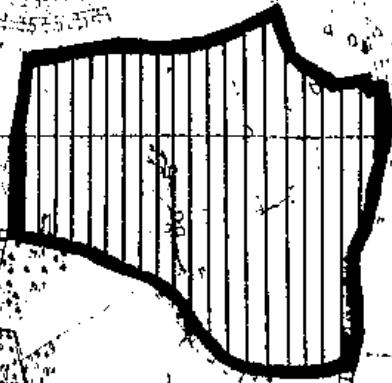


SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



**DRAFT
PLANNING BRIEF
CHAMBERLAINS LANE
UPPER PENNA**

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**Baggeridge
Wood**

1. THE NEED FOR THE BRIEF

- 1.1 The need for this Design Brief has arisen as a result of the sub-division of an area of land in Upper Penn into nine plots of grazing land and the possibility that development following this sub-division could have a harmful effect on the local landscape and amenity value of the area. Already a wide shale track has been constructed across the site for vehicular access and wire fences have been used to mark the plot boundaries. Two plot owners have erected stables and food stores without planning permission; one set of buildings being of timber, with the other of natural asbestos. Parking areas for cars and horse boxes have also been established.
- 1.2 The site is in an attractive part of the Green Belt just on the edge of the built up area of Wolverhampton, and lies on the south facing slope of the valley of the Penk Brook. Its position is such that uncontrolled development would be particularly conspicuous from the surrounding area. The site also has considerable local amenity value as a result of a number of well used public footpaths which cross it. The Brief is, therefore, intended to ensure that the effect of the sub-division of the land and any subsequent development is kept to a minimum and is compatible with the character of the area. (See Plans 1 - 3).
- 1.3 The sub-division of the land into plots for grazing also introduces the possibility of a change of use of the land without the benefit of planning permission. The grazing of horses is not "agriculture" as defined by Paragraph 290 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1971, and a change of use will have taken place where horses are grazed. Equally, buildings erected in association with horse grazing are not agricultural buildings and, therefore, are not exempt from control under the terms of the Town and Country Planning General Development Order, 1973.
- 1.4 Where other livestock are grazed, the land is still classed as used for agricultural purposes and under normal circumstances on agricultural land of more than one acre and comprised in an agricultural unit, buildings of a floor area not exceeding 465 sq.m. can be erected without planning permission. Each of the nine plots exceeds this lower limit and providing that each one is comprised as an agricultural unit it would be possible for two or three buildings of varying design and materials to be erected on each plot. Without control, a proliferation of buildings and associated structures could result which would be visually obtrusive in this attractive Green Belt area.
- 1.5 It is for this reason that the District Council has resolved to make a direction under Article 4 of the General Development Order, 1973, bringing under planning control the erection of structures, buildings and fences and the siting of caravans on this land. All development in this area will, therefore, need planning permission and will need to conform to the requirements of this Brief.

2. THE AREA AND SCOPE OF THE BRIEF

- 2.1 The area covered by the Design Brief is approximately 10.52 ha. being located to the south of Upper Penn. It comprises field numbers OS.0878, OS.2082, OS.8600, OS.0006, OS.1013 and OS.2200, and is bounded by Chamberlains Lane to the east and Light Wood to the south. The physical boundaries to the north and west are formed by the hedgerows bounding the fields. (See Plan 2).
- 2.2 The Brief has been prepared against the background of both the District and County Councils existing policies. In particular the site is within the confirmed South Staffordshire Green Belt and is classed by the County Structure Plan as a Special Landscape Area. Such a designation gives further emphasis to the need to carefully control development in this area. In addition the proposed extension of the Penn Conservation Area covers the north-east corner of the site.
- 2.3 The Brief attempts to provide a framework and guidelines which will allow the type of development envisaged to take place without detracting from the character of the local countryside.

