

LAND SOUTH OF HENHAM ROAD, ELSENHAM

Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Land South of Henham
Road, Elsenham
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29 July 2022



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1 INTRODUCTION

General

- 1.1 RPS has been commissioned by Countryside Partnerships PLC to prepare a Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LTVIA) to accompany an outline application for a proposed residential development (the Proposed Development) on land south of Henham Road, Elsenham, Essex referred to in this report as the Application Site. Refer to Figure 1.
- 1.2 The Application Site is an area of 5.3 ha. It includes one distinct parcel of land interrupted and partly divided by a ditch with occasional trees and remnant hedgerow that forms an east to west feature across the Application Site. The Application Site is bounded to the north by Henham Road and west by Hall Road. Stansted Brook and associated woodland are along the south boundary with a vegetation belt along part of the east boundary and post and rail fence separating the Application Site from adjacent barns associated with Elsenham Place. The Application Site would be accessed from Henham Road
- 1.3 The objective of the LTVIA is to identify the likelihood of the Proposed Development giving rise to significant landscape, townscape and/or visual effects, and to propose effective and appropriate design measures to mitigate such effects. The mitigation measures are presented as the Illustrative Layout Plan.

Baseline Methodology

- 1.4 For this LTVIA, a desktop review of published information, including landscape character assessments, OS data, online mapping data, aerial photography and local and national planning documents was undertaken. To further inform the LTVIA, representative views looking towards the Application Site were selected.
- 1.5 This report provides consideration of the Application Site within the context of the surrounding rural landscape and townscape of the village of Elsenham. It outlines the existing baseline conditions in terms of:
- Topography;
 - Vegetation cover and land uses;
 - Published landscape character studies;
 - Landscape and other relevant designations; and
 - The current visibility of the site.
- 1.6 The likely landscape, townscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development are assessed against the existing baseline scenario.
- 1.7 Planning policy of relevance to the Application Site insofar as it relates to landscape, townscape and visual amenity matters is also considered in this report.
- 1.8 A site visit was carried out on 26th February 2022 and 30th June 2022 to record views from publicly accessible locations, as well as to gain an understanding of the local landscape/townscape character. Fieldwork assisted in the assessment of the potential effects on the landscape character of the Application Site and surrounding landscape/townscape, as well as on visual receptors.

Assessment Methodology

- 1.9 The method used to undertake this LTVIA is detailed in Appendix A, Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology, as summarised in Section 4 below of this report. It is based on the following documents:
- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA) 3rd Edition.
 - Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations (May 2021).
 - Landscape Institute, Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (2019).
 - The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) 'Landscape Character and Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland' (LCA).
 - Natural England (2014) 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment'
- 1.10 The LTVIA provides an overview of the existing baseline conditions, and then assesses the potential significant effects of the Proposed Development upon baseline conditions during its construction and operational phases. This is undertaken through consideration of the sensitivity of the resources/receptors to the proposed impact of the residential development.
- 1.11 The introduction of built form to a site without a significant number of buildings would result in landscape and/or visual change. This report identifies whether these changes are significant or not in terms of the physical landscape/townscape and its character, and when viewed by visual receptors (people) from the surrounding area.

Study Area

- 1.12 A preliminary 5 km radius study area was defined from the outer edges of the Application Site and a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) generated based on a new house ridge height of 11 m. The ZTV is the area from which any part of the Proposed Development has the potential to be visible. Refer to Figure 2. Following the site visit and with the benefit of further analysis of the landscape and townscape context, there is no scope for significant effects to arise beyond 2 km. This LTVIA will focus on areas where significant landscape, townscape and visual effects are most likely to occur, as defined in GLVIA3.
- 1.13 Sensitive landscape and visual receptors within the Study Area as defined by the extent of the ZTV have been included for assessment in the LTVIA.

2 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Introduction

- 2.1 This report identifies the national and local policies of relevance to landscape and visual matters, which have informed the baseline assessment and subsequent landscape, townscape and visual assessment for the Proposed Development. The aims of the various policies at national, county and local level are outlined.

Planning Policy Context

- 2.2 This report identifies the national and local policies of relevance to landscape and visual matters, which have informed the baseline assessment and subsequent landscape, townscape and visual assessment for the Proposed Development. The aims of the various policies at national, county and local level are outlined.

The Development Plan

Uttlesford District Council Local Plan

- 2.3 The Uttlesford Local Plan was adopted in 2005. It still forms the basis for making planning decisions within the District alongside the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and its associated Planning Practice Guidance.
- 2.4 The Local Plan is becoming increasingly out of date and a New Local Plan is currently being prepared. Uttlesford District Council made the decision to withdraw their draft Local Plan and commence work on a new Local Plan in 2020. This is at the issues and Options Stages and there are therefore no policies. Until the New Local Plan is adopted the 2005 Local Plan will have material weight in planning decisions. Policies of relevance to the proposals are outlined below:

Policy S3 Other Development Limits

- 2.5 This policy states that:

‘Elsenham, Great Chesterford, Newport, Takeley and Thaxted are identified as Key Rural Settlements. Their boundaries, including village extensions at Takeley and Thaxted, and the boundaries of other settlements are defined on the Proposals Map. Development compatible with the settlement’s character and countryside setting will be permitted within these boundaries’.

Policy S7 The Countryside

- 2.6 The Site lies outside of the defined settlement boundary so in planning terms is defined as ‘countryside’. *‘In the countryside, which will be protected for its own sake, planning permission will only be given for development that needs to take place there, or is appropriate to a rural area’.* Development in the countryside will only be permitted if its appearance protects or enhances the particular character of the part of the countryside within which it is set or there are special reasons why the development in the form proposed needs to be there.

Policy S8 The Countryside Protection Zone

- 2.7 The Site lies within the Countryside Protection Zone around Stansted Airport. *‘In the Countryside Protection Zone planning permission will only be granted for development that is required to be there, or is appropriate to a rural area. There will be strict control on new development. In particular development will not be permitted if either of the following apply:*

- a) *New buildings or uses would promote coalescence between the airport and existing development in the surrounding countryside;*
- b) *It would adversely affect the open characteristics of the zone'.*

2.8 The key purposes of the Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ) are as follows:

- Purpose 1: To protect the open characteristics of the CPZ;
- Purpose 2: To restrict the spread of development from the airport;
- Purpose 3: To protect the rural character of the countryside (including settlements) around the airport; and
- Purpose 4: To prevent changes to the rural settlement pattern of the area by restricting coalescence.

Policy GEN2 Design

2.9 Policy GEN2 states:

'Development will not be permitted unless its design meets all the following criteria and has regard to adopted Supplementary Design Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents.

- a) *It is compatible with the scale, form, layout, appearance and materials of surrounding buildings;*
- b) *It safeguards important environmental features in its setting, enabling their retention and helping to reduce the visual impact of new buildings or structures where appropriate;*
- c) *It provides an environment, which meets the reasonable needs of all potential users.*
- d) *It helps to reduce the potential for crime;*
- e) *It helps to minimise water and energy consumption;*
- f) *It has regard to guidance on layout and design adopted as supplementary planning guidance to the development plan.*
- g) *It helps to reduce waste production and encourages recycling and reuse.*
- h) *It minimises the environmental impact on neighbouring properties by appropriate mitigating measures.*
- i) *It would not have a materially adverse effect on the reasonable occupation and enjoyment of a residential or other sensitive property, as a result of loss of privacy, loss of daylight, overbearing impact or overshadowing'.*

Policy GEN7 Nature Conservation

2.10 The policy states that:

'Development that would have a harmful effect on wildlife or geological features will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs the importance of the feature to nature conservation. Where the site includes protected species or habitats suitable for protected species, a nature conservation survey will be required. Measures to mitigate and/or compensate for the potential impacts of development, secured by planning obligation or condition, will be required. The enhancement of biodiversity through the creation of appropriate new habitats will be sought'.

Policy ENV3 Open Spaces and Trees

2.11 The policy states that:

'The loss of traditional open spaces, other visually important spaces, groups of trees and fine individual tree specimens through development proposals will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs their amenity value'.

Policy ENV8 Other Landscape Elements of Importance for Nature Conservation

2.12 The policy states that:

'Development that may adversely affect these landscape elements

- *Hedgerows*
- *Linear tree belts*
- *Larger semi natural or ancient*
- *woodlands*
- *Semi-natural grasslands*
- *Green lanes and special verges*
- *Orchards*
- *Plantations*
- *Ponds*
- *reservoirs*
- *River corridors*
- *Linear wetland features*
- *Networks or patterns of other locally important habitats*

will only be permitted if the following criteria apply:

- a) *The need for the development outweighs the need to retain the elements for their importance to wild fauna and flora;*
- b) *Mitigation measures are provided that would compensate for the harm and reinstate the nature conservation value of the locality.*

Appropriate management of these elements will be encouraged through the use of conditions and planning obligations'.

Supplementary Planning Documents

Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment SPD

2.13 The Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment Landscape Character Assessment SPD supports the landscape policies within the Core Strategy. The document defines and describes the different types and character areas of the landscape in the districts and evaluates each area in terms of the condition of the landscape and its sensitivity.

2.14 The Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment Landscape Character Assessments was produced in 2006 by Chris Blandford Associates.

Essex Design Guide SPD

2.15 The Essex Design Guide SPD aims to assist designers and others to achieve high standards of design and construction by promoting a common approach to the main principles which underlie

Local Planning Authorities' criteria for assessing planning applications. The Guide sets out recommendations in relation to areas such as scale, design and materials.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.16 The Department for Communities and Local Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2021 which sets out the Government's planning policy for England and how it expects that policy to be applied.
- 2.17 The NPPF emphasises the importance of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 states:
"The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development." This includes an environmental role, to protect and enhance our natural environment.
- 2.18 NPPF paragraph 10 advises that:
"So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11)."
- 2.19 Paragraph 11 explains that *"plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development."* For decision-taking this means d) granting permission unless:
"i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed. 7"
- 2.20 Footnote⁷ lists those sites of particular importance. For landscape these are: Green Belt; Local Green Space; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; National Parks; and Heritage Coasts.
- 2.21 Strategic policies regarding Plan-making at Section 3 include, at paragraph 20, the sufficient provision for *"conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure"*.
- 2.22 Non-strategic policies should set out more detailed policies for specific areas, including the allocation of sites, establishing design principles, as well as conserving and enhancing the natural environment (paragraph 28).
- 2.23 Section 6: 'Building a strong, competitive economy' recognises that sites may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements or urban areas. In these circumstances, development *'should be sensitive to its surroundings'*.
- 2.24 Section 8: 'Promoting healthy and safe communities' states at paragraph 91 that development should *'enable and support healthy lifestyles,..... for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure... and layouts that encourage walking and cycling'*. Paragraph 97 states that *'Existing open space.... should not be built on unless the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quality and quantity in a suitable location'*. Paragraph 98 states that *'planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users'*. The public right of way (PRoW) within the Site forms an important element of the application process and design development.
- 2.25 Section 11: 'Making effective use of land' recognises the need to safeguard and improve the environment when meeting the needs for development. Paragraph 118 promotes new habitat creation or the improvement of public access to the countryside. Paragraph 122 recognises the *'desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change' and 'the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places'*. Provision of appropriately designed landscape

infrastructure forms an important part of the mitigation strategy for the Proposed Development and will continue to be developed throughout the application process.

- 2.26 Section 12: 'Achieving well-designed places' includes general policies about achieving high quality and inclusive design for all development (paragraph 127). This is to ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place and create an attractive and comfortable place to live, work and visit. Proposals should optimise the potential of the Site to accommodate development. Developments should respond to the local character and reflect the identity of the surrounding built environment and landscape setting whilst not discouraging appropriate innovative design. New development should create safe and accessible environments that are visually attractive with appropriate and effective landscaping. Landscape proposals will be appropriately designed to provide functional and attractive infrastructure within the Proposed Development and compliment the surrounding landscapes and townscapes, including key views across the landscape to the higher ground to the south and the Grade I listed Church of St Mary, and a landscape buffer to the listed assets at Elsenham Place and Elsenham Cross.
- 2.27 Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment (paragraph 174) requires that: "*Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
- a) *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
 - b) *recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland."*
- 2.28 Paragraph 175 requires that Plans should: *distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries'.*
- 2.29 Paragraph 176 states that '*Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues'.*
- 2.30 Paragraph 184 requires that new development is appropriate to its location and should '*identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason'.* and that the impact on local amenity of light pollution from artificial light is limited on local amenity.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.31 The NPPF is supported by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (DCLG, 2014) a web-based guidance resource that was introduced in 2014 in order to bring together existing planning practice guidance for England in an accessible and useable way. The Natural Environment section was updated in July 2019 and the Light Pollution section was updated November 2019. Only those sections of relevance to the Application Site are discussed below.

Natural Environment – Landscape (21st July 2019)

- 2.32 The PPG explains, at paragraph: 036 (Reference ID: 8-036-20190721) that the NPPF requires that "*plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic*

policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.”

- 2.33 In the same paragraph, the PPG requires that where landscapes have a particular, local value planning policies should “*identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence.*” In addition, “*Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures...*” Also “*The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully.*”
- 2.34 In the same paragraph the PPG refers to using Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments to demonstrate the likely effects of a proposed development on the landscape.
- 2.35 The character of the Application Site is set out in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.10 of this LTVIA.

Summary of Planning Policy

- 2.36 The NPPF (2021) sets out overarching aims to ensure development is appropriately located, well designed and sustainable. In summary, the policies set out to improve the overall quality of an area, establishing a strong sense of place and create an attractive and comfortable location, responding to local character. National policies seek to conserve, protect and enhance valued landscapes and provide protection to scenic areas within nationally designated areas such as National Parks and AONBs.
- 2.37 The Uttlesford Local Plan and Essex Design Guide incorporate strategies to conserve and enhance (where possible) the important features, elements and characteristics of the landscape and townscape by avoiding visually intrusive development and promote good quality design which incorporates appropriate green infrastructure and respects local character.
- 2.38 In accordance with national policy the local development framework is based on the principles of sustainable development whilst promoting good design. New development would be encouraged to maintain and enhance the character of the local landscape/townscape where possible.

3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Landscape and Townscape Baseline

- 3.1 This section sets out the context of the Application Site within the surrounding area, with reference to published landscape character assessments and, where relevant, landscape designations at national and local levels. It describes the location, topography and drainage, land use, vegetation cover, existing rights of way and existing landscape character. The location of the Application Site, and relevant landscape planning context, are shown at Figures 1 and 3 and in the photographs at Figures 4 to 10.

Landscape Character

- 3.2 Landscape character types and landscape character areas can be defined at a variety of scales and a substantial amount of published information is available for national to local landscape character. The principal published information comprises Natural England's national landscape characterisation of England (Natural England, 2015) and characterisations undertaken at the regional and district level are contained within the Essex Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, 2003) and Uttlesford District Landscape Character (2006). No Neighbourhood Plan landscape character assessments have been prepared relevant to the study area. Relevant published landscape character assessments are reviewed with a site-specific assessment at paragraphs 3.15 to 3.28 (Application Site Description).
- 3.3 This section should be read in conjunction with Plate 1 National Character Areas and Plate 2 Uttlesford Landscape Character Areas.

