

Appendix v) A4 56 pages

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

EASTFIELD STABLES, ELSENHAM ROAD, STANSTED

AUGUST 2023

guarda  
landscape

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

EASTFIELD STABLES, ELSENHAM ROAD, STANSTED

Document Reference: 223-030-GUA-DOC-L-001

For  
Ranger Management & Design Services Limited

On behalf of  
Mr S Richardson

AUGUST 2023

Revision	Date	Prepared	Approved	Comments
P01	03/08/23	JB	CX	First Issue: 001



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 GUARDA has been commissioned by Ranger Management & Design Services Limited, on behalf Mr S Richardson, to provide a Landscape and Visual Appraisal to support a full application for the erection of 5 detached single storey dwellings at Eastfield Stables, Elsenham Road, Stansted (the Site). This document sets out the baseline situation with regards to the site and the proposed development.
- 1.0.2 This report reviews the existing and emerging planning policy relevant to landscape and visual amenity. A Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been undertaken which identifies the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. This has been achieved through the following process:
- Review existing and emerging planning policy relevant to landscape;
  - Summarise the characteristics of the landscape surrounding the Site with reference to existing studies;
  - Identify and assess the condition of landscape elements within the Site;
  - Identify the potential visual envelope from which the Site and any future development may be seen;
  - Make recommendations to minimise potential landscape and visual effects and where appropriate provide positive enhancement.
  - Identify potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity;
  - Concludes on the suitability of the development.

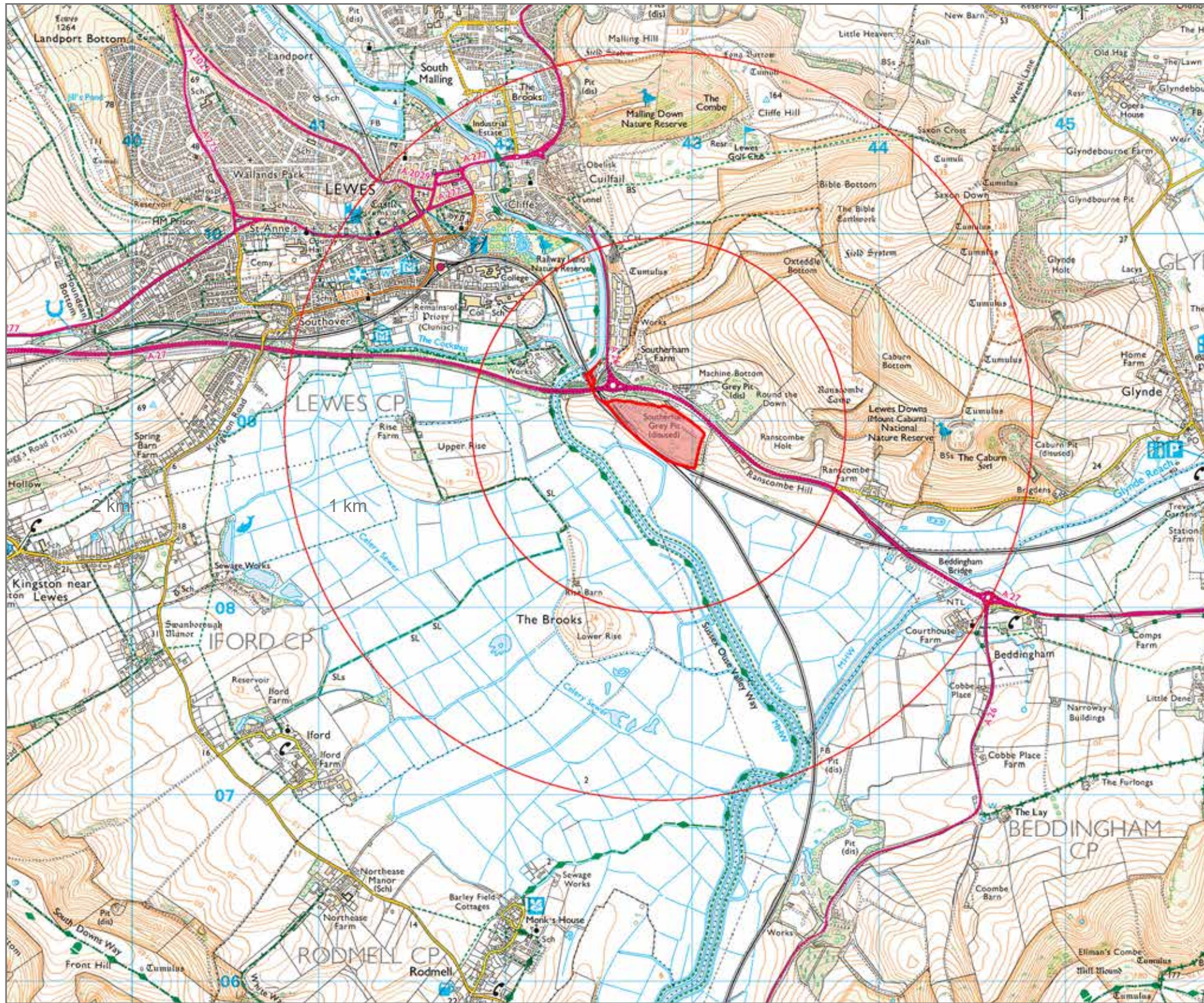
# 2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.0.1 The description of the landscape at Eastfield Stables, Elsenham Road, Stansted, and the further surrounding landscape character and visibility are based on a period of desk study and field survey carried out in July 2023 by a qualified landscape architect. The weather was intermittently overcast and visibility was good.
- 2.0.2 This Landscape Appraisal has been prepared in accordance with the guidance contained within Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002) and Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) and is proportionate to the type and scale of the development.
- 2.0.3 Within the report a clear distinction is made between landscape character and visual amenity:
- Landscape Character: the physical characteristics or elements of the landscape, which together establish the character of the area e.g. geology, topography, hydrology, land cover, land use, vegetation and settlement pattern i.e. the landscape as a resource; and,
  - Visual Amenity: the area from which the site and the development is likely to be visible, and the extent or degree of its visibility within the landscape to people.
- 2.0.4 It should be noted that LVIA can be employed in relation to Environmental Impact Assessment work where it may form a technical chapter in the Environmental Statement. This is considered the formal application of LVIA. A landscape and visual impact assessment is also often provided to assist with the appraisal of otherwise ordinary planning cases. These situations are considered to represent the informal application of LVIA and they are commonly referred to as Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVA).
- 2.0.5 The methodology used in this appraisal is based on the GUARDA Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Methodology, which is set out in Appendix 3 of this report.

# 3. STUDY AREA

- 3.0.1 The Site is situated to the north of Elsenham Road (the B1051) and to the east of a bridleway known as May Walk. It lies to the west of the village of Elsenham and the M11 and to the east of Stansted Mountfitchet.
- 3.0.2 The site extends to approximately 1.97 Ha and the main access to the Site is from Elsenham Road (B1051) at the south eastern corner of the Site. The access has recently been created to provide access to an approved scheme for a Wellness Hub which is currently under construction.
- 3.0.3 The Site is located outside of any development limits, in countryside within the authority area of Uttlesford District Council. The boundary of the Site and the extent of the study area is shown on **Figure 1: Study Area and Location Plan**.
- 3.0.4 The defined study area is centered on the Site and is based on the potential visual envelope of the site and the proposed development i.e. the area from which views of the development may be visible, informed by topographical maps and field survey.





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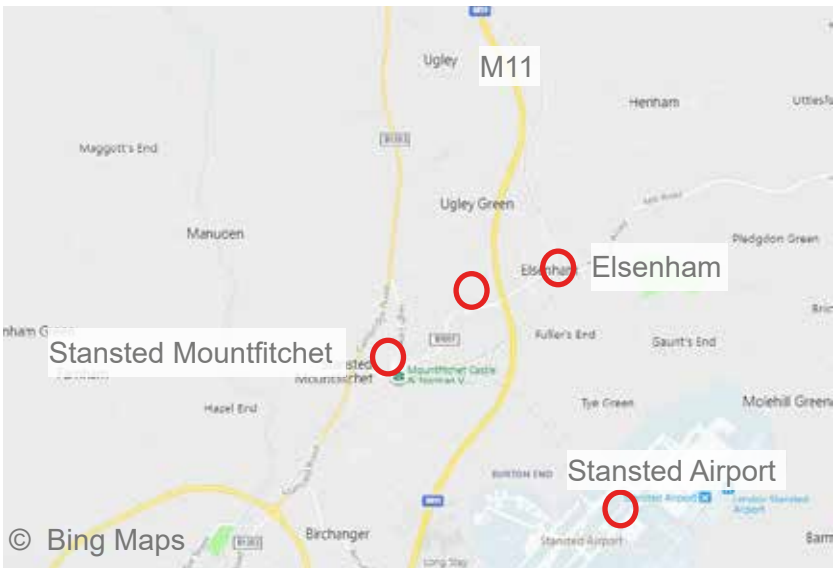
KEY

 Site Boundary

Study Area

1 km from Site

2 km from Site



Location Plan

July 2023  
Scale: 1:20,000 @ A3



Figure 1. Study Area and Location Plan



## 4. POLICY CONTEXT

### 4.1 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1.1 National Government and Uttlesford District Council have identified areas of landscape importance and developed policies and recommendations that relate to the protection of the built and natural environment.

### 4.2 NATIONAL POLICY

- 4.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 (updated Feb 2019) and sets out the Government's planning policies for England. There are a number of key policies of the NPPF which are of particular relevance in landscape and visual terms.

- 4.2.2 On 'Achieving Sustainable Development' Paragraph 8, the NPPF outlines three mutually dependent objectives for the planning system:

- *"Economic - building a strong economy and supporting growth;*
- *Social - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities and creating a high quality built environment; and*
- *Environmental - protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment..."*

- 4.2.3 Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

- 4.2.4 So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development as set out in para 11): For decision-taking this means:

*c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*

*d) Where there is no current Local Plan policy in place planning permission should be granted 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; or*

- *ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole." (Para 11)*

- 4.2.5 On development in Rural Areas, Paragraph 77 states:

*"In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.*

- 4.2.6 And at Paragraph 78 the framework states:

*"To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby."*

- 4.2.7 On 'Achieving well-designed places' (Paragraph 127) a number of planning policies are stated, which should ensure that developments:

- *"will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the*

*arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."*

- 4.2.8 On 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' (Paragraph 170) a number of planning policies associated with conserving and enhancing the natural environment are stated. These include:

- *"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);*
- *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;*
- *maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- *minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- *preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*

- *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”*

## 4.3 UTTLESFORD LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

4.3.1 The Site falls within Uttlesford District Council local planning authority administrative boundary. Policy constraints are shown on **Figure 2. Policy Constraints Plan.**

4.3.2 The Uttlesford District Local Plan was adopted in 2005. In April 2020, the Council decided to withdraw their 2109 draft local plan after it had been found unsound by the Planning inspectors. Therefore, the Council relies upon the policies within the 2005 Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in order to manage development control across the district.

4.3.3 Policies from the adopted plan, of particular relevance to this appraisal are set out below:

4.3.4 S7- The Countryside

*“The countryside to which this policy applies is defined as all those parts of the Plan area beyond the Green Belt that are not within the settlement or other site boundaries. 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. This will include infilling in accordance with paragraph 6.13 of the Housing Chapter of the Plan. There will be strict control on new building. Development 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.*

4.3.5 GEN 1- Access

*“Development will only be permitted if it meets all of the following criteria:*

*a) Access to the main road network must be capable of carrying the traffic generated by the development safely.*

*b) The traffic generated by the development must be capable of being accommodated on the surrounding transport network.*

*c) The design of the site must not compromise road safety and must take account of the needs of cyclists, pedestrians, public transport users, horse riders and people whose mobility is impaired.*

*d) It must be designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities if it is development to which the general public expect to have access.*

*e) The development encourages movement by means other than driving a car.”*

4.3.6 GEN 2- Design

*“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.”*

4.3.7 GEN 7 Nature Conservation

*“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.”*

4.3.8 ENV3 Open Spaces and Trees

*“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.”*

4.3.9 Policy ENV8 – Other Landscape Elements of Importance for Nature Conservation

*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.*

**Neighbourhood Planning**

4.3.10 There is no Neighbourhood Plan covering the area of the Site.

**4.4 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE**  
**Essex Design Guide**

4.4.1 The Essex Design Guide provides information, pertaining to creating high-quality, sustainable developments, and includes sections on Highways and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), Active Design and Health and Wellbeing.

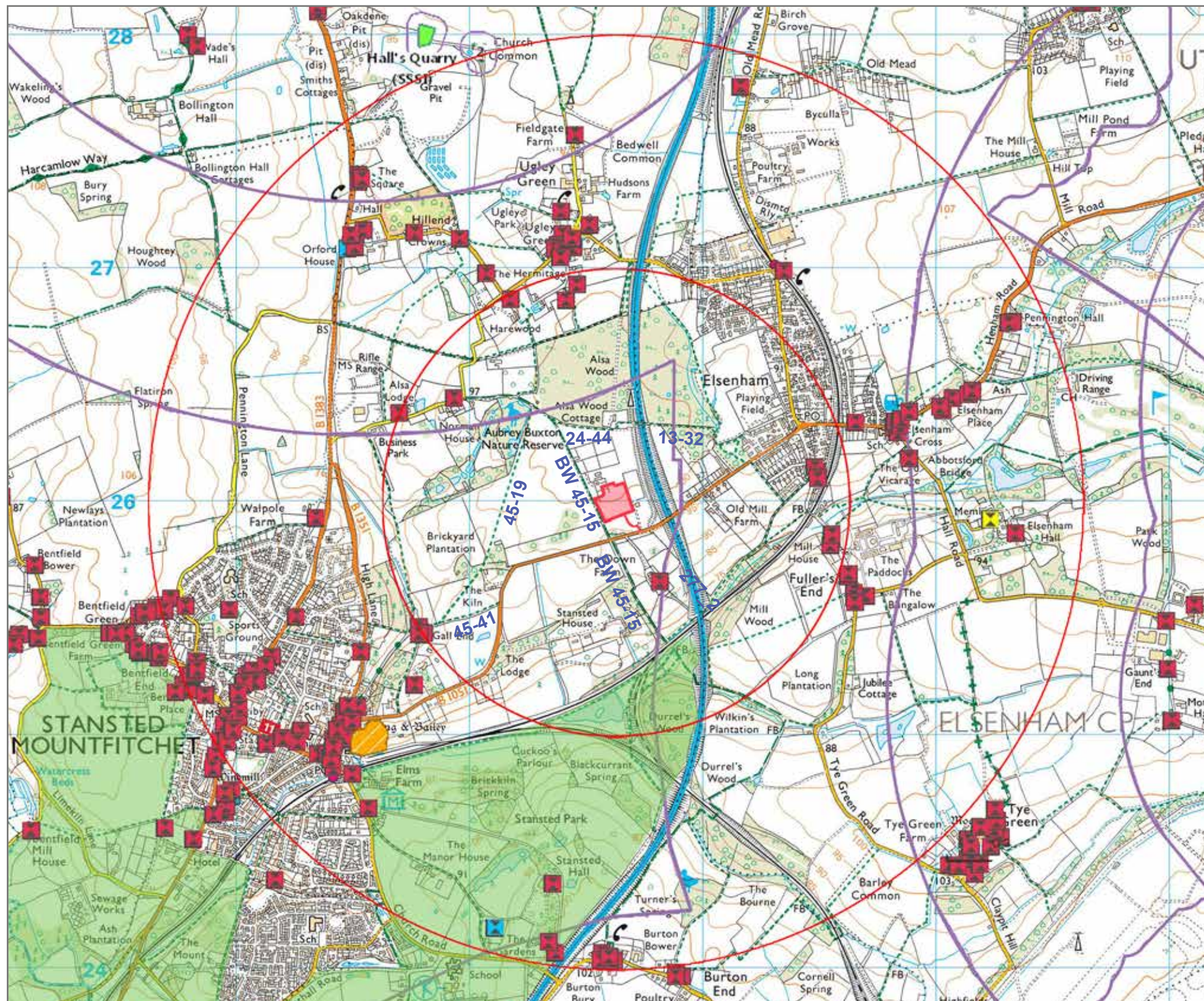
**4.5 DESIGNATIONS**

- 4.5.1 There are no statutory designations within the Site itself, however, there are a number of statutory designations within the wider study area. Refer to ”**Figure 2. Policy Constraints Plan**”.
- 4.5.2 Statutory designations:** There are no Statutory designations within the Study Area. However the Site is situated on the outer edges of SSSI Impact Zones of the following SSSIs:
- Hall’s Quarry SSSI, 2.2 km to the north west;
  - Elsenham Woods SSSI, 3.4 Km to the east

**4.5.3 Schedule Ancient Monuments**

- Stansted Castle: a ringwork and associated bailey, is situated on the edge of Stansted Mountfitchet, 1.5 km to the south west.
- 4.5.4 Listed Buildings:** There are no Listed Buildings in close proximity to the Site: The nearest Listed Buildings is:
- Grade II listed Down Farmhouse, 0.2 km south of the southern boundary of the Site.
- 4.5.5 There are a number of Woodlands and Ancient Woodlands within the study area, refer to **Figure 3- Habitats Plan**. In closet proximity to the Site is:
- Alsa Wood, 0.4km to the north.
- 4.5.6 There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) on the Site, however there area a number in the wider landscape surrounding the Site (refer to **Figure 2**). These include:
- PRoW 45-25 (Bridleway - known as May Walk) directly to the west of the Site;
  - PRoW 45-44/13/32 (Footpath) to the north of the Site
  - PRoW 45-19 (Footpath) to the northwest/ west of the Site
- 4.5.7 There are no trees on the boundaries or within the Site which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders.