3. SITE CONSTRAINTS (See Plan 3)

- 3.1 The site forms part of the northern side of a shallow valley running in an east-west direction and because of the topography of the area, is visible from Foxlands Avenue to the north, and Wodehouse Lane to the south. Both roads run approximately parallel to the valley. The erection of buildings and the type of materials used will, therefore, be of importance if the effect on these views is to be minimised.
- 3.2 However, the general impression of the whole valley when viewed from a distance is of fields bounded by hedges and trees and with a scatter of detached 2-storey houses of brick or white rendered walls with clay tiled pitched roofs. The extensive hedge and tree cover means that parts of the site are completely or partially screened both from distant views and from within the site itself. The whole length of the southern boundary of the site is bounded by a substantial belt of trees which includes an area known as Light Wood. This belt of trees screens much of the southern part of the site when viewed from Wodehouse Lane. Also, there are substantial hedgerows which include a number of trees along the northern side of the access road and along the western side of Chamberlains Lane. These again screen considerable parts of the site. If the visual effect of development is to be minimised then these hedges and trees must be used as much as possible for screening buildings in particular.
- 3.3 The site is also crossed by 3 public footpaths, all apparently well used. Any proposed development should not interfere with the use of these paths by the general public and should also have minimal visual effect upon the users of the footpaths. There is a hedgerow which runs alongside the newly made track through the middle of the area. This track conflicts with one of the well used public footpaths and provision will need to be made to separate the two. The hedge is to the north of the footpath and

provides some visual screening. However, there are holes in this hedge which allow considerable views to the north and there is no hedge to the south of the track. Therefore, all development to the south will be clearly seen from the track and development to the north will have to be carefully located if that also is not to be visible from the footpath.

- 3.4 To reduce the visual impact of any development from either Foxlands Avenue or from the other two footpaths on the site, detailed landscape proposals will be required to accompany planning applications for development.

4. THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

a) LOCATION OF BUILDINGS

- 4.1 It is essential to make the maximum use of existing hedges and trees to screen proposed future buildings, particularly when viewed from Wodehouse Lane. This is especially important on the plots on the northern part of the site as these are particularly noticeable from Wodehouse Lane.
- 4.2 As the footpaths crossing the site are well used by the general public it is also important that future development does not detract from these pleasant country walks. In this respect the development so far (i.e. the access road and fencing) has already adversely affected the local landscape. Further work is, therefore, required to improve the visual effect of these intrusions and future development needs to take due notice of the important local amenity value of these footpaths.
- 4.3 Vehicular access from the service track to the paddocks north of the track necessitates the forming of new access points through the existing hedge. These openings will give a view of the paddocks to the walkers using the track. It is important that the buildings and fences are located so as not to detract from these views. Diagram 1 explains the principle that should be adopted for the location of buildings in relation to the access points.
- 4.4 In order to avoid a scattering of small units over the site and to reduce the visual impact any development will have on the view from Wodehouse Lane, buildings should adjoin the access track and, where possible, should be clustered together, even though they may be associated with different plots. The clustering of buildings near the hedgerows and trees will further help to reduce their visual intrusion into the countryside.

b) ACCESS ROAD

- 4.5 The widening of the footpath to form an access road to the plots has been carried out without permission and has spoilt what was a pleasant country walk. It is important that the position is regularised and that the footpaths and roadway are clearly defined.

4.6 Footpath No. 7 originally followed the hedge line from the south-western boundary of the site to Chamberlains Lane and should be reinstated along this line. It should be physically separated from the access track by a suitable fence and hedge interspersed with trees; the species and number to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

4.7 The access track should then be located to the south of this new hedge line with a timber post and rail fence separating it from the paddocks. Access points from the track will be required to the paddocks on the northern side of F.P.7. and their positions should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

4.8 The reposition of the access road will affect the existing post and wire fencing and could involve the resiting of the existing unauthorised buildings on plots 7 and 9. If these buildings are affected, they should be resited in the preferred positions shown on Plan 4.

c) ADDITIONAL PLANTING

4.9 Although the location of buildings near to existing hedges will help in reducing the adverse visual effect on the countryside, there will be a need for substantial additional planting of suitable hedges and trees to help screen the buildings from Wodehouse Lane, Foxlands Avenue, and from the footpaths within the site.

d) CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS OF BUILDINGS AND FENCES

Buildings

4.10 Farm buildings to-day are usually of a lightweight, low-cost construction of a prefabricated nature rather than the more traditional brick built building. It is likely, therefore, that any storage and stable accommodation that will be developed on this site will be of a similar construction. Prefabricated buildings are not necessarily undesirable, in so far as the easy removal of buildings allows for flexibility in the future use of the site. It is, however, desirable that buildings associated with different paddocks, when clustered together, should have a uniformity of style and materials. This principle should be reflected throughout the area. In view of the practice of using prefabricated units, the most appropriate materials for external finishes in this pleasant rural area would be natural coloured timber or dark coloured asbestos.