National Landscape Character

- 3.4 Natural England divides England into 159 distinct natural areas of National Character Areas (NCAs). Each NCA is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment. At a national level, the Application Site and Study Area is located within the National Character Area 86: South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland.
- 3.5 The National Character Area profile published by Natural England (Natural England 2013) has been reviewed to develop an appreciation of the wider landscape, landscape character and context of the area, although due to its national scale, cannot be relied upon as a basis to assess effects on landscape character.
- 3.6 The South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland National Character Area covers parts of the four counties of Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It stretches from Bury St Edmunds in the north-west to Ipswich in the north-east, roughly following the line of the A14 trunk road through the Gipping Valley. To the south it embraces the Colchester hinterland and the urban areas of Braintree and Chelmsford, stretching to Bishop's Stortford and Stevenage in the west. The Application Site is located in the central west part of the NCA (see **Plate 2**).

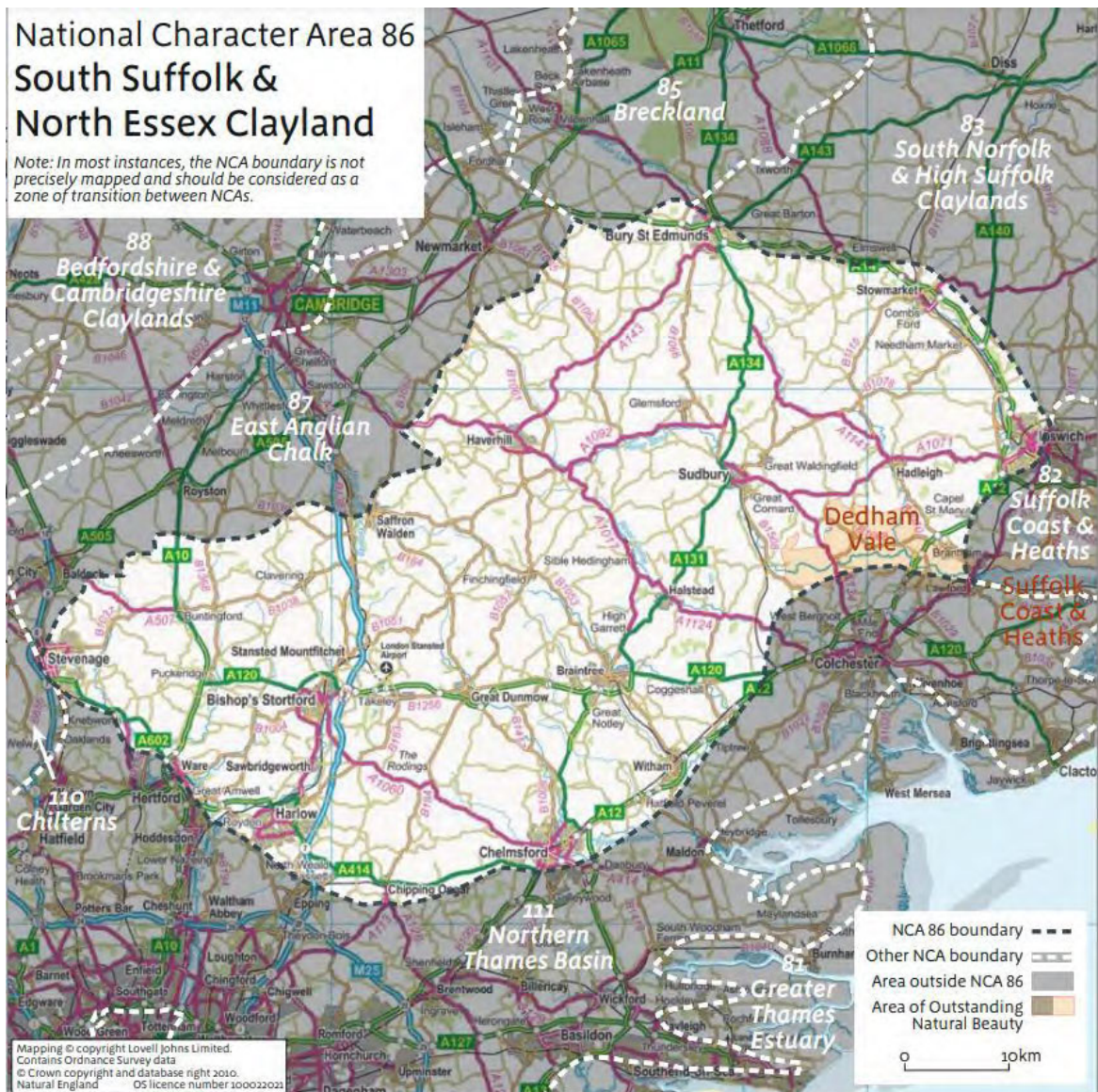


Plate 1 NCA 86 map and approximate site location

South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland NCA 86

3.7 The key characteristics of NCA 86 include:

- “An undulating chalky boulder clay plateau...dissected by numerous river valleys, giving a topography of gentle slopes in the lower, wider valleys and steeper slopes in the narrower upper part.
- Fragments of chalk give many of the soils a calcareous character, which also influences the character of the semi-natural vegetation cover.
- South-east-flowing streams and rivers drain the clay plateau. Watercourses wind slowly across flood plains, supporting wet, fen-type habitats; grazing marsh; and blocks of cricket-bat willows, poplars and old willow pollards. Navigation locks are present on some rivers.
- Lowland wood pasture and ancient woodlands support the dormouse and a rich diversity of flowering plants on the clay plateau. Large, often ancient hedgerows link woods and copses, forming wooded skylines.

- *The agricultural landscape is predominantly arable with a wooded appearance. There is some pasture on the valley floors. Field patterns are irregular despite rationalisation, with much ancient countryside surviving.*
- *Roman sites, medieval monasteries and castles and ancient woodlands contribute to a rich archaeology. Impressive churches, large barns, substantial country house estates and Second World War airfields dot the landscape, forming historical resources.*
- *There is a dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, parishes and small settlements around 'tyes' (commons) or strip greens and isolated hamlets. The NCA features a concentration of isolated moated farmsteads and numerous well-preserved medieval towns and large villages.*
- *Traditional timber-frame, often elaborate buildings with exposed timbers, colour-washed render, pargeting and steeply pitched roofs with pegtiles or long straw thatch. Sometimes they have been refronted with Georgian red brick or Victorian cream-coloured bricks ('Suffolk whites'). Clay lump is often used in cottages and farm buildings.*
- *Winding, narrow and sometimes sunken lanes are bounded by deep ditches, wide verges and strong hedgerows. Transport infrastructure includes the A14, A12, M11 and Stansted Airport.*
- *A strong network of public rights of way provides access to the area's archetypal lowland English countryside".*

3.8 The Application Site occupies a small part of the extensive NCA. The relatively small amount of pasture grassland affected would be seeded and replanted with wildflower grassland, individual trees and orchard as part of the proposed residential development.

Essex Landscape Character Assessment

3.9 The Essex Landscape Character Assessment (ELCA) was undertaken for Essex County Council, by Chris Blandford Associates in 2003.

3.10 The ELCA is for land outside defined settlements and identified seven Landscape Character Types (LCTs), which are broad tracts of landscape with similar characteristics. These LCTs are subdivided into 35 Landscape Character Areas within the ELCA which are single unique geographical areas with a recognisable pattern of landscape characteristics that combine to create a distinct sense of place. The Application Site is situated within the River Valley Landscapes Character Type.

3.11 Key characteristics of this LCT include:

- *"The river valleys dissect the boulder clay plateau. They are smaller and steeper in the upper valley reaches, revealing underlying gravel and sand deposits on the valley sides.*
- *Parts of the valleys are extensively modified by reservoirs, current and reclaimed gravel pits, landfill sites, artificial wetlands, river realignments and canals.*
- *Smaller, intimate tree-lined valleys with small rural settlements contrast with the more developed major river valley floodplains.*
- *Organic field shapes are common as they are defined by the valley topography.*
- *The high ground of the plateau allows 'tunnelled' views through deciduous woodland to the valley bottom.*
- *The river courses are often marked by their associated vegetation.*
- *Settlements along the valleys reflect the historic use of them for access into the county."*

- 3.12 The River Valley LCT is subdivided into eight Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). The site lies within the Stort Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA C2). Key characteristics of this LCA include:
- *“Shallow and narrow valley with moderately sloping arable valley sides.*
 - *Fairly enclosed character due to the frequency of hedgerows/hedgerow trees, small woods/copses and riverside trees.*
 - *Small pastures and large floodplain meadows on the valley floor.*
 - *Numerous small estates and parklands.*
 - *Substantially undeveloped character.”*
- 3.13 The Stort Valley is described as “shallow and fairly narrow for much of its length, only opening out northwest of Harlow where large floodplain meadows extend over the valley floor. A patchwork of pasture and wetland vegetation along the course of the river contrasts with the arable fields of the valley sides, but thick hedgerows, small woods and tree belts provide a sense of enclosure. Views are mostly confined and urban development and major roads are only occasionally visible. Church spires are an occasional feature appearing above wooded skylines”.
- 3.14 The overall condition of the landscape is moderate to good with intact hedgerows and woodlands. Pressure for urban development is highlighted as a continuing trend for change with some villages showing signs of poor-quality modern development.

Uttlesford District Landscape Character

- 3.15 The district level landscape Character Assessment provides the best level of baseline information for the Proposed Development. At the district level the landscape character areas described within the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (BBCMU LCA), broadly correspond in location and characteristics with the types identified at the regional level.
- 3.16 At a district level the Application Site lies within the River Valleys Landscape (LCT A). Key Characteristics of this landscape type include:
- *“V-shaped or u-shaped landform which dissects Boulder Clay/Chalky Till plateau;*
 - *Main river valley served by several tributaries;*
 - *Flat or gently undulating valley floor;*
 - *Intimate character in places; and*
 - *Wooded character in places”.*
- 3.17 Within BBCMU LCA the River Valleys LCT is broken down further into six Landscape Character Areas (LCAs). The Application Site lies within LCA A3: Stort River Valley (see **Plate 3**). Key characteristics of the Stort River Valley include:
- *“Gently sloping, sometimes steep river valley slopes dominated by arable farmland.*
 - *Small to medium scale field pattern defined by hedgerows, tree belts, woodland blocks in places.*
 - *Location of River Stort well delineated by riverbank trees.*
 - *Continuous views down the valley from higher ground, and at some bridging points.*
 - *The large village of Stansted Mountfitchet, dispersed farmsteads and the smaller villages of Clavering and Maunden.*

- *Below Stansted Mountfitchet valley slopes still contain arable farmland but countryside character changes to one of busy roads and lanes and more dense settlement.”*

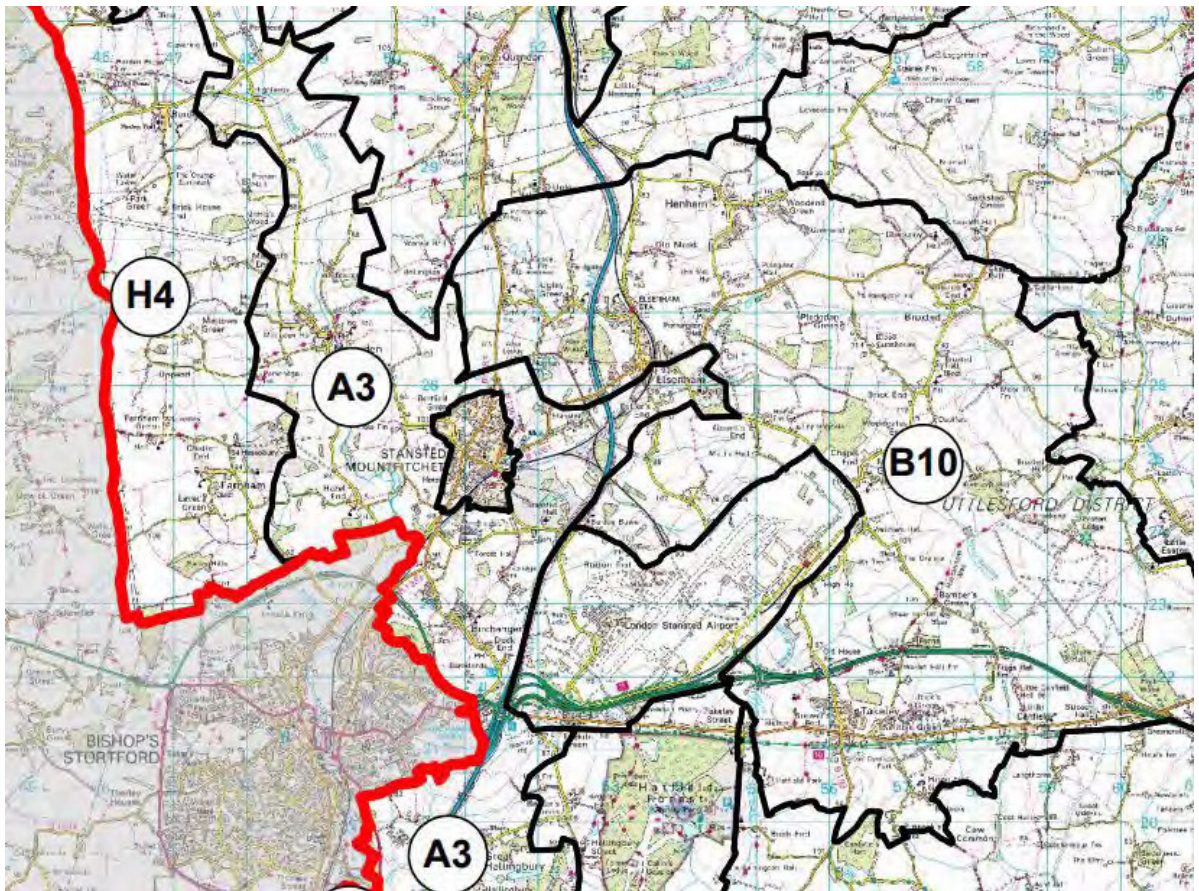


Plate 2 Detail of Uttlesford Landscape Character Areas map

3.18 The visual characteristics of the LCA are as follows:

- *“Long views across the river valley to the opposite slopes are possible from roads and lanes on higher ground in the northern reaches of the valley, and at bridging points.*
- *Church spires an occasional feature appearing above wooded skylines.*
- *The church at Manuden is visible across the floodplain pasture from the Harcamlow Way.*
- *Local views along river floor of wet meadows and tree-lined riverbanks at Gaston Green.*
- *Views of the river valley are more channelled by trees or development in the central and southern parts near Bishop Stortford and Stansted Airport.*
- *Stansted Mountfitchet visible across the farmlands from the north.*
- *Stansted Airport and Tower are visible from eastern river valley slopes.”*

3.19 Key Planning and Land Management Issues as set out within the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment are:

- *“Potential impact of Stansted 2nd runway on degree of tranquillity and visual intrusion of new roads/runway itself.*
- *Potential for pollution of the river, marshland and ditches from fertilizer and pesticide run-off from the surrounding valley sides and farmland plateau.*
- *Potential loss of riverside marshland and pastures due to agricultural encroachment.*

- *Visual intrusion of road traffic in undeveloped floodplain landscape, particularly where the M11 and the B1060 cross the area.*
- *Potential pressure from urban expansions on the edge of Stansted Mountfitchet.*
- *Increasing traffic on minor roads, especially during busy tourist periods.”*

3.20 Sensitive characteristics and landscape elements within this character area include hedgerows, tree belts, woodland blocks and copses that frame several views across and out of the area. Potential new development, which may result in the loss of these features, would change the visual character and nature of views within and to the area.