# KEY

- The Site
- SSSI Impact Zone
- Metropolitan Green Belt

- Scheduled Monument

## Listed buildings

- Grade I
- Grade II
- Grade II\*

Information compiled from MAGIC and Ordnance Survey

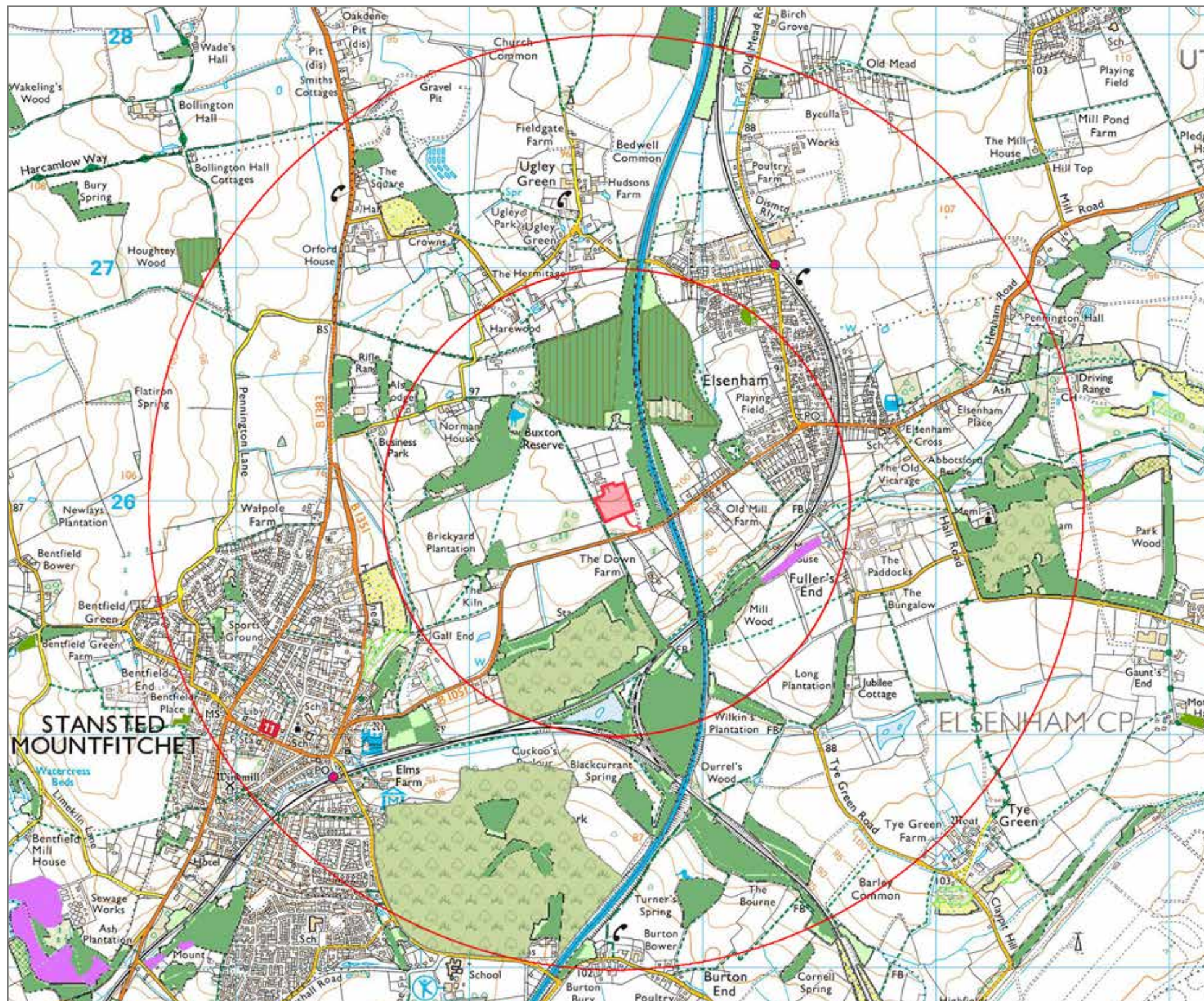
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**Figure 2. Policy Constraints Plan**





# KEY

The Site

## Priority BAP Habitats

- Deciduous woodland
- Woodpasture and Parkland
- Good quality semi-improved grassland
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland

Information compiled from MAGIC and Ordnance Survey

July 2023  
Scale: 1:20,000 @ A3

Figure 3. Habitats Plan



# 5. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 5.0.1 The character of the landscape evolves over time as a result of the interaction of human activity and the natural environment (people and place). Attributes used to assess landscape character include:
- Physical – geology, landform, climate, soils, landcover;

• Cultural and Social – land use, settlement, enclosure and history; and,

• Aesthetics – colour, texture, pattern, form and perception.
- 5.0.2 The published landscape character types (LCTs) and Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the study area from National to District level are described below and are shown on ““Figure 2. Policy Constraints Plan””.

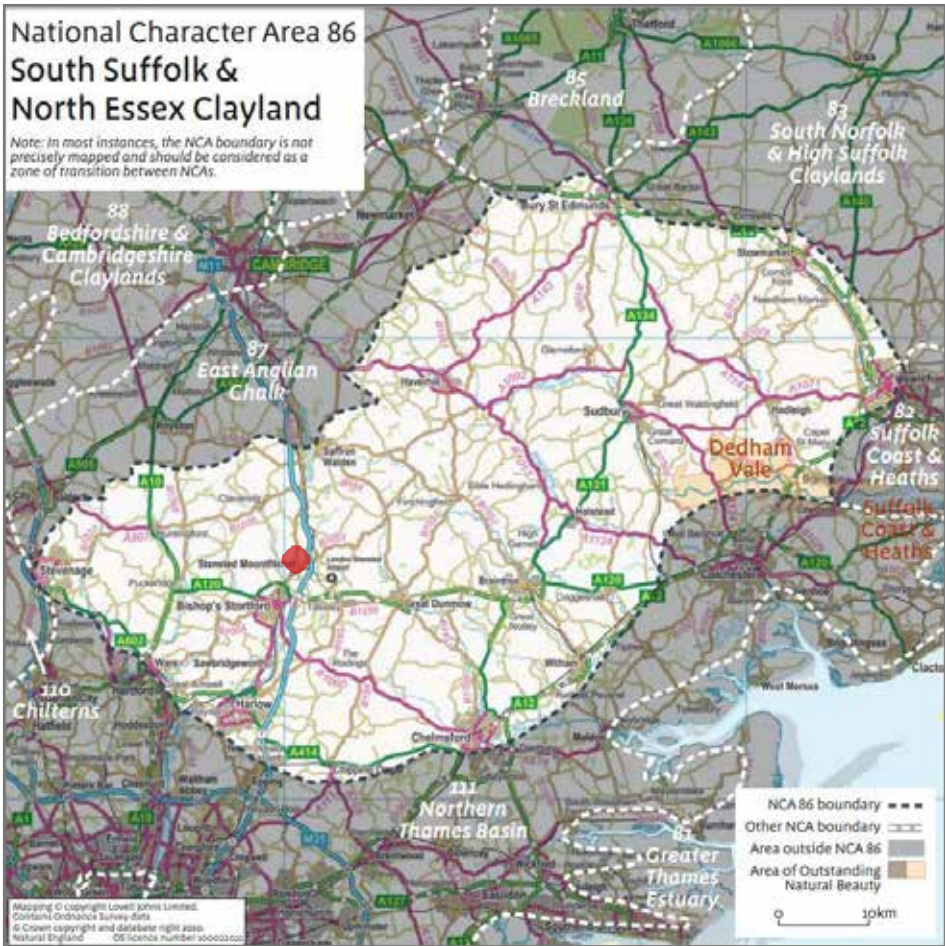
## 5.1 NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 5.1.1 The Site lies within National Character Area (NCA) 86 - South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland as defined by Natural England, which extends from Hertfordshire in the west, to the Essex coast in the east. It is separated from the North Sea and Thames Estuary by a narrow band of land that makes up the Greater Thames Estuary National Character Area (NCA 81)
- 5.1.2 Within this broad character area, the Site is located within the distinct area of the Essex wooded hills and ridges which covers the four counties of Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It stretches to Bishop’s Stortford and Stevenage in the west where the broad-scale character of the East Anglian Chalk NCA rises away from the claylands.
- 5.1.3 Key characteristics of the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland include:
- “An undulating chalky boulder clay plateau is dissected by numerous river valleys, giving a topography of gentle slopes in the lower, wider valleys and steeper slopes in the narrower upper parts.

• 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.



NCA Area 86 - South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland  
Natural England (2014) NCA Profile

- 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.

• Larger 20th-century development has taken place to the south and east around Chelmsford, Ipswich and the new towns of Harlow and Stevenage.

• 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.”

## 5.2 COUNTY LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

### Essex Landscape Character Assessment 2003

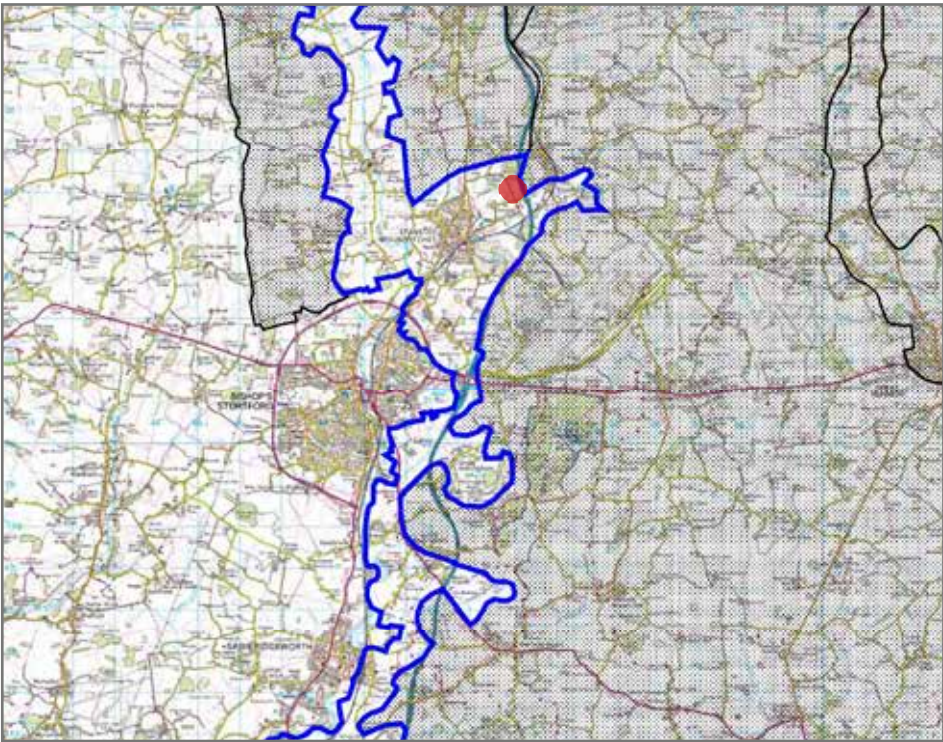
- 5.2.1 In 2003 Essex County Council produced a landscape character assessment for the county. The assessment divided the county into a number of areas with similar landscape characteristics and then summarised these characteristics into seven different landscape types. The Site is located within the River Valley Landscape Type



(LCT C).

5.2.2 The key landscape characteristics of this LCT are listed below:

- 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.



**Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003**  
Stort Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA C2)

- *“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.”£*

5.2.3 Within this Landscape Type the Site is situated within the Stort Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA C2). The key characteristics of this LCA are listed below:

- *“Shallow and narrow valley with moderately sloping arable valleysides.*
- *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.”*

5.2.4 The Stort Valley is shallow and fairly narrow for much of its length, only opening out north west 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 valleysides, 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.

5.2.5 On the ‘Settlement pattern and built form’ the assessment notes:

- *“Small villages and dispersed hamlets on valleysides.*
- *A few large villages much expanded by modern development, e.g. Stansted Mountfitchet, Lower Sheering.*
- *Historic vernacular of colour washed plaster and pegtile roofs. Some half timber and brick.”*

5.2.6 The assessment notes the strongly meandering River Stort and Church spires which are distinctive landmarks.

5.2.7 The landscape character assessment describes the overall condition of hedgerows and woodlands in the farmland landscape to be moderate to good, but with localised areas of abandoned, or overgrazed pastures. It notes that condition of the settlements is moderate to good and that few villages show signs of poor quality modern development.

5.2.8 On ‘Past, Present and Future Trends for Change’ the assessment notes:

- *Traditional use of the valley floor for grazing meadows and the valleysides for arable farming by the farms and small estates had a strong influence in the development of present day character.*
- *Given the proximity of major road and rail routes, there may be further pressure for major urban development. Due to the small scale enclosed character of the valley, with its strong tree cover, any such development would be very difficult to absorb.*

5.2.9 In relation to small scale developments, the ‘Sensitivity Evaluation’, notes: the uncommon intrusive influences; the character of the lanes and settlements; and the low to moderate intervisibility of the landscape.

### 5.3 BOROUGH/DISTRICT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

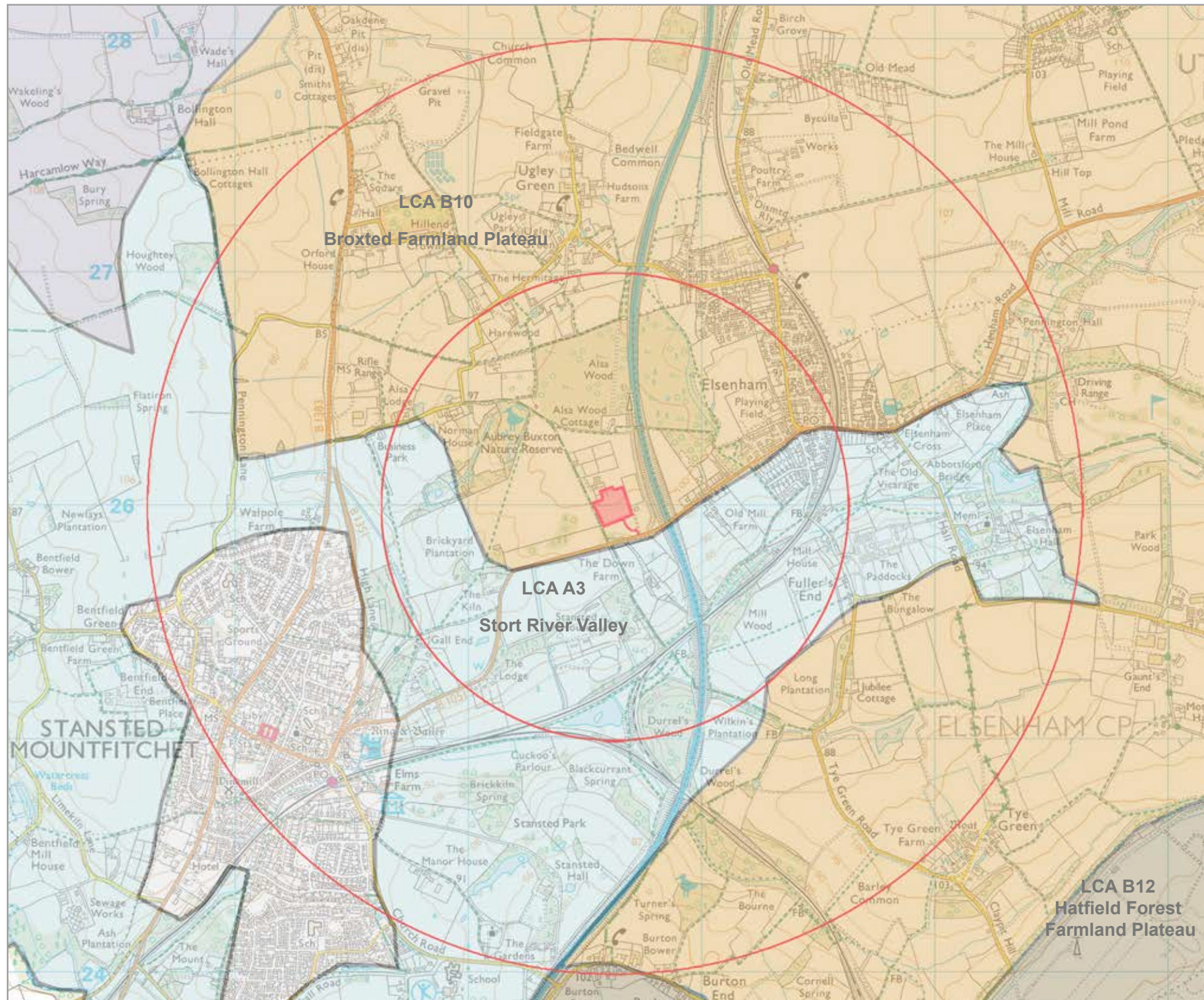
5.3.1 Landscape Character in the district is defined in the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment undertaken by Chris Blandford Associates in 2006 to inform land use planning and land management decisions.