Fences

4.11 The present sub-division of the fields into paddocks by post and barbed wire fencing is regarded as unsuitable, as is the separation of the storage and stable accommodation area from the rest of the paddock by a variety of ad hoc fencing materials. Although traditionally fields have been divided by hedgerows, in the short term this is obviously not practical. It is proposed that the sub-division of the fields into paddocks should be by fencing both suitable in character for the area and also of sufficient strength and durability so as not to necessitate ad hoc maintenance and repair. Timber post and rail fencing should therefore be

used, the timber being treated with creosote or similar proofing agent. Ideally, posts should be 10.2cm. x 10.2cm. at 1.83m. centres and there should be three rails to a standard height of 1.22m. Fences within the paddocks should also conform to this requirement.

Colour Finishes and External Surfaces

4.12 Buildings having an external finish of asbestos cladding should be dark coloured, in preference to natural asbestos which, being of a light colour, is particularly conspicuous in a rural landscape. It is also desirable that the roofs of the buildings should be of a darker colour than the walls. This has the effect of tying the buildings into the landscape rather than associating them with the skyline. This principle is particularly important in this valley location because the buildings will generally be seen against a landscape background rather than the skyline. These principles are also applicable to timber clad buildings in that the finishes should be of natural timber or painted a dark colour. The roofs, if waterproofed with roofing felt, should also have a darker finish than the walls. Recommended colours for the walls are BS.08 B 25 and 10 B 21, and for roofs BS.04 B 29, 10 B 27 and 10 B 29.

e) GENERAL

4.13 Although the land is currently offered for sale as grazing plots, a number of enquiries have been made for other uses which would be inappropriate in this rural area. The following criteria should, therefore, be considered in respect of each proposal:-

- i) The land should only be used for agricultural purposes or the grazing of horses. There should be no development which would result in a change of use to a commercial establishment, such as a riding school.
- ii) No permanent or temporary structures, e.g. caravans, should be erected or placed on the site, without first obtaining planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.
- iii) The arrangements for parking of vehicles in connection with the use of the site should be submitted with the planning applications for the development of each of the paddocks. The parking of vehicles should not take place until such planning permission has been obtained.