Townscape Character

- 3.21 There is limited analysis of the developed area of Elsenham within the Essex and Uttlesford documents therefore a separate analysis of the townscape character has been undertaken by RPS to establish a baseline situation at a local level that is appropriate to the scale of the study area for the Proposed Development. The village of Elsenham has an historic core focused on The Crown Inn and other distinctive historic buildings loosely clustered around Elsenham Cross. Buildings include predominantly painted render and decorative plasterwork in a range of colours. Roof materials include red tiles and thatch.
- 3.22 The wider settlement is defined by two through routes namely B1051 (Henham Road/High Street/Stansted Road), east to west and Station Road/Robin Hood Road following a north to south direction leading south to Tye Green. West from Elsenham Cross a few distinctive historic buildings are along the High Street which are infilled by continuous modern residential dwellings along the road. Modern residential dwellings are north from the High Street along private Park Road. West beyond the railway extending north and south from the defining road system the area is surrounded by modern 20th and 21st century mainly residential developments along cul-de-sacs and link roads that includes a mix of semi-detached houses, bungalows or detached dwellings east of M11. The townscape of Elsenham is generally homogenous and the modern housing estate character type extends over the majority of the settlement and is typical and common place. Individual detached dwellings with large gardens are characteristic of Henham Road and Hall Road. Building materials include predominantly red brick or painted render with black or white painted timber boarding and windows. Roof materials include predominantly red or buff tiles and slate.
- 3.23 The townscape character of Elsenham is largely identified as Modern Residential Townscape Character Area (TCA) and is of ordinary condition. A small area of Loose Historic Core (TCA) identified at Elsenham Cross is of good condition.

Application Site Description

Location, Land Cover and Land Use

- 3.24 Elsenham is a village and civil parish in Essex situated approximately 4.8km northeast of Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. The area lies within the authority of Uttlesford District Council.
- 3.25 The Application Site is located at NGR 553999, 226262, to the south of Henham Road and to the east of Hall Road as it approaches Elsenham Cross. The Site comprises a large open pasture field which is principally laid to grass, measuring 5.3 ha in total and is broadly rectangular in shape (see **Plate 1**), located to the east, southeast of Elsenham Village which comprises a primary school and parade of shops, and much modern residential development.

Plate 3 Aerial view of the site and its surrounding landscape context



- 3.26 The northern edge of the Site is defined by a post-and-wire fence adjacent to a narrow pavement and grass verge along the southern edge of Henham Road, at the eastern gateway into Elsenham, and lies adjacent to Elsenham Place, a Grade II listed sixteenth to seventeenth century timber-framed house, with associated barns and dovecote, also Grade II listed. The northern side of Henham Road is lined with residential dwellings comprising large, detached houses of post-medieval and modern date leading towards Elsenham Cross, which is characterised by a cluster of post-medieval buildings comprising The Crown Inn, No.5 The Cross, Village Hall Cottage, and Tinkers Cottage (all Grade II listed), and comprises part of the historic core of Elsenham. Refer to Figure 3.
- 3.27 The western edge of the Site is bounded by Hall Road, which leads to Stansted Airport. The boundary here comprises a banked verge and a low planted and fenced edge. A narrow pavement edges part of Hall Road on its western side and its associated residential dwellings, leading southwards towards The Old Vicarage (Grade II listed). A public footpath running northeast-southwest crosses the road and the northwest corner of the Site, connecting Hall Road with Henham Road to the northeast, and runs for 152m (Elsenham Parish footpath PROW 13). From Hall Road, the same footpath runs southwest for 557m to Tye Green Road, which crosses through an approved development for 130 dwellings on land to the west of Hall Road (UTT/19/0462/FUL).
- 3.28 The southern boundary of the Application Site dense mature tree planting provides a clear boundary, and this boundary is also marked by Stansted Brook. Other boundaries are marked using a combination of trees and hedgerow. To the south of the brook the land rises markedly, upon which stands the Grade I listed Church of St Mary, and Grade II listed Elsenham Hall.
- 3.29 Most of the landscape to the east of the Site is made up of open fields, creating an open outlook. Immediately to the east there are several buildings, including the listed Barns and Dovecote at

Elsenham Place, and Elsenham Place itself, which are located immediately adjacent to the Site. The Site is separated from the Grade II Listed Barns at Elsenham Place by a timber fence.

- 3.30 Within the wider landscape there are pockets of ancient woodland as well as areas of *'important woodland'* as identified in the Uttlesford 2005 Local Plan.

Topography and Drainage

- 3.31 The topography of the Site is undulating, with it dipping down to the southwest corner. The northern edge of the Site is flatter and is comparatively level with the rest of the street scene around it. The northern part of the Site lies at approximately 90m AOD, and dips to c.80m AOD at Stansted Brook.
- 3.32 The southern boundary of the Application Site follows the course of Stansted Brook which flows to the west-southwest and is linked to a series of drains and ponds associated with Elsenham Hall on the higher ground to the south.

Access and Infrastructure

- 3.33 The Application Site is adjacent to the existing settlement area of Elsenham within countryside north of Stansted Airport. The study area settlement pattern includes the main villages of Stansted Mountfitchet, Elsenham and Henham and other dispersed hamlets often associated with greens together with scattered farmsteads and farm buildings. Stansted Airport occupies the south of the study area.
- 3.34 The M11 main transport corridor is west of the Application Site and separates Elsenham from Stansted Mountfitchet. East and west of the M11 a network of minor roads link villages, settlements and farms within the study area. The A120 is south of Stansted Airport at the edge of the study area.
- 3.35 The Proposed Development would be accessed from Henham Road, east of Elsenham Cross.
- 3.36 One Public Right of Way (PRoW) crosses the Application Site at the northwest corner, traverses Hall Road to continue a route south. There is roadside pavement on both sides of Henham Road and on the west side of Hall Road. A bridleway is south of the Application Site that follows a route close to Stansted Brook. Several other PRoW from Elsenham connect settlements within the wider study area.

Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations

- 3.37 The Application Site does not lie within any specific landscape-related statutory or non-statutory designations, but some local constraints are identified of the Uttlesford District Council Constraints Map (available online at UDC Constraints Map External (arcgis.com)). These are shown on Figure 3.
- 3.38 A number of listed buildings are identified lying adjacent to, or within close proximity, of the Site: these have been assessed as part of a Built Heritage Assessment (RPS 2022) accompanying the application. The masterplan for the Application Site has been developed following an earlier Built Heritage Assessment which identified the relevant heritage assets and assessed the significance of buildings which have the potential to be impacted. Heritage Design Advice was issued at an early stage and can be seen to have strongly informed the current proposals, as have historic and present landscape considerations.
- 3.39 Analysis shows that the Site lies within the Countryside Protection Zone as identified in the adopted 2005 Local Plan, although this is out of date given recently built out and consented development.

- 3.40 To the southeast of the Site, across Stansted Brook, is an area identified in the Local Plan as 'historic parkland' surrounding Elsenham Hall, itself Grade II listed, although this is not recorded in the Historic England Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.
- 3.41 As already noted above, the Site is crossed in its northwest corner by a footpath, PROW 13, which continues across Hall Road and eventually links with other elements of the footpath network leading to Stansted Mountfitchet, although this wider historic landscape connection has been severed by the railway and also the M11 motorway.
- 3.42 There are two conservation areas within the wider area, at Stansted Mountfitchet c.2.5km to the west-southwest and Henham c.1.9km to the north-northeast of the Site, but neither will experience any effects from the Proposed Development.

Landscape Value

- 3.43 As part of the baseline description of the study area the value of the landscape and townscape that would be affected by the Proposed Development has been established. The NPPF at paragraph 174 states that, "*Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by; protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.*"
- 3.44 GLVIA3 defines value as "*the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society, bearing in mind that a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons...A review of existing landscape designations is usually the starting point to understanding landscape value, but the value attached to undesignated landscapes also needs to be carefully considered and individual elements of the landscape and individual elements of the landscape – such as trees, buildings or hedgerows may also have value*".
- 3.45 GLVIA3 includes a list of factors within Box 5.1 that identifies a range of factors to consider when establishing value together with the complimentary Landscape Institute, *Technical Guidance Note 02/21: Assessing landscape value outside national designations*. These factors are useful in identifying the particular qualities present within the Application Site.

Non-designated Landscapes

- 3.46 The Application Site does not lie within a nationally or locally designated landscape. This does not mean that the Application Site has no value. The range of factors set out in GLVIA Box 5.1 and TGN 02/21 are considered to help in the identification of valued landscapes and are discussed below and used in this assessment to establish value.

Landscape Quality

- 3.47 Landscape quality, or condition, measures the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.
- 3.48 The trees and remnants of native hedgerows around the land parcel of the Application Site are typical features of the LCA and have medium/low value. The grassland parcel is a remnant of the previous agricultural land use associated formerly in part with The Old Vicarage as Glebe land, and with the farm at Elsenham Place.
- 3.49 The Application Site is part of the settlement edge which forms a typical transition from historic village core, with its post-medieval and modern residential fringe, which then transitions further to the east as farmland along Henham Road. When approaching from the east, the Site is part of the gateway to Elsenham after the buildings at Elsenham Place which front the road. From Elsenham Cross, the Site is seen as a grassy field in the context of detached residential housing of mixed age flanking Henham Road on its northern side and the farm buildings at Elsenham Place.

Roadside street lights are a detractor, as are other elements such as road signs and domestic wheelie bins on the opposite pavement.

Scenic Quality

- 3.50 This measures the degree to which the landscape appeals primarily to the visual senses. The visual baseline is analysed in more detail below.
- 3.51 The Application Site has a medium/low pastoral scenic quality as parcel of land on a village edge, with views to the south across the mature tree belt along Stansted Brook towards the Church of St Mary, which is nestled behind the trees on the higher ground. Views of the Church are glimpsed from the PRow within the Site and the pavement which runs along the road just beyond its northern edge, but are largely obscured during the summer months due to the dense vegetation.
- 3.52 There is a low scenic quality due to the close association with the development of the settlement edge and associated traffic, and visual influence of aircraft caused by the close proximity to Stansted airport. Despite not being a fixed element, the constant flow of aeroplanes taking off and coming into land at Stansted Airport form a visible component which affects the scenic quality of the landscape and the Site.

Rarity and Representativeness

- 3.53 Rarity is concerned with the presence of rare features and elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare character type. Representativeness analyses the features or elements within the site and its surroundings which are considered particularly important examples, which are worthy of retention.
- 3.54 The grassland, and remnant trees and hedgerows of the site and surrounding rural landscape are typical features associated with the local landscape and cannot be defined as rare locally. The field boundary vegetation within the site are ordinary examples within the local landscape, are poorly maintained and are not particularly important or valuable. The settlement edge, belts of trees, and vegetation create good enclosure that is representative of the village fringes within this wider landscape. The hedgerows and trees of the site are typical examples of this landscape that would be retained and enhanced within the Proposed Development.

Conservation Interests

- 3.55 This considers the presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add value to a landscape.
- 3.56 There are no ecological designations on the Site and therefore it has no more than a low value.
- 3.57 There are features within the southern part of the Site which are remnants of former field boundaries as shown on the 1840 Tithe Map of the Site (see Plate 4). These are of low value.



Plate 4 Extract of the 1840 Elsenham Tithe map showing former land divisions

- 3.58 Historic listed buildings are located within the centre of the village and overlook the Application Site. The Site has value as open land in terms of its relationship to the built form of the village.
- 3.59 To the south of the Site across Stansted Brook there is a County Wildlife Site (Elsenham Hall Fields), of higher value.

Recreational Value

- 3.60 This considers any evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.
- 3.61 There is one public right of way across the northwest corner of the Site linking Hall Road to Henham Road as a shortcut, avoiding Elsenham Cross. The village and the wider farmland of the study area contains further public rights of way linking to surrounding settlements. Overall, the landscape of the site has a medium/low recreational value whilst the wider landscape of the study area has a medium recreational value.

Perceptual Aspects

- 3.62 A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquillity.
- 3.63 The value. The landscape of the Site and surrounding settlement and farmland is rural but, is not wild. The managed land and hedgerows do not have wild qualities. The hedgerows and trees

provide some visual containment although the adjacent residential developments limit the sense of tranquillity to low/medium value.

- 3.64 The audible noise and noticeable aviation fuel smell from Stansted Airport, as well as the constant flow of aeroplanes taking off and coming into land at Stansted Airport, affects the tranquillity and perceptual quality of the landscape at the Site.

Associations

- 3.65 This considers any evidence of artistic endeavours and historic events that contribute to the perceptions of the natural beauty of an area.
- 3.66 The village of Elsenham has historic origins, including a listed church and buildings dating mainly from the 17th to 20th centuries. The historic core of the village adjoins the northwest edge of the Site, although there is some limited intervisibility with the buildings within it. There is a clear relationship with the listed farmstead at Elsenham Place and also some of the other listed buildings along Henham Road.
- 3.67 No literary or artistic associations have been identified to the Site.

Functional

- 3.68 This considers elements that contribute to the healthy functioning of the landscape or a strong physical or functional link with an adjacent designated landscape or its appreciation.
- 3.69 The Site is comprised of pasture and has limited agricultural need. The Site does not form part of a published Green Infrastructure Network however adjacent woodland belt associated with Stansted Brook is considered to contribute to the network of functional green space within the local area which has higher value and creates a sense of place.

Summary of Landscape Value

- 3.70 The value of the landscape of the Site and surroundings is considered to be low to medium. The elements of grassland, hedgerows, trees and stream which comprise the Site are not rare within the wider LCA and are not particularly important examples. The Site has a limited scenic quality due to the close association with the development of the settlement edge, and proximity to Stansted Airport. The site and immediate surroundings are not part of a wild landscape due to its farmed and managed nature. The most valued aspect of the site and surrounding landscape is the recreational opportunity that the public rights of way network offer the local community and the visual amenity of views out over the surrounding farmland. Walkers and dog walkers are an understandably common feature within the fields on the edge of a settlement. Therefore, whilst the site has positive landscape elements and some recreational and wildlife interest, these are not considered sufficient to elevate this area of land to one that is highly valued in accordance with paragraph 170 of the NPPF.
- 3.71 The NPPF requires landscapes that are not statutorily designated to have attributes of a sufficiently high quality to ensure protection and enhancement as a valued landscape. The landscape of the Application Site does not have any demonstrably special qualities and is not of high landscape value.

