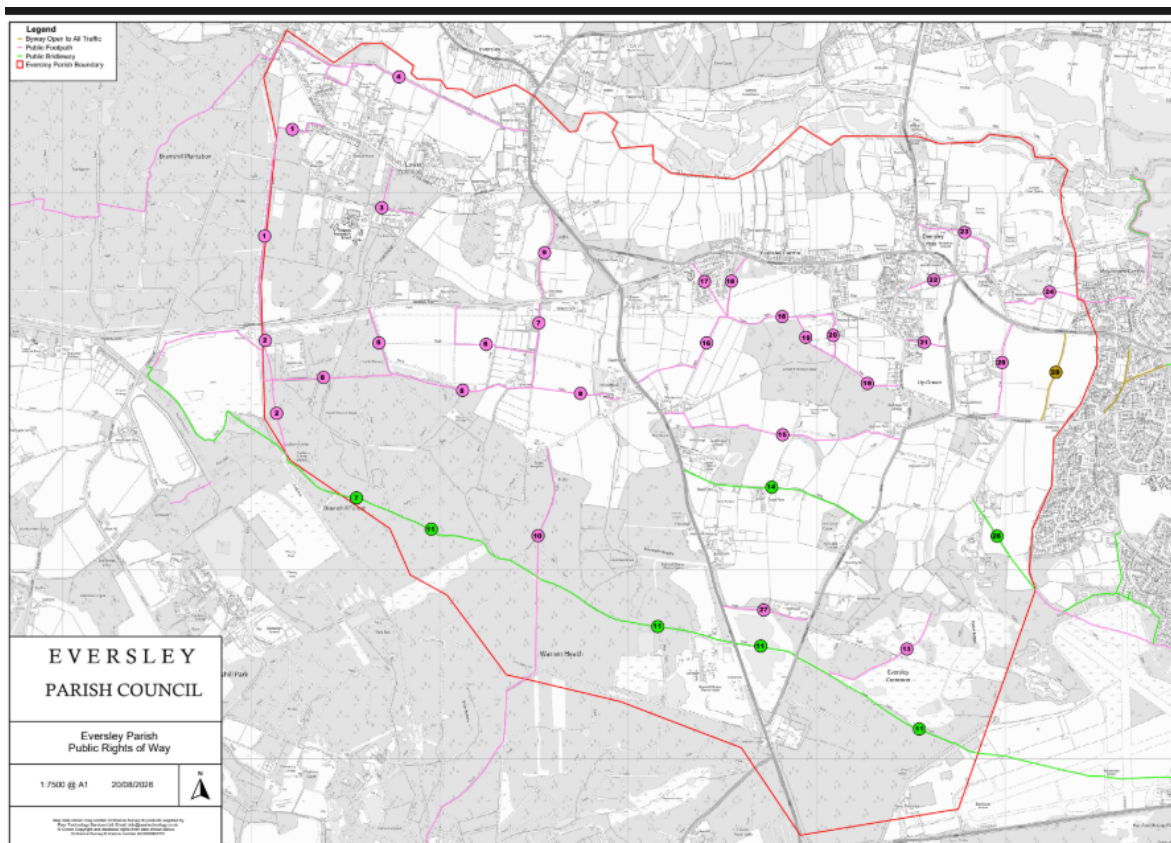
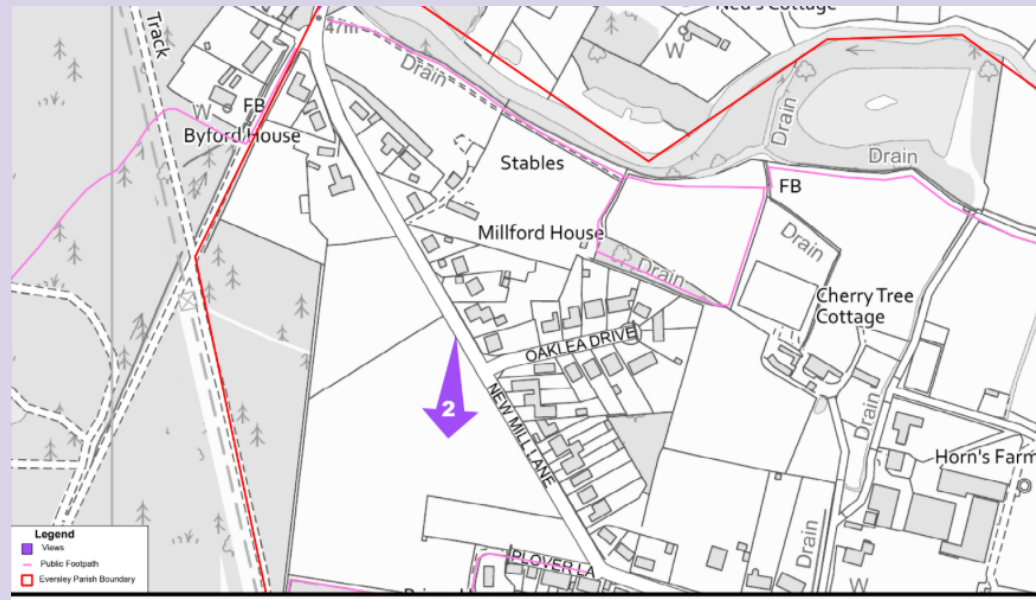