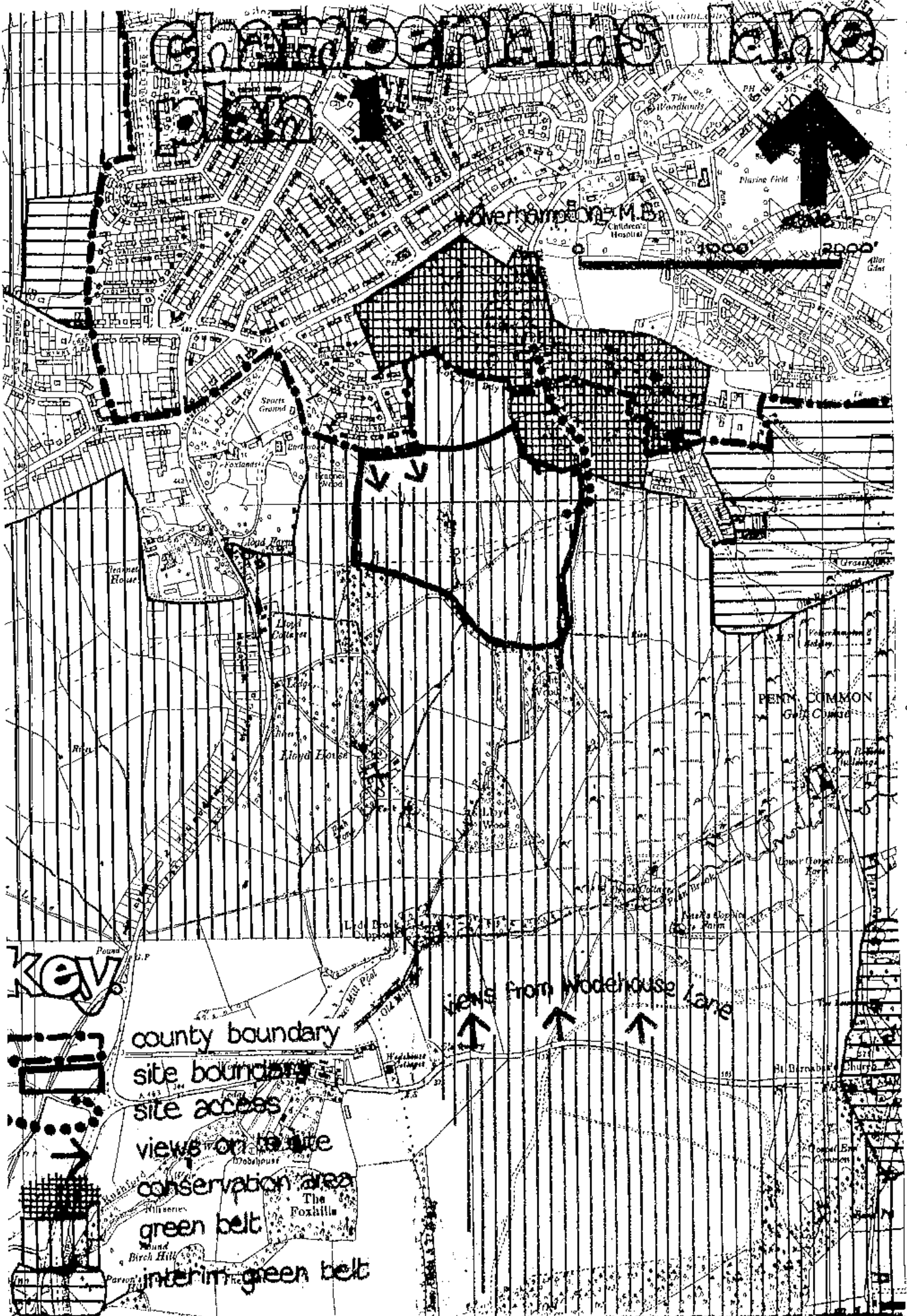
See "Revised Colour Finishes for Factory-made Cladding used in Farm Buildings", fourth report to the Design Council by its Advisory Committee on Farm Buildings, published February, 1974.

4.14 Buildings have already been erected on plots 7 and 9 without planning permission although applications for the retention of these buildings have since been received. Although neither group of buildings is located in a position where it could be clustered with other structures without being visually obtrusive, it is nevertheless felt that in view of the likely cost of resiting these buildings, their existing locations can be accepted providing they do not conflict with the access road proposals and they comply with the materials, colouring and landscaping requirements of the Brief.

CONCLUSION

This Design Guide is intended to inform the prospective purchasers and owners of the general planning requirements for the use of the land and the construction of any buildings on the site and Plan No. 3 shows a suggested scheme for the development of the area incorporating the recommendations made in this document. However, it is important that applicants with specific proposals for the development of individual plots, should enter into early discussions with the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the detailed proposals do conform to the policies of the Brief.