5.3.2 Chapter 7 sets out the Landscape Character Areas in Uttlesford. The Site is situated in a transitional area, just within the Broxted Farmland Plateau (LCA B10) on the edge of the Stort River Valley (LCA A3) to the south, refer to **Figure 4: Landscape Character**.

#### B10 BROXTED FARMLAND PLATEAU

5.3.3 The Broxted Farmland Plateau (LCA) is one of eleven Farmland





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**KEY**



The Site

**National Landscape Character**

Natural England, National Character Area Profile 86:  
South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland

**County Landscape Character**

Essex Landscape Character Assessment 2003:  
Stort Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA C2)

**Borough / District Landscape Character**

Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment



LCA B10 - Broxted Farmland Plateau



LCA A3 - Stort River Valley



LCA B12 - Hatfield Forest Farmland Plateau

July 2020  
Scale: 1:20,000 @ A3



**Figure 4. Landscape Character**



Plateau Landscape Types in the district. It lies between the upper Chelmer and upper Stort river valleys, and stretches from Henham and Ugley Greens eastwards to Molehill Green and the rural fringe to the west of Great Dunmow. Stansted Airport juts into the area at the southwest, and the southern limits reach Puttock's End, below Takeley.

5.3.4 Key Characteristics of the Character Area are:

- *“Gently undulating farmland on glacial till plateau, dissected by River Roding.*
- *Large open landscape with tree cover appearing as blocks on the horizon or as scattered trees along field boundaries, with intermittent hedgerows.*
- *Higher ground where plateau broadens and flattens is expansive and full of big sky views.*
- *Dispersed settlements and few villages of any size.*
- *Some sunken lanes.*
- *Moats, halls and historic farmsteads scattered over the area.”*

5.3.5 Overall Character of the area is described below:

*“This gently undulating arable farmland is in the southern reaches of the boulder clay; the farms are large and the landscape is open, with few trees except in blocks or near settlements. Hedgerows are intermittent and field pattern is delineated mainly by ditches or grass tracks, occasionally with trees or scrub. Rough grassland and pasture for horses can be seen near settlements, bounded by post-and-rail fencing.*

*Tree cover appears in blocks of mixed deciduous types and is often seen as a distant framework on the horizon, or appears to link into a continuous backdrop. The river Roding winds its way southwards from Molehill Green in the centre of the area. Settlement pattern is varied; the village of Henham is a nucleated settlement while Takeley and Broxted are linear. Most settlements are hamlets or farmsteads scattered over the plateau or along the lanes. The ancient market town of Great Dunmow, to the east of this character area, is the largest in the vicinity. Vernacular buildings are pale*

*colour-washed plaster, many with pargetting, and thatched roofs. Farm buildings are sometimes red brick with black-stained weatherboarding. The historic past is also visible in the many moats, halls and ancient woodland spread over this countryside. New residential development outside Henham is more suburban; with little link to local building materials or vernacular style. This is also apparent in the villages around Takeley.*

*Stansted Airport is a major influence on the character of the southwestern part of this area. Though screened by trees and shrubs, its buildings and tower can be seen in long views. The access roads and perimeter roads have brought an urban feel with them. The sound of aircraft is almost constant. The A120 and the B1256 cut across the southern part of this area, and a small piece of the M11 crosses the northwest corner. Water towers, telegraph poles and telecommunications masts are sometimes seen on the horizon. In spite of the proximity of the airport and major roads in the south and west, there still remain only winding lanes and minor roads for access to the scattered farmsteads. Many of these lanes are sunken, with verges of varying widths, sometimes tree-lined, and often quite peaceful. Many footpaths including the Harcamlow Way cross the area. The texture of the landscape is influenced by the topography and the contrasts with trees, fields and local building materials. Away from the Stansted flight path tranquillity is moderate to strong.”*

5.3.6 The Visual Characteristics are described as:

- *“Churches set on hills are visible in long views.*
- *Telecommunications masts occasionally visible.*
- *Stansted Airport and tower visible in long views from many locations within the character area.*
- *From several locations in the north and east of the character area, panoramic views across the*
- *Chelmer Valley slopes and views to Great Dunmow.*
- *Commercial premises growing around airport.*

5.3.7 This Character Area is dominated by intensive and widespread

arable agriculture. However, the area does contain 17 sites of nature conservation value. These include:

- Elsenham Woods SSSI and part of High Wood SSSI comprising ancient woodland habitats.
- Halls Quarry SSSI comprising a variety of grassland and scrub habitats.

5.3.8 Key Planning and Land Management Issues include:

- *“Past loss of hedgerows and decline in hedgerow management.*
- *Potential loss of hedgerows and field pattern due to the further introduction of intensive agricultural practices.*
- *Pressure from increased traffic on rural lanes and erosion of verges.*
- *Pressure from expansion of village settlements which may be detrimental to landscape character*
- *Pressure from visually intrusive expansion due to Stansted Airport.*
- *Potential for erection of new farm buildings on the higher ground, which may be visually intrusive*
- *Pressure to use quick screening ability of conifer plantings which are out of character with this landscape.*
- *Pressure for new development from Stansted Airport second runway.”*

5.3.9 On Sensitivities to Change the assessment notes:

*“Sensitive key characteristics and landscape elements within this character area include blocks of mixed deciduous woodland (visible on the horizon) and scattered trees within field boundaries (which are sensitive to changes in land management). The open nature of the skyline of higher areas of plateau is visually sensitive, with new development potentially visible within expansive views across the plateau.*

*Sunken, often tree-lined lanes are also sensitive to new development, or increases in traffic flow associated with such development. There*



*is a sense of historic integrity, resulting from a dispersed historic settlement pattern and several visible moats and halls (the pattern of which is sensitive to change or new development). There are also several important wildlife habitats within the area (including 14 sites of importance for nature conservation, comprising ancient woodland, grassland and wetland habitats) which are sensitive to changes in land management. Overall, this character area has moderate to- high sensitivity to change.”*

5.3.10 Proposed Landscape Strategy Objectives

- **“Conserve** - seek to protect and enhance positive features that are essential in contributing to local distinctiveness and sense of place through effective planning and positive land management measures.”

5.3.11 Suggested Landscape Planning Guidelines include:

- *“Conserve the rural character of the area.*
- *Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern, especially scale and density, and that use of materials, and especially colour, is appropriate to the local landscape character; such development should be well integrated with the surrounding landscape.*
- *Encourage the appropriate use of colour as well as deciduous tree planting to mitigate the visually intrusive effects of large modern farm buildings; avoid coniferous screen planting.*
- *New farm buildings such as sheds should be sensitively located within the landscape to respect local character and avoid the skyline.*
- *Small-scale development should be carefully sited in relation to existing farm buildings.*
- *Encourage sensitive conversion of barns which respects traditional materials, built fabric and landscape character.”*

5.3.12 Suggested Land Management Guidelines

- *“Strengthen and enhance hedgerows with hawthorn where gappy and depleted.*

- *Conserve and manage ecological structure of woodland, copses and hedges within the character area.*
- *Conserve and manage areas of ancient and semi-natural woodland as important landscape, historical and nature conservation sites.*
- *Conserve historic lanes and unimproved roadside verges.*

5.4 THE SITE AND LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 5.4.1 The Site, forms part of Eastfield Stables, and is located immediately to the north of Elsenham Road (B1051) between Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham and immediately to the east of a PRoW (bridleway) known as May Walk (PRoW 45-25). To the east, the M11 runs north-south in a cutting which separates the Site from the village of Elsenham, further to the east. To the north the Site is adjoined by a recently built new replacement dwelling at May Tree Farm.
- 5.4.2 The site extends to 1.97 and is situated in countryside. Access to the Site is from Elsenham Road to the south east. The site is bounded to the north by a mis of residential development consisting mainly of conversion of existing buildings. To the east and west, the Site is enclosed by vegetated earth bunds and to the south by a recently approved scheme for a Wellness Hub with a deciduous semi natural woodland belt on its southern boundary with Elsenham Road (B1051). There is no vegetation of note within the central area of the Site except for a small sycamore tree. The site is predominantly grass which was formerly used for grazing.
- 5.4.3 The main features of the site are shown on “Figure 6. Site Analysis” and “Figure 7. Site Views A-J”.

Topography

- 5.4.4 The Site is fairly rectangular in shape, more irregular around the existing built form to the north. It is situated on relatively flat land, at around 100m AOD with a very slight fall to the south eastern corner. The earth bunds to the east and west vary in height from 1 -2m. These bunds and their associated vegetation enclose the Site from the wider landscape.

- 5.4.5 In the wider landscape the land rises towards Alsa Wood to the north which sits on a low brow. To the south and west the land falls towards the Stansted Brook, a tributary of the River Stort. To the east the landform is relatively flat towards Elsenham. However, the M11, which runs in a cutting, interrupts the natural topography.

Land Use

- 5.4.6 The Site, is part of the a former Eastfield Stables. To the north of the Site there are 10 existing buildings which were formerly part of the equestrian use of the site which have over time received planning consent for conversion into residential use. Access to this residential parcel is from May Walk.
- 5.4.7 The area to the south of the Site includes the Wellness Hub (currently under construction) which was approved planning consent at Appeal in February 2023 (Appeal Ref: APP/C1570/W/22/3291446). Approval was granted for improvement of the existing vehicular access point and the construction of a single storey wellness hub building and associated car, cycle and motorcycle parking area.
- 5.4.8 The bunding to the east and west boundaries of the Site occupy a fair proportion of the Site’s area.

Boundary Trees and Vegetation

- 5.4.9 The Site is enclosed by vegetation on the bunding to the east and west approximately 2 m high. Vegetation on the bunding is well established and contains a mix of native species. On the boundary with May Walk the vegetation is dense and clipped regularly by the client who maintains the lane.
- 5.4.10 The northern and southern boundaries are open to adjacent built form. However, to the south, a belt of mixed semi natural woodland adjoins Elsenham Road (B1051) which contains a mix of deciduous species, including a large mature Poplar, which is prominent from within the Site and from the wider landscape This tree belt encloses the Site from the wider landscape.
- 5.4.11 Within the Site, there is no vegetation of note due to the previous use as grazing. However, there is a small sycamore tree in the



center of the Site. Although not of significant value, it is well established (refer to inset photo below).

5.4.12 Vegetation in the wider landscape contributes to the treed character of the area which form belts of vegetation on the skyline. Alsa Wood to the north of the Site is a broadleaved ancient semi natural woodland, situated on a low brow of a hill and extends across the M11 to adjoin the built up area of Elsenham. It also adjoins a strong woodland belt which extends southwards along the M11 and its embankments. To the eastern boundary of the Site, a row of conifers supplements the vegetation on the bunding within the Site.

5.4.13 To the west of the Site, landuse is predominantly arable with open views towards the Site’s boundaries, however, an isolated mature woodland copse within the open fields contributes positively to the treed character of the area. Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve, to the north east of the Site, is a 23 acre woodland with grassland and ponds, managed by Essex Wildlife Trust. The reserve forms a distinct woodland edge adjacent to the arable fields to the south.



Small Sycamore tree in center of Site

Landscape Character

5.4.14 The Site is situated in countryside, to the west of Elsenham, outside of the settlement boundary. It falls just within the Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area. The boundary of the Character Area follows Elsenham Road (B1051) on the southern boundary of the Site where the land falls quite distinctively towards the Stansted Brook, a tributary of the River Stort within the adjacent Stort Valley Landscape Character Area. The Site is characteristic of the Broxted Farmland Plateau, which is characterised as a large open landscape with tree cover appearing as blocks on the horizon or as scattered trees along field boundaries, with intermittent hedgerows. In this context, the Site with its treed boundaries contributes positively to the landscape.

Character of Built Form

5.4.15 Adjacent built form to the north of the Site consists of 1 and 1.5 storey dwellings which are predominantly clad in back timber with

red roof tiles. A mixture of close board fencing and post and rail fencing are used as boundary treatments

5.4.16 To the north of the Site, a new replacement dwelling at May Tree Farm has a similar material pallet (see inset below).



Vegetation on western boundary to May Walk





Built form to north of Site (to west)



Built form to north of Site (to west)



Built form to north of Site (to center)

## 5.5 SUMMARY OF THE LANDSCAPE RESOURCE

5.5.1 From the site based evaluation undertaken for this Appraisal, the Site and its immediate context exhibit a number of characteristics which are identified in the various landscape character assessments described previously and therefore the character of the site is considered to be consistent with published guidance. These characteristics include land use, topography and existing boundary vegetation which contribute to the overall character of the Site and its surrounding landscape.

## 5.6 LANDSCAPE VALUE

5.6.1 The site is not covered by any landscape quality designations. However, it contains a number of features which contribute positively to both the character of the Site and the surrounding landscape of the Broxted Farmland Plateau. With reference to the criteria described in Methodology Table 1 - Assessing Landscape Value, the Site and its surrounding landscape are considered to be of Medium to Low Value.