Visual Baseline

- 3.72 A visual assessment has been conducted to verify the desk study findings and confirm the extent of visual influence of the proposal site. A site visit was made on 26th February 2022 during dry, sunny weather and 30th June 2022 during dry, overcast weather.

- 3.73 Principal viewpoints, sensitive visual receptors and the approximate visibility of the land within the Application Site have been recorded from representative publicly accessible viewpoints. Photographs have been taken using a digital camera from the representative viewpoints as a record of the view and have been taken with a fixed 50mm lens on a 35mm digital camera in landscape format at eye level, approximately 1.6m above ground level from public viewpoints. No access to private properties was obtained, and where impact to residential and other private views is noted, this has necessarily been estimated by using the nearest possible publicly accessible location.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 3.74 Areas from which views of any part of the Proposed Development would theoretically be possible were determined by generating a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). The ZTV does not indicate how much of the Proposed Development would be visible. Figure 2 shows a ZTV that takes account of the screening effect of major woodland blocks (at 12 m high) and buildings (at 11 m high). Whilst the ZTV is an accurate representation of what might be seen, it does not take account of smaller blocks of woodland or hedgerows and associated / incidental tree cover, which add to the amount of screening provided by vegetation.
- 3.75 Representative viewpoints, located within the ZTV and likely to experience visual change, were identified through desk study and fieldwork, and their sensitivity established in accordance with best practice guidance.
- 3.76 The extent of the ZTV (and study area for the visual assessment) is limited to a 2 km buffer from the boundary of the Application Site and indicates that potential views of the Proposed Development would be experienced from a relatively contained area to the north and south with limited views available from the urban edge of Elsenham. Belts and strips of woodland and trees to the south, west and north limit views and potential intervisibility. More fragmented areas of the ZTV occurs in a wider area around the Application Site.

Consultation

- 3.77 Following production of the ZTV, site verification and professional judgement a selection of representative viewpoints have been made to support the assessment. The candidate viewpoints were submitted to Uttlesford Council for comment on 9th June 2022, followed up on 16th June 2022 and again by telephone message via reception on 23rd June. No direct response to the viewpoint selection has been made to-date however, if the council wish to review the selected viewpoints during the planning process this could be dealt with at a later date. A total of six viewpoint locations are presented as part of this assessment

Visual Receptor Groups

Residential Properties (Private Views)

- 3.78 In the planning system no individual has the right to a view. The Landscape Institute has provided guidance on residential visual amenity in Landscape Institute *Technical Guidance Note 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment*. Inspector Kingaby, (Burnthouse Farm Wind Farm, APP/D0515/10/2123739) noted that “*There needs to be a degree of harm over and above identified substantial effect to take a case into the category of refusal in the public interest. Changing the outlook from a property is not sufficient*” (Inspector’s Report, paragraph 120) (also at paragraph A1.7, LI TGN 2/19).

- 3.79 Residential properties are located along the majority of the northern and western boundary of the Site and front onto the Proposed Development, with the exception of Grade II listed Nos.1 and 2, The Cross which back onto the Site at its northwest corner.
- 3.80 Along Henham Road, there are a series of large, detached houses of mixed age and style, and are largely set back from the road and contained behind brick walls or fences, some with planting, and punctured by driveway openings/gates. Views of the Application Site from ground floor rooms and rear gardens are slightly limited. Views into the Site from upper floor windows are unfiltered.
- 3.81 At Elsenham Cross, there is a cluster of Grade II listed historic buildings which front onto the junction of Hall Road with Henham Road and High Street. Views into the Site are filtered by intervening built form.
- 3.82 Along Hall Road, there are a group of three modern detached houses to the south of Tinkers Cottage which front onto the road and overlook the Site.
- 3.83 After an access opening leading to a consented scheme for 130 dwellings on land to the west of Hall Road (not yet built out), there is the Grade II listed The Old Vicarage, which is densely screened from the Proposed Development, although there may be views of the Site from the upper floor windows.
- 3.84 The residential areas of Elsenham are generally well screened by vegetation or built form from views towards the Application Site. The main locations where there could be potential visual impacts on residential properties at the edge of the settlement comprise:
- Henham Road;
 - Hall Road; and
 - Elsenham Cross.
- 3.85 Site survey observations have indicated that residential properties are located on Henham Road, along the northern boundary of the Application Site. Two storey properties have front elevations with the field. Views from ground floor windows would be limited by roadside walls and/or garden boundary vegetation. Views into the site from first floor windows would be available from five properties although interrupted by garden vegetation from some private viewpoints.
- Three detached two storey properties on Hall Road along the western boundary of the Application Site have front elevations with the field. Views from the ground floor windows of these properties are either screened by property boundary vegetation or roadside hedgerow. Oblique glimpses through gateways gaps would be possible to the field. Heavily filtered or open views would be possible from some upper storey windows. The Old Vicarage is contained by garden boundary vegetation and views from lower and upper storey windows are screened or heavily filtered in winter.
- 3.86 The single storey cottages with dormer windows at Elsenham Cross would generally have views prevented by intervening built form or roadside hedgerow from ground floor windows. An oblique glimpse of the field would potentially be possible from the cottages. Elsenham Cross Cottage would obtain rear ground floor and first floor windows of the field partly interrupted by garden vegetation.
- 3.87 Where residential views might be gained from properties these have been considered in combination with local and publicly accessible views.

Public Rights of Way

- 3.88 Reference to the Ordnance Survey map and web based definitive interactive map for Essex has informed the extent and status of the PRoW network in the immediate vicinity of the Application Site. Open views of the Application are gained from the footpath (Elsenham 13) that traverses the field from locations at entry points to the field from Henham Road and Hall Road. Views from other

PRoW are generally restricted and often not available from publicly accessible locations due to vegetation cover or intervening buildings.

3.89 Viewpoint locations have been selected from the PRoW network, including footpaths (Elsenham 21, Elsenham 35 and Elsenham 12), and bridleway (Elsenham 5) included in this assessment.

Commercial Property

3.90 Farms / agri-business and a pub are located in the vicinity of the Application Site including Daisy Mays Farm. People at their places of work are considered to have a low sensitivity to the Proposed Development because the focus of attention is on their work not on the surroundings.

3.91 People involved in agriculture or associated industry and in hospitality are likely to experience limited views of the proposed residential development. Given their low sensitivity they are not likely to experience significant change. Consequently, this receptor group is not taken forward for detailed impact assessment.

Surrounding Roads Network

3.92 There are some open views or channelled views of the Application Site from adjacent local roads. These include:

- Henham Road, from which access to the Application Site is made; and
- Hall Road.

3.93 Limited potential very fleeting dynamic views from other roads within the ZTV are identified.

3.94 Because attention tends to be focused on the road or within the vehicle itself, people travelling in vehicles through this landscape are considered to have low sensitivity to the Proposed Development. Cyclists have a slightly raised sensitivity to the proposals, namely medium.

Representative Viewpoints

3.95 The visual assessment has primarily been based on an assessment of seven representative viewpoints for which photography has been undertaken at publicly accessible locations and described in Table 3.1. Refer to Figure 2 and photographs at Figures 4 to 10. In addition, ZTV information supplemented by site visits has been used to identify and consider the main visual receptors within the vicinity of the Application Site.

Table 3.1: Description of Views from Representative Viewpoints

Viewpoint and Location	Distance from Site	Receptor and Sensitivity	Description
1. Footpath Elsenham 13	265 m	Residents – High (future baseline receptors) Walkers – High to Medium (future baseline)	Close view looking east from footpath. The view is over gently sloping rough grassland. The contained short view is surrounded by good tree belts and strong hedgerows that funnel the view towards the Application Site. Post and rail boundary fences and temporary ecological fencing are features of the view. The character of the view is pasture fields defined by hedgerows and vegetation belts with occasional glimpse to village buildings. At night lights of houses would be visible through trees particularly in winter.

Viewpoint and Location	Distance from Site	Receptor and Sensitivity	Description
			<p>Future Baseline</p> <p>This viewpoint is within land that is consented for residential development. The character and context of the baseline view will change when the residential scheme is built.</p>
2. Footpath Elsenham 13	0 m (within Application Site boundary)	Residents - High Walkers – High to Medium Vehicle travellers – Low	<p>Close view from footpath within Application Site close to the pavement along Hall Road. The view is over a flat grassland field to the barns associated with Elsenham Place. The houses along Henham Road that form the residential edge of Elsenham are visible together with Elsenham Cross Cottage. The close view is contained by residential edge or woodland belt. Views of the Application Site are open from this location that is overlooked by village properties giving the perception of a village path across a field. The character of the view is pasture field and vegetation belts at the residential edge of a village.</p> <p>At night lights of houses and street lighting on Henham Road would be visible.</p>
3. Footpath Elsenham 13	0 m (within Application Site boundary)	Residents - High Walkers – High to Medium Vehicle travellers – Low	<p>Close view looking south from footpath off Henham Road. View is open towards Elsenham Hall across gently sloping grassland field to dense woodland belt. The roof of Elsenham Hall is visible above intervening vegetation. Houses on Hall Road are visible including chimney stacks of the Old Rectory and the rear of Elsenham Cross Cottage. Lighting columns, poles and powerlines are visible features along Hall Road.</p> <p>At night lights of houses and street lighting on Hall Road would be visible.</p>
4. Footpath Elsenham 21	176 m	Walkers – High	<p>Close view looking south-west from footpath. The short, contained view is over flat rough grassland to a strong vegetation belt of mature trees including a distinctive group of three cedar trees. The roof and chimneys of houses on Henham Road are visible. Views of houses would be heavily filtered in winter. The expanse of roof of the Elsenham Place barns is visible above vegetation with a glimpse of Elsenham Place obtained. Poles and powerline are visible features along Henham Road. The character of the view is pasture field with backdrop of vegetation and buildings at the edge of village.</p>

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Viewpoint and Location	Distance from Site	Receptor and Sensitivity	Description
			A night lights of houses and street lighting would be visible particularly in winter.
5. Footpath Elsenham 35	440 m	Walkers - High	<p>Close view looking east from footpath. The glimpse view though a gap between vegetation is over sloping field to boundary of intervening vegetation belt and tree groups. The Application Site and buildings at Elsenham Place are screened in summer. There would be potential heavily filtered views through vegetation to the Application Site in winter. The character of the view is woodland edge to pasture fields interspersed with vegetation and trees.</p> <p>At night lights of houses and from street lighting is unlikely.</p>
6. Footpath Elsenham 12	657 m	Walkers – High	<p>Middle distance view looking north from footpath at the edge of arable fields. In summer there is no view to the Application Site from the field corner being screened by intervening hedgerow. In winter there is potential for heavily filter views of the Application Site. The character of the view is agricultural farmland and horse paddocks associated with adjacent residential property.</p> <p>At night lights from houses would be unlikely.</p>
7. Bridleway Elsenham 5 and Hall Road	64 km	Walkers – High to Medium Vehicle travellers - Low	<p>A close view looking north. The view is channelled by vegetation along the road corridor to the rising grassland field of the Application Site. Roadside vegetation is visible and the intermittent section of hedge within the Application Site. House along Henham Road are visible built form along the more distant ridge in the view together with poles and lighting on Henham Road. The railings of Stansted Brook bridge are visible features at a bend in the road. The character of the view is woodland and pasture at a settlement edge.</p> <p>At night lights form houses and street lighting on Henham Road would be visible.</p>

4 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Relevant Guidance

- 4.1 The methodologies tailored for the assessment of this development are based on *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (GLVIA3)* and are presented in detail at Appendix A and summarised below. GLVIA3 set out broad guidelines rather than detailed prescriptive methodologies. The level of landscape and visual effects are assessed through consideration of the sensitivity or susceptibility of the receptor and the magnitude of change. The significance of effect table (Appendix A, Table 4) outlines the broad approach adopted to assess the level of effect which is considered together with professional judgement.
- 4.2 This assessment focuses on the operational phase of the Proposed Development, taking account of the description of the development set out below in Section 5 and is supported by an overview of the construction effects. An assumption has been made that the assessment is undertaken on the basis of full completion of the Proposed Development.
- 4.3 Landscape and visual studies provide an analysis of the physical and perceptual attributes of an area. The assessment of landscape issues relates to the potential effect of development on the landscape resource, which encompasses landscape character, quality and distinctive features, including topography, drainage, vegetation and built features, whereas the study of visual constraints is concerned with the potential effect on views and visual amenity.
- 4.4 The analysis of visual constraints includes the identification of important views towards the Application Site, which are generally from a range of visual receptors, both public (highways and public rights of way) and private (residential properties and places of employment). Visual receptors are at varying sensitivity to change, with views from the ground floor of private residences generally accepted as being more sensitive to change than those from highways or places of work where attention is focused elsewhere. Public rights of way through rural areas with attractive landscapes, which are used for recreational purpose, are also usually accepted as being of a high sensitivity to change.

Landscape Assessment Methodology

- 4.5 The landscape assessment combines the results of both objective and subjective appraisal of the landscape. The assessment consisted of three stages including desk study, a field survey and an analysis of the likely effects resulting from the Development Proposals in the light of these studies.

Desk Study

- 4.6 The desk study involved examining the 1:25,000 scale Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photographs to establish the general context of the study area. This was followed by an analysis of relevant documentation (reports, development plans, assessments, government guidance etc.) to clarify the landscape planning context.

Fieldwork

- 4.7 Fieldwork involved a visual survey of the Application Site and its surroundings to assess its character and identify key landscape elements and visual receptors.

Analysis

- 4.8 Based on the findings of the desk study and field survey, distinctive elements in the landscape, the pattern of their arrangement and dominant features were identified and the existing character and quality of the affected landscape is described.
- 4.9 An assessment was then made of the degree of change to various landscape components or elements and the overall landscape character that would result from the Proposed Development and the nature of any potential effects was assessed.
- 4.10 Effects on the landscape can be defined as the relationship between the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of any change which the proposals would create. Effects may be adverse, beneficial or neutral in nature. The landscape effects of the Proposed Development are discussed in Section 6 below.
- 4.11 Additional mitigation measures in the form of planting have been recommended to offset or reduce landscape effects. The effects on landscape character were assessed as the Proposed Development was completed at year 1. Ten years after completion of the development when the existing and retained strategic planting has matured the residual effects are expected to reduce and further integrate the scheme with the local area.