Figure 6 - PROW's and footpath numbers

Reference/Name
View 2 - Looking
South from New
Mill Lane
towards Plover
Lane

Description

Looking South from New Mill Lane towards Plover Lane is representative of Character Area 6: Firgrove, as defined within the [*Hart District Landscape Character Assessment*](#).



	
Visual Quality	This view shows the characteristic relationship between open pasture, woodland and scattered rural settlement. The field in the foreground is framed by mature woodland and hedgerows, creating a strong sense of openness while maintaining a well-defined rural enclosure. Mature oak trees along the lane reinforce the traditional pastoral character of the landscape. The small group of dwellings visible beyond the field sits comfortably within the wooded setting and illustrates the established pattern of settlement integrated into the countryside rather than dominating it. The view demonstrates the mixed farmland and woodland mosaic identified in the Hart District Landscape Character Assessment and contributes to the understanding of Eversley's rural landscape character.
Distinctiveness	The small group of dwellings visible beyond the field sits comfortably within the wooded setting. This view is visible from all the dwellings along New Mill Lane framing the green space with a vista over to Bramshill Forest and is a distinctive feature of Eversley. The view illustrates the established pattern of settlement integrated into the countryside rather than dominating it. The view demonstrates the mixed farmland and woodland mosaic identified in the Hart District Landscape Character Assessment and contributes to the understanding of Eversley's rural landscape character.

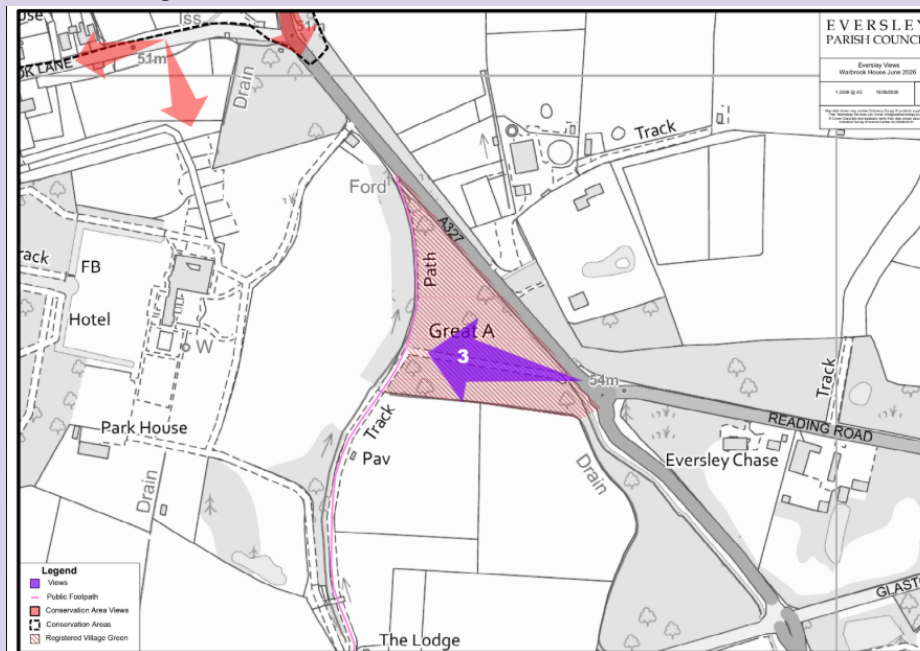
Accessibility	Accessible by road on New Mill Lane and Plover Lane
Cultural or Historical significance	Low
Vulnerability to change	Medium As an open rural space outside conservation areas and without SSI or SINCE status the views might be subject to planning pressures
Overall Assessment	Include as a Key View