Wodehouse Lane



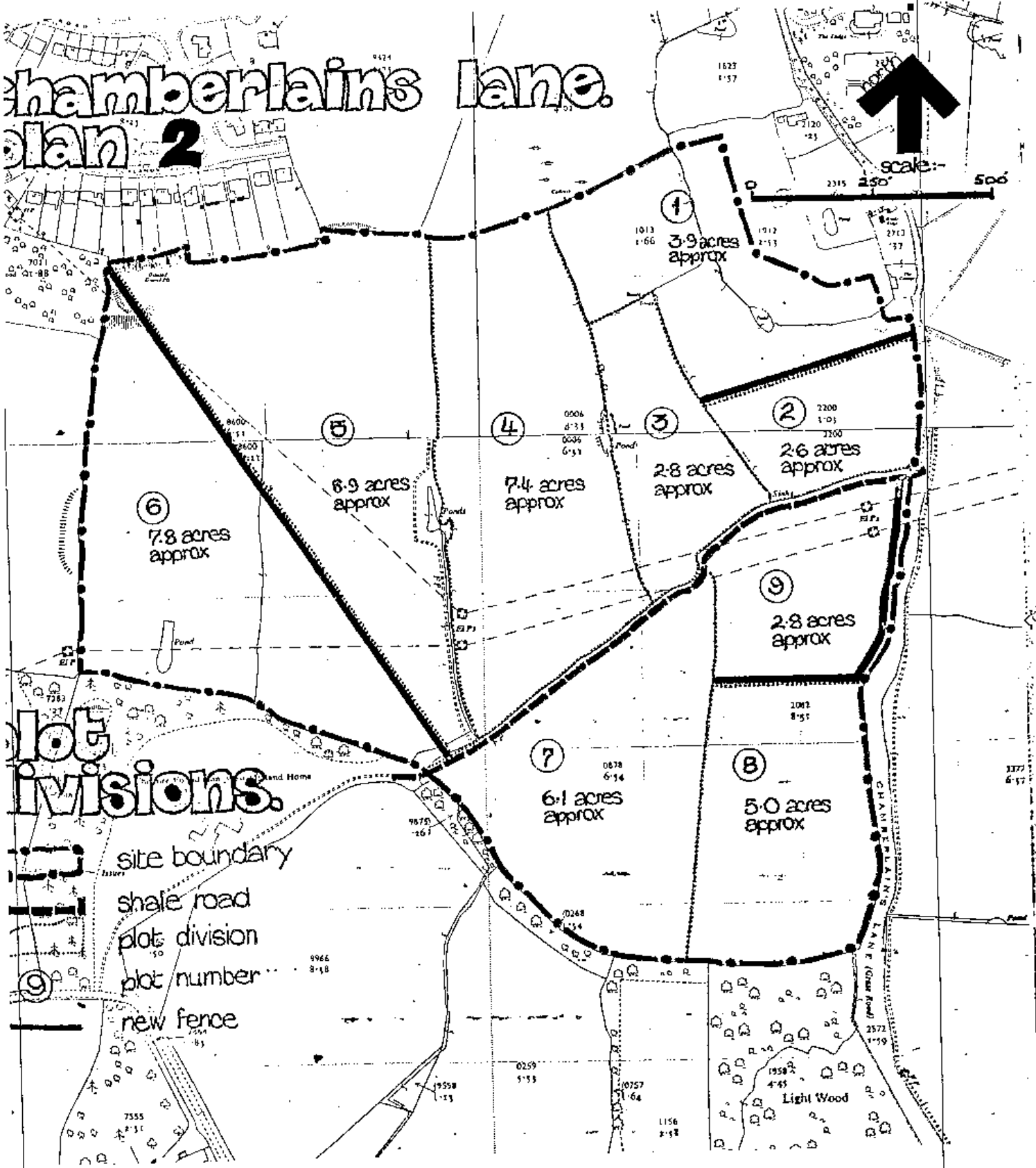
Views from Wodehouse Lane

KEY

- county boundary
- site boundary
- site access
- views on to site
- conservation area
- green belt
- interim green belt