## 5.7 LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS

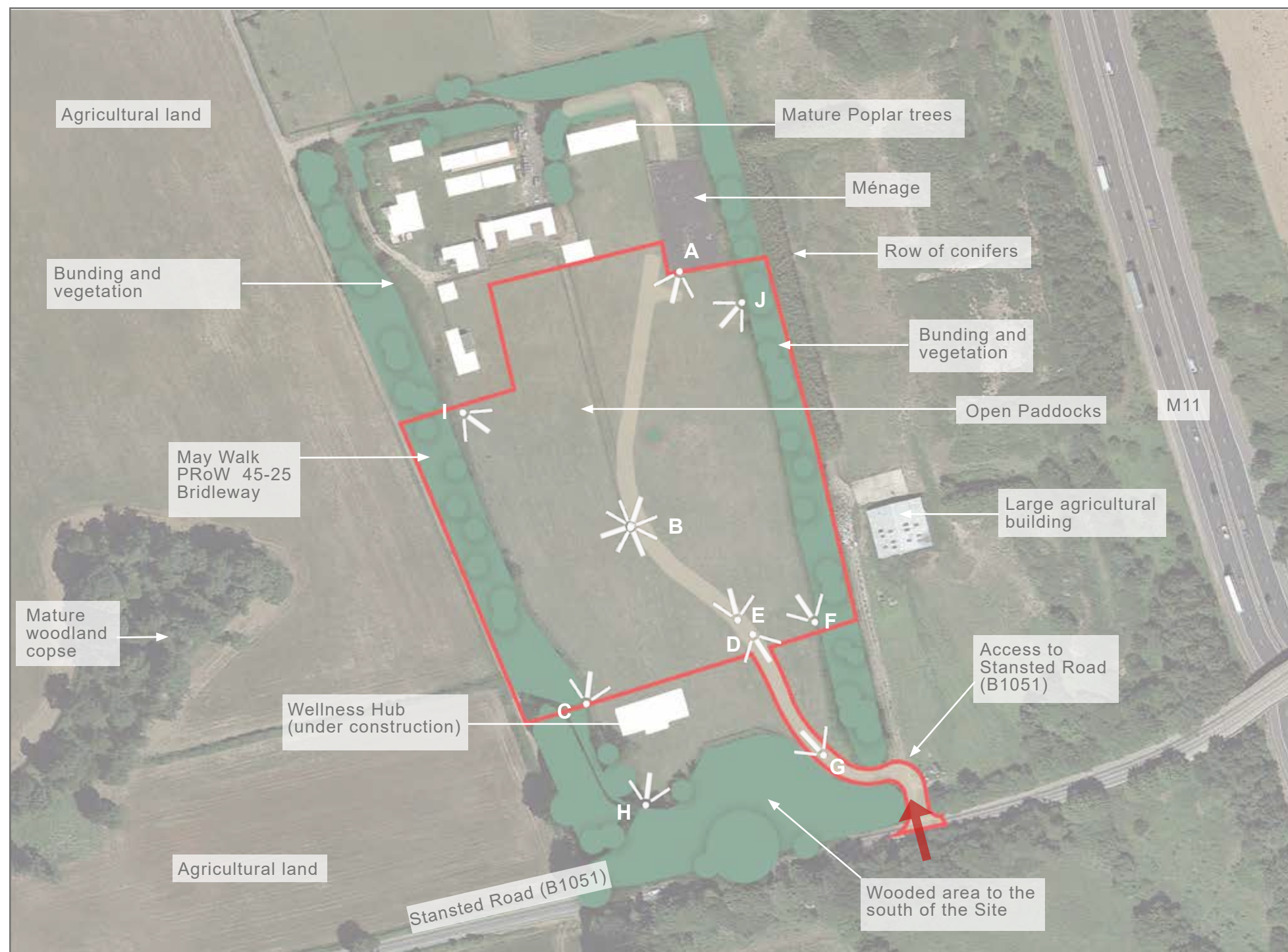
5.7.1 With reference to this baseline landscape appraisal, the following landscape elements and characteristics (in no particular order) have been identified as potential receptors of landscape effects of the proposed development:

- The site incorporating:
  - Land use;
  - Boundary trees and vegetation;
  - The overall character of the site.
- Landscape Character
  - The character of the Broxted Farmland Plateau.









May Tree Farm to north of Site





Aerial imagery from Google Earth, July 2020

# Key

-  The Site
-  Access point
-  Viewpoint Locations for Site Views A-J
-  Existing vegetation
-  Existing built form
-  Existing lane

June 2020  
Scale: Not to scale



Figure 5. Site Analysis





Viewpoint A: From north western boundary of Site looking south east



Viewpoint B: From north western part of Site looking south east

Figure 6. Site Views A-J continued





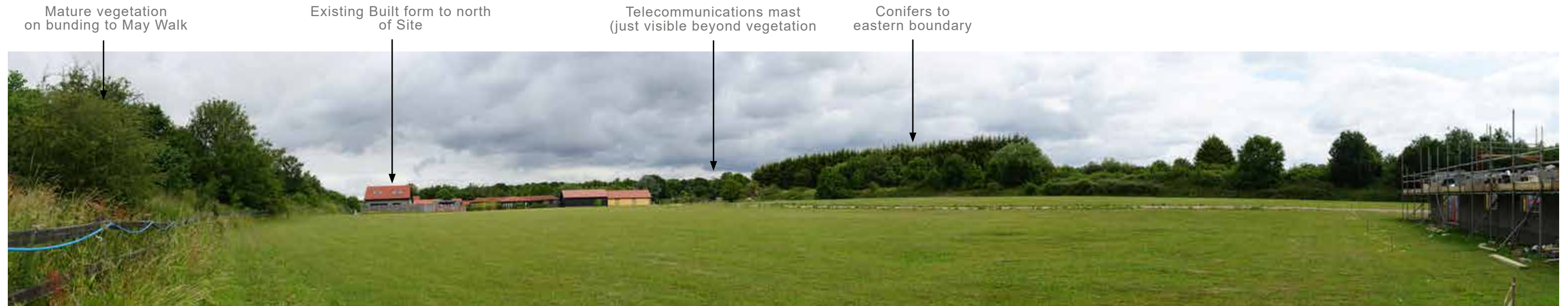
Viewpoint B continued: From within Site looking west towards boundary with May Walk



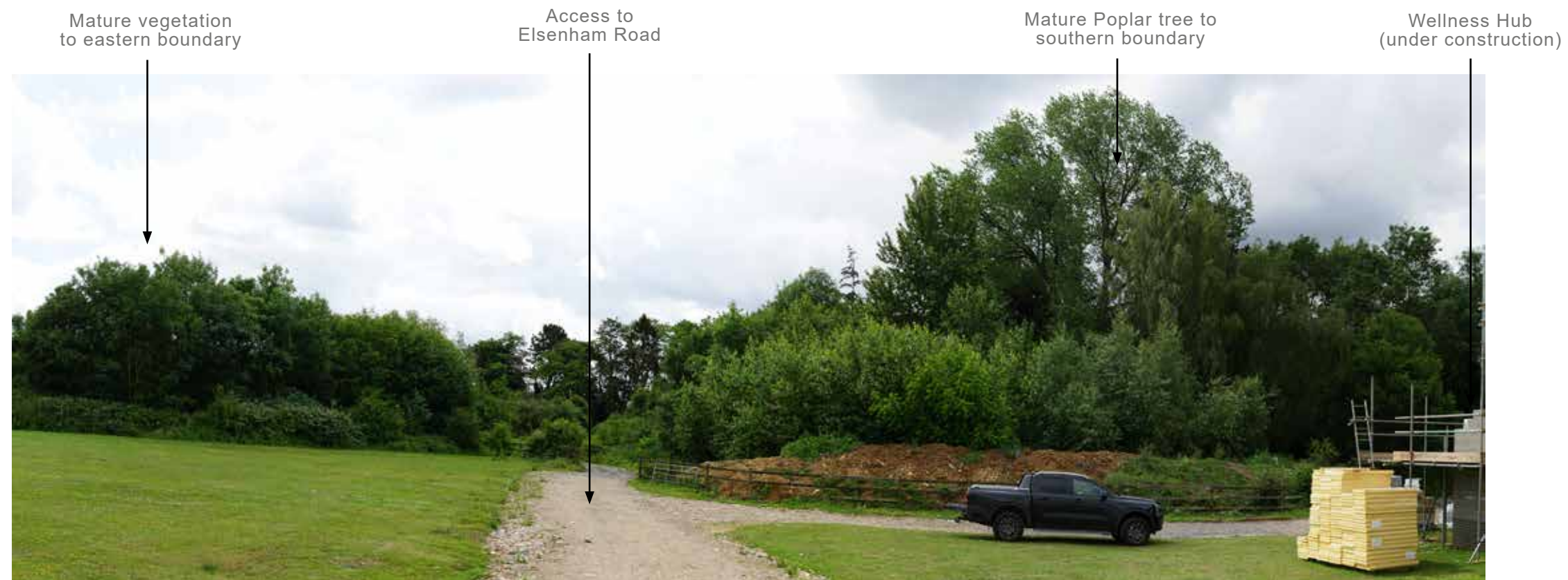
Viewpoint B continued: From south west corner of Site looking north

Figure 6. Site Views A-J continued





Viewpoint C: From south eastern corner looking north west



Viewpoint D: From southern boundary looking south to access

Figure 6. Site Views A-J continued





Viewpoint E: From access track looking north



Viewpoint F: From south eastern corner looking south to proposed Site access

Figure 6. Site Views A-J continued





Viewpoint G: From Site access looking north



Viewpoint H: From south west corner of wider Site looking north east

Figure 6. Site Views A-J continued





Viewpoint J: From north western corner looking south east



Viewpoint I: From north east corner looking south west

Figure 6. Site Views A-J continued



## 6. VISUAL AMENITY

- 6.0.1 The following section examines the visibility of the site from the surrounding area. This appraisal is based on a manual assessment of topography and aerial images which are refined by the field survey (refer to **Figure 6: Site Views A-J**” above, “**Figure 7. Visual Analysis**” and “**Figure 8. Representative Views**” below).

### 6.1 VISIBILITY

#### Views from the Site

- 6.1.1 Views from the Site are contained by existing boundary vegetation on the bunding and the woodland belt to the southern boundary. Although the top of the mast, near Alsa Wood Farm is just visible above the tree line from the south eastern corner of the Site (refer to Site View C), there are no views to the wider landscape from the Site (refer to Site Views A-E).

#### Views towards the Site

- 6.1.2 There are near distance views towards the Site from Elsenham Road (B1051) on the southern boundary (Viewpoints 1-3) and from the Bridleway (PRoW 45-25) known as May Walk, on the western boundary of the Site (Viewpoints 4-6). In these views, only the boundary vegetation is visible which encloses the internal part of the Site. Along May Walk the bunding restricts views completely, while on the southern boundary, the deciduous woodland belt restricts views but it should be noted that the screening ability of this belt will be slightly reduced in winter when the trees are not in leaf.
- 6.1.3 There are middle distance views from PRoW 45-44 4 to the north east of the Site (Viewpoint 7) where the poplar trees at the north west corner of the Site are visible on the skyline beyond the vegetated bunding. There also mid to long distance progressive views from PRoW 45-19 (viewpoints 8- 11). In these views the hedgerow along May Walk and vegetation along the Site boundary restrict views. The recently rebuilt May Tree Farm to the north of the Site is clearly visible and the roof top of one of the existing buildings within Eastfield Stables to the north of the Site is just discernible (refer to full frame view of 10).

- 6.1.4 On the approach to the Site from the west, there are views from Stansted Road (B1051) after the bend in the road at the Old Brick Yard (Viewpoints 12-14). In these progressive views the strong vegetation along the western boundary of the Site along May Walk is visible on the skyline beyond the mature woodland copse within the intervening arable fields.

- 6.1.5 As part of the visual survey, a number of potential viewpoints footpaths near the Site and from higher ground in the wider landscape were assessed, but in these views the Site was not discernible.

### 6.2 VISUAL RECEPTORS

- 6.2.1 GLVIA3 places emphasis on assessing visual effects on public areas and viewpoints, rather than individual private residential properties; however, it is acknowledged that residents may be particularly sensitive to changes in their visual amenity. As part of this assessment the combined effects on a number of different groups of residential properties within the visual envelope have been considered to assess the effect on the community as a whole. When considering views from groups of properties, views from ground floor windows and garden space (which are occupied during waking/daylight hours) are considered to be the most sensitive. It should be noted that in planning terms there is not a private right to a view but the visual amenity of existing residents should be considered.

- 6.2.2 The following section identifies the primary viewpoints and people or visual receptors within the area that are likely to be affected by the change in views and visual amenity resulting from the potential proposed development.

- 6.2.3 Visual receptors i.e. those individuals who would see the site and may experience a change in their view as a result of the proposed development have been identified as follows:

#### Users of Public Rights of Way:

- PRoW 45-25 (Bridleway - known as May Walk) directly to the west of the Site;

- PRoW 45-19 (Footpath) to the northwest/ west of the Site

#### Users of roads:

- Motorists and pedestrians on Stansted Road (B1051)

#### Residential and other properties (private views):

- May Tree Farm to the north of the Site.

### 6.3 SUMMARY OF VISUAL AMENITY

- 6.3.1 With reference to the visibility of the Site, the overall visual amenity of the Site within the context of the Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area is deemed to offer Medium to Low visual amenity, where there are some views towards the Site from relatively well used PRoW which are in close proximity to the Site.

### 6.4 REPRESENTATIVE VIEWS

- 6.4.1 Consideration of the views and visual amenity during the site visit has been undertaken in summer (July 2023) when vegetation was in leaf. As a result, the views shown (in the photographs) represent an almost best case scenario, in terms of the level of screening provided by existing vegetation.
- 6.4.2 Within the study area, a number of representative views of the site have been selected according to distance, the degree of visibility, the nature of the view and the anticipated number or type of potential receptors.
- 6.4.3 All representative views are from public viewpoints and have been categorised by location in relation to the Site and the visual receptors as follows:

#### Near distance views

- Views 1-3: Views from Elsenham Road (B1051) on the southern boundary of the Site;
- Views 4-6 Views from May Walk (PRoW 45/25S to the west of the Site

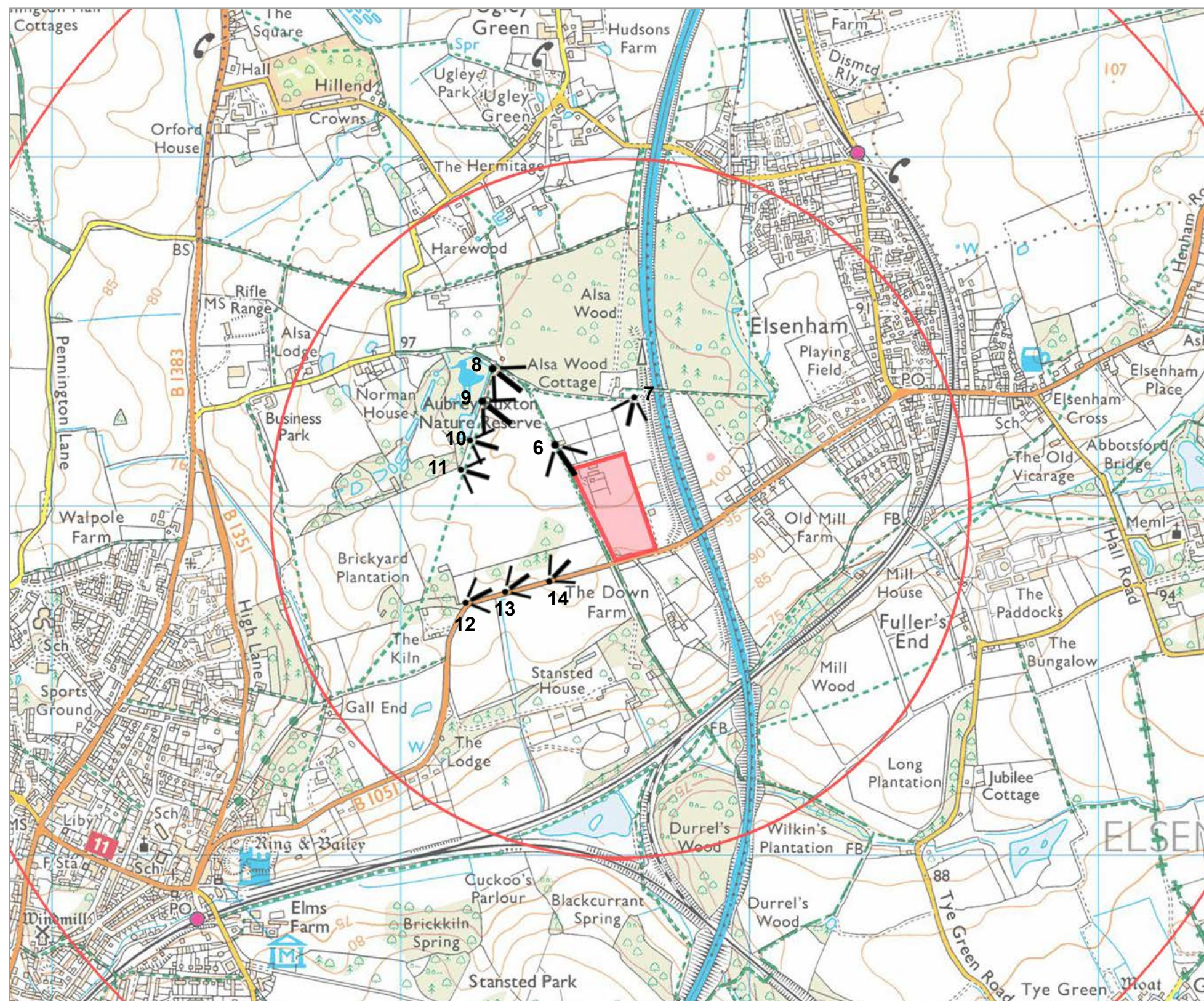


#### **Middle to Long distance views**

- View 7 : PRow 45-44 4 to the north east of the Site
- Views 8-11: Views from PRow 45-19 to the north west of the Site
- Views 12-14: Views from Stansted Road (B1051) to the west of the Site.

6.4.4 Representative views demonstrating the visual amenity of the Site are shown in **Figure 7. Visual Analysis** and **Figure 8. Representative Views**.