Visual Assessment Methodology

- 4.12 An assessment has been undertaken to determine the degree of visual effect of the Proposed Development upon receptors (people) in the surrounding area.
- 4.13 A computer generated ZTV has been prepared for the Proposed Development to show the theoretical extent of the surrounding area from which views to it at eye level (assumed to be 1.6 m above ground level), may be possible taking account of screening landform, significant woodland blocks and buildings, within the study area. The screening effect of other features such as tree belts, hedgerows and individual trees were not taken account. The ZTV is shown on Figure 2.
- 4.14 A 5 km buffer from the site boundary has been selected for the extent of the study area used in this assessment. The findings of the ZTV indicate that visibility of the Proposed Development is limited to within 2 km of the Application Site. From our previous experience with similar scale developments in rural areas any significant landscape and visual effects are likely be within 2 km of the Application Site. The ZTV confirms this extent is sufficient for this assessment.
- 4.15 Visual receptors are people and include the public or community at large, residents and visitors to the area. Viewpoints looking towards the Proposed Development have been selected to represent these visual receptors. These include views from the public highway and the public right of way network at different distances and directions to the Application Site. The representative viewpoints have been used to assess the potential visual effects of the Proposed Development and are described in Section 3 above.

Fieldwork

- 4.16 The provisional identification of viewpoints was refined by subsequent fieldwork, at which stage visual receptors identified from the desk study that might experience an effect were confirmed or ruled out. These included locations from highways and public rights of way. Existing views from a representative number of these locations were recorded photographically. Refer to Figure 2 for viewpoint locations.
- 4.17 Baseline photographs were taken at eye level from the representative viewpoints, using a digital SLR camera with fixed focal lens equivalent to a 50 mm focal length lens in 35 mm film format. These photographs are reproduced in the assessment and a description of the views has been included in Table 3.1 above. Refer to Figures 4 to 10.

Analysis

- 4.18 The existing views were then compared with those that would result if the scheme were to be constructed. The comparative changes in the views have been assessed for winter for the first year following completion of the development. Changes in views are recorded as adverse, beneficial or neutral effects, representing the effects in visual amenity terms. The effects are set out in Section 6 below.

Limitations of the Landscape and Visual Assessments

- 4.19 The visual assessment has been based on analysis of OS mapping of the Application Site and surrounding area and on field surveys of views towards the Application Site from publicly accessible locations in the surrounding landscape / townscape. Although every effort has been made to include viewpoints in sensitive locations and locations from which the development would be most visible, not all public viewpoints from which the development would be seen have necessarily been included in the assessment. Where impacts to residential and other private views (e.g. commercial occupiers) are noted these have necessarily been estimated.
- 4.20 The visual assessment and associated field work were carried out during spring and summer 2022 when deciduous vegetation was with some or full leaf and thus providing screening effect and therefore not presenting the worst-case scenario. Judgements have necessarily been made regarding the winter situation when vegetation is without leaf providing the least screening effect.

5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Design Proposals

- 5.1 The application is for 130 dwellings (60% affordable) with associated garages, car parking, private garden space and landscaping, and proposes a mix of housing, bungalows and apartments, thus creating a varied and sustainable development. A number of varying types of public open space, incorporating children's play and SUDS features are also proposed to support the development. More details on the outline proposals are included within the Design and Access Statement prepared by DAP Architects and submitted in support of this application.
- 5.2 The following design principles and objectives were identified during the course of the design process and have helped to shape the proposal:
- To be sympathetic and responsive to the nearby heritage assets such as St Marys Church, the barns at Elsenham Place and the important grouping around Elsenham Cross.
 - Appreciate the site's landscape setting, reinforced by new green infrastructure.
 - Incorporate buffers of open space with frontage set back to reflect existing built form and respect natural features.
 - Integrate the on-site public right of way and create new routes that connect with the wider footpath network.
 - Specify vernacular building materials and naturalistic hard and soft landscaping suited to a rural location.
 - Consider the sites topography.
 - Provide vehicular access from Henham Road.
 - Consider on-site utilities and easements.
 - Implement a SUDS strategy to manage surface water run-off.
 - Offer ecological enhancements to achieve biodiversity net gain.
 - Deliver the right mix of housing in a sustainable location.

Scheme Description

- 5.3 The proposed indicative site layout plan has been developed to provide appropriate landscape elements in keeping with the settlement edge location and neighbouring rural landscape which minimises any adverse effects on landscape or townscape character and the visual amenity of the local community (see Plate 5).



Plate 5 Illustrative layout plan

- 5.4 The layout has been formulated to respond to site-specific opportunities and constraints and adhere to best practice urban design principles. A strategy has been adopted to place development blocks and building frontage behind a series of green buffers to achieve the following:
- Address Henham Road and Hall Road
 - Respect the setting of St Marys Church, Elsenham Cross and the barns at Elsenham Place and create key vistas towards these historical landmarks
 - Create a welcoming entrance green and an 'Arrival Point' feature
 - Define and overlook the existing public footpath
 - Consider the existing water pipe easement along Hall Road
 - Allow space for existing vegetation and watercourses
 - Provide public open space and SUDS (flood retention basins)
 - Offer surveillance over a circular pedestrian route.
- 5.5 The Site is divided into three broad areas, separated by the existing public right of way and existing ditch which cross from east to west. This natural division helps to break up development and adds to the character of the proposal.
- 5.6 The area to the north of the right of way is particularly constrained and has been designed to address the surrounding roads and the public footpath, whilst maximising the continuity of this

pedestrian route. For this reason, vehicular access is limited to one road crossing the footpath and accommodating a mix of on-plot or rear courtyard parking away from the right of way.

- 5.7 The central area of the proposal is split into four blocks with low density development around the outer edges and more compact forms in the middle. Northern frontages here address the public footpath and the southern edges overlook the retained ditch. To the east, frontages provide the setting to a swathe of green open spaces and the western edge faces Hall Road.
- 5.8 To the south, two further blocks provide frontage overlooking Stansted Brook, Hall Road and the retained ditch.
- 5.9 As well as the retained PRow, a circular pedestrian route is proposed from Henham Road, heading down the hill and around the development. An 'arrival point' on the eastern side of the development and a green buffer has been designed to minimise impacts to Elsenham Place and maximise the view across the valley to St Mary's Church. To assist and emphasise this view, the development frontage has been set back and helps to lead the eye down the hill and towards the church. Development at the southern end sits within the viewing corridor, but due to the site levels and high ground on which the church stands, views are not interrupted.
- 5.10 The landscape design focuses on reflecting the existing pattern of the settlement and field system whilst minimising effects on the townscape and listed buildings at Elsenham and the local landscape. These proposals include the following features:
- Tree, shrub and hedgerow planting, and wildflower grass seeding to enhance the site, provide integration with the landscape and compliment the adjacent residential developments, community facilities and rural landscape.
 - Retention of the hedgerows and trees on the southern edge of the Application Site to retain the character and grain of the Site and townscape, and to screen views.
 - Predominantly native planting to supplement existing vegetation within public access areas and around perimeters to provide a scheme of landscape and ecological value.
 - Creation of two drainage ponds and introduction of marginal planting, trees and shrubs to form an attractive frontage to the proposed heritage trail.
 - An ecologically diverse collection of habitats incorporating trees, scrub, meadow grassland and ponds within the Application Site to form an important ecological resource and public open space.
 - Mature hedgerows and trees would to be managed to retain their important characteristics, to ensure they contribute to the quality of the Proposed Development, the character of the urban edge and the valuable screening function they provide.
 - Buildings would reflect traditional styles, materials, colours and textures.
- 5.11 Detailed landscape proposals would need to be agreed in consultation with Uttlesford District Council as part of the Reserved Matters submission(s) should Outline Planning Permission be granted.

6 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE, TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

Assessment of Operational Effects

Landscape Effects

- 6.1 This section describes the effects of the operational phase of the Proposed Development based on the layout and landscape strategy shown on Plate 5. The proposed use of native trees and shrubs would help provide a link with the existing perimeter woodland areas and hedgerows to maintain a buffer between adjacent land uses and would screen the lower levels of buildings within views from adjacent areas. External spaces within the Application Site would be of good quality landscape design in terms of types of native and ornamental planting, meadow grassland, marginal species around the drainage pond and the use of hard materials. The likely landscape effects that would result as a consequence of the Proposed Development are summarised below.

National Character Areas

- 6.2 Direct effects on national landscape character relate to South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland character area. The proposed residential development at the edge of the developed area of Elsenham would extend the level of residential development at the edge of a developed area of ordinary condition. Areas of pasture farmland that are characteristic features of South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland would be lost and changed to roads and houses set within a landscape including retained boundary tree belts and hedgerow, and internal trees and shrubs. As a proportion of the overall national character area the change in landscape character of the Application Site would be relatively small. The low sensitivity and small magnitude of change to the national character area would result in a **Negligible** adverse effect where the proposed changes would reflect the existing character of the wider character area. This is not significant.

Essex and Uttlesford Character Areas

- 6.3 At a district scale the published landscape character assessments for Essex and Uttlesford define the area in which the Application Site is located as the Stort River Valley LCA. This character area covers the western part of the study area and extends as a finger east of Stansted Mountfitchet, and in terms of land use, specifically relates to the eastern part of land parcel, which is arable and pasture farmland around Elsenham. Development of part of a grassland field as a residential scheme with amenity open space and drainage ponds on the edge of a village within the landscape character area would change the character of a very small piece of urban fringe land and farmland, as a proportion of the wider character area.
- 6.4 The Application Site is sloping down to Stansted Brook and has mature tree belts on some of the eastern boundary and all of the southern boundary, minimising the potential for impact on the adjoining landscape to the south-east. There would be a change in the land use within the Application Site however, the established pattern and grain of land at the interface of the townscape and landscape would be retained and reinforced. There would be a loss of openness within the western part of the land parcel, whilst the far eastern part of the land parcel would remain open and retain a similar character within the edge of village.
- 6.5 Sections of new hedgerows, trees and an orchard would be planted and improvements to existing gappy hedgerows made around the Application Site boundary to provide a screen for the new houses. These would add a positive element of character to the landscape and align with recommendations in the Landscape Character of Uttlesford District for the reinstatement and improvement of field boundaries. Generally, the land within the Application Site is not readily

intervisible with the adjoining landscape or settlements limiting the potential for people to perceive the full extent and scale, albeit small, of the residential development.

- 6.6 The proposed residential development south of Henham Road would not result in significant effects to the value of the landscape of the Stort River Valley LCA as there would be no loss of important landscape features, elements and characteristics. There would be limited influence over the adjacent farmland of the LCA, and no intervisibility with local settlements. The residential scheme would introduce further development of a similar character and scale on the residential edge of Elsenham within a context of a wooded urban edge.
- 6.7 The small scale of the scheme, within a landscape structure provided by hedgerows and tree belts, supplemented by new hedgerow, tree planting, orchard and introduced planted ponds, would limit the effects on a relatively small part of the wider Stort River Valley LCA of medium sensitivity to the proposed change resulting in **Minor** adverse effect, which is not significant.

Site and Immediate Surrounds

- 6.8 Due to the development of a new small-scale housing scheme on the edge of an agricultural landscape and the change in character of the Application Site from farmland/grassland to residential and open space with ponds the magnitude of change would be medium on the Application Site of medium sensitivity. The direct effect on the site area would be **Moderate** adverse during the day, which would not be significant.
- 6.9 The proposed scheme would form a minor extension of part of the eastern edge of Elsenham. This would form a relatively low-key addition in the context of the adjacent urban land uses and Loose Historic Core Townscape Character Area. The similarity in the scale, mass and nature of development of the new scheme and the existing residential developments and the minimal disruption of the pattern and grain of the village would minimise any adverse influence over existing townscape character or the urban edge in a rural context. Development at any location on the existing edge of settlement is likely to result in the loss of open land and result in localised adverse effects on the character of the landscape/townscape interface. Inclusion of open space with water infrastructure as part of the scheme offer improved levels of ecological diversity and would provide enhancement to the townscape character and benefits to the local community.
- 6.10 The land within the Application Site currently contains no lighting however, the adjacent residential developments within Elsenham include lighting columns and lighting within properties which exert some influence over the site area at night. Development of the site would introduce new street lighting and light sources within houses resulting in a **Minor** adverse effect, which is not significant.

Visual Effects

- 6.11 Visual impacts would result from change to the appearance of the Application Site in its landscape and townscape context, resulting from the Proposed Development. A ZTV was generated, using the height of buildings (11 m) to establish the extent to which the Proposed Development would theoretically be possible. Refer to Figure 2.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 6.12 Due to the general nature, extent and small scale of the Proposed Development, combined with the presence of extensive mature boundary vegetation and vegetation within the neighbouring areas of the Elsenham townscape, there would be limited change in the extent of the ZTV for the proposed scheme within the rural landscape and urban fringe, when compared to the visibility of the existing developed area. There would be no perceptible extended visibility of the scheme from the landscape to the north, east and west of the settlement and very limited perception of the development from within the village. The extended urban edge would be perceived from the south. All visual impacts are direct.

Visual Receptors

- 6.13 Visual receptors at locations which are not represented by one of the seven individual representative public viewpoint locations are described below.

Residential Properties: Private Views

- 6.14 Occupiers of the six detached two storey properties located adjacent to the north of the Application Site on Henham Road would gain near views of the proposed development. The tops of new houses would be visible over garden walls or fences and filtered through existing garden vegetation and trees from ground floor rooms and front gardens. The existing view would be replaced by housing, open space and new boundary hedgerow with trees. The architecture and layout of the development would be appropriate in design and character within this location. The new development would form a prominent element in some of the views. Views of the new houses from upper floor windows would be more open, although would still be filtered through existing vegetation and proposed boundary vegetation. There would be a change in view from the main living spaces and front gardens of these properties. There is a change in view and people at these particular properties would experience more change than other residential properties. However, given the type of development (residential) the properties would not experience more than substantial effect to a private view which is not a planning (public interest) matter as explained in paragraph 3.11 above.
- 6.15 Occupiers of some detached two storey properties at Hall Road (including the Old Vicarage) located adjacent to the Application Site would gain near views of the proposed development. There would be a change in view from these properties, but it is considered to be of less effect than views from other adjacent houses due to the influence of intervening boundary vegetation.
- 6.16 Views from the listed properties at Elsenham Cross are generally from ground floor windows and views would be oblique or screened by intervening built form. There would be a change in view but is considered to be of less visual effect to people at these properties.
- 6.17 At night, lighting columns and light sources within new houses would be slightly more visible than the existing lit settlement edge, presenting a slight change.

Representative Viewpoints

- 6.18 An assessment of the likely effect on views gained by groups of different receptors at the seven representative viewpoint locations are described below. These viewpoints are all at publicly accessible locations where the scheme would potentially be visible, and their locations illustrated on Figure 2. The representative viewpoint photography is at Figures 4 to 10.

Viewpoint 1: Footpath Elsenham 13

- 6.19 Representative viewpoint 1 (Figure 4) lies approximately 265 m south-west of the Application Site. Following development of the Application Site a glimpse of top section of houses would be visible in summer above intervening vegetation, and heavily filtered in winter beyond the open area of rough grassland. Walkers are receptors of high sensitivity and would experience a negligible magnitude of change. The level of effect in the daytime would initially be **Minor** adverse, which is not significant. By year 10 any planting within the Application Site would reinforce the existing vegetation cover and further integrate development at the edge of Elsenham. The level of effect would reduce to **Negligible** adverse
- 6.20 At night views of new street lights and lights within houses within a currently lit background space would result in **Negligible** adverse level of effect for people using the footpath during hours of darkness.