Reference/Name

View 3- Footpath 9 Looking towards Warbrook House

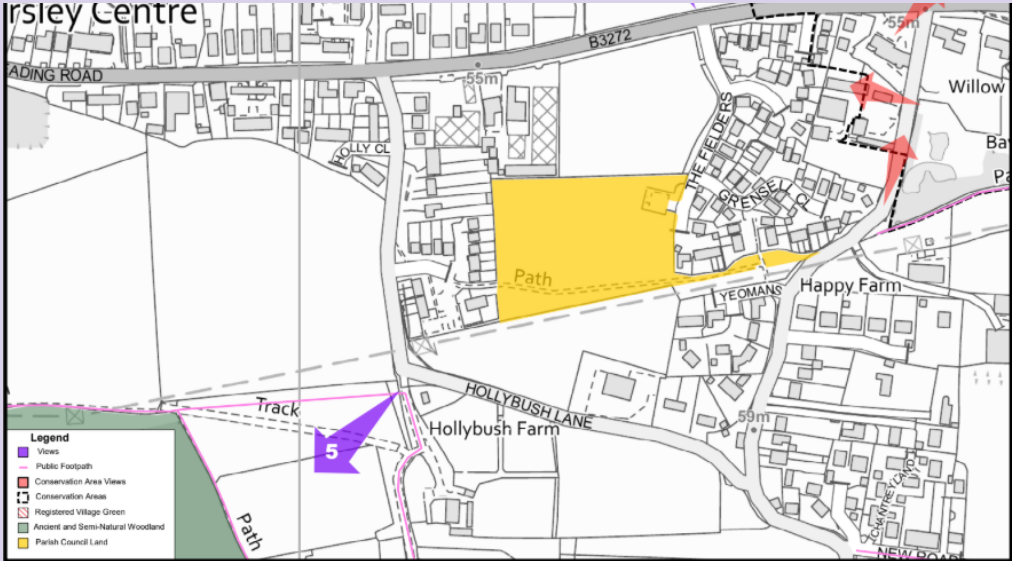
Description

This view from Footpath 9 provides an important visual connection to Warbrook House, one of Eversley's most significant historic buildings.