# LEGEND

- The Site
- Viewpoint locations
- Public Right of Way (within study area)



Inset of near distance views

May 2019  
Scale: Not to scale @ A3



Figure 6. Visual Analysis





Viewpoint 1: From Elsenham Road at Site entrance looking north west



Viewpoint 2: From Elsenham Road looking north

Figure 7. Representative Views





Viewpoint 3: From Elsenham Road at junction of May Walk looking north east



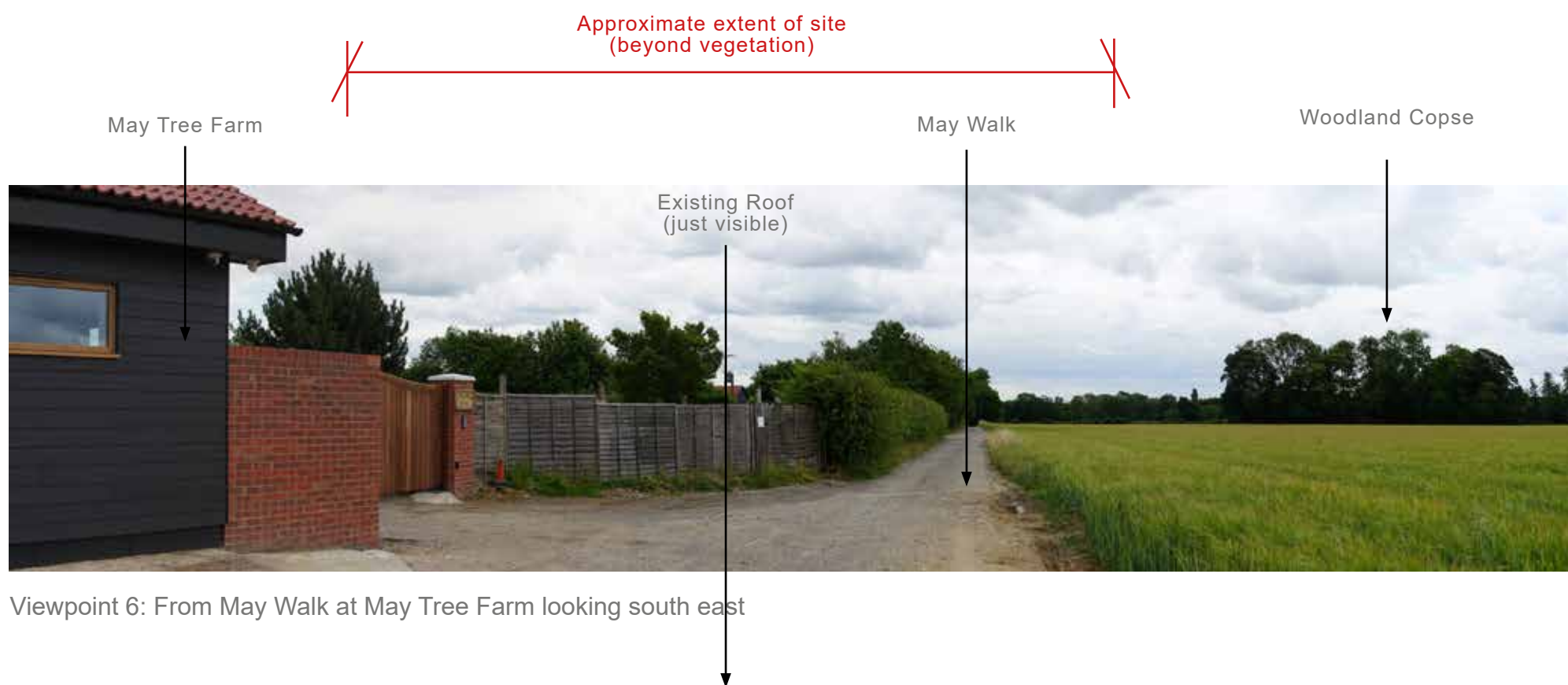
Viewpoint 4: From May Walk, near Elsenham Road looking north east

Figure 7. Representative Views continued





Viewpoint 5: From May Walk at entrance to Eastfield stables looking south east

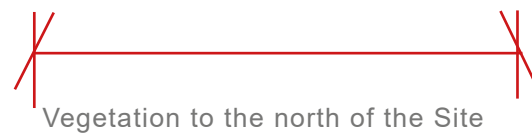


Viewpoint 6: From May Walk at May Tree Farm looking south east

Figure 7. Representative Views continued



Approximate extent of site  
(beyond vegetation)



PRoW 45-44



Viewpoint 7: From PRoW 45-44 near footbridge over M11 looking south west

Approximate extent of site  
(beyond vegetation)



Alsa Wood

May Tree Farm

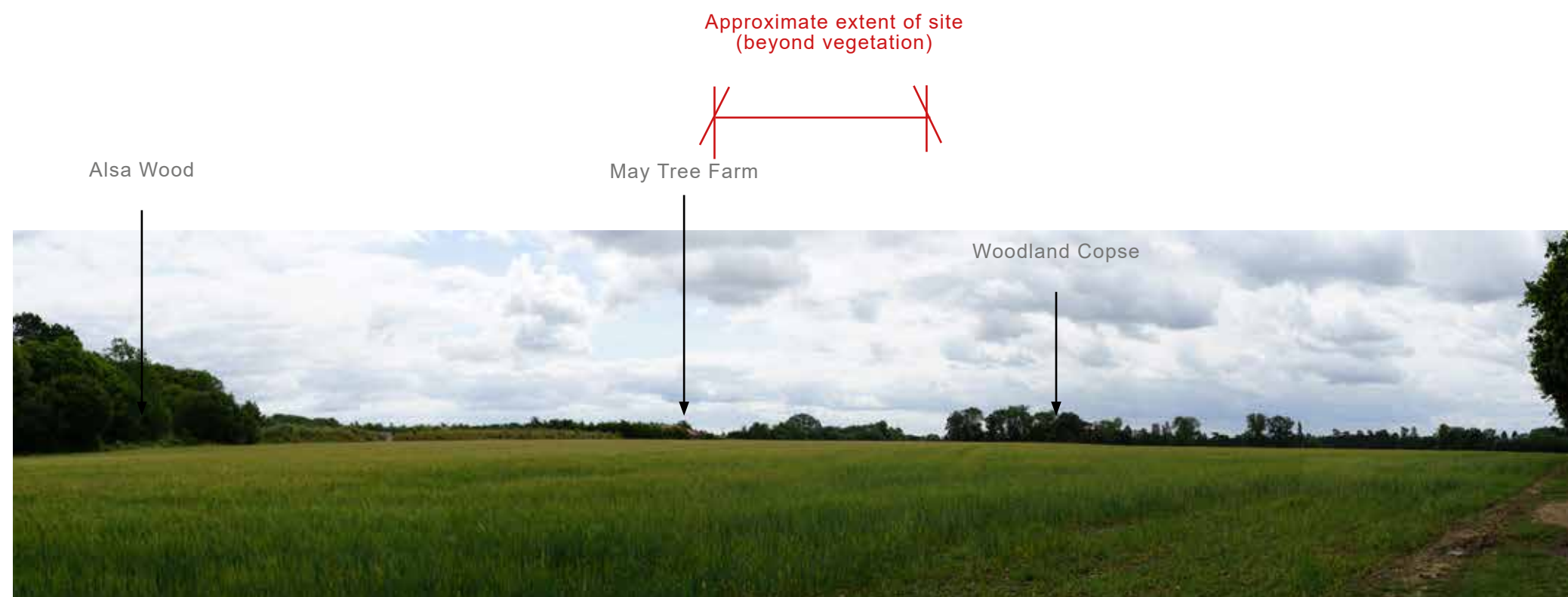
Woodland Copse



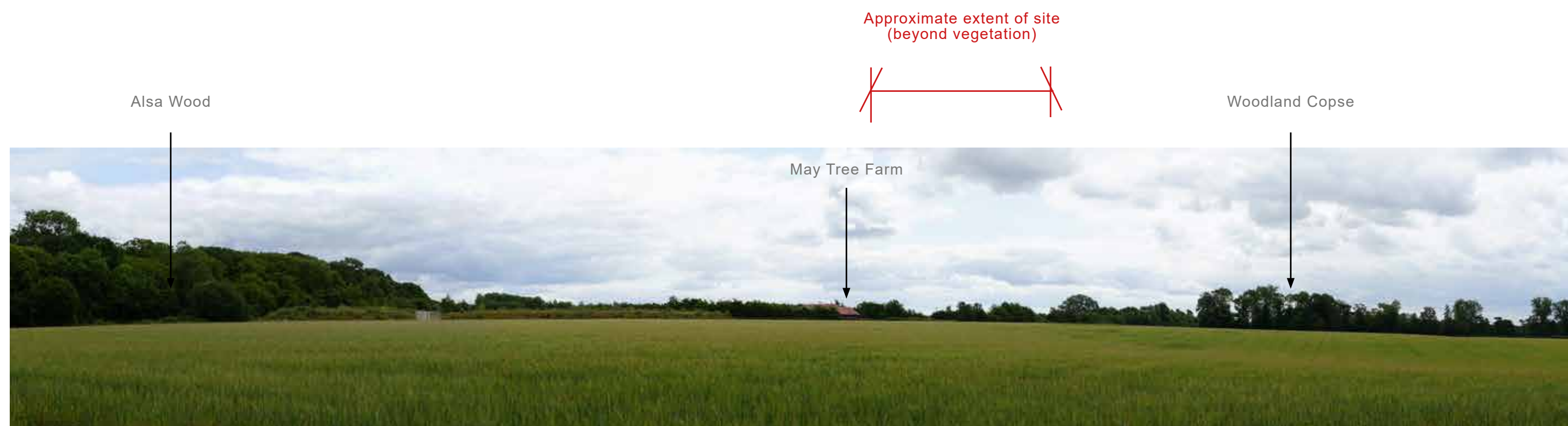
Viewpoint 8: From PRoW 45-19 looking south east

Figure 7. Representative Views continued





Viewpoint 9: From PRow 45-19 looking south east



Viewpoint 10: From PRow 45-19 looking south east

Figure 7. Representative Views continued

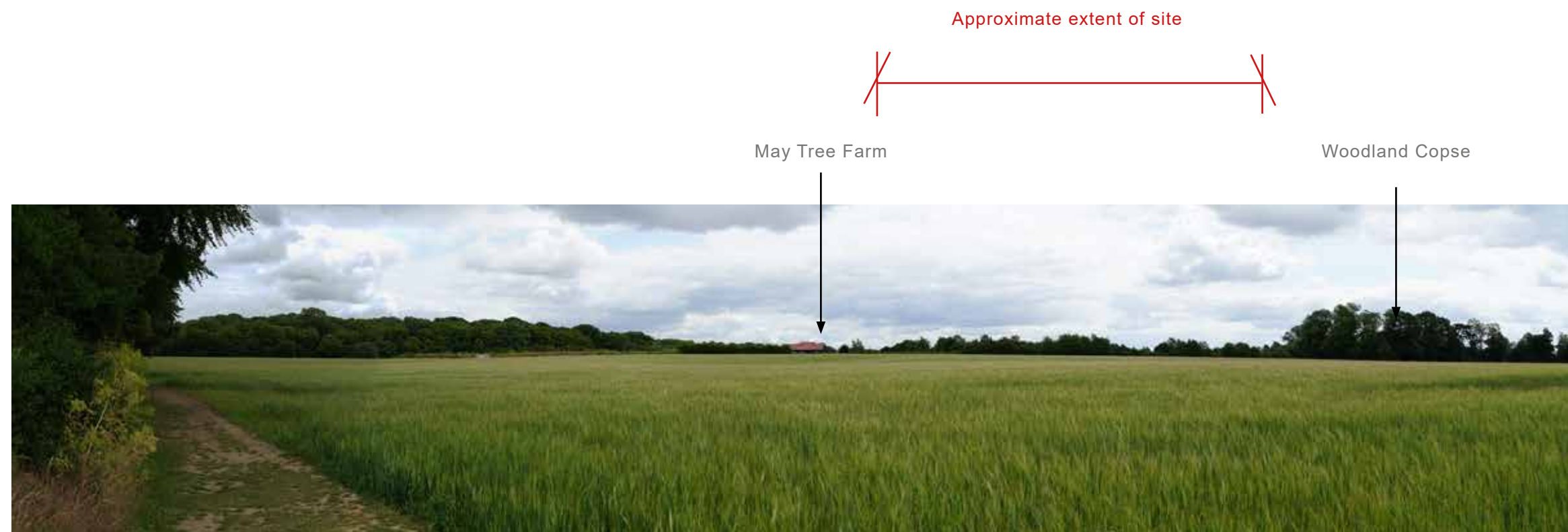




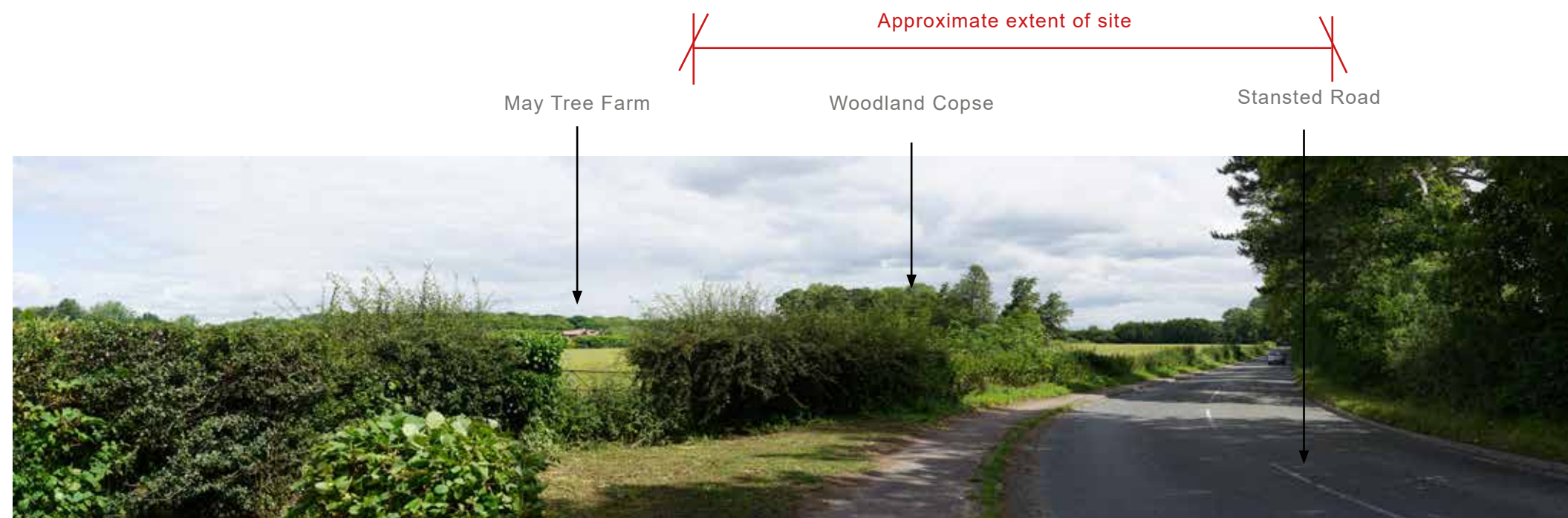
Full frame view of Viewpoint 9

Figure 7. Representative Views continued





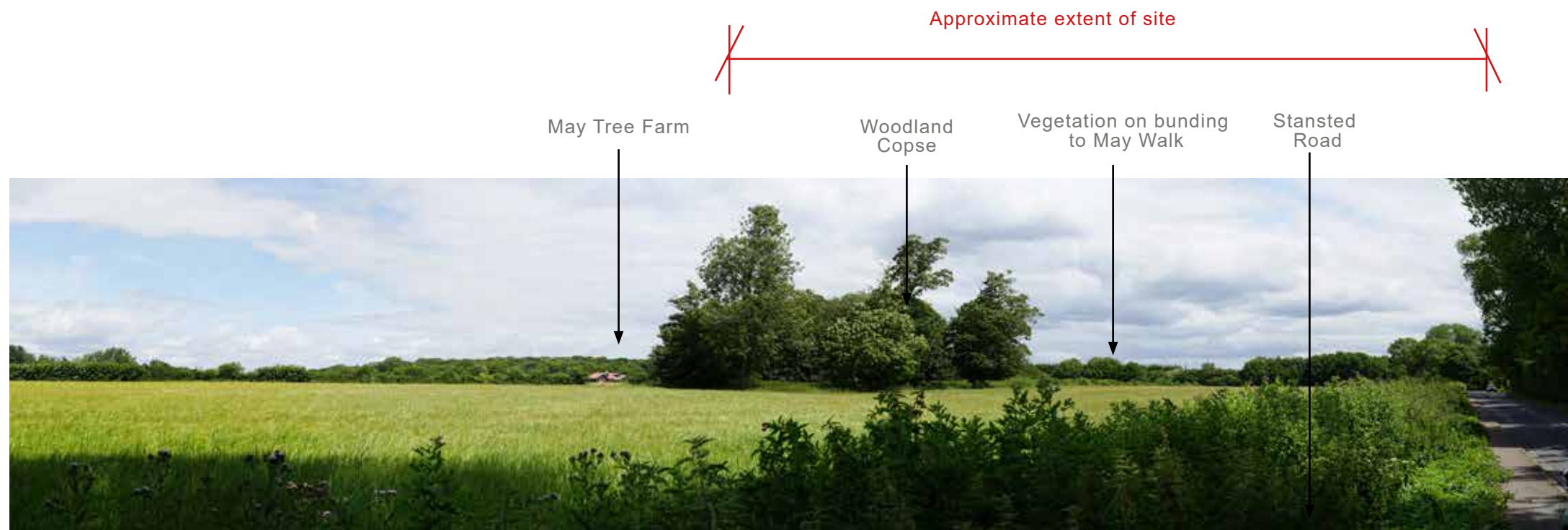
Viewpoint 11: From PRow 45-19 looking south east



