LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Landscape and Visual Appraisal
Local Services, Brixworth

February 2024

LandArb Solutions Limited is a company registered in England and Wales 11380041. Registered Office: 2 Jardine House, The Harrovian Business Village, Bessborough Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 3EX.

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REVISIONS:

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by Stephen Wadsworth who is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute and qualified urban designer.

1.2 This landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) is prepared on behalf of Dr Dallas Burston, to accompany a planning application for a new mixed residential and commercial development at land north of the Dallas Burston Cricket Ground, Brixworth ('the site').

1.3 In line with the guidelines of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) GLVIA 3, this landscape appraisal takes a 'proportionate' approach, taking into consideration the scale, extent and nature of the proposals and the anticipated sphere of influence and effect the proposals are considered to have upon the surroundings.

1.4 The objective of the LVA is to assess the baseline landscape and visual character of the site and study area, and the potential landscape and visual effects that would arise from the proposals, including the proposed access and landscaping.

1.5 The LVA considers the potential effects of the proposals on:

- Landscape elements and features such as vegetation, topography and water bodies etc.,
- Visual amenity; and
- Landscape character.

1.6 The primary objectives of the LVA are as follows:

- To identify, describe and evaluate the current landscape character of the site and its surrounding area;
- To identify, describe and evaluate any notable individual landscape elements and/or features within the site;
- To determine the sensitivity of the landscape to the type of development proposed;

- To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to view the proposed development) and to evaluate their sensitivity to the type of changes proposed; and
- To identify and describe any effects of the proposals in so far as they affect the landscape and/or views and to evaluate the magnitude of change owing to those effects.

Site Visit

1.7 The visual assessment was undertaken on 10th October 2023 when foliage was still largely present on deciduous vegetation. Consideration has also been given to the effect on visibility with the absence of foliage during winter months.

Caveats

1.8 It is acknowledged that by virtue of carrying out the 'visual' element of this assessment, the author has an inherent 'bias' against the proposals to which this report relates. When carrying out the site visit and taking photos from the chosen viewpoint locations (from publicly accessible areas and vantage points), the report's author is actively and deliberately 'looking' for the 'site' within the local landscape.

1.9 In reality, visual receptors such as users of the public rights of way network and motorists alike will not 'actively' be 'looking' for the site whilst traversing the public rights of way and road network. Whilst each visual receptor will have a varying degree of appreciation for their surroundings, depending on what they are doing (playing sport, walking, driving), their efforts will typically not be concerned with 'actively' and 'deliberately' looking for any given 'site' or 'proposed development'.

1.10 The photoviews were accurate at the time they were taken. Site conditions can be subject to change, for example garden and field boundary hedgerows can be cut/trimmed by landowners/farmers, trees can be felled by landowners or blown over by adverse weather, and new trees can be

planted. Therefore, the extent of visibility can potentially increase or decrease since the photoviews were taken. Such eventualities are not within the control of the report's author. The assessment of visibility within photoviews is accurate at the time of writing.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This LVA has been undertaken with regard to the following best practice guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) – Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA);
- TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of development proposals - Landscape Institute/Institute 2019

2.2 As recommended within the published guidance, landscape (elements and character) and visual effects are assessed separately.

APPENDIX 1 – METHODOLOGY

2.3 For the purposes of this assessment, unless otherwise stated, changes to landscape and visual amenity as a result of the proposed development are considered to be permanent and non-reversible.

Format of Report

2.4 After the first section of the report sets out the baseline scenario and incudes a policy review, the second part (the assessment part) of the report will focus on two key elements of landscape and visual assessment.

2.5 There are two important ways any development proposals can affect the landscape.

- Visually, or
- Physically.

Visual Assessment

2.6 Of the two ways, how the proposals are perceived visually in the landscape is an important consideration and has a bearing upon mitigation by design,

such as any proposed planting recommendations, the siting of the proposals, the scale and materials used.

Landscape Character and Quality of the Proposals/Design

2.7 Once the visual amenity of the site is understood, the focus then lies with the character, the physical being and quality of the design of the proposals. A site not widely visible with the surroundings is no excuse for bad design and proposals that do not seek to emulate local character and anchor themselves to their setting.

2.8 The section focusing on landscape character will include reference to the different elements of the proposals (such as planting, height and massing, materials, access and parking, and lighting.

3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for good design, promoting healthy communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

3.2 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for open countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives are to protect valued landscapes and, where possible, provide net gains in biodiversity.

3.3 The NPPF has been of material consideration as part of our assessment of the site and its setting, and the proposals shall take on board the overall framework guidance and principles contained within the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

3.4 The site is located within West Northamptonshire. In the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan (Part 1), Adopted DEC 2014, the following policies are considered relevant to landscape and visual matters.

3.5 Policy BN1 - GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CONNECTIONS states:

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDORS OF SUB-REGIONAL AND LOCAL IMPORTANCE AS SET OUT IN FIGURE 6 OF THE JOINT CORE STRATEGY WILL BE RECOGNISED FOR THEIR IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO SENSE OF PLACE AND CONSERVED, MANAGED AND ENHANCED BY:

1) INCORPORATING EXISTING AND IDENTIFIED FUTURE NETWORKS INTO NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS;

2) SECURING CONTRIBUTIONS FROM DEVELOPMENT OR OTHER SOURCES FOR THE CREATION OF AND FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF THE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORKS;

3) DELIVERING LONG TERM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR THE SUB-REGIONAL AND LOCAL NETWORK. MEASURES TO ENHANCE EXISTING AND PROVIDE NEW GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION WILL:

a) BE DESIGNED AND DELIVERED SUSTAINABLY WITH PRUDENT USE OF NATURAL RESOURCES;

b) MITIGATE AND ADAPT TO THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE INCLUDING THROUGH IMPROVED FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT AND AS A CARBON STORE;

c) BE DESIGNED TO THE HIGHEST QUALITY IN TERMS OF APPEARANCE, ACCESS PROVISION AND BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT AND PROTECTION;

d) REFLECT LOCAL CHARACTER THROUGH THE PLANTING OF NATIVE AND OTHER CLIMATE APPROPRIATE SPECIES AND CONSIDERATION OF NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE FEATURES;

e) BE SUPPORTED BY A LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT STRATEGY.

3.6 Policy BN3 - WOODLAND ENHANCEMENT AND CREATION states:

MEASURES TO ENHANCE AND MANAGE EXISTING WOODLANDS AND CREATE NEW WOODLANDS IN WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE WILL BE SUPPORTED. OPPORTUNITIES WILL BE SOUGHT TO CREATE NEW WOODLAND TO BUFFER, EXTEND AND RELINK AREAS OF ANCIENT WOODLAND WHICH HAVE BECOME FRAGMENTED. THE PROTECTION OF

AGED OR VETERAN TREES OUTSIDE ANCIENT WOODLANDS WILL ALSO BE SUPPORTED. DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD LEAD TO FURTHER FRAGMENTATION OR RESULT IN A LOSS OF ANCIENT WOODLAND, AGED AND VETERAN TREES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED UNLESS THE NEED FOR, AND BENEFITS OF, THE DEVELOPMENT IN THAT LOCATION CLEARLY OUTWEIGH THE LOSS. WOODLAND ENHANCEMENT AND CREATION ALONG THE YARDLEY WHITTLEWOOD RIDGE FROM THE VILLAGE OF YARDLEY HASTINGS TOWARDS TOWCESTER AND BRACKLEY WILL BE PRIORITIESED IN RECOGNITION OF ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE CHARACTER AND BIODIVERSITY OF WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

3.7 The above policies have been taken into consideration when preparing this LVA.

4 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL BASELINE

4.1 This report takes a considered and 'proportionate' approach to the assessment of likely landscape and visual effects associated with the proposals.

Site Location

4.2 The site is located on land to the west of Northampton Road and to the north of the Dallas Burston Cricket Ground.

APPENDIX 2 – SITE LOCATION PLAN

4.3 By the nature of the site's location, and considering the scale and extent of the proposals, the anticipated influence of the proposals would be localised in the host landscape. By virtue of the site's generally well enclosed nature, visual amenity is likely to be limited and confined to the areas close to the site.

4.4 Effects upon character will be limited to the immediate environs of the site as this appraisal will confirm.

Scale of the site

4.5 It is useful to identify the scale of the site area, to better understand how this relates to its surroundings, and what the potential scale of the proposals could be in relation to the site. The site is considered to be medium in size.

4.6 The site comprises two distinct parcels of land separated by a private road. The northern parcel consists of a single pastoral field and irregular in shape. The field is generally well defined and is enclosed by tree and understorey planting along its boundaries. Along the parcel's boundary with the private road, the vegetation is more formal with an avenue of trees and a maintained hedge beneath.

4.7 The southern parcel, is also irregular in shape and wraps around the northern part of the Dallas Burston Cricket Ground with which it has an open boundary. The parcel consists of an area of amenity grassland and a larger area of emergent silver birch scrub in and around a walled enclosure.

4.8 A series of context photos help to show the nature of the site as it presently exists.

APPENDIX 3 – CONTEXT PHOTOVIEWS

Scale of the proposals

4.9 It is useful to identify the scale of the proposals in relation to the site, to better understand how the proposals relate to the site itself, how much of the site is being developed, and what the potential visual sphere of influence is anticipated to be, in respect of the proposals.

4.10 The extent of new structures and hard standing in relation to the site area is considered to be large. The proposed development would be arranged across the site.

Scale of visual influence upon surroundings

4.11 The site is considered a medium site, and the proposals are considered to be large in comparison to the existing site. Nevertheless, the site visit and visual assessment confirm and support the author's view that the sphere of influence of the proposals upon its surroundings would be localised as a result of the enclosing existing built form and vegetation.

4.12 Having identified the anticipated sphere of influence the scale of the proposals are likely to have on its surroundings, the focus of this appraisal

can be narrowed to an area of study 'proportionate' to the scale, extent and nature of the proposals.

4.13 Visual amenity and landscape character will be assessed as part of this appraisal. It is prudent to note, however, that the scale of the proposals is not considered likely to have any effect greater than negligible upon the character of the national and local character areas in their entirety, given these are large geographic areas by comparison.

Landscape Baseline

4.14 The following section describes the individual elements, attributes, and key characteristics of the existing site and local landscape, which together contribute to an understanding of the landscape character.

4.15 The following physical landscape attributes will be described;

- Topography and Landform
- Hydrology and Water Features
- Landscape Framework – Tree and Vegetation Cover
- Public Rights of Way
- Public Highways and Transport Corridors
- Settlement Pattern and Built Form
- Landscape Designations
- Landscape Character

<u>Topography/Landform</u>

4.16 A low point of approximately 113 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) is located in the site's south-eastern corner. Within the site, the land rises to high point of approximately 120metres AOD in the north-eastern boundary.

4.17 The site is located on top of an area of high ground identified as Pitsford Hill. The high ground continues northwards and is largely urbanised as part of the village of Brixworth.

4.18 The land falls way from the site boundary to the east, south and west. The surrounding area reaches a low of approximately 75 metres AOD.

Hydrology and Water Features

4.19 There are no water features within the site. Pitsford Water is a manmade reservoir and occupies an extensive area approximately 564 metres to the east of the site at its closest point.

Landscape Framework – Tree and Vegetation Cover

4.20 The application site is generally well defined. A belt of trees and understorey planting are located on the site's western boundary. Scrub and trees are present along the site's eastern boundary with Northampton Road. A more formal boulevard of trees and hedgerow passes through part of the site. The southern site boundary is largely open.

4.21 Internally, to the site, the southern parcel has self-set silver birch. These are situated in and around the existing square walled enclosure.

4.22 The eastern side of Northampton Road opposite the site boundary is well vegetated with trees and shrubs. A belt of trees and shrubs is present to the south of the Dallas Burston Cricket Ground.

Public rights of way

4.23 The site is presently entirely private and does not have any public access in respect of public rights of way. A private road does bisect the site.

4.24 Part of the Northamptonshire Round passes along Merry Tom Lane immediately to the north of the site. The Northamptonshire Round is a promoted long distance (approximately 82km) walking trail.

4.25 The site location plan (Appendix 2) identifies other public rights of way in the immediate area.

Public Highways and Transport Corridors

4.26 The site is located immediately west of Northampton Road. This is the closest to highway the site. Northampton Road is one of the primary arteries into the village of Brixworth.

Settlement Pattern and Built Form

4.27 The site is located on the south-western edge of Brixworth. The site is contained by the Dallas Burston Cricket Ground, the Brixworth Tennis Club and approved care home to the south.

4.28 To the east, on the other side of Northampton Road, is a recent housing estate comprising mainly 2 storey detached residential properties. A modern medical centre is situated opposite the northern part of the site.

4.29 On the eastern side of Northampton Road, urban development extends northwards for approximately 1.4km into the centre of Brixworth.

4.30 To the south-west of the site, there is an approved 60 bedroom care home.

Landscape Designations

4.31 The site is not located within any nationally designated landscape.

4.32 There are no other designations within close proximity to the site.

APPENDIX 4 – DESIGNATIONS

Landscape Character

4.33 Landscape character assessments are documented at national, regional and local levels, and vary greatly in their level of detail, dependant on the scale and complexity of the landscape to which each assessment relates.

4.34 Landscape character assessments at national level for example provide more high level and generic descriptions for much wider geographic areas, compared to more local level assessments which provide more detailed descriptions and recommendations for much smaller local areas.

Review of Published Landscape Character Assessments

4.35 The site and the surrounding landscape have previously been assessed as part of a number of published landscape character assessments. These published landscape character assessments form a hierarchy from the national level to the district/local level.

National Landscape Character

4.36 England is divided in to 159 National [Landscape] Character Areas (NCAs). The site is located within NCA 95 'Northamptonshire Uplands'. The NCAs are managed by Natural England.

4.37 Whilst is it considered good practice and appropriate to consider national character assessments when considering the effects of proposals upon landscape character, the proposals to which this report relates are so small in nature, scale and extent that assessments against national character assessments are not considered appropriate.