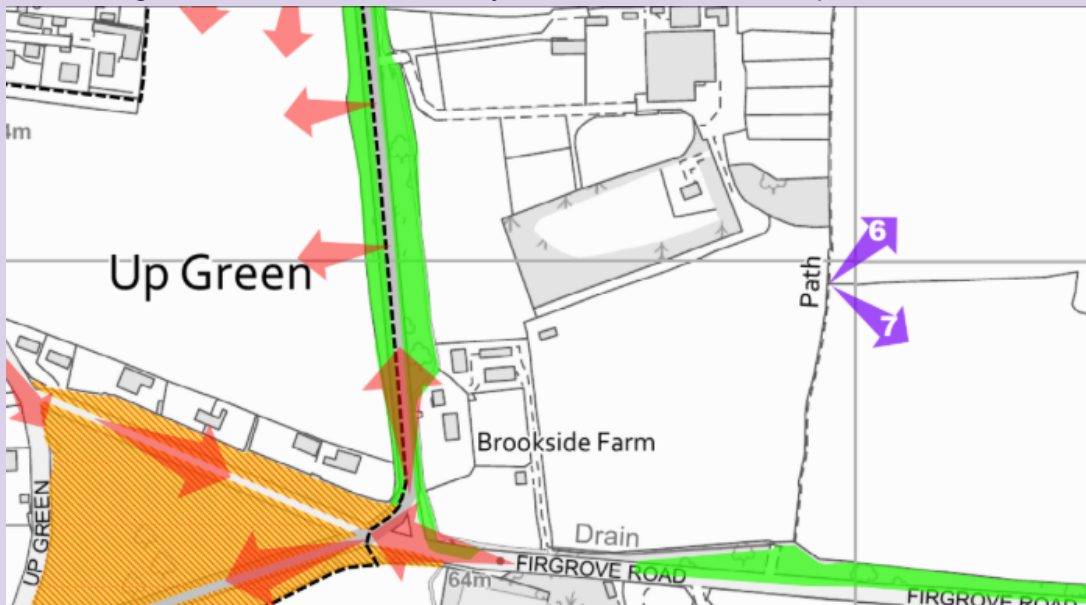
Visual Quality	The house is seen across an open expanse of parkland, framed by mature trees that emphasise its historic setting and reinforce the character of the designed landscape. The combination of open grassland, veteran trees and the elegant Georgian façade creates a distinctive and memorable view that reflects the parish's historic and rural character. The mature trees soften and frame the building, while the uninterrupted foreground allows appreciation of its scale, symmetry and architectural quality within its landscape setting.
Distinctiveness	High due to its classic, grand 18th-century geometric and formal parkland layout.
Accessibility	By road. Located at the intersection of the A327 and Reading Road and visible from a main roundabout in the village
Cultural or Historical significance	This view has high heritage and landscape value, illustrating the close relationship between Warbrook House and its historic parkland. The Great A is a significant feature of the historic landscape and reflects the historical and architectural importance of Warbrook House, which was designed by the renowned architect John James. The stone structure in the foreground is a section of the balustrade from the original Waterloo Bridge over the River Thames. When the bridge was rebuilt in the 1930s, sections of the original balustrade became available. Mrs Humphries-Owen, the owner and occupier of Warbrook at the time, purchased a number of sections and erected one set across the vista at the edge of the park, where it meets The Great A Village Green. At some point during the 1990s, this section of the balustrade was substantially damaged, leaving a large number of damaged balusters and broken bases.
Vulnerability to change	Low Any development would interrupt the open foreground, erode the parkland setting, or diminish views of the house from the public footpath. The risk is Low to Moderate as the mansion is Grade I listed and the surrounding landscape is Grade II* listed.

Overall Assessment	Include as a Key View
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Reference/Name	Description
<u>View 5- Footpath 16 Hollybush Farm looking west towards Kingsley Road</u>	This view from Footpath 16 is another representative view of Hart Landscape Assessment Character Area 6. 

	
Visual Quality	The public footpath runs through open pasture towards a backdrop of mature woodland, illustrating the area's characteristic mosaic of mixed farmland and woodland with medium-sized fields enclosed by hedgerows and trees. The landscape has a strong rural character, with expansive grazing land, mature woodland and an absence of built development, creating a sense of openness and tranquillity. The overhead electricity transmission lines are recognised in the Landscape Character Assessment as existing visual intrusions, but they do not diminish the area's predominantly rural character.
Distinctiveness	The view reflects the key characteristics of the Firgrove landscape and supports the Landscape Character Assessment's priorities to conserve and strengthen the mosaic of pasture, woodland and hedgerows. It looks onto an ancient woodland known for its distinctive flora and fauna.
Accessibility	By footpath number 16
Cultural or Historical significance	Low