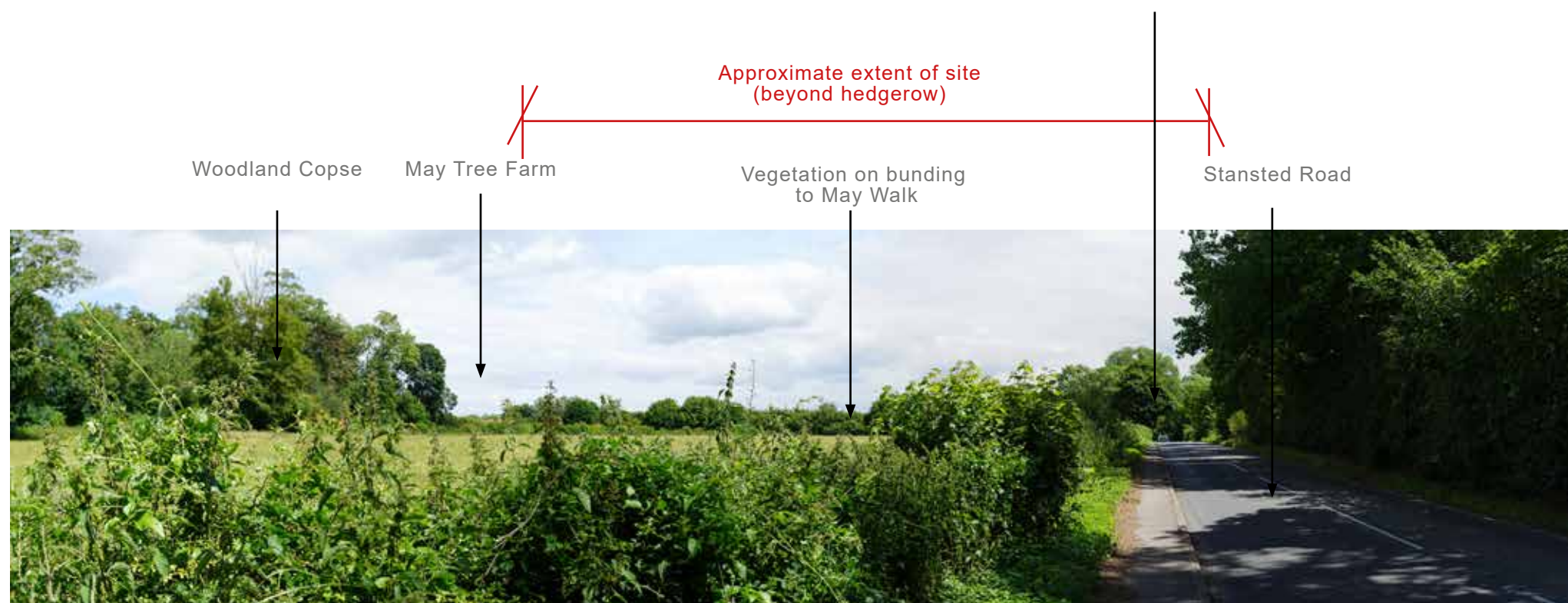
Viewpoint 12: From Stansted Road (B1051) near Old Brick Yard looking north east

Figure 7. Representative Views continued





Viewpoint 13: From Stansted Road (B1051) looking north east



Viewpoint 14: From Stansted Road (B1051) looking north east

Figure 7. Representative Views continued



## 7. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

7.0.1 This section of the report considers the results of the initial baseline work in the context of the potential development of the Site.

### 7.1 DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

7.1.1 The proposed development forms a full application for the erection of 5 detached single storey dwellings at Eastfield Stables, Elsenham, Stansted (the Site). The development includes:

- A low density development of 5 single storey dwellings within a parkland setting on either side of a wide sweeping road with new stable style detached dwellings;
- All plots are proposed to have the same floor plan in different orientations. The floor plan consists of a single story, bungalow style, with 3 bedrooms (one bedroom with ensuite), a study and open plan kitchen/living room.
- Each property would have a private driveway with a double cart lodge/garage and shed.
- Double garages are set back with parking provided to the front;
- Access to the new dwellings will be via the south eastern entry point to the south east corner of the Site. The internal road will be extended to the vicinity of the existing buildings;
- Extensive areas of new tree planting, areas of grassland meadows and native hedgerows to provide a parkland setting to the proposed dwellings;
- Ecological recommendations for placing habitat and bird nesting boxes and proposals for low impact lighting as advised in the preliminary ecological appraisal by Open Spaces Limited, refer to section 4.2. of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, April 2020; and
- The proposed new dwellings have been carefully located within the area of short sward, uniform managed paddocks to retain all the existing vegetation which contributes positively to the rural character of the landscape.

7.1.2 The proposed dwellings are all single storey and will have a similar design and material pallet as the existing buildings to the north of

the Site. This includes traditional materials of black timber cladding and red clay roof tiles which reflect the former equestrian use of the Site.

### 7.2 GENERAL LANDSCAPE PRINCIPALS

7.2.1 The review of current planning policy, in conjunction with the findings of the landscape and visual appraisals, provide the basis for identifying the potential landscape and visual effects of the development of the site.

7.2.2 The design of the proposed development should be well-integrated into the landscape which surrounds the site; the treatment of the Site boundaries, will be key to maintaining the rural character of surrounding countryside.

7.2.3 The Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment for the Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape has an overall strategy to Conserve the landscape by “*seeking to protect and enhance positive features that are essential in contributing to local distinctiveness and sense of place through effective planning and positive land management measures*”. It sets out Landscape Planning Guidelines and Land Management Guidelines which have influenced the approach to mitigation. In particular this includes:

- “*Conserve the rural character of the area.*”
- “*Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern, especially scale and density, and that use of materials, and especially colour, is appropriate to the local landscape character; such development should be well integrated with the surrounding landscape.*”
- “*Encourage sensitive conversion of barns which respects traditional materials, built fabric and landscape character.*”

### 7.3 PROPOSED MITIGATION

7.3.1 The proposed development site consists of a rectangular shaped plot, situated in a rural location to the west of Elsenham and the M11 just within the Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area. Strong vegetation on bunding to the eastern and western

boundaries of the Site enclose the Site. The northern and southern boundaries are open to existing built form, whilst the wider Eastfield Stables site is enclosed by the belt of semi natural woodland on the southern boundary, and further bunding and vegetation to the north. The strong boundary vegetation combined with the woodland blocks in the wider landscape form a wooded landscape on the edge of more open arable land characteristic of the area.

7.3.2 The visibility of the Site from the wider landscape is restricted by these strong boundaries which form bands of woodland on the skyline in views from the open landscape to the west and north west of the Site.

7.3.3 Mitigation measures which are embedded into the proposed illustrative masterplan prepared by Guarda (refer to Figure 8) include:

- The existing hedgerows and trees on the boundaries of the Site are visually important in screening the Site and contribute positively to the rural character of the area. They do not form a constraint to the development and will be retained and enhanced where necessary. This includes:
  - Vegetation on the existing earth bunds to the western and eastern boundaries of the Site;
  - The semi natural woodland belt on the southern boundary of the site to Stansted Road (B1051);
- Access to the site will be gained via the existing entrance at the south eastern corner of the Site and will provide a permanent new access to the proposed buildings on the Site.

7.3.4 Full details of the hard and soft landscape scheme are provided which maximise the ecological and landscape benefits of the scheme and will be supported by a long term management plan. The landscape proposals are shown on the Illustrative landscape masterplan and includes:

- Retention of the vegetation on the earth bunds to ensure the development is well integrated into the surrounding landscape;
- Extensive new native hedgerow planting and hedgerow trees along the main access lane and native hedgerows to form plot



divisions. This will provide a parkland setting to the proposed dwellings;

- Areas of wildflower grassland meadows and generous 3m verges along the access lane;
- Orchard trees within rear gardens to increase biodiversity and provide amenity value to residents;
- A mix of ornamental planting to the frontage of each plot to add a variety of colours, textures and heights against the buildings. Planting will be a mix of flower-rich perennials, grasses and shrubs, to provide additional benefits to biodiversity.

7.3.5 In addition to the above, the ecological mitigation measures as recommended in Section 4.2 of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Open Spaces, July 2023 are integrated into the scheme. This includes:

- Bird, bat and invertebrate boxes;
- New tree and hedgerow planting throughout site (as described above)
- Creation of wildflower/wild-grass meadow within the site (as described above);
- Low impact lighting solution - no lighting of boundary tree lines;
- Inclusion of native/wildlife friendly planting in landscape scheme (as described above); and
- Enhancements defined and secured by way of a BMP (By condition).



DESIGN PARAMETERS

1 TREE LINED ACCESS LANE

The access lane from Elsenham Road is to be resin bound gravel and will be lined with native and native cultivar trees planted into a mixed native hedgerow to retain the rural character of the Site and enhance the Site's ecological value by providing a new green corridor. A generous 3m verge is provided which will be planted with native wildflowers which provide additional value to biodiversity.



Native trees, hedgerows, and wildflowers retain the Site's rural character



Example wildflower planting

2 ORCHARD TREES

To enhance the Site's green cover and add value to biodiversity, each plot will be provided with several fruiting tree species. Fruiting tree species offer both food and shelter to a range of species, and provide amenity value to residents.



Prunus avium 'Summer Sun'



Morus 'Illinois Everbearing'



Malus domestica 'Bramley's Seedling'

3 FRONTAGE PLANTING

A mix of ornamental planting will be proposed to the frontage of each plot to add a variety of colours, textures and heights against the buildings. Planting will be a mix of flower-rich perennials, grasses and shrubs, to provide additional benefits to biodiversity.



Planting for pollinators



Flower-rich planting for biodiversity value



Use of native/native cultivars where appropriate

EXAMPLE PLANTING PALETTE

**Mixed Native Hedge**  
Acer campestre, Corylus avellana, Prunus spinosa, Carpinus betulus, Ilex aquifolium

**Shrubs (7.5 & 10L)**  
Cistus purpureus, Cornus 'Midwinter Fire', Choisya x dewitteana 'Aztec Pearl', Euonymus fortunei 'Emerald Gaiety', Hebe rakaiensis, Hedera helix 'Green Ripple', Hydrangea paniculata 'Limelight', Lavandula angustifolia, Rosa spp., Sarcococca confusa, Viburnum opulus 'Compactum'

**Herbaceous Perennials (2 & 3L)**  
Anemone x hybrida 'Honore Jobert', Bergenia 'Bressingham Ruby', Epimedium x versicolor 'Sulphureum', Geranium x cantabrigiense 'St Ola', Helleborus x hybrida 'Harvington Shades of the Night', Liriope muscari 'Royal Purple', Nepeta 'Six Hills Giant', Rudbeckia 'Goldstrum', Salvia 'Caradonna'

**Grasses & Ferns (3 & 5L)**  
Anemathele lessoniana, Polypodium vulgare, Stipa tenuissima

**Bulbs**  
Narcissus pseudonarcissus, Anemone nemorosa, Galanthus nivalis

**Wildflower Meadow Species**  
Achillea millefolium, Allaria petiolata, Anthriscus sylvestris, Carex divulsa ssp divulsa, Centaurea nigra, Chamaecrista nuttalliana, Cruciatia lewisii, Dipsacus fullonum, Galium album, Geranium pratense, Geranium pyreniacum, Geum urbanum, Knautia arvensis, Leucanthemum vulgare, Malva moschata, Plantago lanceolata, Silene dioica, Silene fls-cuculi, Torilis japonica, Agrostis capillaris, Anthoxanthum odoratum, Brachypodium sylvaticum, Cynosurus cristatus, Deschampsia cespitosa, Festuca rubra, Poa nemoralis

LANDSCAPE MASTERPLAN



**KEY**

- Application boundary
- Illustrative indication of existing trees to be retained. Indicative only.
- Illustrative indication of existing large conifer hedge offsite, to be retained. Indicative only.
- Proposed large tree. Native/native cultivar. Select standard tree, 10-12cm girth, double staked.
  - Ac Acer campestre
  - Cb Carpinus betulus
  - Qr Quercus robur
  - Tc Tilia cordata
  - TcG Tilia cordata 'Greenspire'
  - USAG Ulmus 'Sapporo Autumn Gold'
- Proposed small tree. Select standard tree, 10-12cm girth, double staked.
  - PcC Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer'
  - Sa Sorbus aucuparia
- Proposed Fruit Tree. Half standard tree, 100-125cm clear stem, single staked.
  - MdBS Malus domestica 'Bramley's Seedling'
  - MIE Morus 'Illinois Everbearing'
  - PaSS Prunus avium 'Summer Sun'
  - PyC Pyrus communis 'Conference'
- Mixed Native Hedge
- Ornamental planting beds with shrubs, grasses and herbaceous perennials. 3, 5 & 10L shrubs, perennials and grasses 3-7/m2 with specimens planted as 10L.
- Proposed native woodland wildflower planting or species rich grassland
- Proposed species rich amenity grass
- Indicative residential layout and private landscaping
- Road - Resin bound gravel
- Private Driveways - Loose Gravel
- Private Patios - Buff concrete flags. Size: 450X450.
- Kerb with a 150mm upstand. Silver grey concrete kerb
- Edge to be flush with road. Grey concrete edge

P01	02.08.23	First Issue.	SL	JB
Rev	Date	Comments	Dr	Ch



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+44 (0)1508 630035

Client  
NB Investments (UK) Limited  
Site

Elsenham Road, Stansted

Drawing Title  
Illustrative Landscape Masterplan

Scale	Status
1:500 @ A1	Preliminary
Project	Drawing Number
23030	GUA-DR-L-001
Drawn	Checked
SL	JB
	Date
	August 2023
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EXAMPLE TREE SPECIES



Tilia cordata 'Greenspire'



Hornbeam (Carpinus betulus)



Field Maple (Acer campestre)

ELSENHAM ROAD, STANSTED

Figure 8. Illustrative Landscape Masterplan



# 8. POTENTIAL EFFECTS

## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

- 8.1.1 This section of the report considers the results of the initial baseline work in the context of the future potential development of the Site as described in Chapter 7.
- 8.1.2 The effects on both the landscape resource and visual amenity are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect or cumulative. The assessment involves a systematic assessment of the changes to the receptors identified in the baseline assessment.
- 8.1.3 The assessment of effects requires a methodical consideration of the **sensitivity** of the receptors and the **magnitude of change** from the proposed development.
- 8.1.4 The assessment of effects has been undertaken during construction, on completion of the scheme (Year 1) and at Year 15 when proposed vegetation has matured.

### Construction effects

- 8.1.5 During the construction phase, impacts on landscape components within the site will result from direct changes in land use and alterations to the existing topography, along with the provision of temporary infrastructure such as access and new highway works, site compounds and parking, the storage of materials, erection of temporary fencing/hoardings, use of operational plant and general construction works. All are uncharacteristic features of the landscape, however the effects of the construction phase will be temporary in nature and limited to 12-18 months. All construction works will be carried out in full accordance with best practice to avoid, reduce or limit the extent of effects as far as possible.