4.38 It is considered that at this medium scale of project there would be no material change to the key characteristics of the NCA within the wider landscape as identified above.

Local Landscape Character

4.39 At the county and district level, the site and its host landscape is assessed in the published landscape character assessment for Northamptonshire[1].

[1] Current Landscape Character Assessment – circa 2003 – LDA Design

The site is located in the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slope landscape character type (LCT) see Appendix 5.

APPENDIX 5 - ROLLING IRONSTONE VALLEY SLOPE

4.40 The key characteristics for the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slope are given as:

- Broad valley slopes dissected by numerous tributary streams;
- Ironstone geology expressed in local vernacular buildings and in rich red soils;
- rolling landform, extensive views and sense of exposure on some prominent locations;
- steep slopes adjacent to more elevated landscapes;
- numerous water bodies including the county's largest reservoir;
- productive arable farmland in medium and large scale fields predominates on elevated land although sheep and cattle pastures also prevalent, often in smaller fields adjacent to watercourses;
- agricultural practices create a patchwork of contrasting colours and textures extending across valley slopes;
- where broadleaved woodlands and mature hedgerow trees combine, these impart a sense of a well treed landscape;
- hedgerows generally low and well clipped although intermittent sections show evidence of decline;
- well settled with numerous villages and towns;
- landscape directly and indirectly influenced by the close proximity of many of the county's urban areas; and
- building materials vary although vernacular architecture and churches display the local ironstone.

4.41 Specifically the site is located on the extreme edge of the 4d Hanging Houghton landscape character area (LCA). The LCA is described as being a largely rural landscape of mixed arable and pastoral agricultural in the Brampton Valley below Brixworth. The following is noted in the description of the LCA:

"…Although located beyond the boundary of the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes, the settlement of Brixworth remains visually important due to its prominent position on the upper slopes. Significant historic features are

contained within the settlement, notably a Saxon church built in 680AD on the northern boundary..."

4.42 The Aesthetic and Perceptual Qualities of the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slope LCT are described in the following paragraph:

"Despite urban influences having an impact on the character and perception of wide tracts of the landscape, much retains a quiet rural character. The landscape is perceived as busy, settled and primarily agricultural, with most views encompassing extensive areas of productive arable farmland, with fields defined by well-maintained hedgerows. Where various land uses are evident across valley sides, contrasting colours and textures provide visual interest. Woodlands and hedgerows are important textural elements and add to the visual appeal of the landscape. Where present, woodlands combine with the undulating topography to give visual containment and a more pronounced sense of intimacy. This contrasts with the elevated valley sides, where open views over wide areas have a more open character."

NB Underling above represents the LVA report author's emphasis.

4.43 The condition of the landscape within the LCT is described as 'good'.

Visual Baseline

Residential Properties

There are numerous residential properties within close proximity to the site i.e. within 500 metres of the site boundary. However, these are almost entirely within the built up area of Brixworth to the east of the site. Direct intervisibility with residential properties and the site even at such a close distance is typically restricted by the presence of existing vegetation and

local changes in topography in the intervening space between the particular property and the site boundary.

4.44 Intervisibility from more distant residential properties with the site is typically restricted by existing built form and/or vegetation in the intervening landscape between the particular property and the site boundary.

Public Highways

4.45 The highway network in proximity to the site is limited. The closest public highway to the site is the Northampton Road. This road affords limited views of and into the site as it passes the site boundary. Existing vegetation both on the roadside and within the site itself act to restrict views of much of the site.

4.46 From further away, views of the site are restricted. Most potential views of and into the site from the local highway network are restricted through one or all of the following factors:

- Road side vegetation
- Orientation of the particular highway
- Changes in topography in the intervening landscape between the highway user and the site boundary
- The presence of existing vegetation and/or built form in the intervening landscape between the highway user and the site boundary

Public Rights of Way

4.47 The public right of way network in the local landscape surrounding the site is relatively limited in the numbers of routes. However, the Northamptonshire Round long distance recreation route passes is adjacent to the site's western boundary.

4.48 The presence of existing dense vegetation along much of the site boundary restricts views from many locations.

4.49 From the wider pubic rights network and open access land, views of and into the site are typically restricted by existing vegetation and/or changes in the local topography. Where views do occur, the site is seen only as discrete parts rather than its entirety and over a distance; as part of a wide panorama that encompasses existing development.

Selection of representative viewpoints

4.50 A visual assessment has been undertaken of the study area. Following a desk top study and subsequent site visit, it is evident that the site and the proposed development would only be visually apparent from close or very close views. In line with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition), a number of representative viewpoints (9 in total) have been selected to form the basis of a detailed visual assessment.

4.51 The chosen viewpoints are regarded as being representative of the range of potential views and receptors e.g. users of the public highway and public right of way networks, etc. from various distances and directions around the site.

4.52 A desk top study and field surveys has refined the number and exact location of the representative viewpoints so that their locations are ones from which there is anticipated to be an effect. The representative viewpoints are not intended to be exhaustive. It is acknowledged that there are other locations from which the proposed development would be visible but a greater number of locations would have demonstrated no visual effect.

4.53 It is taken that users of the public right of way network would generally have a high susceptibility to change, reflective of the fact that the primary reason for using a right of way is to enjoy the local landscape. Users of the highway network are considered to have less susceptibility to change.

4.54 In the specific context of the site, it is taken that views from within the local area are typically of a medium value owing to the site and its host landscape being outside a designated area.

5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

5.1 This section describes the key components of the proposals, and the nature of the anticipated effects that are likely to occur. It then draws upon the landscape and visual baseline information and summarises key constraints and opportunities that need to be considered and incorporated within the proposals.

5.2 In summary, the proposals comprise (see Appendix 6):

- Construction of a four new buildings forming a Brixworth Local Services centre to include office units, convenience store and pharmacy, a drive through coffee outlet and a gymnasium
- Creation of a new parking area (100 spaces) and access points for the proposed Local Services centre
- Construction of 16 semi-detached affordable homes
- Construction of a spa and wellness centre and associated parking and access
- Attenuation pond
- New tree and hedgerow planting plus landscape works

APPENDIX 6 – PROPOSED SITE PLAN

5.3 The proposed built form has yet to be fully detailed. However, the following parameters have been provided in respect of heights and materials.

5.4 The proposed Local Service buildings to be single storey with pitched roof to a height of 6.5 metres. With the exception of the convenience/supermarket building, the materials are to be a palette of white rendered block work with areas of red brick and a slate roof. The convenience/supermarket building is to be constructed of aluminium cladding with a pitched slate roof.

5.5 Spa and wellness building to be single storey with pitched roof to a height of 6.5 metres. The materials are to be white rendered block work with areas of red brick and a slate roof.

5.6 The affordable houses are to be 2.5 storeys constructed of redbrick with a slate roof.

Lighting

5.7 There is no lighting information available at the time of writing, however several assumptions can be made as to the nature of the lighting required and typical for such a setting.

5.8 Any lighting would be kept to a minimum and would be for health and safety purposes. It is anticipated that any lighting would be determined at the detailed design stage and that the form and extent of any lighting would be controlled by the LPA through an appropriate planning condition.

6 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

6.1 A visual assessment of the proposals has been undertaken to determine how the proposals would likely have a bearing on the visual amenity of the immediate vicinity of the site and the surrounding landscape/countryside. This assessment was undertaken in 10th October 2023 when foliage was still largely present on deciduous vegetation. Consideration has also been given to the effect on visibility with the absence of foliage during winter months.

6.2 A number of representative viewpoints have been identified on which to base a visual assessment.

APPENDIX 7 – PHOTOVIEW LOCATION PLAN

6.3 The detailed assessment of these representative viewpoints sets out how the baseline view will be affected visually by the proposals.

APPENDIX 8 – REPRESENTATIVE VIEWPINTS

Effects Upon Visual Amenity

6.4 As illustrated within the visual assessment, the lack of public rights of way and the well enclosed nature of the site greatly reduces the potential visual effects arising from the proposals.

6.5 There are several features that limit the outward visibility of the site.

- The site is generally well vegetated;
- There is a dense woodland belt along the site's western boundary;
- The road frontage with Northampton Road is generally well vegetated;
- There is a general absence of publicly accessible vantage points within the surrounding landscape from which to view into the site.

Viewpoints

6.6 The viewpoints that were taken as part of the visual assessment have been assessed at;

Year 1 - when the proposed development has been constructed and the access and landscaping has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and

Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow the planting to have established, and grown sufficiently to provide any softening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.

6.7 The photoviews are formatted on A3, such that if you were to hold them up at arm's length, they would be a 100% representation of the view you would see.

6.8 Visual assessment is subjective, and what one person might consider is a beneficial change, another could be of the opposite view and consider the same thing negative.

Visual Commentary – Representative Viewpoints

Viewpoint 1 and 3 - View from Northampton Road

6.9 These views are taken from Northampton Road looking south and north respectively from the footway to the highway. In both instances views into the site are greatly restricted by the presence of existing vegetation in the intervening space between the observer and the site.

6.10 The view is representative of users of the public highway network. Such users are assessed as having a medium susceptibility to change. The value of the view is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the person using the public right of way is assessed as medium.

Magnitude of Change

6.11 The magnitude of change is considered to amount to negligible in year 1. The proposed development would involve the creation of some pedestrian

access points into the local services centre in the north of the site off Northampton Road. The creation of these access points would require some loss of understorey vegetation but the intention is to retain most of the existing vegetation on the site boundaries.

6.12 The retained vegetation would screen the proposed single storey buildings. In winter, with the loss of foliage on deciduous vegetation, it is considered that the existing vegetation is sufficiently dense to provide a lattice that would still restrict views into the site and of the proposals.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.13 With a negligible magnitude of change, and a medium sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to be negligible adverse at year 1.

6.14 At year 15 it is assessed that scale of effect would remain as negligible adverse.

Viewpoint 2 - View from Northampton Road looking north-west

6.15 This view is taken from Northampton Road and the eastern footway. Most of the site is not visible and is screened by a combination of existing vegetation and the existing crenelated walled structure in the south-eastern part of the site.

6.1 The view is representative of users of the public highway network. Such users are assessed as having a medium susceptibility to change. The value of the view is assessed as low. The view has little inherent merit. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the person using the public highway is assessed as low.

Magnitude of Change

6.2 The magnitude of change is considered to amount to low in year 1. The low profile single storey spa and wellness building would replace the existing

crenelated wall and would have a similar massing but would be slightly higher. Most of the proposed development would not be seen and would be screened by the proposed spa and wellness building and the existing retained vegetation.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.3 With a low magnitude of change, and a low sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to be negligible adverse at year 1.

6.4 At year 15 it is assessed that scale of effect would remain as negligible adverse.

Viewpoint 4 - View from Northamptonshire Round public right of way (Merry Tom Lane) adjacent to entrance to Ash House looking north

6.5 This view is taken from Merry Tom Lane which contains the site to the west. The lane forms part of the Northamptonshire Round public right of way long distance route.

6.6 The view is taken adjacent to Ash House and looks north along Merry Tom Lane in the direction of Northampton Road. The vegetation on the site's western boundary is clearly seen but the same vegetation prevents into the site.

6.1 The view is representative of users of the public right of way network. Such users are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change. The value of the view is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the person using the public right of way is assessed as high.

Magnitude of Change

6.2 The magnitude of change is considered to be negligible in year 1. The low profile buildings would set back some distance from the site boundary such

that the retained boundary vegetation would continue screen views into the site and of the proposed development.

6.3 The existing tree belt has a sufficient depth and height that in winter, without foliage, the lattice work of branches and trunks would still greatly restrict views into the site and of the proposals.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.4 With a negligible magnitude of change, and a high sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to be minor adverse at year 1.

6.5 At year 15 it is assessed that the scale of effect would remain as minor adverse.

Viewpoint 5 - View from Northamptonshire Round public right of way (Merry Tom Lane) looking north

6.6 This view is taken from Merry Tom Lane which contains the site to the west. The lane forms part of the Northamptonshire Round public right of way long distance route.

6.7 The vegetation on the site's western boundary is visible but the same vegetation together with vegetation to the south of the site, prevents into the site.

6.8 The view is representative of users of the public right of way network. Such users are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change. The value of the view is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the person using the public right of way is assessed as high.

Magnitude of Change

6.9 The magnitude of change is considered to be negligible in year 1. The low profile buildings would set back some distance from the site boundary such

that the retained boundary vegetation would continue screen views into the site and of the proposed development.

6.10 The existing tree belt has a sufficient depth and height that in winter, without foliage, the lattice work of branches and trunks would still greatly restrict views into the site and of the proposals.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.11 With a negligible magnitude of change, and a high sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to be minor adverse at year 1.

6.12 At year 15 it is assessed that the scale of effect would remain as minor adverse.

Viewpoint 6 - View from Northampton Road close to junction with A508 looking north

6.13 This view is taken from Northampton Road and the western footway. The site is almost entirely screened by existing vegetation in the intervening landscape between the observer and the site boundary. Part of the fence to the adjacent Dallas Burston Cricket ground can be seen in the middle distance. A small element of the crenelated walled structure on the site can just be distinguished.

6.14 The view is representative of users of the public highway network. Such users are assessed as having a medium susceptibility to change. The value of the view is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the person using the public highway is assessed as medium.

Magnitude of Change

6.15 The magnitude of change is considered to amount to low in year 1. The low profile single storey spa and wellness building would replace the existing crenelated wall and would have a similar massing but would be slightly

higher. Most of the proposed development would not be seen and would be screened by the proposed spa and wellness building and the existing retained vegetation.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

6.16 With a low magnitude of change, and a medium sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to be minor adverse at year 1.

6.17 At year 15 it is assessed that scale of effect would remain as minor adverse.

Viewpoint 7 - View from Northamptonshire Round public right of way close to the junction with the A5199 looking north-east

6.18 This view is taken from the Northamptonshire Round public right of way and long distance route, close to its junction with the A5199. The view is a panoramic one and looks north-east across the vale landscape towards the site.