Vulnerability to change	High It is highly sensitive to development that would introduce buildings, lighting or other urbanising features into the open fields or interrupt the wooded skyline. The footpath borders land granted outline planning permission by the LPA but is protected as a public right of way. However due to its proximity to known development activity it is more vulnerable than many such footpaths in the village.
Overall Assessment	Include as a Key View

Reference/Name <u>View 6 - Footpath 25</u> <u>Looking north towards</u> <u>Berkshire</u>	Description This view from Footpath 25 are other representative views of Character Area 6 . They perfectly illustrate the area's primary defining criteria: a consistent, intact pattern of mixed farmland and woodland, featuring medium-to-large-scale agricultural fields framed by an unbroken backdrop of mature woodland. 
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Visual Quality	The views feature medium-to-large-scale agricultural fields framed by an unbroken backdrop of mature woodland. The defining visual framework of this view is the long-distance, highly scenic skyline formed by the heavily wooded slopes of The Finchampstead Ridges across on the Berkshire side of the Blackwater Valley.
Distinctiveness	Looking across the vast, open hayfield toward Eversley Road, the vantage points capture a critical component of the designated 'Green Gap' - the essential strategic buffer that preserves the visual separation and distinct individual identities of Yateley and Eversley.
Accessibility	By Footpath No 25
Cultural or Historical significance	Low
Vulnerability to change	High

	Given these views are opposite land that is subject to outline planning permission, it is vulnerable to development creep. Whilst it is protected as a PROW it nevertheless warrants preservation as a key view.
Overall Assessment	Include both north and south views as Key Views

Reference/Name <u>View 7 - Footpath 25</u> <u>Looking south East</u> <u>towards Yateley</u>	Description This view from Footpath 25 is representative of Hampshire Landscape Assessment Character Area 6. It perfectly illustrates the area's primary defining criteria: a consistent, intact pattern of mixed farmland and woodland, featuring medium-to-large-scale agricultural fields framed by an unbroken backdrop of mature woodland. 
Visual Quality	Similar to view 6 the combination of open agricultural fields, mature woodland and hedgerows creates a strong sense of openness and tranquillity. The wooded backdrop provides a clear natural edge to the view, while the absence of prominent built development reinforces the predominantly rural character of the landscape.

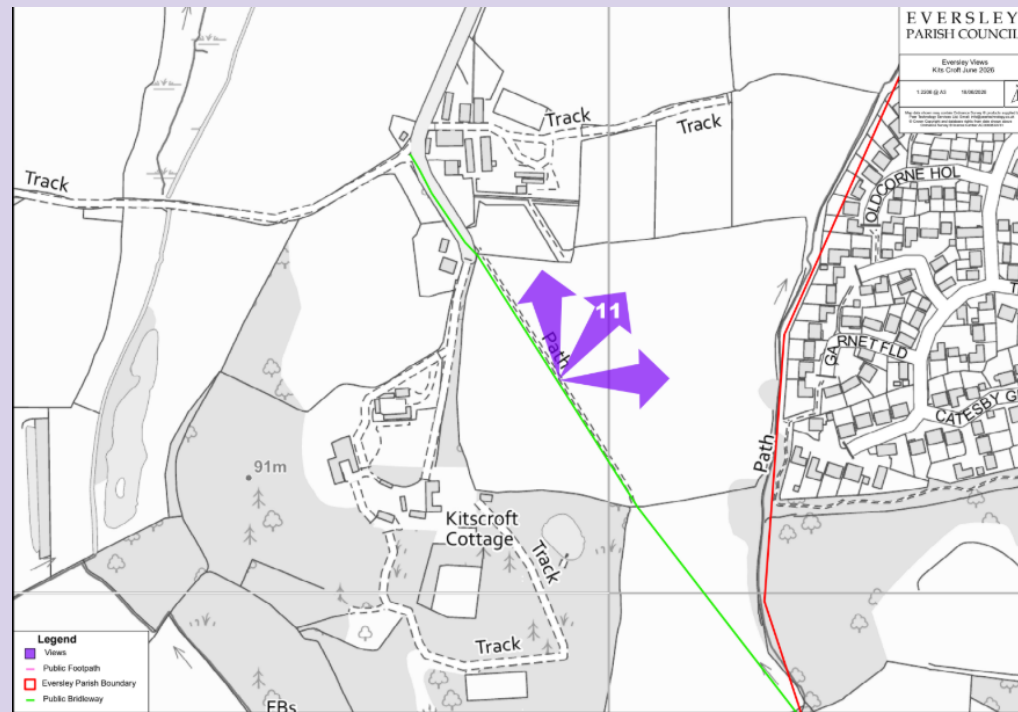
Distinctiveness	Similar to view 6 the view forms part of the designated 'Green Gap', helping to maintain the visual separation and distinct identities of Yateley and Eversley.
Accessibility	By Footpath No 25
Cultural or Historical significance	Low
Vulnerability to change	High Given this view borders land that is subject to outline planning permission, it is vulnerable to development creep.
Overall Assessment	Include as a Key View