### Effects of the Permanent Development and Specific Mitigation

- 8.1.6 The key aspects of the mitigation includes the retention and enhancement of the existing landscape structure; the spatial layout/ location of the proposed buildings and open space; and the scale and mass of the buildings. To take into account, the establishment

of the proposed development (especially new vegetation) the effects have been assessed in the short to medium term (from Year 1) and long-term (15 Years and beyond). As such, the effects of the development at Year 1 are broadly the same as at construction and effects reduce by Year 15, as vegetation matures.

- 8.1.7 The following assessment of Landscape and Visual effects has been based on the information provided in the follow reports and drawings which support the application:
- Design and Access Statement, Ranger Management & Design Services Ltd,
  - Proposed Site Plan and Site Sections, Ranger Management & Design Services Ltd Hill, Feb 2020; and
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Open Spaces, April 2020.

## 8.2 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

- 8.2.1 The effect of the proposed changes to the Site, specifically on the identified landscape receptors (attributes) has been assessed including consideration of changes to the existing landscape resource, the introduction of new elements within the landscape and changes to local perception of the Site.
- 8.2.2 The following assessment of landscape effects should be read in conjunction with the approach to mitigation (refer to Chapter 6).

### Landscape Sensitivity

- 8.2.3 In accordance with GLVIA3, the assessment of Sensitivity is based on a combination of the value attributed to the landscape and the susceptibility of the landscape to the proposed development (refer to Appendix 3 - Methodology: Tables 3 and 4 setting out the criteria used to determine the landscape sensitivity to change.

### Landscape Value

- 8.2.4 The inherent value of the landscape and the Site was assessed as part of the baseline appraisal to be of Medium to Low Value and identified the following receptors:

- The site incorporating:
  - Land use;
  - Boundary trees and vegetation;
  - The overall character of the site.
- Landscape Character
  - The character of the Broxted Farmland Plateau (LCA B10).

### Landscape Susceptibility

- 8.2.5 With reference to the criteria in Appendix 3- Methodology -Table 4) the Site is assessed to be of Low Susceptibility to accommodate the proposed development: although the Site benefits from strong vegetation on its boundaries which contribute positively to the wider landscape, the Site itself is a landscape of ordinary character with some evidence of erosion, has opportunities for restoration and enhancement and has capacity to accommodate the proposed development without affecting the baseline situation.
- 8.2.6 As such the overall sensitivity of the Site is considered to be Low.

### Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 8.2.7 The significance or scale of landscape effects is a function of the **sensitivity** of the landscape resource against the **magnitude of change** that they would experience (refer to Appendix 3 - Methodology and Tables 5 and 10 setting out the criteria used to determine the magnitude of change and significance/ scale of effect.
- 8.2.8 In accordance with GLVIA, significance is not absolute and whilst a judgment is made on both the overall sensitivity of each identified receptor and the magnitude of change, the conclusion is based on the professional judgment of the assessor.

### Magnitude of Landscape Change

- 8.2.9 The components of the landscape identified during the baseline study that may be affected by the proposed development (landscape receptors) were identified and the interactions between



these and the proposed development during construction and following completion were assessed. Such interactions include changes to or loss of existing elements, the introduction of new elements and the combined effect of these changes on the overall character of the area.

8.2.10 The magnitude of landscape change is classified on a sliding scale from high to negligible where high is a prominent and notable change potentially occurring over or influencing a wide area, to low or negligible where changes are small and/or are restricted to the site level. The nature of the impact can be either positive or negative, however, there may be instances where an impact results in an effect that is neither and are considered to be neutral.

8.2.11 The magnitude of landscape change considers the different time-frames over the project life-cycle including the construction phase (temporary) and following completion. To take into account the establishment of the proposed development (in particular proposed vegetation), the effects have been assessed during construction, in the short to medium term (from Year 1) and long-term (15 Years and beyond) when proposed vegetation has matured. Refer to Appendix 3- Methodology: Table 5 .

### Effects on the Landscape Resource

8.2.12 The assessment of landscape effects for the identified landscape receptors are set out below and should be read in conjunction with the Methodology in Appendix 3.

### Land Use

8.2.13 The proposed development will result in a permanent change in land use from disused paddocks to a low density, well designed residential development which will be completely contained within the center of the Site. This change in landuse will be very localised in extent and there will be no effect on the character of the wider landscape. During construction, there will be a temporary disturbance of the existing ground levels arising from the removal and storage of topsoil and excavation for roads, foundations, services and drainage and there will be **Minor Adverse** scale of effect.

8.2.14 The location of the proposed small scale buildings are spread across the Site, within a proposed parkland setting, with a large number of new trees and large areas of grassland meadows which will increase the Site's ecological diversity and provide a landscape benefit in terms of the increase in tree cover. Although there will be an increase in built form, in landscape terms the effect of the associated landscape scheme is considered beneficial, especially in the long term as proposed vegetation matures. By Year 15, the scale of effect will be **Minor Beneficial**.

### Boundary Trees and Vegetation

8.2.15 Existing trees to the boundaries of the Site, namely the vegetated bunding to the east and west are to be retained and protected during construction. Vegetation to the bunding should be protected during construction in accordance with BS5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction to ensure there will be **No Adverse Effects** to existing trees and vegetation during construction.

8.2.16 Existing vegetation already provides a level of structure and screening around the boundary of the Site, which contributes to the rural landscape character of the area within the Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area. Within the Site, extensive areas of new tree planting, areas of grassland meadows and verges along the access road and native hedgerows to form plot divisions are proposed to provide a parkland setting to the proposed dwellings. These measures will benefit the ecological value of the Site and will provide a net gain in the level of vegetation within the site. By Year 15, as vegetation matures, the scale of effect will be **Minor/ Moderate Beneficial**.

### Landscape Character

8.2.17 The Site is enclosed by strong belts of vegetation to the bunding as well as the semi natural woodland to Elsenham Road. These strong landscape features enclose the Site and restrict the visibility of the Site and the existing buildings within the Site. These strong boundaries form bands of woodland on the skyline in views from the open landscape to the west and north west of the Site and

contribute positively to the overall rural character of the Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area. This vegetation is to be retained and protected during construction and there will be a **Neutral** effect on the character of Broxted Farmland Plateau.

8.2.18 The proposed dwellings will be located within these strong boundaries and will be completely contained within the area of open disused paddocks in the center of the Site and provides a low density, well designed residential development. The proposed dwellings are all single storey and will have a similar design and material pallet as the approved conversions, using traditional materials of black timber cladding and red clay roof tiles which reflect the former equestrian use of the Site.

8.2.19 The proposed dwellings will be set within a parkland landscape with extensive areas of new tree planting, areas of grassland meadows and veges to the access road and native hedgerows to form plot divisions which will provide both ecological and landscape benefits. Although there will be little effect of this planting in the short term, by Year 15, as vegetation matures, the increase in vegetation within the Site will benefit the character of the Broxted Farmland Plateau and the scale of effect will be **Minor/ Moderate Beneficial**.



8.3 VISUAL EFFECTS

- 8.3.1 The visual effects are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect or cumulative. The appraisal involves a systematic identification and description of the visual effects, supported by plans and photographs.
- 8.3.2 For the visual receptors identified the degree of change which the Proposals will engender is described and assessed. The assessment has made informed judgments applicable to visual amenity throughout the year, with consideration of seasonal views, e.g. including the summer months when screening vegetation is most effective.

Visual Sensitivity

- 8.3.3 In accordance with GLVIA the sensitivity of visual receptors is dependent on a number of interlinked considerations namely the location and context; the number of people likely to be affected by the change; the expectations and occupation of each receptor; and the importance of the view.
- 8.3.4 Other users of higher sensitivity generally include users of rights of way such as recreational walkers, equestrians and cyclists, along with others engaged in cultural pursuits whose occupation is the enjoyment of the outdoor environment. Users of lower sensitivity generally include users of major trunk routes and A Roads where the primary focus is getting to the intended destination rather than appreciation of their surroundings. Particularly scenic, slow or local routes are generally of medium sensitivity.
- 8.3.5 Consideration of the study area, via desk research and field survey, during the baseline appraisal has identified locations from which the Site is visible. Visual receptors who may experience a change in their view as a result of the proposed development have been identified as follows:

Users of roads:

- Motorists and pedestrians on Elsenham Road/ Stansted Road (B1051), to the south and southwest of the Site; Views 1-3 and 12-14

Users of Public Rights of Way:

- PRoW 45-25 (May Walk) to the west of the Site; Views 4-6
- PRoW 45-44 to the north of the Site; View 7
- PRoW 45-19 to the north west of the Site; Views 8-11

Residential Views (private views):

- Residents of Eastfield Stables to north of Site; Reverse Site Views B, C and F

Other Users

- Users of the Wellness Hub (upon completion); Reverse Site Views B

- 8.3.6 The likely value placed upon views by people or the visual amenity of the locality is evaluated to help assess the effects of the proposed development.
- 8.3.7 An important element in identifying the visual effects of a Proposal is to assess the existing visual receptors (people who see the view) and their susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity. As such the sensitivity of the receptor is a combination of:
- The value attached to the views or visual amenity; and
  - The susceptibility of the visual receptor (the viewer);.

Visual Receptor Susceptibility

- 8.3.8 An important element in identifying the visual effects of a Proposal is to assess the existing visual receptors (people who see the view) and their susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity. 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 the view at 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.
- 8.3.9 With reference to Appendix 3- Table 9, visual receptors of higher

sensitivity with limited susceptibility to change include residents at home (private viewpoints), people engaged in outdoor recreation (including use of PROWs), visitors to heritage assets and other attractions, travelers on recognised scenic routes (public viewpoints from PRoW) and people at their work place where views are an important contributor to the setting and quality of their working life.

- 8.3.10 Travelers on road (motorists and pedestrians,) rail or other transport routes and people engaged in outdoor sport or recreation are considered less sensitive to changes in visual amenity.

Assessment of Visual Effects

- 8.3.11 The significance or scale of visual effects is a function of the sensitivity of the visual receptor against the magnitude of change that they would experience (refer to Appendix 3 - Methodology and Tables 8 and 10 setting out the criteria used to determine the magnitude of change and significance/ scale of effect).
- 8.3.12 In accordance with the GLVIA, significance is not absolute and whilst a judgment is made on both the overall sensitivity of each identified receptor and the magnitude of change, the conclusion is based on the professional judgment of the assessor.

Magnitude of Visual Change

- 8.3.13 Changes to views identified during the baseline study and the subsequent effect on visual receptors were identified and described with reference to the following:
- The nature of the view e.g. full, partial or glimpsed;
  - The proportion of the development or particular features that would be visible;
  - The distance from the Site;
  - Whether the viewer would focus on the development due to its scale and/or proximity or whether it would comprise a small, minor element in a panoramic view;
  - Whether the view is stationary/fixed, transient, or one of a sequence of views experienced along a route or moving vehicle; and



- The nature of the change resulting from the development through the removal or introduction of features (both natural and man-made) and any associated changes to the profile of the skyline, visual simplicity/complexity, enclosure/openness and scale.

### Effects on Visual Amenity

#### Transport Routes

Motorists and pedestrians on Elsenham Road (B1051), to the south and southwest of the Site; Views 1-3 and 12-14

- 8.3.14 Views towards the Site from Elsenham Road (B1051) are completely screened by existing vegetation. In views from the road directly to the southern boundary, where there is a pavement to the north of the road (Views 1-3), views are screened by the deciduous woodland belt to the southern boundary of Eastfield Stables. There is no bunding along this boundary, therefore, there may be filtered views into the proposed development in winter, when trees are not in leaf which pedestrians may experience. The Wellness Hub, currently under construction, is just visible through vegetation (Viewpoint 3).
- 8.3.15 The new entrance to the Site at the south eastern corner of the Site (provided for the Well being Hub) curves into the Site and is surrounded by vegetation which restricts views into the Site (Viewpoint 1). The proposed development is set back beyond the Wellness Hub and beyond the strong vegetation along Elsenham Road.
- 8.3.16 There are some open views towards the Site from Stansted Road (B1051), to the west of the Site, on the approach from Stansted Mountfitchet (Viewpoints 12-14). In these views, both construction activities and the emerging single storey, new dwellings will be within the central part of the Site, beyond the strong vegetated bunding on the western boundary of the Site and will not be visible.
- 8.3.17 As such, the scale of effect on motorists and pedestrians who have a Medium and Low sensitivity respectively, will be predominantly

**Neutral** or **Minor Adverse** for a short section of the road, directly to the south of the Site.

- 8.3.18 On completion, the new development will not be discernible beyond the existing vegetation to the eastern and southern boundaries. Proposed mitigation measures includes the introduction of new native hedges and mature trees to provide a parkland type character to the development. These hedges will establish relatively quickly and will provide further screening of the proposed development as well as wildlife benefits. By year 15 the scale of effect on visual amenity will decrease to **Neutral** for all users of Elsenham Road.

#### Users of Public Rights of Way

Users of PRoW 45-25 (May Walk) to the west of the Site; Views 4-6

- 8.3.19 There are progressive views towards the Site from this bridleway which follows the western boundary of the Site (Viewpoints 4-6). In these views, the Site is screened by the vegetated 2m high bunding along the whole length of the Site. The hedgerow vegetation is well managed to form a dense screen and even in winter when vegetation is not in leaf, views into the site will be restricted by the bunding which is above eye level. Even from a more elevated view from horse-back, the internal part of the Site will not be visible.
- 8.3.20 To the north of the Site near May Tree Farm, the roofline of one of the existing buildings to the north of the Site is just visible from the bridleway, above intervening lower vegetation (refer to Viewpoint 6). Proposed built form is set beyond this and will not be visible. The magnitude of change on visual amenity during construction will be Neutral, resulting in a **Neutral** on the bridleway.
- Users of PRoW 45-44 to the north of the Site; View 7
- 8.3.21 In limited views from PRoW 45-44 where there is a clearing, the poplar trees at the north eastern corner of the Site are visible on the skyline, beyond the vegetation on the bunding to the northern and eastern boundaries of the Site. Construction activities and the emerging single storey, new dwellings will be within the central part of the Site beyond this strong vegetated bunding and will not be

visible. There will be no effect on visual amenity and the scale of effect will be **Neutral**.

PRoW 45-44 to the north of the Site; Users of PRoW 45-19 to the north west of the Site; Views 8-11

- 8.3.22 In views towards the Site from this footpath, there are progressive views towards the Site across open arable fields where the strong boundary vegetation and woodland blocks in the wider landscape form a wooded skyline characteristic of the Broxted Farmland Plateau. The poplar trees at the north eastern corner of the Site and the mature woodland (especially the large Poplar tree) to the southern boundary are important features on the skyline. Construction activities and the emerging single storey, new dwellings will be within the central part of the Site beyond the strong vegetated bunding on the boundaries of the Site and will not be visible. There will be no effect on visual amenity and the scale of effect will be **Neutral**.

#### Residential Views (private views):

Residents of Eastfield Stables to north of Site; Reverse Site Views B, C and F

- 8.3.23 Residents of Eastfield Stables who back onto the Site are in relative close proximity to the Site. Although there will be some temporary disturbance during construction, the proposed dwellings are set back from the boundary within large plots and new native hedgerows are proposed to the boundaries.
- 8.3.24 There are no views from upper storey windows and the proposed dwellings are single storey. The sensitivity to change for residential views from ground floor rooms and outdoor spaces is considered to be Medium and the magnitude of change is also Medium. As such, the scale of effect during construction will be **Moderate Adverse**. Initially the effect of the new hedgerow planting will be limited. Over time, as the hedgerows mature the magnitude of change will reduce to Low and the long term effect of the development will be **Minor Adverse**.



**Other Users**

Users of the Wellness Hub (upon completion); Reverse Site Views B

- 8.3.25 Upon completion, users of the Wellness Hub will be separated from the Site by a hedgerow which forms part of the approved proposals. This hedgerow will in time screen the proposed development. Although there will be some temporary adverse effects during construction, as there are no views from upper storey windows and the commercial nature of the Wellness Hub, the sensitivity of its users is considered to be Low . The magnitude of change will also be Low resulting in temporary Minor Adverse effects during Construction.
- 8.3.26 As the intervening hedgerow matures, the magnitude of chanhe will reduce to Negligible and the resulting scale of effect will reduce to **Negligible**.