6.19 Brixworth can be seen on the crest of high ground that forms the valley side. Ash House to the west of the site can be readily distinguished as can part of Hill Farm to the south of the site. However, existing vegetation and changes in topography in the intervening landscape between the observer and the site boundary prevent views of and into the site.

6.20 The view is representative of users of the public right of way network. Such users are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change. The value of the view is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the person using the public right of way is assessed as high.

Magnitude of Change

6.21 It is assessed that there would be a negligible change to the view at year 1 with the proposed development in place. Existing vegetation and changes in topography in the intervening landscape between the observer and the

site boundary would continue to restrict views of and into the site, and would similarly restrict views of the proposed development.

Scale of Effect at Year 1 and 15

6.22 With a negligible magnitude of change year 1 and a high sensitivity, the scale of effect would be minor adverse.

6.23 At year 15, it is assessed that the scale of effect would remain as minor adverse.

Viewpoint 8 – View from layby on A508 at Pitsford looking north

6.24 This view is taken from the A508 close to Pitsford village. The view is an expansive one and looks across fields in the direction of the site. The horizon is well treed and is perceived as almost continuous woodland. Some built form within Brixworth can be distinguished and Hill Farm and Victors Barn are clearly seen. However, views of and into the site are screened by the existing built form and vegetation in the intervening landscape between the observer and the site boundary.

6.25 The view is representative of users of the public highway network. Such users are assessed as having a medium susceptibility to change. The value of the view is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the person using the public highway is assessed as medium.

Magnitude of Change

6.26 With the proposed development in place on the site, the view would be substantially unaltered. The proposed development would be screened from view by the existing built form and vegetation in the intervening landscape between the observer and the site boundary.

6.27 The magnitude of change at year 1 of the operational phase is assessed as negligible.

Scale of Effect at Year 1 and 15

6.28 With a negligible magnitude of change year 1 and a medium sensitivity, the scale of effect would be negligible adverse.

6.29 At year 15 of the operational phase, it is assessed that the scale of effect would remain as negligible adverse.

Viewpoint 9 – View from public right of way DK2 Pitsford looking north

6.30 This view is taken from the public right of way DK2 as it passes to the north of Pitsford church. The view looks north across a vale landscape of fields and woodland in the direction of the site.

6.31 Hill Farm and Victors Barn are evident on the high ground to the north. Views of and into the site are restricted by the change in topography and the presence of existing built form and vegetation in the intervening landscape between the observer and the site boundary.

6.32 The view is representative of users of the public right of way network. Such users are assessed as having a high susceptibility to change. The value of the view is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the visual receptor i.e. the person using the public right of way is assessed as high.

Magnitude of Change

6.33 It is assessed that there would be a negligible change to the view at year 1 with the proposed development in place. The proposed development would be screened from view by the layering effect of the change in topography and the intervening built form/vegetation in the landscape between the observer and the site boundary.

Scale of Effect at Year 1 and 15

6.34 With a negligible magnitude of change year 1 and a high sensitivity, the scale of effect would be minor adverse at year 1 and 15.

Summary

6.35 A summary of the visual effects is tabulated in Table 6.1 below:

Table 6.1 – Summary of Visual Effects

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Scale of effect above baseline	Year 15 - scale of effect with landscape proposals in place
Viewpoint 1 - View from Northampton Road looking south	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse
Viewpoint 2 - View from Northampton Road looking north-west	Low	Low	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse
Viewpoint 3 - View from Northampton Road looking north	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse
Viewpoint 4 - View from Northamptonshire	High	Negligible	Minor adverse	Minor adverse

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Scale of effect above baseline	Year 15 - scale of effect with landscape proposals in place
Round public right of way (Merry Tom Lane) adjacent to entrance to Ash House looking north				
Viewpoint 5 - View from Northamptonshire Round public right of way (Merry Tom Lane) looking north	High	Negligible	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
Viewpoint 6 - View from Northampton Road close to junction with A508 looking north	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Minor adverse

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change	Scale of effect above baseline	Year 15 - scale of effect with landscape proposals in place
Viewpoint 7 - View from Northamptonshire Round public right of way close to the junction with the A5199 looking north-east	High	Negligible	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
Viewpoint 8 - View from layby on A508 at Pitsford looking north	Medium	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse
Viewpoint 9 - View from public right of way DK2 Pitsford looking north	High	Negligible	Minor adverse	Minor adverse

7 EFFECTS UPON LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS AND CHARACTER

7.1 In the context of the proposals described within the previous section. This section sets out an assessment of the likely physical landscape effects upon the site and the anticipated landscape effects upon the character of the relevant landscape character area of the site and its immediate context.

Likely causes of effects

7.2 Although any landscape has some intrinsic sensitivity, different landscapes contain a range of components which will respond differently to change, subject to the type and nature of the proposals. Therefore, in order to inform the analysis of effects, judgements should be made with reference to the specific changes which arise from the type and nature of proposals being considered.

7.3 The following section sets out the likely causes of effects which would occur in relation to the proposals for the site.

Causes of temporary effects during construction

7.4 The temporary construction work which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows:

- Site clearance and setting out;
- Movement and presence of associated construction vehicles;
- Presence of materials storage and machinery storage on site during construction;
- Installation of tree protection barriers to protect boundary vegetation;
- Minor reprofiling internally for parking areas and access;
- Construction of buildings and access points/parking; and
- Installations of planting proposals and landscaping.

7.5 Tree protection measures (e.g. Heras barriers) would need to be erected prior to site construction works. All of these measures will be temporary in nature.

Causes of effects at completion

7.6 The permanent components of the proposals which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows;

- Construction of the proposed buildings, access points and parking areas; and
- Installations of planting proposals and landscaping integrated into the proposals (i.e. trees, shrubs, grassland areas, native structure planting).

7.7 Effects at completion are concerned with the long-term alteration in the landscape from the current site context, to the future scenario with the proposals in place. The proposed buildings and parking area and associated planting will have been completed and will be a long term component in the landscape.

7.8 In terms of physical landscape resources, the direct changes will be restricted to the site only. There would be no anticipated additional direct effects on the wider areas around the site or to the wider landscape context of the local character area.

Effects Upon Landscape Elements

7.9 This section assesses the effect of the proposals on the elements and features that currently characterise the site.

7.10 In the following paragraphs (apart from land use), effects will be assessed at;

Year 1 - when built form has been completed, and any earthworks and landscape has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and

Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow structural elements to have weathered, and for any landscaping interventions such as trees, shrubs and grassland to have established, and grown sufficiently to provide any screening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.

Topography

7.11 Topographically, the proposals would not alter the grain of the existing topography. The proposals do not require large cut and fill exercises that would fundamentally alter the key character of the topography.

7.12 There would be localised areas of re-profiling in respect to the foundations for proposed buildings, parking areas and access. These are not fundamental alterations to the grain of the site wide topography. The boundary vegetation is being retained and thus the levels would not change in line with the requirement to maintain levels as part of BS: 5837:23012.

Value and Sensitivity

7.13 The topography of the site is assessed as having a low susceptibility to the type of development proposed, with a low value as it is not rare or unusual. The sensitivity is therefore low.

Magnitude of Change

7.14 The magnitude of change to the fundamental character of the site's topography is assessed as being low. Despite several localised areas of re-profiling for the foundations, these would not amount to major changes. The fundamental character of the topography of the site would remain.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

7.15 With a low magnitude of change, and a low sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to negligible at year 1 and year 15. Any changes would be permanent.

Trees and Vegetation Resource

Value and Sensitivity

7.16 Trees are considered highly susceptible to development if they are not protected as part of any site works.

7.17 The tree survey and AIA report submitted as part of the application identifies the quality of the existing arboricultural resource on the site. The majority of trees on site are being retained. The removals relate to individual trees, hedgerows and tree groups that would need to be removed primarily to facilitate access onto and within the site.

7.18 The trees on and adjacent the site boundary are not protected, are not within a site that is designated in any way, and have nothing that elevates their status or quality. However, the tree and hedgerow resource on and immediately around the site do contribute positively to the character of the site and the wider area and are assessed as having a medium value. Overall, the sensitivity of the tree and hedgerow resource associated with the site is assessed as medium.

7.19 The grassland on the site is considered to have some ecological value but is not particularly rare or unusual as a landscape feature in the context of the site's host landscape. The grassland on the site is assessed as having a medium value and medium susceptibility to the type of development being proposed. Overall, the grassland sensitivity is assessed as medium.

Magnitude of Change

7.20 The tree and hedgerow resource on and adjacent to the site is to be largely retained as part of the proposed development. Approximately 23 arboricultural elements would need to be removed in whole or in part so as to accommodate the proposed development.

7.21 The proposed site layout plan includes some suggested tree, shrub and hedgerow planting. The new tree and hedgerow planting would create new boundaries and would provide additional screening for the proposals. Tree planting within the site would be consistent with the generally well treed appearance of the wider landscape around the site.

7.22 The magnitude of change for the new tree and shrub planting is assessed as medium. At year 1, any new tree, shrub or hedgerow planting would be largely immature and would not contribute to the structure and character of the site as greatly as they would when they have fully established.

7.23 The proposals include for the removal of most of the grassland on the site. There would be loss of the grassland to accommodate the proposed buildings, parking areas, access and tree and hedgerow planting.

7.24 The magnitude of change at year 1 for the grassland resource on the site is assessed as high.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

7.25 With a medium sensitivity and medium magnitude of change, there would be a moderate adverse effect at year 1 of the operational phase for the existing tree resource on the site.

7.26 As the suggested tree, shrub and hedgerow planting establishes and grows, they would increasingly contribute positively to the site over the coming years. This would amount to a moderate neutral scale of effect in year 15.

7.27 With a medium sensitivity and a high magnitude of change, the scale of effect on the grassland resource of the site would at year 1 be initially major adverse. However, some grassland would be reinstated as part of the proposals, it is considered that the scale of effect on the site's grassland resource would have altered to moderate adverse.

Public rights of way (PRoW)

7.28 There are no rights of way running through the site, and the proposals do not directly require the alteration of any rights of way. There would therefore be no direct effect to any public rights of way.

7.29 Any potential effects on users of the local PRoW network are considered under section 6 'Effects on Visual Amenity'.

Watercourses and waterbodies

7.30 There are no watercourses or waterbodies within or close to the site, and therefore no affects.

Effects Upon Landscape Character

Landscape Value

7.31 The Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact (GLVIA 3), at Box 5.1, together with the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21set out a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes. These factors include:

- Landscape quality (condition);
- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation Interests;
- Recreation Value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations.

7.32 Table 7.1 below seeks to assess the value of the site and its host landscape based on the above factors.

Table 7.1 Assessment of Landscape Value of the Site and its Environs

Criteria	Assessment of Value
Landscape quality (condition)	**Medium.** The site and its environs are entirely outside any nationally important landscape in terms of the NPPF. The site is considered to be in fair condition but the landscape around it is considered to be good condition.

Scenic quality	**Medium.** The site has some intrinsic scenic quality and is in a landscape of some aesthetic and visual interest .
Rarity	**Low.** The site has no rare or unusual features within its boundary. The wider local area around contains few examples of rare landscape.
Representativeness	**Low.** The site possesses a limited number of the characteristics of the wider landscape as identified in the published landscape character assessments. The principal characteristics is the woodland edge along the site's western boundary. The site forms part of an area that is already largely developed.
Conservation Interest	**Low.** Neither the site nor its immediate surrounding area is recognised as having any particular historic conservation interest.
Recreational value	**Medium.** The site is entirely private and, without general public access, has no recreational value at present. The site's immediate environs do have public rights of way passing through and do provide some recreational value .
Perceptual qualities	**Low.** The site affords only a restricted amount of intervisibility with the surrounding area and has a reduced sense of tranquillity owing to the noise and activity as a result mainly of the adjacent road and urban development to the east and existing development to the south.
Associations	**Low.** There is no known direct association with any historic or cultural figure and the site or the area immediately surrounding the site.

7.33 Having considered the various factors given in the above table, it is assessed that the landscape of the site and its surrounding area is of low

value. The susceptibility of the local landscape to the type of development being proposed is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the local landscape is assessed as low.

Assessment of the Effects on Landscape Character

7.34 At the finer grain level of assessment, as expressed in the published County landscape character assessment, the immediate environs of the site to the west demonstrate many of the wider landscape's key characteristics. Principal of these key characteristics are, the sloping topography, the mixed agricultural fields, the presence of hedgerow and trees and the sense of a well treed landscape, the influence of urban areas, and the visual importance of Brixworth as a landscape feature on the higher ground.

7.35 In contrast, the site, owing to its relatively small size and location, does not itself demonstrate any of the above key characteristics. The site contributes to the wider landscape through its trees and roadside vegetation that provide a level of enclosure and screening to the site.

7.36 The nature and features of the site are not rare or unusual in the context of the wider landscape. Pastoral land that forms part of the site is evident as part of the area's settled agricultural 'patchwork'.

7.37 There would be a noticeable change to the appearance and character of the site with the proposals in place. The proposals would introduce built form and associated infrastructure onto an area of land where development is currently largely absent. However, the structural elements of the proposed development, would be experienced and perceived in the context of other existing and approved development that occupies the area to the west of the Northampton Road.

7.38 The proposals would not encroach perceptively into the countryside. The existing tree and hedgerow resource on and adjacent to the site would be

retained largely unaltered. In particular, the retained trees and vegetation along the site's boundaries, which contribute to the appearance of the wider landscape would still continue to thrive and have the potential to remain a viable feature of the landscape for many decades with the proposals in place.

7.39 New tree, shrub and hedgerow planting as part of the proposals that is intended to provide additional screening and biodiversity/wildlife habitat, would also have the potential to reinforce and enhance the retained vegetation resource and to contribute further to the character of the site and to the wider landscape when mature. Once established, new planting would enhance the setting of the proposed development. The new and retained planting would maintain a green edge to the village of Brixworth.