Reference/Name <u>View 10 - Firgrove Farm</u> <u>Hayfield from Firgrove</u> <u>Road</u>	Description This view looking south from Firgrove Road is another representative view. It explicitly illustrates the area's main distinguishing features: a consistent pattern of mixed farmland and woodland, featuring medium-to-large-scale fields framed by a continuous backdrop of woodland. Looking across the expansive hayfield from this roadside vantage point.
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	The landscape maintains an intact, high-quality rural and agricultural character. The foreground is defined by a grassy roadside verge and a rustic, unmanicured boundary fence densely overgrown with brambles. This reflects the distinctively natural, robust hedgerow structure noted in the district assessment. Beyond this boundary lies a vast, vibrant green pasture that stretches uninterrupted across the midground.
Distinctiveness	While the wider character area suffers from localized suburbanizing pressures and ribbon development, this specific view is completely unblemished by built structures or overhead power lines. The built environment is virtually absent; any nearby vernacular or modern agricultural dwellings remain entirely concealed by the extensive, continuous belt of mature woodland that forms a solid green wall across the entire background.
Accessibility	By Road- Firgrove Road
Cultural or Historical significance	Low

Vulnerability to change	High Given its proximity to a known outline planning application for a large number of dwellings and with intention of a stage 2 development, the view is at high risk.
Overall Assessment	Include as a Key View