Future Baseline

- 6.21 The future baseline scenario for this representative viewpoint would change when the consented residential development is built out across the field within which the viewpoint is located. The context of the view would change to that within residential development. The future housing would prevent views of proposed residential development at the Application Site reducing the level of effect to **Negligible** adverse.

Viewpoint 2: Footpath Elsenham 13

- 6.22 Representative viewpoint 2 (Figure 5) is from a location within the Application Site boundary immediately adjacent to Hall Road. Following development this open view would change to a channelled view over open space with trees and along the retained route of the footpath defined by a row of fronting houses leading to the entrance green. The foreground of the view from the public footpath would remain open with views north to properties at Elsenham Cross available. Residential development would extend across the view, set back from Hall Road by an area of linear open space with trees that accommodates the heritage trail. Further east along the public footpath from this viewpoint location the view to Elsenham Place Barns is retained opening out beyond a row of houses. Walkers are receptors of High sensitivity and would experience a Medium magnitude of change. The level of effect during daytime would initially be **Moderate** adverse, which is not significant. By year 10, when the planting within the open space and around houses matures to partially screen and soften views of the houses and form an attractive open space along the Hall Road frontage, the level of effect would reduce to **Minor** adverse, which is not significant.
- 6.23 At night views of lights within new houses and street lighting would be seen in the context of lighting at Henham Road. The magnitude of impact would be medium and the level of effect **Moderate** adverse, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 3: Footpath Elsenham 13

- 6.24 Representative viewpoint 3 (Figure 6) is from a location within the Application Site boundary immediately adjacent to Henham Road. The open view into the northern part of the Application Site would change following completion of the development and be over an entrance green space with trees and road to a row of houses. Views east to Elsenham Place Barns would be retained from this location beyond an area of green space which retains some openness and provides separation from the residential development. Walkers are receptors of High sensitivity and would experience a Medium magnitude of change. The level of effect during daytime would initially be **Moderate** adverse, which is not significant. By year 10 when tree planting within the site and open space matures, new development would be less visible and the level of effect would reduce to **Minor** adverse.
- 6.25 At night light sources within new house and street lighting would be visible and extend the lit context of the settlement edge across the Application Site. The magnitude of impact would be medium and level of effect on people would be **Moderate** adverse, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 4: Footpath Elsenham 21

- 6.26 Representative viewpoint 4 (Figure 7) lies approximately 176 m north of the Application Site. Walkers using the public footpath north of the Application Site would experience very little change in view. The woodland at the edge of settlement and vegetation along Henham Road would screen views of the residential development in Summer. Heavily filtered views of houses would be possible in winter in context with built form of Elsenham place and houses on Henham Road, however the character and composition of the view would be retained. Walkers using the footpath are receptors of high sensitivity and would experience a negligible magnitude of change. The level

of effect in the daytime would initially be **Negligible** adverse, which is not significant. By year 10 any planting within the Application Site would reinforce the existing mid-distance vegetation and further integrate development at the edge of Elsenham. The level of effect would remain **Negligible** adverse.

- 6.27 A night views of new street lights and lights from houses within the context of some point light sources from existing street lighting and houses would result in **Negligible** adverse level of effect for people using the footpath during hours of darkness.

Viewpoint 5: Footpath Elsenham 35

- 6.28 Representative viewpoint 5 (Figure 8) lies approximately 440 m north-east of the Application Site. Following completion of the development the intervening vegetation from this viewpoint would continue to screen views of the residential development during summer and the character of the view would be retained. In winter some potential for heavily filtered views of houses may be possible from the public footpath. Walkers are receptors of high sensitivity and would experience a negligible magnitude of change. The level of effect during the daytime would initially be **Negligible** adverse and remain so by year 10, which is not significant.

- 6.29 At night-time in winter new street lighting and lights within houses would potentially introduce point light sources closer to the viewpoint that would result in **Minor** adverse level of effect, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 6: Footpath Elsenham 12

- 6.30 Representative viewpoint 6 (Figure 9) lies approximately 657 m south of the Application Site. The strong hedgerow vegetation would prevent views of the proposed development. From this viewpoint it would not be possible to distinguish residential development in summer or winter due to the screening effect of the vegetation and the context and character of the view would remain. There would be no change to the existing view for walkers of high sensitivity using the public footpath. The long term-effect on this view would be **No Change** at year 1 and year 10.

- 6.31 At night-time walkers would experience **No change**.

Viewpoint 7: Bridleway Elsenham 5 and Hall Road

- 6.32 Representative viewpoint 7 (Figure 10) lies approximately 64 m south of the Application Site. Following completion of the residential development the channelled view of new houses would be closer to the viewpoint than the existing visible settlement edge, however the character and composition of the view would be retained. People using the bridleway and vehicle travellers using Hall Road are receptors of high and low sensitivity respectively and would experience a small magnitude of change leading to a **Moderate** adverse effect for walkers and **Negligible** adverse effect for road uses at daytime year 1, during summer and winter. By year 10 any planting along the south and west boundary of the development would reinforce the existing vegetation cover and further integrate the development at the edge of Elsenham. The level of effect would reduce to **Minor** adverse for walkers and remain **Negligible** adverse for road users, which is not significant.

- 6.33 At night views of new street lighting and lights within houses with a view currently lit in the distance would result in **Negligible** adverse level of effect for people using the bridleway or road during hours of darkness.

Assessment of Construction Effects

- 6.34 Construction activities associated with the proposed residential development would include the following;

- Erection of protective fencing for hedgerows and trees to be retained.
- Stripping and stockpiling of soil materials.
- Remodelling landform to create ponds.
- Construction of houses.
- Construction of roads, footpaths and fences.
- Site offices and car park.
- Implementation of soft landscape proposals.

Landscape and Townscape Effects

6.35 The construction site and activities for this small-scale residential development would result in localised direct effects on the fabric of the Stort River Valley landscape character area. The activities within the settlement edge landscape and townscape would temporarily form a discordant addition to a small part of the rural character area, although the scale of the activities would not be completely uncharacteristic of built development within Elsenham. The open northern and eastern field boundaries would result in the temporary activities being visible in the neighbouring landscape and townscape context. However, the urban form of the village, the existing green infrastructure and vegetation around field boundaries would provide a reasonably well contained location and relationship with the urban townscape. The levels of effect previously defined for the operational stage of the development would be the same for the construction phase. Whilst the nature of the construction site and activities is more discordant in the landscape/townscape than the completed scheme, this would be balanced by the short-term nature of effects.

Visual Effects

- 6.36 Occupiers of properties at Henham Road and Hall Road which are immediately adjacent to the Application Site would temporarily gain views of construction site activities or obstructed views due to hoardings as discordant additions to the rural urban fringe view, leading to significant effects in the short term.
- 6.37 Walkers using public right of way Footpath Elsenham 13 which passes through the Application Site and continues west would temporarily gain near, open views of the construction site and activities or obstructed views due to hoardings as discordant additions to the rural urban fringe view, leading to significant effects in the short term.
- 6.38 There would be no significant effects on visual receptors in any other locations within the surrounding study area including walkers using public rights of way which are located near to the site, or occupiers of residential properties. The levels of effect previously defined for the operational stage of the development would be the same for the construction phase.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed residential scheme at Elsenham would comprise a mix of 130 two storey detached and semi-detached properties, located within a parcel of land which currently comprises pasture farmland and remnant hedge and ditch on the eastern residential edge of the settlement. New houses would be positioned in front of existing properties on Henham Road and Hall Road and include entrance green and public open space, incorporating tree and shrub planting, ponds and species rich grassland. The majority of existing hedgerows and mature trees around the site perimeter and the single mature tree within the site would be retained and supplemented by new planting to provide a comprehensive landscape framework for development and to reinforce the character of the settlement edge. The corridor of the public footpath which connects the settlement to the rural landscape and the northern settlement edge remains and the route incorporates vistas towards Elsenham Cross and the barns at Elsenham Place. Walkers using public right of way Footpath Elsenham 13 would be able to continue to walk from the Henham Road to Hall Road through the new development and into the farmland to the west and south. The new houses would extend residential development at the village and the perception of walkers during a journey from the townscape to the landscape. The proposed heritage trail incorporated within the residential scheme creates a circular route that increases public amenity within the site, provides additional connections to the wider PRow network whilst retaining views to St Mary's church and the wider landscape.

Summary of Landscape Effects

- 7.2 At a district scale the Application Site lies within the Stort River Valley landscape character area defined by valley slopes dominated by farmland with hedgerows, tree belts and riverbank trees. It is considered that permanent changes that would occur in the Stort River Valley landscape character area as a result of the proposed residential development would be accommodated within the character area which has capacity to absorb the scale of this residential development. The parcel of land, which would be developed for housing, has a typical character and exhibits few special qualities of its own, resulting in a landscape of no more than local value within the context of the adjacent settlement. The ordinary condition of the existing landscape at the Application Site provides the opportunity of introducing new housing without significant effects. The loss of openness through development would not significantly change the pattern and grain of the settlement edge landscape. The loose historic core at Elsenham Cross would continue to have an influence over the townscape/landscape interface, providing an established context for the development of a small residential scheme. The proposed residential development with an appropriate site layout and landscape strategy, would seek to ensure that the site would function well and add to the overall character and quality of the area with **Moderate to Negligible** adverse effects on landscape character.
- 7.3 During the temporary construction phase the magnitude of impact on landscape character would be similar to the completed development but some activities would be more discordant including the movement of construction vehicles.
- 7.4 At night the effect of site lighting and within houses on the surrounding area is **Moderate to Negligible** adverse.
- 7.5 The landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals have been included as an integral part of the scheme. The landscape strategy includes retention of existing trees and hedgerows, native tree and shrub planting, individual trees, shrubs, wildflower and amenity grassland. As the landscape proposals mature, they would become an important aspect of the development, capable of softening and enhancing the quality of the landscape and townscape.
- 7.6 Overall, the quality and character of the landscape and townscape would be maintained in the long term.

Summary of Visual Effects

- 7.7 The ZTV for the proposed scheme is localised and well defined by surrounding vegetation and built development at Elsenham to the east and west. The assessment concludes that the greatest change in views would be experienced by walkers using the right of way which passes between the new houses within the site and the private views of neighbouring residents in properties at Henham Road and Hall Road. Due to the high sensitivity of receptors, the close proximity of viewing locations and the prominence of the new houses there would inevitably be a change in the character and composition of these views. The level of effect would initially be **Moderate** adverse as defined within the methodology, which is not significant. Visual effects at other viewpoints on the edge of Elsenham and the local agricultural landscape would not be significant and would range from **Minor** to **Negligible** adverse, depending on the presence of residential development within the village and hedgerows and trees within the adjoining landscape, within the intervening view.
- 7.8 Mitigation measures would be incorporated into the scheme to provide new hedgerow and tree boundaries which would, in time, reinforce the hedgerow network and field pattern on the edge of the agricultural landscape, reducing effects by year 10 in the long term. Tree and shrub planting, pond and meadow creation and an improved management regime or grass and wildflower seeding within the area of open space would also enhance the biodiversity of the site.
- 7.9 Overall, the proposed scheme would not result in significant effects to visual amenity within the study area.



FIGURES



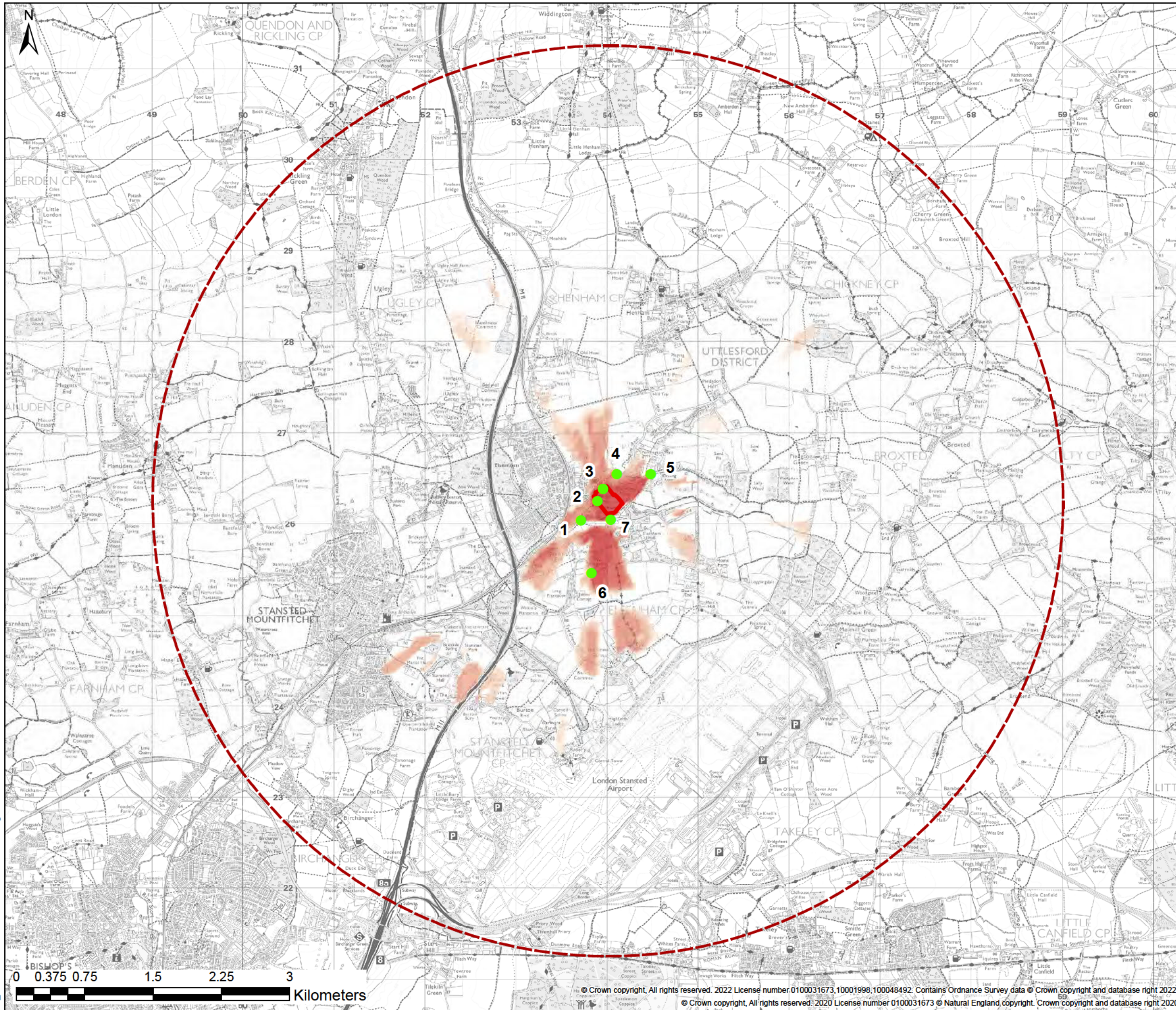
 Site Boundary



0 100 200m
Scale at A4: 1:10,000



Figure 1
Site Location



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Legend

- Representative Viewpoints
- Site Boundary
- Study Area (5km radius)

Multipoint ZTV
 Areas where views of the proposed development maybe visible

- Least Visible
-
-
-
- Most visible

Note:
 ZTV compiled assuming observer height as 1.75m at eye level, and takes into account screening effects of local settlements at 9m and existing vegetation / woodland at a height of 12m. The modelling does not include hedgerows and trees which effect the visibility of the proposed development from the surroundings.