7.40 With the possible exception of underground utilities, there would be no physical effects beyond the site boundaries with the proposed development in place on the site. The physical characteristics of the local landscape beyond the site would remain unchanged with the proposed residential development in place. The existing scale and pattern of the landscape with its landcover of large arable and pastoral agricultural fields, sloping topography and valley sides, strong hedgerow and wooded structure, and associated settlements would all continue to prevail with the proposals in place.

7.41 Only experiential factors such as tranquillity and visual appearance would be affected beyond the site boundary and only to a limited degree. The proposals would be a source of activity and noise associated with the proposed commercial and recreational uses. Nevertheless, it is considered that any change to the perceived level of tranquillity in the vicinity of the site would be comparatively small; reflective of the scale of the proposed

development, and the presence of other existing urban uses and development in the surrounding landscape.

7.42 The published landscape character assessment identifies that the landscape in which the site is located is 'perceived as busy, settled and primarily agricultural… where various land uses are evident across valley sides, contrasting colours and textures provide visual interest…' It is considered that the proposed development would do little to change this perception and would be consistent with the urban land uses that enclose the site to the south, north and east.

7.43 In respect of night time effects, the proposed development would introduce some new light sources. It is anticipated that any external lighting within the proposed development would be kept to a minimum needed for health and safety and security. It is anticipated that any external lighting would be controlled by the local planning authority through a suitable condition should the proposed development gain planning consent.

7.44 Visually, the site benefits from a high degree of containment from within the wider landscape. The proposed development would influence the visual amenity experienced by those people in the surrounding area to only a limited degree. Any change in the visual appearance of the site would not alter substantially the material perception of the local host landscape as being a settled rural one.

7.45 The proposed development, where visible at all, would generally only been seen as discrete elements in a landscape and typically in the context of other existing development along the eastern and southern edge of Brixworth. The local landscape already accommodates a variety of development to the extent that they are integral component of the character of the wider landscape. In this context, the sight of the proposed

development would not unduly affect the visual experience, appearance or perception of the landscape's character.

7.46 The character of the local landscape is assessed as having a low sensitivity. The magnitude of change that would be brought to the character of the local landscape of with the proposed development in place is assessed as medium. With a low magnitude of change and an overall medium sensitivity, the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local landscape is assessed as minor adverse at year 1.

7.47 By year 15 of the operational phase, the establishment and filling out of any proposed tree, shrub and hedgerow planting within the proposed development and along the site boundary, would help assimilate the proposals further into the landscape. It is assessed that the scale of the effect on the local landscape would remain as minor adverse.

7.48 Overall, it is concluded that the proposed development is of an appropriate mix of land uses, scale and form for its landscape setting. The proposals have been located appropriately in terms of sensitive landscape receptors, and would not cause a notable adverse change in the prevailing character and appearance of the area's landscape.

8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

8.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has assessed the landscape and visual effects of the proposals and associated landscaping.

8.2 It is evident from this assessment that the visual envelope associated with the proposals would be localised. The majority of the surrounding landscape would be completely unaffected visually should the proposals for the site take place.

8.3 Typically intervening vegetation and/or existing built form together with localised changes in the area's sloping topography would limit the outward effect the proposals would have on the surrounding landscape.

8.4 The proposed development, where visible at all, would generally only been seen as discrete elements in a landscape and typically in the context of other existing development along the eastern and southern edge of Brixworth.

8.5 The published landscape character assessment identifies that the landscape in which the site is located is 'perceived as busy, settled and primarily agricultural… where various land uses are evident across valley sides …' It is considered that the proposed development would do little to change this perception.

8.6 This appraisal did not find any significant concerns regarding the anticipated landscape and visual effects arising from the proposals.

APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

1. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been undertaken with reference to best practice, as outlined in the following published guidance:

    - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) - Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)

    - GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13

    - Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland - (2002) Countryside Agency / Scottish Natural Heritage

    - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) Natural England

Professional Judgement

2. LVIAs differ from other specialist studies because they are generally undertaken by professionals who are also involved in the design of the landscape and the preparation of subsequent management proposals. This allows the landscape assessment to proceed as an integral part of the overall scheme design rather than a discrete study carried out once the proposals have been finalised.

3. Professional judgement is a very important part of the LVIA process. Whilst there is scope for quantitative measurement of some interrelating elements (e.g. the loss of trees), much of the landscape assessment will rely on qualitative judgements that involve a degree of subjective opinion (e.g. the assessment of landscape values or what effect proposals will have on visual amenity).

4. Professional judgements are therefore based on both training/qualification and experience and are supported by clear evidence and a reasoned judgement. Accordingly, it is recommended that suitably qualified and experienced professionals carry out the LVIAs.

5. The assessment of landscape and visual effects is based on the professional judgement of a chartered landscape architect with over 13+ years' experience of undertaking landscape and visual impact assessments for projects at varying scales at complexities.

Landscape Baseline

6. The initial step in the landscape assessment is to establish the baseline landscape conditions, to determine the current elements and character of the landscape within and surrounding the site. This involved an initial desktop study of but not necessarily limited to:

    - The review of published Landscape Character Assessments;
    - The review of planning policies relevant to landscape;
    - Use of Ordnance survey maps at 1:50,000, 1:25,000 scales;
    - Use of Aerial photographs of the site and surrounding area;
    - Review of and use of datasets for rural designations from the MAGIC website (Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside);
    - Describing the existing landscape elements that contribute to landscape character, such as trees and vegetation, topography, settlement pattern, public rights of way, land use, waterbodies; and
    - Visual observations in the field – completing a character sheet during the site visit to note any visual detractors or visual qualities, the unity, level of activity, key characteristics, sense of enclosure, tranquillity etc.

Identification of Receptors

7. Once the landscape and visual baseline information about the receiving landscape has been collated this can be understood and described with an understanding of the details of the proposed change or development that is to be introduced into the receiving landscape to identify and describe the landscape effects.

8. The first step is to identify the elements and components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposals referred to as landscape receptors. Potentially sensitive landscape receptors may include:

    - Physical influences on the constituent elements of the landscape (e.g. landform, topography and waterbodies);
    - Land cover of the landscape (e.g. the different types of trees and vegetation and patterns/types of tree cover);

- Influences of human activity on the landscape (e.g. the land use and its management, the character of settings and buildings and the patterns and types of fields and enclosures);

- Aesthetic or perceptual qualities of the landscape (e.g. its scale, its complexity, its openness, its tranquillity or its wildness); and

- The character of the landscape (i.e. any distinctive landscape character types or areas that can be identified), which may include published character assessment reports and / or defined character areas identified as part of the assessment process.

Identification of likely landscape effects

9. The second step is to identify interactions between the landscape receptors and the different elements/components of the development at the different stages, such as construction and operational stages.

10. Potential landscape effects that could occur during the construction and operational periods may include, but are not restricted to, the following;

    - Changes to landscape elements: the addition of new elements or the removal of existing landscape elements;

    - Changes to landscape qualities: degradation or erosion of landscape elements and patterns and perceptual characteristics, particularly those that form key characteristic elements of defined landscape character types or areas, or contribute to the landscape value; and

    - Changes to landscape character: landscape character may be affected through the incremental effect on characteristic elements, landscape patterns and qualities and the cumulative addition of new features, the magnitude of which is sufficient to alter the overall landscape character of a particular area.

Sensitivity of the receptor likely to be affected

11. For each of the landscape and visual effects identified the susceptibility of the landscape receptor to a specific change is to be judged as to is the value attached to the landscape and visual receptor. These two judgements are combined to determine the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor. The sensitivity and the judgements on susceptibility and value will be fully described for each of the receptors.

Landscape Effects

Landscape Susceptibility

12. Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/ condition of a particular area, or individual element and/ or feature) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and / or the achievement of the landscape planning policies and strategies.

13. In this context, the term landscape receptors can be expanded to cover character areas, particular landscape character types or an individual landscape element (such as trees/vegetation and topography) or feature. Landscape susceptibility will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered and to the nature or type of change that may occur.

14. Judgements about the susceptibility of a landscape receptor to change will be recorded as being high, medium or low.

Trees/vegetation

15. Trees are considered **highly susceptible** to development if they aren't protected as part of any site works.

Topography

Table 1: Topography Susceptibility –

Low	Flat land/ slightly undulating topography Many references to the type of topography within the local area Topography can easily accommodate the type of development proposed
Medium	Gently undulating/undulating land Some references to the type of topography within the local area Topography can accommodate the type of development proposed with minor regrading or localised cut and fill exercises

High	Steep/very steep topography in a hilly/mountainous area Few or no references to the type of topography within the local area Topography cannot easily accommodate the type of development proposed with major cut and fill exercises

The following table sets out the criteria that have been considered for determining overall landscape susceptibility.

Table 2: Landscape Susceptibility –

Low	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a high capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is small scale and / or has a high level of containment, resulting in only a slight degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with extensive existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with few / no landscape characteristics / elements / features of value are present or, where they are present, they can easily be replaced / substituted and / or loss could be satisfactorily compensated for. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features or major infrastructure is present and the influence of these on the landscape is dominant. Several detractors present which have a negative influence on the character and / or experience of the landscape. Very good opportunities for mitigation and enhancement.
Medium	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a medium capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is of a medium scale and / or there is a moderate level of containment, resulting in a moderate degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with some existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – Existing landscape characteristics / elements / features of limited value and could potentially be replaced / substituted, and / or loss satisfactorily compensated for. Nature of existing features – Some detracting features and / or major infrastructure are present in the area, and these have a noticeable influence on the character and experience of the landscape. Good potential for mitigation and enhancement.

High	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is of a large scale and / or there is a low level of containment, resulting in a high degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with no or very little existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – Many of the existing landscape characteristics / elements / features of value would not be easy to replace or substitute, and it is unlikely that loss could be compensated for. Nature of existing features – Few detracting features in the area and where present, these have little influence on the character and experience of the landscape Some potential for mitigation and enhancement.

Landscape Value

16. Landscape value is the relative value attached to a potentially affected landscape. Landscape value will vary in relation to the different stakeholders and different parts of society that use or experience a landscape.

17. Landscape value is not solely indicated by the presence of formal designations and a range of factors influence landscape value. Factors that have been considered in making judgements on landscape value include designations (both national and local), local planning documents, status of features (e.g. TPO's or Conservation Areas) and local community and interests (for example local green spaces, village greens or allotments).

18. Landscape value will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered in relation to its condition, sense of seclusion or isolation, the presence or absence of detracting features and the presence or absence of rare or distinctive elements and features and to what degree these form key characteristics.

19. Judgements about the value of a landscape receptor will be recorded as being High, Medium, or Low based on the information gathered in the landscape baseline (such as landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations.

The following table sets out the criteria that have been considered for determining landscape value.

Table 3: Landscape Value –

Low	Ones that have no or little rarity make no and/or make only a limited contribution to the character and local visual and amenity value and/or be of such poor condition that it has lost its ability to contribute effectively to the character of the landscape. Fair to poor representation of landscape area / type / characteristics and common. No formal designations but a landscape of local relevance (including, but not limited to, public or semi-public open spaces, village greens or allotments) and also green infrastructure and open paces within residential areas likely to be visited and valued by the local community. Landscape condition is poor and components are generally poorly maintained or damaged. Several detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are unlikely to be a reason for visiting. Little or no contribution to public amenity, access and recreation. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has limited levels of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are not a notable component that contribute to the character of the area.
Medium	Designated areas at a Regional or County level (including, but not limited to, green belt, regional scale parks, designated as open space or a Conservation Area in local planning documents) and also considered a distinctive component or the region/county character experienced by a large proportion of its population. Good to fair representation of landscape area / type / characteristics but common. Landscape condition is fair and components are generally relatively well maintained. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has moderate levels of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are a notable component that contribute to the character of the area. Some detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are unlikely to be one of the main reasons for the visit, but make a positive contribution to the experience. Important contribution to local public amenity, access and recreation e.g. well-used public rights of way, green open spaces, common land. Ones that are notable in the landscape, with some visual and/or amenity interest but that do not make a particularly strong or important contribution to the character of the landscape or ones that are an intrinsic element of landscape but in poor condition.

High	Designated areas at an International or National level (including, but not limited to, World Heritage Site, National Parks, AONB's) and also considered an important component of the country's character, experienced by high numbers of tourists. Very good representation of landscape area / type / characteristics and / or uncommon. Landscape condition is good and components are generally regularly maintained to a high standard. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has an elevated level of tranquillity. Rare or distinctive elements and features are a key component that contribute to the character of the area. Negligible / few detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are likely to be one of the main reasons for the visit. Important contribution to wider public amenity, access and recreation e.g. long-distance / themed trails, well-used public rights of way, Heritage Coast, Public Open Space / Local Green Space. May be protected by / subject of planning policy.

Table 4: Value of Topography –

Low	Topography that is typical of the immediate and wider area with many references to the same type of topography Topography that doesn't have any historic or cultural associations Topography that doesn't feature any associated features such as depressions, undulations, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that isn't noted as being a prominent or notable feature within the published character area
Medium	Topography that is typical of the immediate and wider area with some references to the same type of topography Topography that does have some historic or cultural associations Topography that does feature some/localised associated features such as depressions, undulations, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that has several notable features within the published character area
High	Topography which is not typical of the immediate and wider area with few references to the same type of topography Topography which is typical of the immediate and wider area with many references to the same type of topography and does have additional attributes and associations

	Topography that does have many historic or cultural associations Topography that does feature many associated features such as depressions, undulations, steep terrain, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that is noted as being prominent or key features within the published character area

Note: the presence of ridge and furrow is considered high value, but will be assessed separately from overall landform of a site.

Table 5: Value of Trees and areas of vegetation –

Low	Trees and vegetation are either all or **mostly** categorized as **Low quality** (Category C and U) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **very few Medium** quality (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation **not designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO – no planning or ecological designations
Medium	Trees and vegetation are **either all or mostly** categorized as **Medium** quality (Category B) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **some Low Quality** (Category C) trees/vegetation and **very few High** quality (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation are **partly or wholly designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO
High	Trees and vegetation are **either all or mostly** categorized as **High quality** (Category A) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains **some Low Quality** (Category C) trees/vegetation and **some Medium quality** (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation **are designated** as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO

Sensitivity

20. The sensitivity attributed to a landscape element, a view, or character is determined by a combination of;

    - the value that is attached to a particular landscape element feature; and

- and the susceptibility of the landscape element/feature to changes that would arise as a result of the Proposed Development as outlined in pages 88-90 of GLVIA3.