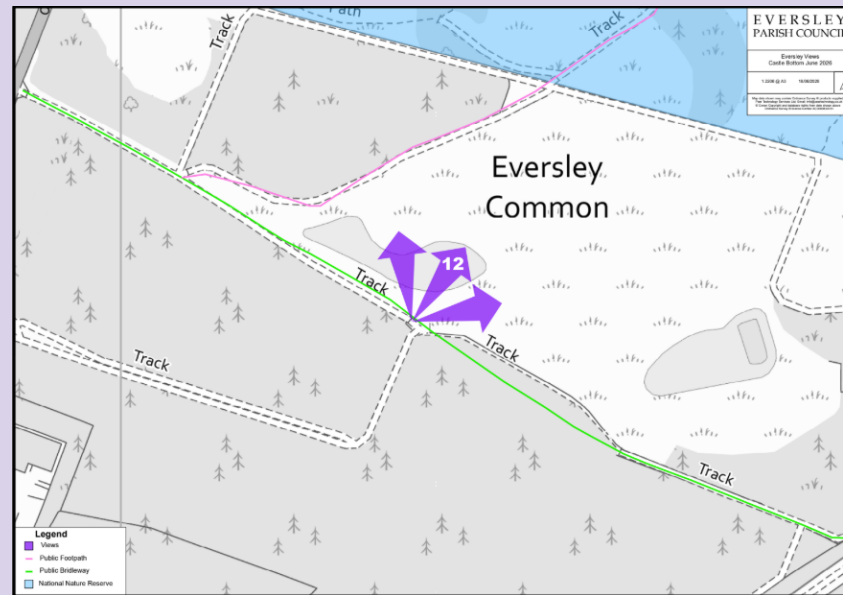
Reference/Name <u>View 11 - Footpath 26</u> <u>Looking North toward</u> <u>Finchampstead Ridge</u> <u>Road</u>	Description This view from Footpath 26 is representative of the pastoral fringe of Eversley and its visual relationship with the Blackwater Valley corridor, looking towards the prominent topography of the Finchampstead Ridges. The public footpath tracks alongside expansive open grazing land and managed paddocks, offering a wide, panoramic perspective towards a continuous backdrop of distant rising ground and mature woodland.
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Visual Quality	The landscape maintains a strong rural and agricultural character, defined by a wide foreground of green pasture divided by functional timber post fencing. Low-profile equestrian structures, agricultural outbuildings, and traditional residential rooftops are visible within the midground cluster, but they remain nestled among mature trees and do not dominate the landscape. The defining feature of this view is the long-distance, uninterrupted panoramic horizon formed by the heavily wooded slopes of the Finchampstead Ridges, which provides a highly scenic framework to the north.
Distinctiveness	The view highlights the importance of preserving open, low-density transitions between the settlement edges and the valley floor. It is highly sensitive to any large-scale or insensitive development that would introduce urbanising elements into the open fields, generate light pollution, or breach the iconic, distant wooded skyline. This is a significant public view from a right of way that reinforces Eversley's rural identity and its geographical connection to the wider regional landscape.
Accessibility	Footpath 26

Cultural or Historical significance	Low
Vulnerability to change	High Given its proximity to a known outline planning application for a large number of dwellings and with intention of a stage 2 development, the view is at high risk.
Overall Assessment	It offers community value by showcasing the distinctive northern topography of the ridges and should be protected as an Important View within the Eversley Neighbourhood Plan. Include as a Key View

Reference/Name <u>View 12- Footpath 12,</u> <u>Looking North/ East/West</u> <u>Eversley Common Woods</u>	Description Eversley Common is spread across approximately 200 acres, it is a diverse landscape encompassing downs, heathland, and moorland. The common is situated within close proximity to the village and is a popular destination for nature enthusiasts and outdoor activities.
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Visual Quality

The area demonstrates high scenic quality following the successful restoration of former gravel extraction sites (quarried between the 1980s and early 2000s) back to heathland. The open landscape features a mosaic of heather, gorse, and bracken—producing a vibrant floral display in spring—contrasting with the surrounding pine canopy. Visitors can also enjoy picnicking in designated areas or simply relax and absorb the tranquil ambiance.

	Eversley Common offers a network of well-maintained footpaths and trails, making it an ideal location for walking, hiking, and dog walking. The paths wind through the heathland and provide breathtaking views of the surrounding countryside.
Distinctiveness	The view captures both the ecological restoration of mineral workings and an intact fragment of historic lowland heathland contiguous with Castle Bottom NNR.
Accessibility	Via footpath 11
Cultural or Historical significance	Medium . The Welsh Drive , part of Evertsley Common, is an historic farming route, originally part of a much longer route used by cattle drovers to bring their animals from Wales to the annual fair held in Blackwater.
Vulnerability to change	Low as this is part of the protected Castle Bottom to Yateley and Hawley Commons SSSI
Overall Assessment	Include as a Key View

Sources

Hart District Landscape Assessment Scott Wilson Resource Consultants April 1997

https://www.hart.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-11/landscape_assessment_merged.pdf

Conservation Areas Proposal Statement Adopted 11th March 2002

<https://www.hart.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-01/Church-Farm-Eversley-Street-Eversley-Cross-Up-Green-conservation-areas-statement.pdf>

Draft