The ZTV includes the future baseline of the Southern Parcel Development.

7 origin points set at 11.0m AGL spread through the Proposed Development have been used to represent proposed housing locations.

OS Terrain 5 data has been used for generating the ground model.

Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

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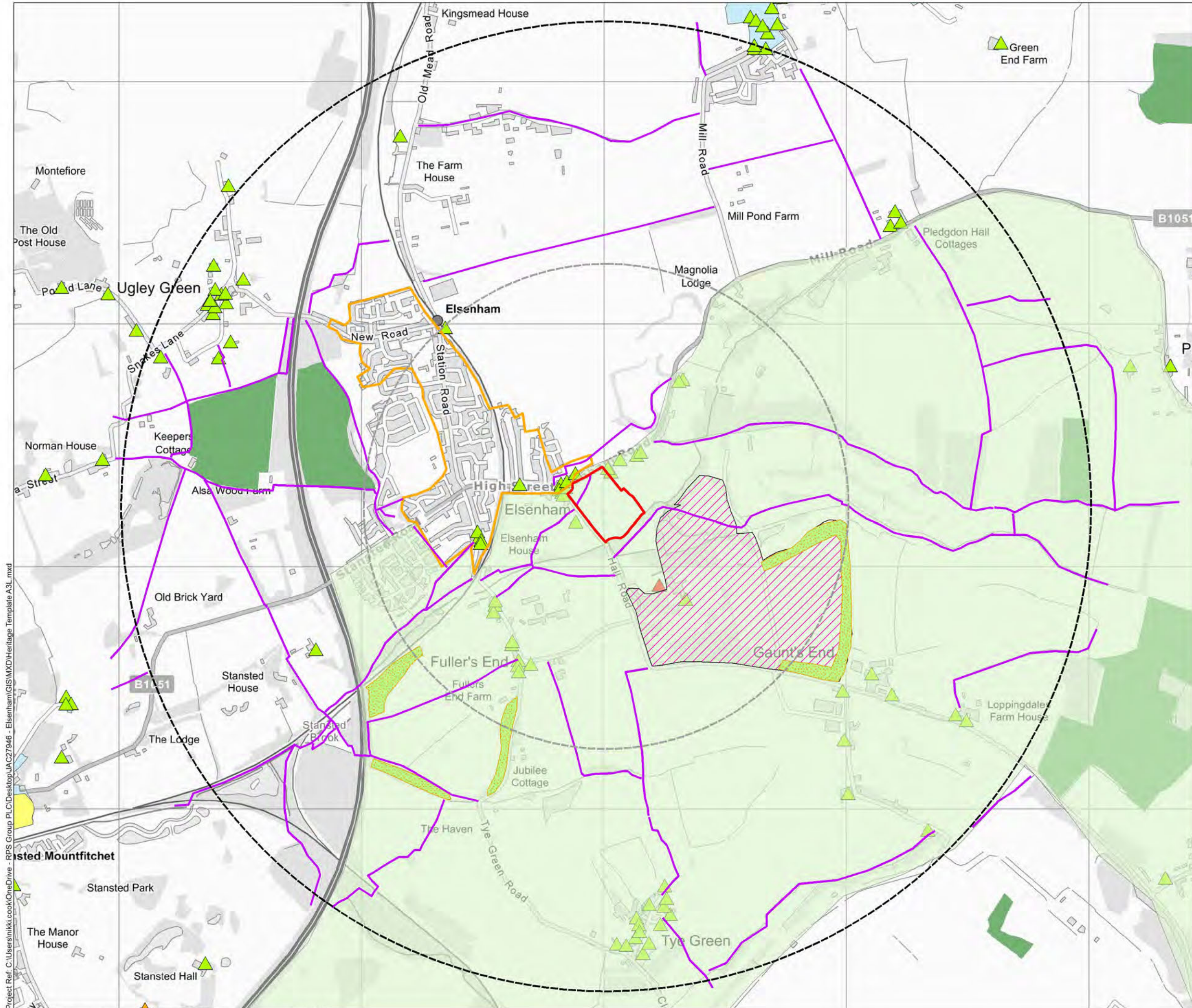
Project **Elsenham**

Title **Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and Representative Viewpoints**

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked By
DRAFT	JMB/JP	GL
Project Number	Scale @ A3	Date Created
JSL4473	1:40,000	JUL 2022
Figure Number		Rev
2		-

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Legend

- Site Boundary
- 2km buffer
- 1km buffer
- Public Rights of Way
- Policy S3 Other development limits
- Policy ENV8 Important Woodland
- Policy ENV9 Historic Parkland
- Countryside Protection Zone
- Ancient Woodland
- ▲ Grade I Listed Building
- ▲ Grade II* Listed Building
- ▲ Grade II Listed Building
- Scheduled Monument
- Conservation Area

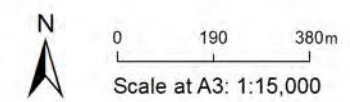


Figure 3
Policy Context within 2km radius of the Site

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Viewpoint 1i: Footpath Elsenham 13



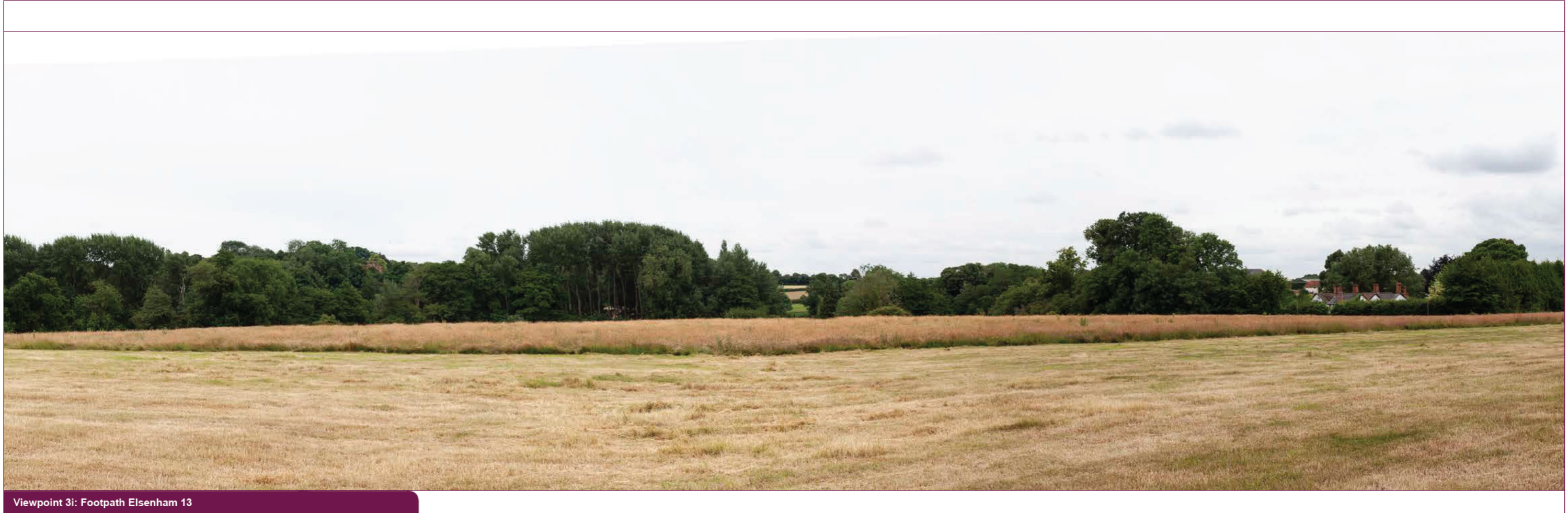
Viewpoint 1ii: Footpath Elsenham 13



Viewpoint 2i: Footpath Elsenham 13



Viewpoint 2ii: Footpath Elsenham 13



Viewpoint 3i: Footpath Elsenham 13



Viewpoint 3ii: Footpath Elsenham 13



Viewpoint 4i: Footpath Elsenham 21



Viewpoint 4ii: Footpath Elsenham 13



Viewpoint 5i: Footpath Elsenham 35



Viewpoint 5ii: Footpath Elsenham 13



Viewpoint 6i: Footpath Elsenham 12



Viewpoint 6ii: Footpath Elsenham 12



Viewpoint 7i: Bridleway Elsenham 5 and Hall Road



Viewpoint 7ii: Bridleway Elsenham 5 and Hall Road



APPENDICES

Landscape, Townscape & Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

1. Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

Assessment Methodology

1.1 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment considers the potential effects of the development upon:

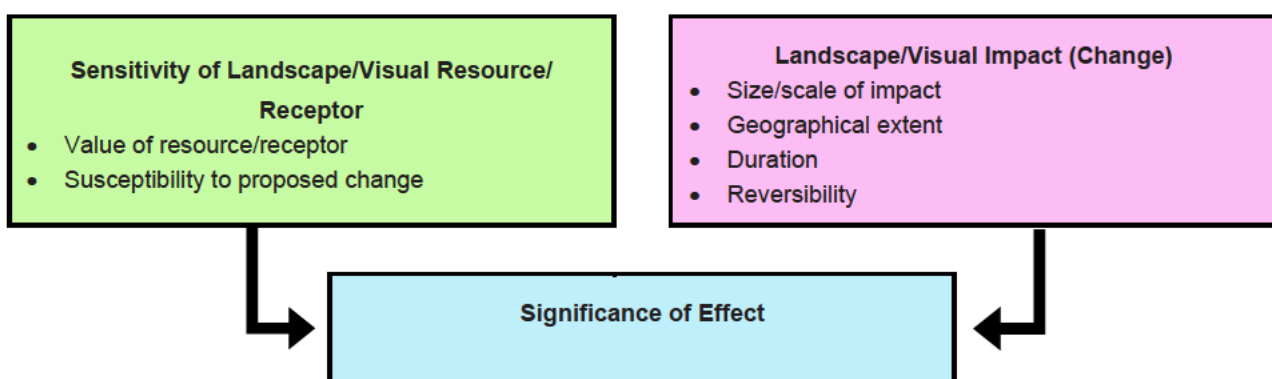
- Landscape character in general;
- Individual elements and features in the landscape;
- Visual resources in general; and
- Visual amenity of individuals who view the proposed development.

Distinction between landscape and visual effects

1.2 As set out in the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition', 2013 (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment) (GLVIA3) landscape and visual effects have been assessed separately, although the procedure for assessing each of these is closely linked. A clear distinction has been drawn between landscape and visual effects as described below:

- Landscape effects relate to the effects of the project on the physical and other characteristics of the landscape and its resulting character and quality.
- Visual effects relate to the effects on views experienced by visual receptors (e.g. residents, footpath users, tourists etc.) and on the visual amenity experienced by those people.

1.3 The likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development are assessed by considering the change that would result from it against the landscape resource or visual receptor as outlined in the diagram below.



1.4 These factors are determined by a combination of quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) assessment using professional judgement. Magnitude of change (impact) and resource and receptor sensitivity is described in the paragraphs below. Landscape and Visual effects can be beneficial (positive) or neutral as well as adverse (negative).

Assessment criteria and significance of effects

- 1.5 The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate the magnitude of change (impact) to landscape and visual resources and receptors to enable the likely key effects of the project to be identified.
- 1.6 Published guidance states that the level of effects is ascertained by professional judgement based on consideration of the sensitivity of the baseline landscape or visual receptor and the magnitude of change as a result of the project.

Sensitivity of landscape receptors

- 1.7 The sensitivity of a landscape receptor is a combination of “judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape” (GLVIA3, para 5.39). For the purpose of this assessment, susceptibility and value of landscape receptors are defined as follows:
- Landscape susceptibility: *“the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed change without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies”* (GLVIA3, para 5.40).
 - Value of the landscape receptor: *“The value of the Landscape Character Types or Areas that may be affected, based on review of designations at both national and local levels, and, where there are no designations, judgements based on criteria that can be used to establish landscape value; and, the value of individual contributors to landscape character, especially the key characteristics, which may include individual elements of the landscape, particularly landscape features, notable aesthetic, perceptual or experiential qualities, and combinations of these contributors”* (GLVIA3, para 5.44).

Sensitivity of visual receptors

- 1.8 Visual receptors are always people. The sensitivity of each visual receptor (the particular person or group of people likely to be affected at a specific viewpoint) *“should be assessed in terms of both their susceptibility to change and in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views”* (GLVIA, para 6.31). For the purpose of this assessment, susceptibility and value of visual receptors are defined as follows:
- Visual susceptibility: *“The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of: The occupation or activity of people experiencing views at the particular locations; and, the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations”* (GLVIA3, para 6.32).
 - Value of views: Judgements made about the value of views should take account of: *“recognition of the value attached to particular views, for example in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations; and, indicators of value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment (such as parking places, sign boards or interpretive material) and references to them in literature or art...”* (GLVIA3, para 6.37).

1.9 Sensitivity is not readily graded in bands and GLVIA3 notes, with regards to visual sensitivity, that the division of who may or may not be sensitive to a particular change “is not black and white and in reality, there will be a gradation in susceptibility to change” (GLVIA3, para 6.35). In order to provide both consistency and transparency to the assessment process, however, Table 2 defines the criteria which have guided the judgement as to the intrinsic susceptibility and value of the resource/receptor and subsequent sensitivity to the proposed development.

Table 2: Sensitivity of receptor

	Landscape resource/receptor	Visual receptor
Low	Landscape value is low, with no designations; landscape is in a poor condition and a degraded character with the presence of detractors; and the landscape has the capacity to potentially accommodate significant change.	May include people at their place of work, or engaged in outdoor activities, whose attention may be focussed on their work or activity and who may therefore be less sensitive to visual change. Occupiers of vehicles whose attention is not focused on landscape.
Medium	Landscape value is recognised or designated locally; the landscape is relatively intact, with a distinctive character and few detractors; and is reasonably tolerant of change.	Viewers’ attention may be focused on landscape; such as users of secondary footpaths, pedestrians on rural lanes, and people engaged in outdoor sport or recreation (e.g. horse riders using gallops) are moderately sensitive to visual change.
High	Landscape value recognised by existing or proposed national designation. The qualities for which the landscape is valued are in a good condition, with a clearly apparent distinctive character and absence of detractors. This distinctive character is susceptible to relatively small changes.	Observers on the public rights of way network in the countryside are more sensitive to visual change. Viewers’ attention very likely to be focused on landscape. e.g. residents experiencing views from dwellings; users of strategic recreational footpaths and cycle ways; people experiencing views from important landscape features of physical, cultural or historic interest, beauty spots and picnic areas.