21. Therefore, landscape sensitivity is assessed combining judgements on the value attached to a landscape and the susceptibility to the type of change and nature of the development proposed.

Landscape Sensitivity

22. Landscape sensitivity is a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor. Receptors can include specific elements or features or may be judged at a wider scale and include landscape character parcels, types or areas.

23. Having considered in detail the contributing factors to landscape value and the susceptibility of the site and surrounding area to the type of the development proposed, conclusions on landscape sensitivity can be drawn by balancing the judgements on value and susceptibility.

Table 6: Sensitivity of Topography -

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 7: Sensitivity of Trees and Vegetation -

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 8: Sensitivity of Landscape Character

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Magnitude of Change

24. The magnitude of change is determined through a range of considerations particular to each effect receptor and effect. In line with the GLVIA, the main attributes considered are:

Size/Scale of Change

The considerations set out in GLVIA 3 are summarised as follows:

- The extent to which the removal or addition of landscape features alters the existing landscape character;
- The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered by removal of features e.g. hedgerows and/or the introduction of new features e.g. buildings; and

- Consideration of whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape which are critical to its distinctive character.

Geographical Extent

25. This is distinct from the size or scale of effect and a range of scales that typically apply are listed below:

    - Large scale effects influencing several landscape types or character areas;
    - Effects at the scale of the landscape type or character areas within which the proposal lies;
    - Effects within the immediate landscape setting of the site;
    - Effects at the site level (within the development site itself); and
    - Effects only experienced on parts of the site at a very localised level.

Duration and reversibility

26. These are separate but linked considerations. Duration is judged according to the defined terms set out in below. Reversibility is a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation. The categories used in this assessment are set out below.

Duration:

- Long term (20 years+)
- Medium to long term (10 to 20 years)
- Medium term (5 to 10 years)
- Short term (1 year to 5 years)
- Temporary (less than 12 months)

Reversibility:

- Permanent with unlikely restoration to original state e.g. major road corridor, power station, urban extension etc;

- Permanent with possible conversion to original state e.g. agricultural buildings, retail units;
- Partially reversible to a different state e.g. mineral workings;
- Reversible after decommissioning to a similar original state e.g. wind energy development; and
- Quickly reversible e.g. temporary structures.

27. With regard to Reversibility, GLVIA 3 explains that where developments have a limited life and could eventually be removed and/or the land reinstated the effects could be considered reversible. The reversibility and consideration of temporary effects is however linked to the duration of that effect such as short term (0-5yrs), medium term (5-10 yrs) and long term (20yrs).

28. For the purpose of this assessment impacts that would be considered permanent are those typically occurring over the long term, such as the construction of buildings and reprofiling of land as these cannot practicably be reversed. Vegetation removal is also considered to be permanent where it cannot be planted in the same location and reach maturity over the short or medium term. Mitigation planting has the potential to compensate for the loss of existing vegetation if similar types and species are planted and could provide similar benefits over the medium to long term. There are instances where mitigation planting could not compensate for the loss of existing vegetation such as the removal of Ancient Woodland or instances where there are rare species which form a unique habitat.

29. Temporary effects would typically occur over a short to medium term duration and would mainly occur during the construction period. Development that may result in temporary effects would typically include the introduction of temporary site security fencing, temporary hard standing areas, construction machinery, temporary buildings and compounds, haul roads, earthmoving and stockpiles, lighting etc.

30. The characteristics of the proposals and the nature of landscape and visual effects arising will vary throughout the different phases of the lifecycle of the project. LVIA undertaken as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to include an assessment of effects at different stages of the life-cycle of the development, and commonly includes:

- Construction effects; and

- Operational Effects (often including Year 1 and Year 15 effects such that mitigation is considered).

31. Year 1 considers the effects of the development upon completion of the construction phase. The assessment of landscape and visual effects at Year 15 takes into account any proposed mitigation measures, including planting. The assessment undertaken at Year 15 assumes that planting proposals have established and grown sufficiently to become effective. For the purposes of LVIAs Year 15 effects are also considered to be the 'residual effects' of the proposals.

32. Judgements about the magnitude of impact on landscape receptors will identify whether the impact will be negative (adverse) or positive (beneficial) and will be recorded as being large, medium, small, negligible or no change, based on the criteria set out in Table 3.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Elements and Features

33. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of direct physical impacts on individual existing landscape elements and features as follows:

Table 9: Criteria for magnitude of change for topography and landform

No change	No change to existing topography of the site
Negligible	**Very small** change to existing site topography across a small part of the site **Very small** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **very small** part of the site on the whole **Very few small/no** SuDS basins/ very few/no swales **No cut and fill exercises** **Unnoticeable change** to baseline topography
Low	**Small** change to existing site topography across a small part of the site **Small** change to existing site topography across the entire site **Multiple** small sized SuDS basins/ few swales **No cut and fill exercises** Development within a **small part** of the site on the whole **Small change** to baseline topography

Medium	**Medium** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **half of** the site on the whole **Multiple** medium sized SuDS basins/ multiple swales **Localized cut and fill exercises** **Medium change** to baseline topography
High	**Large** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **majority** the site on the whole **Multiple** large sized SuDS basins/ lots of swales **Major cut and fill exercises** **Major change** to baseline topography
Very high	**Very large** change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a **vast majority** of the site on the whole **Lots of** large sized SuDS basins/ lots of swales **Major cut and fill exercises** **Major change** to baseline topography

Table 10: Criteria for magnitude of change for existing trees and vegetation

No change	**No** trees removed **All** existing trees/areas of vegetation retained and protected
Negligible	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **very low** **Very small loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would substantially influence the landscape of the site only The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered very small A very small amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site

Low	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered l**ow** **Small loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would influence the landscape in the immediate setting of the site, i.e. limited to the influence of part of a single landscape character area/type The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered small A small amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
Medium	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **moderate** **Moderate loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would influence the landscape at a local scale, i.e. a single landscape character area/type (or potentially multiple areas/types where a site is located on the boundary between areas) The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered moderate A medium amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
High	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **high** **Majority loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered large A large amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
Very high	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered **very high** **Total loss** of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall

	Geographical extent of removals would have a substantial influence on the landscape at a regional scale, i.e. across several landscape character areas/types The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered very large Significant new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site

Table 11: Criteria for magnitude of change for landscape character

High	Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered very large due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a very large scale, influencing several character areas or types Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of highly uncharacteristic, conspicuous elements, features and / activities, would result in major alteration to, or complete loss of, aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Medium	Partial alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered medium due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a moderate scale, influencing the character type within which the change is proposed but at a local level within the immediate setting of the site Partial alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are not uncharacteristic in the area, would result in partial alteration to, or loss of, aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Low	Minor alteration to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered small due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a small scale, influencing the landscape within which the change is proposed at the site level (within the site itself) and localized within the immediate setting

	Minor alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are characteristic in the area, would result in minor alteration to aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Negligible	Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered very small due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a very small scale, experience on parts of the site with no influence beyond the site on the landscape within which the change is proposed Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are entirely characteristic in the area, would result in barely discernible alteration to aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Neutral	No change to the baseline condition

Table 12: Scale of effects

		Magnitude of Change			
Sensitivity		**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

Nature of Effects

34. It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to state whether effects are adverse, beneficial or neutral. The landscape effects will be considered against the landscape baseline, which includes published landscape strategies or policies if they exist.

35. Visual effects are more subjective in terms of their valency as people's perception of the proposals varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in

assessing the significance of effects and will assume, unless otherwise stated, that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

Table 13: Nature of landscape/character effects

Major adverse	Be at considerable variance with the character of the receiving landscape. Degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic elements or features. Damage the sense of place. Such effects would be incapable of full mitigation and would degrade the integrity of the landscape.
Moderate Adverse	Show some variance or inconsistency with the character of the receiving landscape. Have an adverse impact on characteristic elements or features. Detract from the sense of place. Proposals are likely to be out of scale with the existing topography, grain, scale and patter of the landscape.
Minor Adverse	Not quite fit in with the character of the receiving landscape. Be at variance with characteristic elements or features. Have a limited influence on the sense of place. Proposals may not logically complement the existing topography, grain, scale and patter of the landscape and constitute an unsympathetic outcome.
Neutral/Negligible	Maintain the character of the receiving landscape. Blend in with the characteristic elements or features. Very minor levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be retained.
Minor Beneficial	Complement the character of the receiving landscape. Maintain or enhance characteristic elements or features. Minor levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable some sense of place to be restored.
Moderate Beneficial	Improve the character of the receiving landscape. Enable the restoration of characteristic elements and features partially lost or diminished as a result of changes from the absence of or inappropriate management or development.

	Moderate levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be restored.
Major Beneficial	Enhance the character of the receiving landscape. Enable the restoration of characteristic elements and features lost as a result of changes from absence of or inappropriate management or development. Major levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be enhanced.

Visual Assessment Methodology

36. The visual assessment considers the potential effect of the proposals on visual amenity; as experienced by people within the study area. They relate to changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity.

37. The effects on visual amenity will be assessed through the consideration of potential effects on receptors. Visual receptors include people in their homes, at work, undertaking recreational activities or when travelling through and area i.e. using roads, footpaths etc, where they would be likely to experience a change in the existing view as a result of the construction and operation of the proposals.

38. The visual effects may include a change to an existing view, sequential views, or wider visual amenity as a result of development or the loss of particular elements or features already present in the view. Cumulative visual effects may result when receptors gain views of similar types of development, which combine to have a cumulative visual effect.

39. It is generally accepted that the two criteria that combine to determine the scale of visual effect are the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact.

40. The assessment of the visual baseline within the study area will take into consideration the following:

    - The area within which the proposals may be visible;
    - The different groups of people within the study area who may experience views of the proposals;
    - The identification of specific viewpoints; and

- The nature of views at the viewpoints.

Viewpoints

41. The selection of viewpoints will be based on the following criteria:

    - The requirement to provide an even spread of representative viewpoints within the visual envelope, and around all sides of the Proposed Development;
    - From locations which represent a range of near, middle- and long-distance views;
    - Whilst private views are relevant, public viewpoints i.e. from roads and public rights of way and other area of open public access, will be selected since they are the most significant in term of the number of receptors affected;
    - Views from sensitive receptors within designated landscapes

42. In accordance with the GLVIA3, the viewpoints that will be selected take account of:

    - The potential number and sensitivity of viewers who may be affected;
    - The viewing direction, distance (i.e. short, medium and long-distance views) and elevation;
    - The nature of the viewing experience (for example static views, views from settlements and views from sequential points along routes);
    - The view type (for example panoramas, vistas, glimpses); and
    - The potential for cumulative views of the proposed development in conjunction with other developments.

43. The findings and conclusion of this assessment assume that all existing vegetation located outside the site would be retained unless otherwise identified for removal.

44. The assessment of visual effects was undertaken on the basis of viewpoint analysis as recommended in best practice guidelines. The viewpoints which are in different directions from the site and are at varying distances and locations were selected to represent a range of views and visual receptor types.

45. The viewpoints are representational and not exhaustive. They are taken from publicly accessible land and not from any third party, private, land.

46. The viewpoints were used as the basis for determining the effects of visual receptors within the entire study area. The viewpoints were photographed at 1.6 metres above ground level.

47. The photos were taken using a Canon EOS 5d Mark IV full frame camera using a fixed 50mm lens.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

48. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a view and the susceptibility of the receptor to changes in that view that would arise as a result of the Proposed Development as outlined in pages 113-114 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed as high, medium or low.

49. GLVIA3 says a judgement should be made as to the value of a particular view being experienced. In making a professional judgement as to the value attached to a view, the following criteria have helped guide the process. Not all the criteria have to apply to a particular view and the criteria are not in a hierarchy.

Table 14: Criteria for judging levels of visual value

Low	Views from within, or towards, undesignated landscapes and / or features of site-wide importance View is of low scenic beauty View makes a very limited contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from landscapes / viewpoints which are not particularly popular or recognised as being destinations in their own right, including infrequently used rights of way Views with no social / cultural / historic associations
Medium	Views from within, or towards, undesignated landscapes and / or features of local importance View is of moderate scenic beauty View makes a moderate contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from locally-popular recreation areas / green open spaces / public rights of way, but not used by many visitors Views with social / cultural / historic associations of local importance

High	Views from within, or towards, designated landscapes and / or features of regional or countywide importance e.g. Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), Country Parks, Conservation Areas, Grade II listed buildings, National Trust land etc., especially where contributing to the significance of an asset / feature View is of high scenic beauty View makes an important contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from well-used and popular visitor attractions / tourist destinations, including long-distance / themed trails, Heritage Coasts, Public Open Spaces / Local Green Spaces, used by relatively large numbers of people Views with social / cultural / historic associations of countywide importance

Table 15: Visual Receptors Susceptibility to Change

Low	Receptors in commercial and industrial premises, schools, playing fields etc. where the view is not central to the use People using main roads, rail corridors, infrequently used / inaccessible public rights of way and likely to be travelling for a purpose other than to enjoy the view People moving past the view often at high speed (e.g. on motorways and main line railways) and with little or no focus on or interest in the landscape through which they are travelling Motorists and passengers on main roads People working in premises where the views are not likely to make an important contribution to the setting, and / or to the quality of working life People engaged in outdoor sport and recreation which does not involve or depend on appreciation of views of the landscape Communities where views do not contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
Medium	Receptors within, or looking towards, undesignated landscapes, areas and features of local importance, and in places where the landscape / feature is not necessarily part of the reason for the visit People engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is unlikely to be focused on the landscape and / or particular views, and / or for whom the view is not necessarily a factor in the enjoyment of the activity Users of public rights of way where attention is not focused on the landscape/and/or views (for example in densely vegetated or built up areas) People staying in hotels and healthcare institutions who are likely to appreciate and / or benefit from views of their surroundings

	People working in premises where the views are likely to make an important contribution to the setting, and / or to the quality of working life Motorists and passengers on rural lanes Residential properties (upper stories/less use in daylight hours) Communities where views partly contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
High	Receptors (tourists / visitors) within, or looking towards, internationally- or nationally-designated landscapes, areas and features such as World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings and other places where the landscape / feature is the main reason for the visit People using national trails and other designated routes where the view is likely to be the focus of attention Residents at home, although thus will depend on the rooms occupied during waking hours People, whether residents or visitors, engaged in outdoor recreation, including users of public rights of way, e.g. walkers, riders, cyclists, boat users, motorists, whose attention may be focused on the landscape and / or particular views, and / or for whom the view is a factor in the enjoyment of the activity People travelling through the landscape on roads, rail or other routes on recognised scenic routes or where there is a distinct awareness of views of their surroundings and their visual amenity Residential properties (lower stories and gardens) Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area

Table 16: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		**HIGH**	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Magnitude of Change on Visual Impact

50. The Magnitude of Visual Impact experienced by visual receptors as a result of the development proposals will be described by reference to the:

- Scale of change in the view in respect of the loss or addition of features and changes in the visual composition, including the proportion of view occupied by the proposed development;
- Geographical extent – This is likely to reflect the orientation/ angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; The distance of the viewpoint from the main development and the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible;
- Duration of the effect - (short 0-5yrs/ medium 5-10yrs/ long term 20yrs, temporary, permanent, intermittent/ continuous and whether the views will be full, partial or glimpses.)
- Reversibility - the ability of the proposed development to be reversed.