Chamberlains Lane

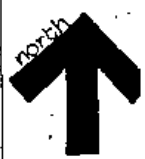
Plan 2



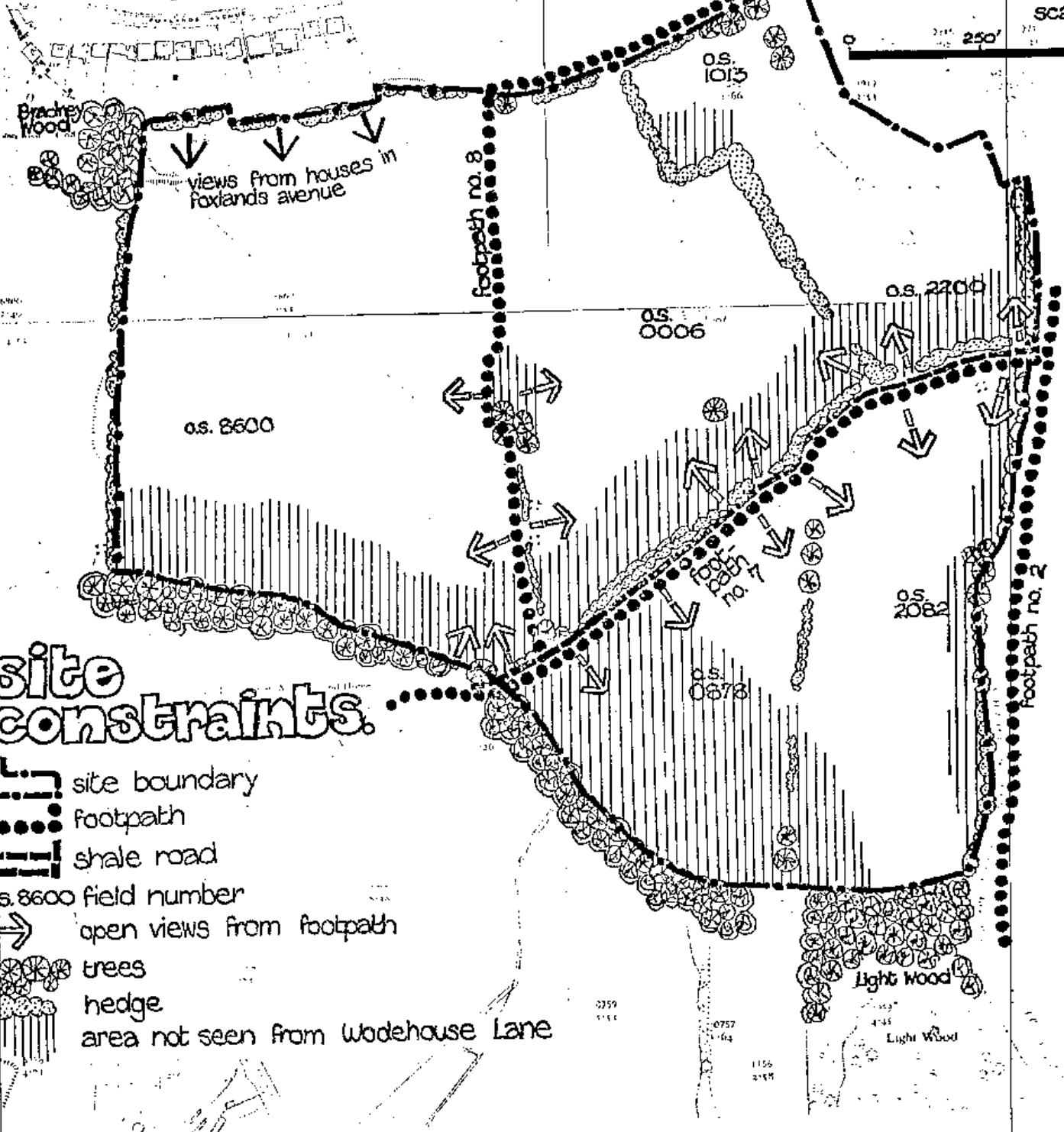
Plot Divisions

- site boundary
- - - shale road
- · · plot division
- ⊙ plot number
- new fence

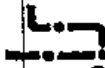


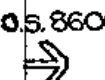



hamberlains lane lan 3



scale
0 250' 50



site constraints.

-  site boundary
-  footpath
-  shale road
- o.s. 8600 field number
-  open views from footpath
-  trees
-  hedge
-  area not seen from Wodehouse Lane

chamberlains lane.

diagram ①

location of buildings in relation
to views from public footpath.