Magnitude of impact on landscape resources / receptors

1.10 The magnitude of impact or change affecting landscape receptors depends on the size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. These factors are described below:

- Size or scale: “The extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost, the proportion of the total extent that this represents and the contribution of that element to the character of the landscape...; the degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered either by removal of existing components of the landscape or by addition of new ones...; and, “whether the effect [impact] changes the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character” (GLVIA3, para 5.49).
- Geographical extent: Distinct from scale or size, this factor considers the geographical area over which the landscape impacts will be felt, it might, for example, be a moderate loss of landscape receptors or character over a large area, or a large loss of receptors or character over a very localised area. At para 5.50 GLVIA3 notes that “in general effects [impacts] may have an influence at the following scales, although this will vary according to the nature of the project and not all may be relevant on every occasion:

- at the **site** level within the development site itself; at the level of the immediate setting of the site;
- at the scale of the landscape type or character area within which the proposals lie;
- and, on a larger scale, influencing several landscape types or character areas.”

This assessment considers the impact of the proposed development on the published landscape character areas and units, both at local and national level, i.e. the third and fourth landscape scales.

- Duration and reversibility: Duration is categorised as short, medium or long-term. GLVIA3 explains that as there are no standard lengths of time within these categories, the assessment must state what these are and why these have been chosen (GLVIA3, para 5.51). Reversibility is described as “*a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation*” (GLVIA3, para 5.52). Projects can be considered to be permanent (irreversible), partially reversible or fully reversible. For the purposes of this assessment the proposed development is considered to be permanent.

Magnitude of impact on visual receptors

1.11 As with the magnitude of landscape impacts, the magnitude of impact or change affecting visual receptors depends on the size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. These factors are described below:

- Size or scale: Judgements need to take account of: “*the scale of the change [impact] in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development; the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture; and, the nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses*” (GLVIA3, para 6.39).
- Geographical extent: This will vary from viewpoint to viewpoint and will reflect: “*the angle [orientation] of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and, the extent of the area over which the changes [impact] would be visible*” (GLVIA3, para 6.40).
- Duration and reversibility of visual effects: As with landscape impacts, duration should be categorised as short, medium or long-term and projects considered to be permanent (irreversible), partially reversible or fully reversible (GLVIA3, para 6.41). For the purposes of this assessment the impacts on views of the proposed development are considered to be permanent.

Table 3: Magnitude of Impact

	Landscape impacts	Visual impacts
Negligible	Very minor loss or addition of or alternation to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape approximating to a 'no-change' situation.	Very slight change in baseline, i.e., pre-development view, - change barely distinguishable from the surroundings. Composition and character of view substantially unaltered.
Small	Minor loss or addition of or alternation to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape.	Minor change in baseline, i.e., pre-development view, - change would be distinguishable from the surroundings whilst composition and character would be similar to the pre-change circumstances.
Medium	Partial loss or addition of or moderate alternation to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be substantially uncharacteristic with the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Moderate change in view: which may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of baseline, i.e., predevelopment view, through the introduction of new elements or removal of existing elements. Change may be prominent but would not substantially alter scale and character of the surroundings and the wider setting. Composition of the views would alter. View character may be partially changed through the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.
Large	Total loss or addition or/very substantial loss or addition of key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of dominant, uncharacteristic elements with the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Complete or very substantial change in view, dominant involving complete or very substantial obstruction of existing view or complete change in character and composition of baseline, e.g., through removal of key elements.

Significance of effect

- 1.12 It is recognised that new development will lead to some landscape and visual effects. However, it should be stressed that not all landscape and visual effects will be significant.
- 1.13 GLVIA3 explains, at paragraph 5.55 that a staged approach can be taken to assess landscape significance; *“susceptibility to change and value can be combined into an appraisal of sensitivity for each receptor, and size/scale, geographical extent and duration and reversibility can be combined into an appraisal of magnitude for each effect. Magnitude and sensitivity can then be combined to assess overall significance”*.

- 1.14 Significance varies depending on the receptor’s sensitivity and the magnitude of impact of the project. The distance to the development can be a major factor in determining the magnitude of impact. Those resources or receptors closer to the project are likely to experience a greater significance of effect than those further away.
- 1.15 The following Table 4 outlines the broad approach adopted to assess the level of effect, together with professional judgement in determining which of the levels is more appropriate.

Table 4: Significance of effect

Landscape and visual sensitivity	Magnitude of change			
	Large	Medium	Small	Negligible
High	Major	Major or Moderate	Moderate	Minor or Negligible
Medium	Major or Moderate	Moderate	Minor or Negligible	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

- 1.16 The significance effect of relevant aspects of the project on the landscape has been described and evaluated against the following criteria, as set out in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Significance of landscape effects

Significance of effect	Definition (landscape resource/receptor)
Major adverse	Where the proposed changes would be uncharacteristic and/or would significantly alter a valued aspect of (or a high quality) landscape.
Moderate adverse	Where some elements of the proposed changes would be out of scale or at odds with the character of an area.
Minor adverse	Where the proposed changes would be at slight variance with the character of an area.
Negligible adverse	Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the landscape.
Neutral:	Where the proposals would be in keeping with the character of the area and/or would maintain the existing quality or where on balance the proposals would maintain quality and leave the character of an area effectively unaltered (e.g. where on balance the adverse effects of the proposals are off-set by beneficial effects).
Negligible beneficial	Where the proposed changes would not conflict with the existing character and would slightly improve the quality of the landscape.
Minor beneficial	Where the proposed changes would fit well, reflect and reinforce the existing character and would slightly improve the character and quality of the landscape.
Moderate beneficial	Where the proposed changes would not only fit in well with the existing character of the surrounding landscape but would improve and enhance the quality of the resource through the removal of detracting features.
Major beneficial	Where the proposed changes would significantly improve character and quality through the quality of design or removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far-reaching enhancements.

1.17 The effect of relevant aspects of the project on views has been described and evaluated as set out in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Significance of visual effects

Significance of effect	Definition (visual resource/receptors)
Major adverse	Where the proposed changes would form a major part of the view, or would be uncharacteristic, and/or would alter valued view or a view of high scenic quality.
Moderate adverse	Where the proposed changes to views would be out of scale or at odds with the existing view.
Minor adverse	Where the proposed changes to views, although discernible, would only be at slight variance with the existing view.
Negligible adverse	Where the proposed changes would have a barely noticeable effect on the existing view/visual amenity.
Neutral	Where the project would be imperceptible or would be in keeping with and would maintain the existing views or, where on balance, the proposals would maintain the quality of the views and leave the visual amenity of an area effectively unaltered (which may include adverse effects of the proposals which are offset by beneficial effects for the same receptor).
Negligible beneficial	Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within or not conflict with the existing view.
Minor beneficial	Where the proposed changes to the existing view would be in keeping with and would slightly improve the quality of the existing view.
Moderate beneficial	Where the proposed changes to the existing view would not only be in keeping with but would improve the quality of the scene through the removal of visually detracting features.
Major beneficial	Where the proposed changes to existing views would significantly improve the character and quality of the view due to quality of design or the removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far-reaching enhancements.

1.18 The level of effects is described as major, moderate, minor, negligible. Where negligible adverse and beneficial effects occur within the same view or same landscape, the effect can be described as neutral on balance. The level of effects varies according to individual circumstances and the baseline situation, for example the presence of landscape designations and/or visual detractors.

1.19 In this assessment, those effects of Moderate and below are not considered to be significant. Those effects to be Major may be regarded as significant.

Land South of Henham Road, Elsenham

Historic Landscape Character

- 1.1 The Essex Historic Landscape Characterisation Project was undertaken in 2013 with the aim of characterising the distinctive historic dimension of the current rural landscape.
- 1.2 Uttlesford is the only area in Essex where the Cambridge and Midland-type of large common-fields developed. These were largely confined to the chalk ridge on the Cambridgeshire border, and were finally enclosed by enclosure act in the 18th and 19th century. The remainder of the district is typified by pre-18th century irregular fields, probably of medieval origin, with winding lanes, dispersed hamlets and greens and ancient woodlands. There are surviving areas of the enclosed meadow pasture along the valley floors. The area is overwhelmingly rural in nature.
- 1.3 The Site itself formerly comprised three irregular field parcels, as shown on the 1840 Elsenham Tithe Map (see **Figure 4**, also **Plate 4**): plot 30 in the southwest corner of the Site was recorded in the Apportionment as 'Little Pasture', forming part of the Rectoral Glebe owned and occupied by The Revd. Thomas Canning, who also owned/occupied Plots 14, 14a, 15, 15a, 15b, 16, 26, 27, 27a, 28, 29 and 29a.
- 1.4 Plots 31 and 32 comprising the remainder of the Site were owned and occupied by Daniel Mumford, who also owned/occupied plots 34-37, and 39-46 comprising part of the landholdings of Elsenham Place within the parish of Elsenham. All three fields were recorded as grass, with Plot 31 called Lower Pasture and Plot 32 Dove House Pasture.
- 1.5 These formal field divisions no longer exist, but their remnants are extant as topographic and vegetation features within the landscape context of the Site. The irregular nature of the former boundaries suggests these might have originated in the medieval period, before later formal enclosure in the early 19th century.
- 1.6 Historic map regression shows that by the time of the First Edition OS 1 to 6 inch map (surveyed 1875-1876, published in 1881) the boundary subdividing Plots 30 and 31 had been removed, and the Site subdivided by a more regular east-west planted boundary, remnants of which survive today.

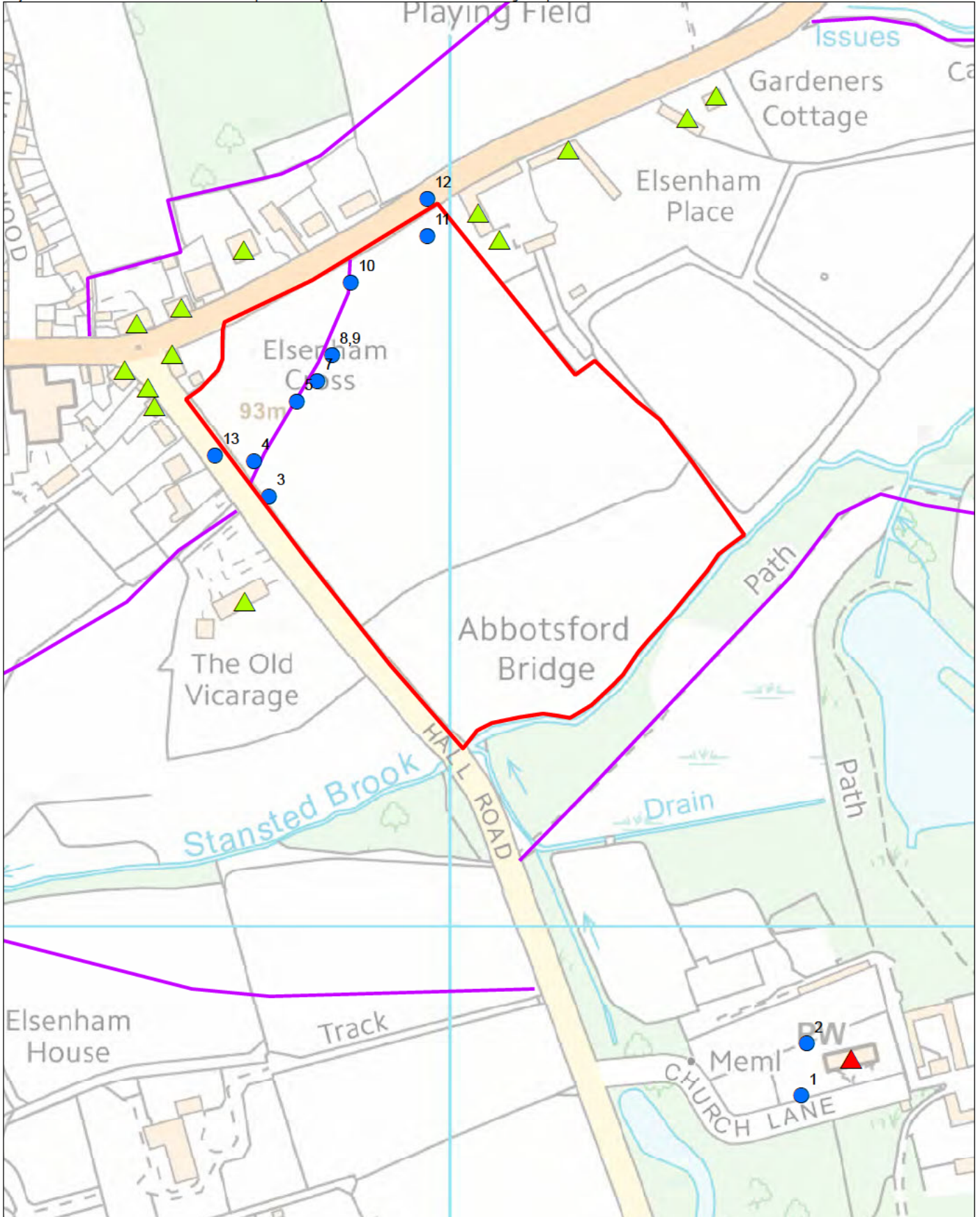
Landscape Receptors

- 1.7 The following landscape elements and characteristics were identified as potential receptors of landscape effects resulting from the Proposed Development at the Site:
 - The Site incorporating:
 - Topography;
 - Land use;
 - On-site vegetation; and
 - The overall character of the site.

- The setting of PRow FP13_13;
- The setting of PRow FP13_21;
- The setting of PRow Bridleway 13_5;
- The settings of the buildings at the historic core of Elsenham Cross;
- The setting of The Old Vicarage;
- The setting of Elsenham Place;
- The setting of the Church of St Mary the Virgin;
- The setting of the Stansted Airport Countryside Protection Zone;
- The character of the Stort River Valley; and
- The settlement character of Elsenham.

Appendix C

Site Context Photographs



- Site Boundary
- Site visit photos
- Public Rights of Way
- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building

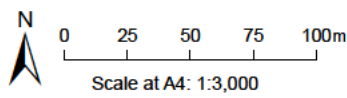


Figure 2b

Site Summary Photo locations



1. St Mary's Church, looking north-northeast



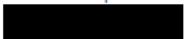
2. View north from churchyard across to the Site



3. View across the Site from Hall Road looking east



4. Northwest corner of the Site at Elsenham Cross





5. View from PRow looking east across to Elsenham Place



6. Winter view from PRow in the Site across to St Mary's Church



7. View from Site towards The Old Vicarage looking south-southwest



8. View south-southeast from PRow within the Site



9. View from PRow looking southeast



10. View from ProW/Henham Road looking southwest to Hall Road



11. View south towards St Mary's Church from northeast corner of the Site



12. View west along Henham Road and the northern edge of the Site



13. View of western edge of Site looking south along Hall Road

DRAFT

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