51. The criteria which will be used to guide the assessment of the magnitude of impact that would be experience by visual receptors as a result of the proposals are outlined below;

Table 17: Criteria for magnitude of change for visual receptors

High	The proposals will be clearly noticeable and the view would be fundamentally changed by its presence. Direct or oblique views with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent.
Medium	The proposals will form a new element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. Direct or oblique views with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected.
Low	The proposals will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. The proposals will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.
Negligible	The proposals will form a barely noticeable component of the view, and the view whilst slightly changed would be similar to the baseline situation.
No Change	No change to the existing view.

Scale of Effects

52. The scale of the landscape and visual effects is determined by;

    - cross referencing the sensitivity of the landscape feature, landscape character or view with;

    - the magnitude of change. The scale of effects is described as major, moderate, minor, negligible, neutral or no change.

Table 18: Scale of effects

		Magnitude of Change			
Sensitivity		**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

Nature of Effects

53. It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to state whether effects are adverse, beneficial or neutral.

54. Visual effects are more subjective in terms of their valency as people's perception of the proposals varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in assessing the significance of effects and will assume, unless otherwise stated, that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

Table 19: Nature of visual effects

Major adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause major deterioration to the view and constitute a major discordant element in the view.
Moderate Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause obvious deterioration to the view.
Minor Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that would cause limited deterioration to the view.
Negligible Adverse	The proposals would give rise to negative changes that be barely perceptible in the view.
Neutral	The change to the view would be barely perceptible to the point it is not apparent if the changes are positive or negative.
No Change	No change to the view. Proposals are not visible.
Negligible Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to a barely perceptible improvement in the view.
Minor Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to a limited improvement to the view.
Moderate Beneficial	The proposals would give rise to an obvious improvement to the view.
Major Beneficial	The proposals would lead to a major improvement in the view.

Mitigation

55. The purpose of the mitigation is to prevent/ avoid, reduce and where possible remedy or offset any negative (adverse) effect on the environment arising from the proposals. Mitigation is not solely concerned with 'damage limitation' but may also consider measures that could compensate for unavoidable residual effects.

56. Mitigation measures are generally considered to fall into three categories:

- Primary measures, developed through the iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded in to the project design;

- Standard construction and operational management practices for avoiding and reducing environmental effects;

- Secondary measures designed to address any residual adverse remaining after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme.

57. Strategies to address likely negative (adverse) effects include:

- Avoid impact by changing the proposal;

- Reduce the impact by changing the proposals;

- Remediation of the impact by screen planting for example;

- Compensation for the impact, for example replacement of removed trees with new tree planting; and

- Enhancement, for example creation of a new landscape or habitat.

<u>Guidelines for mitigation</u>

- Landscape mitigation measures should be designed to suit the existing landscape character and needs of the locality, respecting and building on local landscape distinctiveness and helping to address any relevant existing issues in the landscape.

- It must be recognised than many mitigation measures, especially planting, are not immediately effective. Where planting is intended to provide a visual screen for the development, it may also be appropriate to assess the effects for different seasons and periods of time, such as day of opening and Year 15 and potentially other periods in line with phasing. In such projections the assumptions made about growth rates should be clearly stated on the proposed landscape plans;

- Use of appropriate form, material and design of buildings. It is not always practical or desirable to screen buildings and associated development. In these cases, the scale, design, colour and texture of buildings/ structures should be carefully considered to aid integration with the surroundings;

- Alterations to landforms (including creation of bunds or mounds) together with structure planting and/ or off-site planting;

- Minimising light pollution and avoiding or reducing obtrusive light; and

- Planting: Structural planting can help to integrate and ‘soften’ development as well as being of potential value as a wildlife habitat. Offsite planting should also be considered where it could be of benefit to screen the proposed development from sensitive landscape and visual receptors.

APPENDIX 2: SITE LOCATION

KEY TO PLAN

The site

PROJECT Brixworth Local Services			
DRAWING Site Location Plan			
SCALE As shown	DATE Feb/2024	DRAWN SW	
DRAWING NUMBER LAS703-04		REVISION	

APPENDIX 3: CONTEXT PHOTOVIEWS

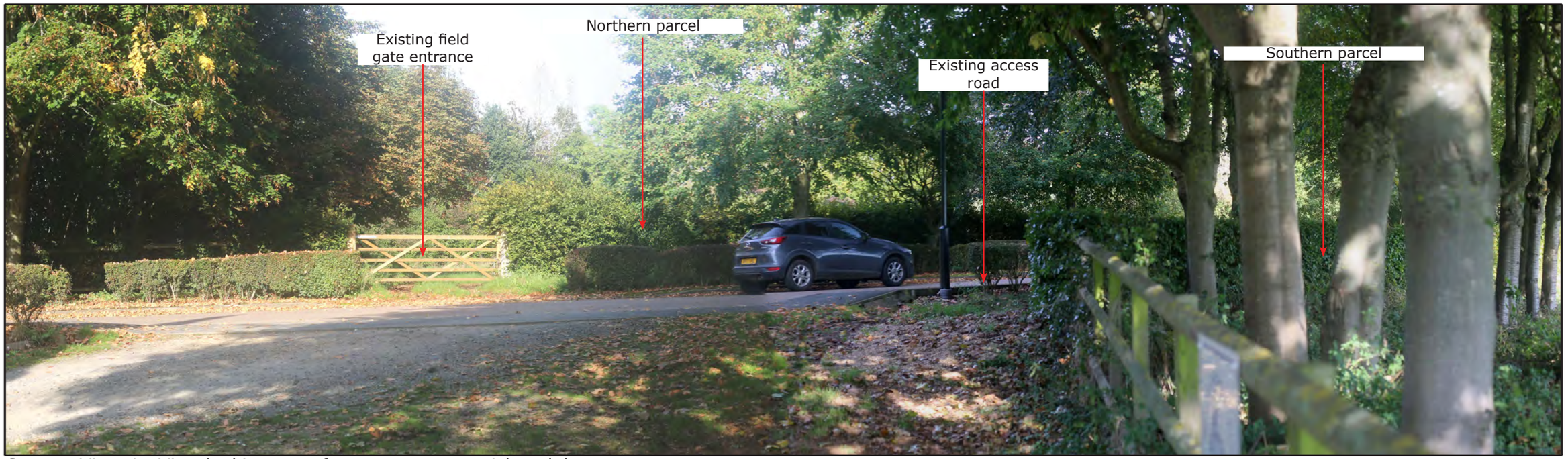
For Context Only

Context View 1 - View looking north across northern parcel of site

Context View 2 - View looking east from access road across southern parcel of site

For Context Only

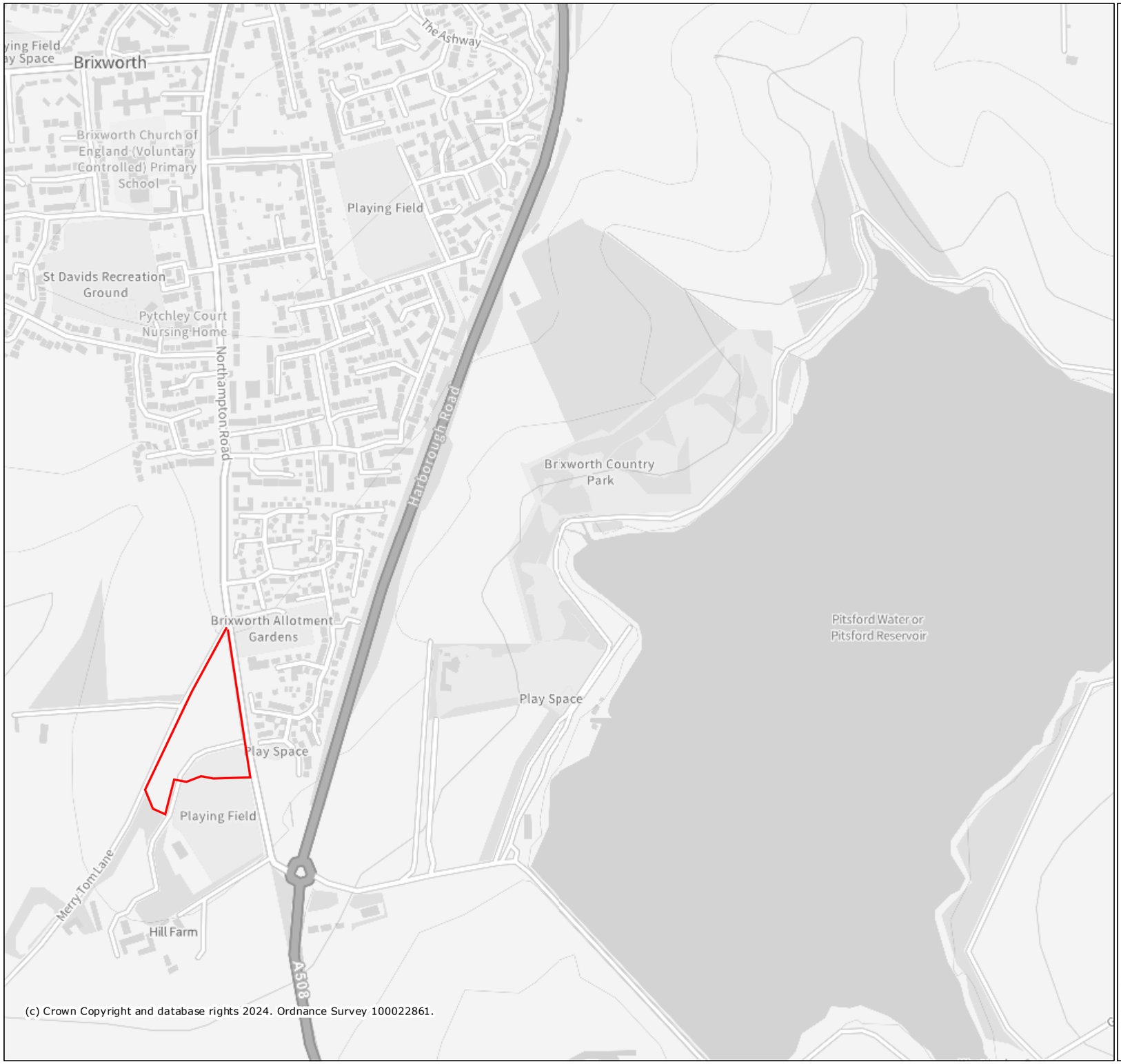
Context View 3 - View looking south across northern parcel of site



Context View 4 - View looking west from entrance to cricket club

APPENDIX 4: DESIGNATIONS

Magic Map



Legend

Scheduled Monuments (England)

Listed Buildings (England)

I

II

II*

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 472900
ymin = 268500
xmax = 478000
ymax = 270900

0 0.15 0.3
km

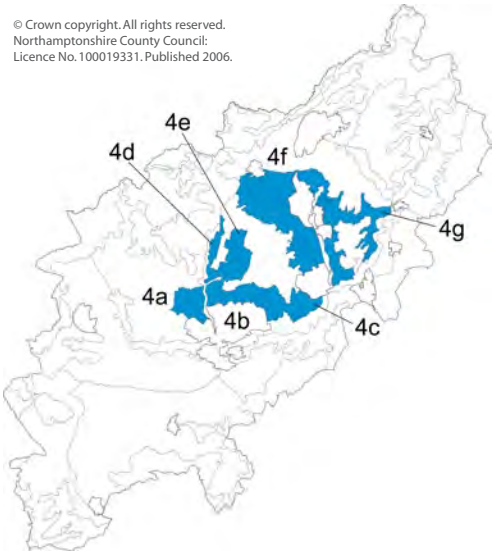
Map produced by MAGIC on 8 February, 2024.

APPENDIX 5: ROLLING IRONSTONE VALLEY SLOPE

4 ROLLING IRONSTONE VALLEY SLOPES

CHARACTER AREAS

4a Harlestone Heath and the Bramptons
4b Moulton Slopes
4c Ecton and Earls Barton Slopes
4d Hanging Houghton
4e Pitsford Water
4f Kettering and Wellingborough Slopes
4g Irthlingborough Slopes



View over Valley slopes

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- **Broad valley slopes dissected by numerous tributary streams;**
- **Ironstone geology expressed in local vernacular buildings and in rich red soils;**
- **rolling landform, extensive views and sense of exposure on some prominent locations;**
- **steep slopes adjacent to more elevated landscapes;**
- **numerous water bodies including the county's largest reservoir;**
- **productive arable farmland in medium and large scale fields predominates on elevated land although sheep and cattle pastures also prevalent, often in smaller fields adjacent to watercourses;**
- **agricultural practices create a patchwork of contrasting colours and textures extending across valley slopes;**
- **where broadleaved woodlands and mature hedgerow trees combine, these impart a sense of a well treed landscape;**
- **hedgerows generally low and well clipped although intermittent sections show evidence of decline;**
- **well settled with numerous villages and towns;**
- **landscape directly and indirectly influenced by the close proximity of many of the county's urban areas; and**
- **building materials vary although vernacular architecture and churches display the local ironstone.**

4 ROLLING IRONSTONE VALLEY SLOPES

LOCATION AND INTRODUCTION

The Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes landscape character type occupies the heart of Northamptonshire. It comprises a distinctive landscape of rolling valley slopes bordering the floodplains of the River Nene and its tributaries, the Brampton Valley and the River Ise. The landscape surrounds elevated areas of Clay Plateau where drift deposits overlie and obscure the surface expression of similar solid geology. It also borders the southern fringes of the Wooded Clay Plateau landscape character type and defines the eastern limits of the Undulating Hills and Valleys. A number of urban areas, notably Northampton, Wellingborough and Kettering may be found within and bordering the landscape. Seven landscape character areas have been identified within the overarching Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes landscape character type, indicating subtle, localised variations in land cover and land use elements

PHYSICAL INFLUENCES

Geology and Soils

Whilst not the most extensive rock type in the landscape, the Inferior Oolite Ironstones of the Northampton Sand Formation are the most prominent and important in terms of the contribution made to landscape character. These deposits, which date to the Middle Jurassic, were once more extensive. They have been eroded by rivers and streams to leave distinctive ridges and hills, forming watersheds between the streams that drain into the main channel of the River Nene and its tributaries. These rocks have been extensively quarried in history, with significant former extraction sites having been identified on a number of hill tops, particularly in the vicinity of Rothwell. The eastern fringes of the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes comprise significant deposits of Blisworth Limestone Formation. These rocks form part of the Great Oolite Group and overlie the Ironstones. Together the Ironstones and Limestones extend into the neighbouring plateau landscapes, where significant drift deposits obscure all surface expression of them. The Ironstone overlies softer Lias Group rocks of the Lower Jurassic comprising Whitby Mudstones. This relatively softer rock unit has been more easily weathered and outcrop on the steep slopes that fall into the valleys.

Drift geology across the landscape type is limited to very isolated deposits of glacial till (diamicton) and glacial sand and gravel. These deposits are more extensive on the neighbouring Clay Plateau and Wooded Clay Plateau landscapes. However, isolated patches survive on the most elevated hills and ridge tops where they blur the transition between the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes and neighbouring areas of plateau. Alluvial clays and silts are also evident as narrow bands along the floor of tributaries streams of the River Ise and Brampton Valley.

Soils across the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes are complex and contain bands of varying types. The most westerly of the valley slopes has the simplest soil cover, comprising well drained brashy fine and coarse loamy ferruginous soils over ironstone, with a small area of slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Whilst the Moulton Slopes comprise the same soils, they also include small pockets of well drained calcareous clayey and fine loamy soils over limestone, in places shallow and brashy, slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged, clayey soils with similar fine loamy over clayey soils and an isolated area of deep, well drained coarse loamy and sandy soil. The Ecton and Earls Barton Slopes again have comparable characteristics to the Moulton Slopes; the isolated area of deep, well drained coarse loamy and sandy soil does, however, give way to a larger area of deep, well drained calcareous clayey soils associated with similar but slowly permeable soils. The western edge of the landscape type has relatively simple soil coverage, combining well drained brashy fine and coarse loamy ferruginous soils over ironstone and slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey soils with similar fine loamy over clayey soils in generally equal amounts. The Kettering and Wellingborough Slopes offer the most complex soil characteristics, with linear bands of soils evident in an east - west direction. The soils comprise areas of well drained brashy fine and coarse loamy ferruginous soils over ironstone, slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey soils with similar fine loamy over clayey soils, fine loamy over clayey and clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils, and areas of restored iron workings. To the east, the soil once again has a simple composition, including areas of well drained brashy fine and coarse loamy ferruginous soils over ironstone and well drained calcareous clayey and fine loamy soils over limestone, in places shallow and brashy and again in generally equal amounts.

Landform

The complex landform evident in the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes landscape character type has arisen from erosion by streams draining the neighbouring upland landscapes into the River Nene and its principal tributaries. Individual watercourses have eroded side valleys, often at right angles to the main tributary channels and course of the Nene. In many cases, the dendritic pattern of tributaries has eroded further and less prominent side valleys, adding to the complexity of landform patterns. The overall pattern, therefore, comprises a principal valley formation dissected by numerous tributaries which themselves create undulations across areas of otherwise smoothly sloping landform. The most elevated areas are formed by hard caps of Ironstone and Limestone, which have formed elevated ridges and hills. These act as watersheds between neighbouring streams. The most elevated landscapes exist to the west of Rothwell, where land rises to 140m ASL. However, Ironstone caps and valley sides can also be observed at much lower elevations, closer to the main channel of the Nene.

4 ROLLING IRONSTONE VALLEY SLOPES

Slopes associated with the ironstone capping are generally shallow, thus creating distinctive broad hills and ridges. Steeper slopes and a rolling landscape are characteristic of areas of Lias Group geology. Here, softer rocks have been eroded to form narrow, steep sided valley systems. However, a wide, shallow sloped valley can be observed to the south of Scaldwell within which the Pitsford reservoir is located.

Hydrology

The River Nene, or perhaps more importantly its tributaries, are the prominent hydrological influences on the landscape. These form a dendritic pattern and have eroded the principal valley slopes to form a rolling landscape that shelves down towards the main channels of the Nene, Brampton Valley and Ise. Tributary streams rarely originate within the landscape. They tend to rise on the neighbouring clay plateau landscapes and flow through the Rolling Ironstone Valleys, where they combine to create increasingly powerful flows and more deeply incised valley formations. Reservoirs are also an important landscape feature. These tend to be located in natural valley formations, where a barrier has been constructed to collect large volumes of river water. The main reservoirs are Sywell, Thorpe Malsor, Cransley and Pitsford. Pitsford Water is by far the largest and is retained by an impressive dam, visible from the A508 into Northampton. All are located on Whitby Mudstone geology and bordered by ironstone hills and ridges. The form of the reservoirs is often dictated to by the presence of the harder ironstone geology.

Land Use and Land Cover

Cereal cultivation predominates, particularly on the Ironstone and Limestone geology that forms more elevated land above the steeper rolling valley slopes. Particularly significant concentrations of cereal production are evident to the east of Barton Seagrave. Numerous arable fields have uncultivated buffer strips running adjacent to hedgerows. These are important wildlife corridors and protect hedgerow habitats from pesticide and fertiliser damage. Whilst cereal cultivation and horticulture is prevalent, improved pastures become more frequent on the valley slopes, particularly where the steepness of slopes precludes the use of farm machinery, and along valley bottoms, which may become seasonally wet. Pasture fields are also more frequent close to farmsteads. On particularly steep slopes, for example along the River Ise to the northwest of Rothwell, neutral and calcareous grasslands become more frequent, indicating that these areas may be marginal and not suitable for improvement. Significant areas surrounding Sywell and Pitsford reservoirs have been designated as Country Parks. Here, land has been taken out of productive agriculture and managed to provide a wide range of wildlife habitats. Set-aside land is also a conspicuous feature of some of the agricultural areas.

Woodland and Trees

Whilst woodlands are not a dominant landscape feature, they nevertheless make an important contribution to landscape character across the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes. Small and moderately sized mixed and deciduous woodlands are prevalent and are largely associated with designed parklands, fringing reservoirs or cloaking particularly steep slopes. Linear broadleaved woodlands are also conspicuous along a number of streams. Small broadleaved coverts are also dotted throughout the agricultural landscape. There is a significant area of coniferous planting at Harlestone Heath, and relatively large areas of broadleaved woodland occur at Overstone. Very few woodlands in the landscape are ancient.

Hedged field boundaries often contain ash and oak as mature and semi-mature hedgerow trees. In views up and along rolling valley slopes, hedgerows and perhaps more importantly hedgerow trees, combine with areas of woodland to give the impression of a well wooded landscape. The 'borrowed' effects of woodland from the neighbouring Wooded Clay Plateau landscape character type further contribute to the sense that the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes are perhaps more wooded than they actually are.

HUMAN INFLUENCES

Thatched cottages at Boughton

Buildings and Settlement

The Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes landscape character type is relatively well settled. Numerous villages, many containing Conservation Area designations, and hamlets occupy sheltered locations on the slopes above rivers and streams. The majority are small, compact villages and tend to be located at the junction of two or more roads. Here, older village properties, typically constructed of local ironstone or limestone, congregate around a prominent church. More recent housing forms linear extensions to a number of settlements or, in a number of instances 'estates', on the periphery of the village. Due to their sheltered locations, many villages are not widely visible from the surrounding countryside. However, church spires often punctuate the horizon and indicate the location of a particular village. New housing can also sometimes be seen extending onto more visually prominent areas of the landscape.

Urban areas have a more significant influence on landscape character, as the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes are bordered by seven of the county's fifteen urban areas. The influence is both direct and indirect. Direct influences include views to urban areas and the distinctive orange arc of light that rises above these towns at night. The largest urban area is Northampton, which forms the southern boundary of the Harlestone Heath and Moulton Slopes character areas. Wellingborough, Desborough and Kettering also have a significant influence on the character of the Kettering and Wellingborough Slopes character area. These urban areas occupy entire hillsides and, as a consequence, are visible over wide areas. Rothwell, although a relatively small and compact urban area, also exerts a strong influence on the local landscape. This town occupies a relatively high ridge that rises in the north to 130m ASL. Indirect influences, which become less conspicuous with distance from each urban area, include suburban building styles and materials in otherwise rural areas, and a greater number of 'A' roads, for example the busy dual carriageway that runs to the west of Wellingborough.

Despite these influences, wide areas of the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes retain a productive and well managed rural character. Numerous farms and small hamlets are dispersed throughout the landscape. Whilst particular concentrations can be observed around estates and villages, a number occupy relatively remote locations and are only accessible along long tracks.

Heritage Features

This is a long settled landscape, with evidence of occupation stretching back as far as the Neolithic period. Surviving fragments from these times include the Three Hills, a collection of barrows on a hill to the south of Woodford, which are thought to date to the first farmers, and a barrow to the west of the Boughton Estate. Barrows are funerary monuments that elsewhere have been interpreted as territorial markers and may indicate that local populations were exerting a claim over the surrounding landscape by the presence of their ancestors. It is possible that the communities that constructed these monuments were living on the gravel terraces bordering the Nene to the south, and sited them to be visible from their small farming settlements. Whilst infrequent, these monuments are a potent reminder of the landscape's long settlement history. They are likely to have been more widespread; however, development and agriculture have removed all traces of other similar sites.

The presence of historic houses, parklands and estates within the landscape are a more recent and tangible link to the past. Three historic parks on the English Heritage Register are located on the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes landscape, all sited to take advantage of the dramatic landform and panoramic views. The most important is Boughton Park, Listed Grade I. This exerts a strong influence over the surrounding landscape, with avenues of trees, some dating from the late 17th Century stretching as far as Kettering in the west and Geddington Chase. The site of Boughton Hall and Great Harrowden Hall are also important sites. Non-registered gardens are an important element of the landscape with wooded parkland landscapes evident at Ecton, Thorpe Malsor and Cranford St Andrew. The Triangular Lodge is also an important historic landscape feature. The lodge represents an extraordinary piece of symbolic architecture located within the Rushton Estate, which has been the principal seat of the Tresham family from the 15th Century. The monument was built by Sir Thomas Tresham and was designed as a covert declaration of his Catholic faith, with its construction on the basis of an equilateral triangle taken to symbolize the Holy Trinity and the Mass.

Boundaries and Field Patterns

Large, and medium to large fields predominate across the landscape, particularly along the tops of ridges and hills where landform is less steep. Where rolling landform and steeper slopes are prevalent, small and small to medium sized fields are more common. Regular and sub regular fields are common, and there appears to be a tendency for regular fields to occupy the more gently sloping land on ridges and hills. Discontinuous fields, more commonly found on the neighbouring clay plateau landscapes are also evident, although not common. Field patterns tend to follow landform, emphasising the rolling character of the landscape. However, the patterns they create in the landscape are difficult to appreciate, due to the rolling landscape limiting views to wide tracts of the landscape in which the pattern of fields might be identified.

Field hedges are, on the whole, low and well clipped giving the landscape a well maintained and managed character, although overgrown and gappy hedges are also evident. Significant lengths of hedged boundaries contain numerous mature hedgerow trees. This is particularly the case where hedgelines border watercourses. These are an important landscape feature, contributing to the landscape's well treed character.

Communications and Infrastructure

The Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes contain a number of busy roads. The principal route through the landscape is the A14 between Coventry and Cambridge, which also forms the western boundary of Wellingborough. A number of other busy roads converge on the urban areas located within and bordering the landscape. These principal routes tend to avoid hilly areas and weave along the lower, gentler valley slopes. A dense network of minor roads is also evident across the landscape. Many can be observed to run along the distinctive ironstone ridges then drop, sometimes steeply, down valley slopes into the valleys. Other, routes linking these ridge roads rise and fall with the rolling landform. Together, this network of minor roads gives the landscape a distinctive grain.

Beyond the urban areas, a rural character prevails, with only limited infrastructure development. The main line railways linking Northampton and Kettering to Birmingham, Leicester and Peterborough run through limited stretches of the landscape and have minimal impact on local character. Perhaps more significant are the high voltage transmission lines that run through Kettering and Wellingborough Slopes landscape character area.

Recreation

Despite the close proximity of large urban areas, there are only limited recreational opportunities in the Rolling Ironstone Valleys. Brixworth Country Park, on the fringes of Pitsford Water, and Sywell Country Park bordering Sywell Reservoir are major visitor attractions, offering a range of informal recreational opportunities centred around enjoying wildlife and the countryside. Pitsford Water is also important and offers a range of water based recreation opportunities.

There is a dense network of public rights of way criss-crossing the landscape. The principal routes, however, are the Midshires Way between Harlestone and Church Brampton and a section of the Nene Way that runs along the southern edge of the landscape to the north of Irthlingborough. Historic parks and country houses, and sites including the Triangular Lodge, are also important tourist attractions. A number of golf courses, taking advantage of challenging landform and the close proximity of urban populations, are located within the landscape type.

AESTHETIC AND PERCEPTUAL QUALITIES

Despite urban influences having an impact on the character and perception of wide tracts of the landscape, much retains a quiet rural character. The landscape is perceived as busy, settled and primarily agricultural, with most views encompassing extensive areas of productive arable farmland, with fields defined by well-maintained hedgerows. Where various land uses are evident across valley sides, contrasting colours and textures provide visual interest. Woodlands and hedgerows are important textural elements and add to the visual appeal of the landscape. Where present, woodlands combine with the undulating topography to give visual containment and a more pronounced sense of intimacy. This contrasts with the elevated valley sides, where open views over wide areas have a more open character.

LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS, LANDSCAPE CONDITION AND LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The Ironstone geology is particularly important to the landscape. Whilst significantly more limited in extent than, for example, on the Ironstone Uplands landscape character type, Ironstone caps above Lias Group mudstones have created distinctive hills and ridges, which often dictate the alignment of watercourses and roads giving the landform a distinctive grain. Despite its limited extent, large areas have been quarried in the vicinity of Rothwell and Kettering and the rock finds expression in numerous villages and churches. Rich orange red soils, characteristic of other Ironstone uplands, are also limited in extent. However, where present, such expressions of the underlying geology are important to local character and distinctiveness.

The condition of the landscape is generally good. Hedgerows and woodlands, which represent key landscape features, are on the whole well managed and maintained. Poorly maintained gappy hedgerows, whilst having an impact locally, are not widespread and the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes may be regarded as being in a good condition. Settlements and isolated farms are generally well integrated with their surroundings as a consequence of the well treed character of the surrounding landscape. However, larger settlements and urban areas have seen rapid expansion in recent decades, leading sometimes to insensitive development on their fringes, which can have a negative impact on local landscape character.

Whilst individual hills and ridges each have a distinctive profile, few are of sufficient prominence to be regarded as landmarks. Individual landscape elements can, however, be regarded as landmarks. These tend to be prominent vertical elements such as water towers and church spires, which, when sited on hill and ridge tops can be seen across wide areas. Distinctive landscape features such as the Triangular Lodge and Pitsford Water, whilst of limited visual impact, also comprise locally important landmarks.

Hanging Houghton

4d Hanging Haughton

Hanging Haughton Character Area is the most linear character area within the type, is located along the eastern edge of the Brampton Valley and is bordered to the south by a tributary of the main valley. The character area forms the valley slopes rising to the Clay Plateau in the east. From the upper valley slopes, long distant panoramic views are possible over the surrounding landscape, including views over the River Valley Floodplain towards the Undulating Hills and Valleys.

The main settlement is Hanging Houghton, a small linear settlement that has developed on the upper slopes adjacent to the plateau landscape. Beyond this lies a largely rural landscape with scattered dwellings and farmsteads, such as those found on the outskirts of Draughton and Lamport. Whilst a number of farms are located adjacent to minor roads, others are accessed via trackways. Although located beyond the boundary of the Rolling Ironstone Valley Slopes, the settlement of Brixworth remains visually important due to its prominent position on the upper slopes. Significant historic features are contained within the settlement, notably a Saxon church built in 680AD on the northern boundary.

The landscape is characterised by a predominance of arable land, although areas of improved pasture are evident below Brixworth and around Lamport, extending down and along the sloping landform towards the River Valley Floodplain and Hanging Haughton. Defining the fields are a combinations of low, clipped hedgerows and wooden post and rail fences. Whilst woodland in the character area is limited, the small deciduous copses combine with the many hedgerow trees and woodland in the surrounding landscape types to give the impression of a well treed landscape. Clint Hill Fox Covert is a prominent copse of mixed composition descending the slopes of Clint Hill.

Bordering a large proportion of the area to the east is the A508. Whilst this road enters the area in two locations, road access is otherwise limited to three minor roads connecting plateau villages with the surrounding landscape. Pedestrian access is also limited with only occasional rights of way, connecting settlement on the eastern edge of the type with the wider landscape, including the Brampton Valley Way, and Midshires Way, which is located along the length of the Brampton Valley and follows the course of a dismantled railway. There are no other recreational facilities within the area.

APPENDIX 6: PROPOSED SITE PLAN

KEY

A Existing Vineyard

B Existing Farm Land

C Approved Trekking Centre & Parking
Proposed Best of British Wine & Food Building &
Proposed Central Viticulture Academy

D Proposed Existing Barn Conversion to 5 Dwellings

E Approved 25 Extra Care Cottages

F Existing & Built 14 Houses & Manor House

G Approved 60 Bed Care Home (2023/6277/MAR)
with 78 parking spaces (13 EV spaces)

H Existing Cricket & Tennis Club

I Proposed Spa & Wellness Centre
74 parking spaces (29 EV spaces)

J Proposed 16 Affordable Houses

K Proposed Brixworth Local Services
100 parking spaces (30 EV spaces)

L Proposed 2 Extracare Bungalows (WND/2023/0010)

M Approved & Built 7 Care Cottages

0m 13m 26m 39m 52m 65m

VISUAL SCALE 1:650 @ A1

KEY

7KW ELECTRIC EV CHARGING

15KW SUPER EV CHARGING

STANDARD PARKING	104
DISABLED PARKING	10
EV PARKING	55
EV DISABLED PARKING	4

BRIXWORTH LOCAL SERVICES (K)
100 Parcking Spaces (30 EV Spaces)

16 x SEMI DETACHED AFFORDABLE HOMES (J)

APPROVED 60 BED CARE HOME (G)
78 Parcking Spaces (13 EV Spaces)

SPA & WELLNESS CENTRE (I)
Single storey building built on footprint of existing structure.
74 parking spaces (29 EV spaces)

EXISTING CRICKET & TENNIS CLUB (H)

EXISTING CRICKET & TENNIS CLUB (H)

Recreation Facility To Be Transferred As A Brixworth Community Assest

EXISTING TREE BELT AND LANDSCAPING
SERVICE ROAD
EXISTING FOOTPATH
SERVICE YARD
TURNING
NATIONAL SUPERMARKET OPERATOR 4500 sqft
PHARMACY 1500sqft
NEW CROSSING
BICYCLE ACCESS
NORTHAMPTON ROAD
6 X DISABLED PARKING BAYS
21 X STANDARD PARKING BAYS
18 X 7KW ELECTRIC EV CHARGING
10 X 15KW SUPER EV CHARGING
BRIXWORTH LOCAL SERVICES
23 X STANDARD PARKING BAYS
2x SMALL PROFESSIONAL OFFICE UNITS 750sqft
3x SMALL PROFESSIONAL OFFICE UNITS 500sqft
UNLOADING
PROFESSIONAL OFFICE UNIT 1500sqft
GYMNASIUM/ DANCE SCHOOL 3400sqft
4 X DISABLED PARKING BAYS
5 X STANDARD PARKING BAYS
8 X STANDARD PARKING BAYS
SUDs
DISABLED X 15KW SUPER EV CHARGING
DRIVE THROUGH COFFEE FACILITY WITH HIGHSPEED HUB LARGE SCREEN MEETING ROOM 3850sqft
20 X 7KW ELECTRIC EV CHARGING
16 X STANDARD PARKING BAYS
9 X 15KW SUPER EV CHARGING
SPA & WELLNESS CENTRE CENTRAL GARDENS
EXISTING FOOTPATH

1 Site Plan (NORTH)
1 : 625

Revision	Description	Drawn	Date	Checked
1	Site plan updated following arboricultural survey	NS	19.12.2023	NS

Socrates Architects

M +44 (0) 7829998821
T +44 (0) 1534 639773

studio@socratesarchitects.com
socratesarchitects.com

Client's Name: DR. DALLAS BURSTON

Job Title: BRIXWORTH

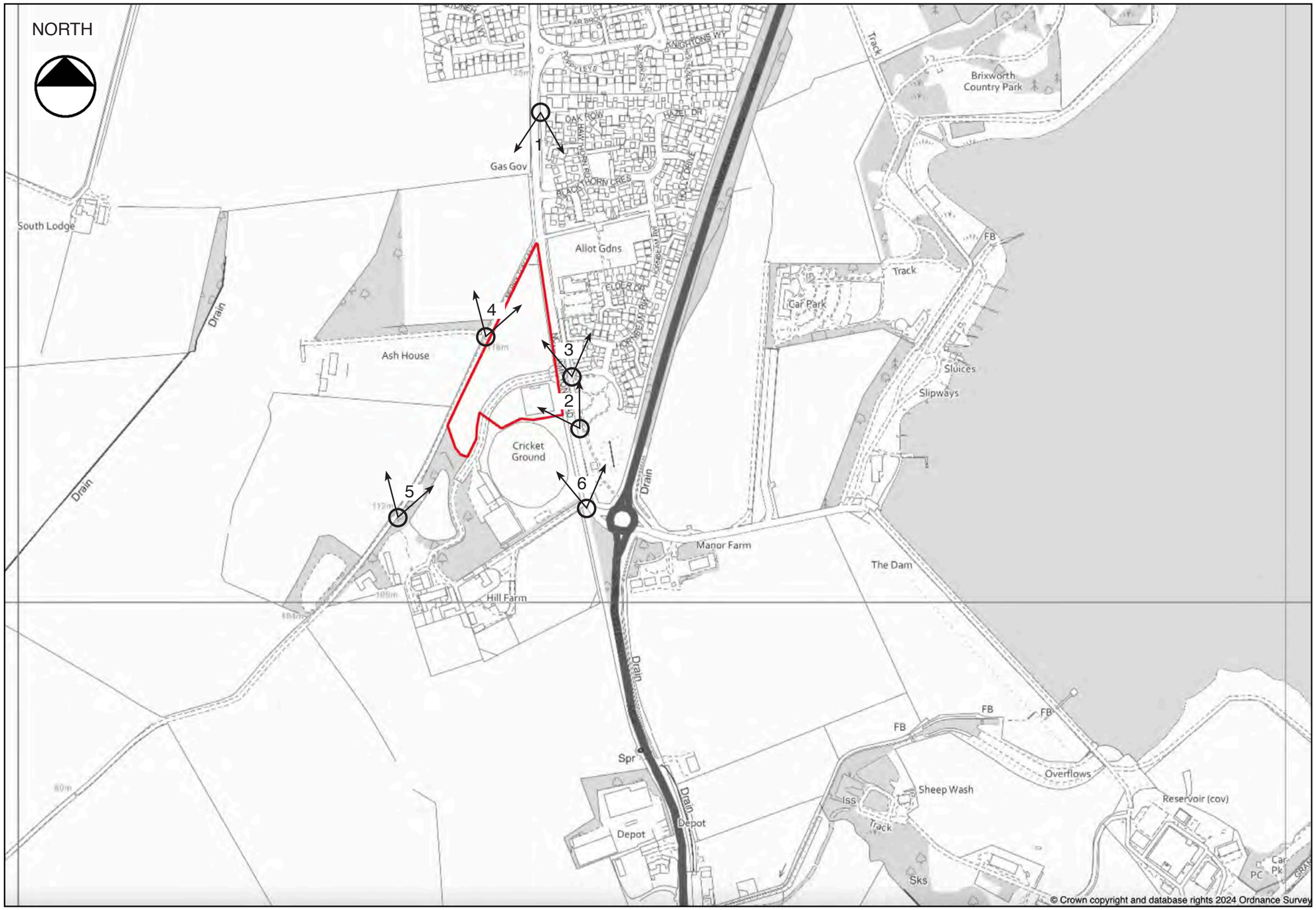
Drawing Title: PROPOSED SITE PLAN - (1 of 2) - NORTH

Scale: As indicated @A1

Job No: **2023028** Drawing No: **A101**

Status: **P1**

APPENDIX 7: PHOTOVIEW LOCATION PLAN



KEY TO PLAN

The site

Photoview number and location

12

PROJECT Brixworth Leisure			
DRAWING Photoview Location Plan - Close Views			
SCALE NTS	DATE Feb/2024	DRAWN SW	
DRAWING NUMBER LAS703-04a		REVISION	

KEY TO PLAN

The site

Photoview number and location

PROJECT Brixworth Local Services			
DRAWING Photoview Location Plan - Distant Views			
SCALE As shown	DATE Feb/2024	DRAWN SW	
DRAWING NUMBER LAS703-04		REVISION	

APPENDIX 8: REPRESENTATIVE VIEWPOINTS

Viewpoint 1 - View from Northampton Road looking south

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height
when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Viewpoint 2 - View from Northampton Road looking north-west

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height
when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Viewpoint 3 - View from Northampton Road looking north

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height
when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Viewpoint 4 - View from Northamptonshire Round public right of way (Merry Tom Lane) adjacent to entrance to Ash House looking north

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Viewpoint 5 - View from Northamptonshire Round public right of way (Merry Tom Lane) looking north

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Viewpoint 6 - View from Northampton Road close to junction with A508 looking north

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Viewpoint 7 - View from Northamptonshire Round public right of way close to the junction with the A5199 looking north-east

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Viewpoint 8 - View from layby on A508 at Pitsford looking north

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height
when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm

Viewpoint 9 - View from public right of way DK2 Pitsford looking north

Single ‘monocular’ view - 390mm width x 260mm height
when printed at A3 and viewed at 542mm