**8.4 SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS**

- 8.4.1 This assessment of landscape and visual effects demonstrates that the effect of the proposed development is either Minor Adverse or Neutral due to both its scale and design and its limited visibility due to the strong vegetation to the Site’s boundaries.
- 8.4.2 The landscape mitigation proposes extensive areas of new native hedgerow and tree planting and areas of grassland meadows to provide a parkland setting to the proposed dwellings. In addition all gardens contain fruit trees and ornamental planting beds containing a mix of flower-rich perennials, grasses and shrubs. These measures will benefit the ecological value of the Site and will provide a net gain in the level of vegetation within the site which in the long term will contribute positively to both the character of the Broxted Farmland Plateau and to the visual amenity of residents of Eastfield Stables.users of a number of PRoW in the surrounding landscape.



## 10. CONCLUSION

- 10.0.1 This appraisal shows that the proposed development will have a very limited effect on the landscape of the Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area and the visual amenity of local residents and users of local Public Rights of Way.
- 10.0.2 The Site is situated within Eastfield Stables, in a rural location to the west of Elsenham and is well screened by vegetated bunding to the west, north and eastern boundaries and by a semi natural woodland belt to Elsenham Road (B1051) to the southern boundary. These features, contribute positively to the local landscape providing a wooded skyline to a more open arable landscape which is characteristic of the Broxted Farmland Plateau. These features are to be retained.
- 10.0.3 The proposed development of 5 detached single storey dwellings will be located within these strong boundaries and will be completely contained within the area of open disused paddocks in the center of the Site and provides a low density, well designed residential development. The proposed dwellings will have a similar design and material pallet as the existing buildings to the north and the recently approved Wellness Hub (under construction) to the south which use traditional materials of black timber cladding and red clay roof tiles which reflect the former equestrian use of the Site.
- 10.0.4 Access to the new dwellings will be via the south eastern entry point to Elsenham Road (B1051), the approved access to the Wellness Hub, with a internal lane extending into the Site.
- 10.0.5 The proposed dwellings will be set within a parkland landscape with extensive areas of new native hedgerows and trees along the central lane and plot boundaries. Areas of grassland meadows are proposed along the 3m wide verge to both sides of the access lane and to communal areas. The new features will provide both ecological and landscape benefits contributing to a net gain in the level of vegetation within the site which, in conjunction with the retention of existing vegetation, will contribute positively to the rural character of the Broxted Farmland Plateau. These effects on the landscape resource are considered to be Minor/ Moderate Beneficial.
- 10.0.6 In visual terms, the effects of the proposed development will be minimal as the visibility of the Site from the wider landscape is very limited. There will be some short term Minor Adverse effects to pedestrians on Elsenham Road (B1051) for a short section directly to the southern boundary of the Site, but these effects will only be experienced in winter when trees are not in leaf. Proposed mitigation measures includes the introduction of new native hedges and mature trees to provide a parkland type character to the development. These hedges will establish relatively quickly and will provide further screening of the proposed development as well as wildlife benefits. By year 15 the scale of effect on visual amenity will decrease to Neutral for all users of Elsenham Road. For all other users of footpaths in the surrounding landscape there are no effects on visual amenity.
- 10.0.7 The long term effect of the proposed development on existing residents of Eastfield stables is Minor Adverse and the long term effect on users of the new Wellness Hub is Negligible.
- 10.0.8 With reference to the policies of the Local Plan, the appraisal confirms that the proposed mitigation measures associated with the proposed development, as recommended in this report, will maintain the character of the site's rural location and the features which contribute positively to both the character of the wider landscape and visual amenity.
- 10.0.9 This appraisal demonstrates the importance of the landscape proposals in providing benefits to the landscape and visual amenity within the Site without any adverse effects on the wider landscape of the Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 – SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Updated February 2019
- Uttlesford District Local Plan, 2005
- Natural England, National Character Area (NCA 86) - South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland
- Essex Landscape Character Assessment, Chris Blandford Associates, September 2003.
- Braintree, Brentwood, Maldon and Uttlesford Bourough and District Landscape Character Assessment, Chris Blandford Associates, 2006
- Historic England, The National Heritage List for England, [REDACTED]
- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, GLVIA 3, 2013.
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>).
- Ordnance Survey maps (1:25000 Explorer Series), © Crown Copyright 2015. All rights reserved.



## APPENDIX 2 – GLOSSARY

- **Analysis (Landscape)** - The process of breaking the landscape down into its component parts to understand how it is made up.
- **Assessment (Landscape)** - An umbrella term for description, classification and analysis of landscape.
- **Classification** - A process of sorting the landscape into different types or character areas using selected criteria but without attaching relative values to the different kinds of landscape.
- **Countryside** - The rural environment and its associated communities.
- **Diversity** - Where a variety of qualities or characteristic occurs.
- **Element** - A component part of the landscape (e.g. roads, hedges, woods).
- **Enhancement** - Landscape improvement through restoration, reconstruction or creation.
- **Environment** - Our physical surroundings including air, water and land.
- **Field pattern** - The pattern of hedges and walls that define fields in farmed landscapes.
- **Heritage** - Historical or cultural associations.
- **Landcover** - Combinations of land use and vegetation that cover the land surface.
- **Landform** - Combinations of slope and elevation that produce the shape and form of the land.
- **Landscape** - Human perception of the land conditioned by knowledge and identity with place.
- **Landscape character** - The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how this is perceived by people. Usually referenced to a place or area, landscape character reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement. It creates the particular sense of place of different areas of the landscape.
- **Landscape character type** - A landscape character type will have broadly similar patterns of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, settlement and field pattern nationwide. Not referenced to place i.e. open moorland.
- **Landscape effects** - Change in the elements, characteristics, character and quality of the landscape as a result of development. Effects may be positive or negative.
- **Landscape feature** - A prominent eye-catching element, for example church spire or hilltop.
- **Landscape quality (or condition)** - Is based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape and about its intactness, from visual, functional and ecological perspectives. It also reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements, which make up the character in any one place.
- **Landscape resource** - The combination of elements that contribute to landscape context, character and value.
- **Landscape sensitivity** - The extent to which a landscape can accept change of a particular type and scale without unacceptable adverse effects on its character.
- **Land use** - The primary use of land, including both rural and urban activities.
- **Methodology** - The scientific approach and techniques used for the study.
- **Mitigation** - Measures including any process, activity or design to avoid, reduce or compensate for adverse landscape and visual effects of a development project.
- **Perception (of landscape)** - The psychology of seeing and possibly attaching value and/or meaning (to the landscape).
- **Receptor** - Physical landscape resource, special interest or viewer group that will experience the effect.
- **Sense of place** - The essential character and spirit of an area: genius loci literally meaning ‘spirit of place.’
- **Sustainability** - The principle that the environment should be protected in such a condition and to such a degree that ensures new development needs the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,
- **Visual amenity** - The value of a particular area or view in terms of what is seen.
- **Visual effect** - Change in the appearance of the landscape as a result of development. This can be positive (i.e. beneficial or an improvement) or negative (i.e. adverse or a detraction).
- **Visual envelope** - Extent of potential visibility to or from a specific area or feature.
- **Worst-case situation/scenario** - Principle applied where the environmental effects may vary, for example, seasonally to ensure that the most severe potential effect is assessed.
- **Zone of visual influence** - Area within which a proposed development may have an influence or effect visual amenity.



## APPENDIX 3 – METHODOLOGY FOR LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

### Assessment Approach

A3.1 This report has been prepared in accordance with the guidance contained within the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland* (Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002) and the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, Third Edition (GLVIA3) produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013). This study assesses the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development.

A3.2 Throughout the report, a clear distinction is made between the *landscape context* (the landscape as a resource) and the *visual context* (views/visual amenity):

- Landscape Context: the physical characteristics or elements of the urban and rural environment, which together establish the character of each area e.g. geology, topography, hydrology, land cover, land use, vegetation and settlement pattern; and
- Visual Context: the views of the Site and the proposed development, and the perception in the change of these views by individuals both living in and visiting the area.

A3.3 The assessment of landscape character and visual amenity is both a subjective and objective process. Whilst subjectivity can never be removed, by following a systematic and robust step by step process, rational and transparent conclusions can be drawn.

A3.4 The process of LVIA is therefore based on the following principles and processes:

- Baseline appraisal of the landscape resource and visual amenity of the Site and the surrounding landscape, including desk based research and field surveys to identify the nature of the existing resource. Sources of information for the desk study are listed in Appendix 1;
- Identification of the individual receptors likely to experience change from the proposal;
- A description of the effects, both adverse and beneficial; and
- An assessment of the relative importance/significance of the effects identified.

A3.5 For the purposes of this report, the term ‘impact’ refers to the cause of the change and ‘effects’ are the results or changes on the landscape and visual context.

A3.6 It is important to recognise that the LVIA process can be an integral part of the design process. Following an initial appraisal of the baseline, primary mitigation and enhancement measures can be fed back into the development proposals and its design as part of an iterative approach. Additional secondary mitigation and monitoring measures including construction management practices to avoid or reduce landscape and visual effects are identified where necessary.

A3.7 The review of current and draft planning policy, in conjunction with the findings of the baseline survey, provide the basis for identifying the potential landscape and visual effects of the development of the site.

A3.8 The Guidelines emphasize that any LVIA should be in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its likely effects. This Methodology sets out the range of potential activities for an Assessment; for smaller projects, the principles will be followed but the scope of work may be reduced.



Baseline Appraisal of the Landscape Context

- A3.9 The baseline study includes a combination of desk and fieldwork in order to identify the existing character of the landscape, and the elements, features and combinations of features and less tangible attributes such as their aesthetic and perceptual aspects that contribute to it.
- A3.10 The location of the Site is identified in the published National Character Areas Profiles, County and Local Landscape Character Assessments, supplementary planning documents such as green infrastructure proposals, countryside strategies, and published mapping.
- A3.11 This analysis provides an understanding of the landscape components within the site that contribute to the landscape;
- topography, land-cover, land use, vegetation, settlement and buildings for example;
  - Landscape character and its key characteristics that contribute it; and
  - The aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape;

Identifying Landscape Receptors

- A3.12 As part of the baseline study the components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposals, often referred to as the landscape receptors, are identified. These include the overall character and key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects.

Landscape Value

- A3.13 As part of the baseline study the value of the landscape is assessed taking into account the presence of statutory and non-statutory designations and the reasons for their designation, in conjunction with the objectives for the District Landscape Character Assessment including:
- Landscape quality- the condition and overall strength of character

- of the site and surrounding area;
- The importance, value or special qualities placed on the landscape including scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects including tranquillity, and cultural association.
  - The objectives of landscape strategies and guidance.
- A3.14 These are summarised in Table 1.

Value	<b>Designations / Landscape Quality</b>  Landscape designations, condition and strength of character and degree to which the landscape is representative of the wider area
High	<b>Internationally or Nationally Important Landscapes</b> e.g.: National Park,AONB Registered Parks and Gardens, National Trust Land, <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Distinct landscape structure with strong pattern and intact features / few detractors or uncharacteristic features present.</li><li>• Features noted as highly distinctive and/or rare and in excellent condition.</li><li>• Management objectives require conservation of landscape character.</li></ul>
Medium	<b>Landscapes Important at a Regional/District Level</b> e.g.: Special Landscape Areas / Features <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognisable landscape structure and characteristic patterns / some detracting features present.</li><li>• Features noted as a particularly characteristic and/valuable component of the landscape.</li><li>• Management objectives require conservation and restoration of landscape character.</li></ul>
Low	Ordinary landscapes / not designated <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Degraded landscape structure with fragmented pattern and poor legibility of character / detracting features notable within the landscape.</li><li>• Common features and/or in poor condition.</li><li>• Management objectives required restoration of landscape character.</li></ul>

Table 1. Assessing Landscape Value



Baseline Appraisal of the Visual Context

- A3.15 The Visual Baseline Appraisal is an evaluation of the existing visual amenity in the locality of the Site and the contribution that the Site makes to existing visual amenity.
- A3.16 Specific evaluations from identified viewpoints are used for the assessment of visual effects. A viewpoint is a place from where there is a potential view of the Proposals and the visibility of the Proposals is the extent to which they may be seen from public viewpoints and private properties. Viewpoints fall broadly into three groups:
- Representative: illustrating views from within a wider area e.g. views representative of a group of houses or a street or along a public right of way;
  - Specific: demonstrating views from key locations such as visitor destinations or recognised viewpoints, views from protected landscapes or with particular cultural associations; and
  - Illustrative: demonstrating a particular effect or specific issue e.g. restricted visibility in an area where views might be anticipated.
- A3.17 All public places and residential properties that might have a view of the Proposals are identified. Unless special circumstances prevail, access is not made to the interior of residential properties. The orientation of dwellings and surrounding vegetation that may influence views are noted. If the visual survey is made when vegetation is in leaf, an assessment is also made of the likely winter views.
- A3.18 At each viewpoint, baseline photographs are taken to record the existing view. All photographs are taken during the day with a digital camera at a focal length of 50mm and an eye height of 1.65m in accordance with technical guidance and best practice. The weather and visibility at the time of the survey is recorded.

Identifying Visual Receptors

- A3.19 The location of people who may experience changes in views

(visual receptors) is identified and representative viewpoints are recorded. Information about the type of views are also recorded; for example the elevation of the view; a full, partial or glimpsed view; the proportion of the development that would be visible; the distance of the viewpoint from the development; the scale and proximity of the view of the development; whether the view is stationary, transient or sequential.

- A3.20 Distance is dependent on the nature of the setting. A close view is defined as a view from within the immediate vicinity of the proposed development. Other views are defined as:
- Local: within 0.5km of the development
  - Medium distant: 0.5km to 2km from the development
  - Distant: 2km or more from the development.
- A3.21 The visual receptors may include:
- Users of properties: such as residents, employees or visitors;
  - Users of public rights of way: public footpaths, bridleways, byways and permissive paths;
  - Users of transport routes: main roads and residential streets; and
  - Places accessible to the public, including open space areas, gardens and other destinations.

Value of Views / Visual Amenity

- A3.22 The existing visual amenity from principal viewpoints is assessed using published surveys if they exist or using the professional judgement of an experienced landscape architect using the criteria in Table 2 to define the value attached to particular views and a judgment on visual amenity.
- A3.23 The visual amenity/value of existing views was noted in the baseline appraisal taking into account the presence of statutory and non-statutory designations (including those from heritage assets), and with reference to other indicators such as appearance in guidebooks or maps.

Level	Visual Amenity
High	Visual amenity assessed as good to excellent; an area of high scenic value to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nationally recognised or important views such as those protected by policy e.g. National Park / AONB or a national trail / route.</li><li>• Designed views.</li><li>• Views to or from designated heritage assets, views from recognised tourist destinations, views marked on maps or referred to in art / literature.</li></ul>
Medium	Visual amenity assessed as average to good to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Views which are locally recognised including those protected by local policy eg. visually important open space or special landscape area.</li><li>• To or from locally important heritage assets.</li><li>• Views from local destinations and well used footpath routes.</li></ul>
Low	Areas of average to low visual amenity to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Views which are not recognised or have limited value, such as footpaths which are not well used.</li><li>• Detracting features may be clearly apparent.</li></ul>

Table 2. Assessing Visual Amenity

Assessing the Landscape Effects

- A3.24 The landscape effects are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect or cumulative. The assessment involves a systematic assessment of the changes to the landscape receptors identified in the baseline assessment.
- A3.25 The assessment of the landscape effects requires a methodical consideration of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of change from the proposed development

Assessing Sensitivity of the Landscape Receptors

- A3.26 The sensitivity of the landscape receptors is defined by a combining judgments of their susceptibility to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape as defined in the baseline appraisal.
- Susceptibility + Landscape Value = Landscape Sensitivity
- A3.27 The sensitivity of the landscape / landscape components is classified on a sliding scale from high to low and is determined by a combination of value and susceptibility as set out in the matrix in Table 3.

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

Table 3. Sensitivity Matrix

Landscape Susceptibility to change

- A3.28 The susceptibility (ability) of the landscape to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences on the local landscape character is assessed on:
- the potential for mitigation;
  - the capacity of the landscape to accommodate the proposed development; and
  - the extent of the proposals being in accordance with management or policy objectives.
- A3.29 The susceptibility of the landscape and its landscape components is classified on a sliding scale from high to low as set out in Table 4.
- A3.30 Those landscape components, which make a notable contribution to character and can not accommodate the proposed development or change without affecting the baseline situation and/or achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies have a high susceptibility, while those resources which are replaceable or contribute little to the overall character of the landscape and can accommodate the change without affecting the baseline situation have a low susceptibility.

Landscape sensitivity

- A3.31 Those landscape components, which make a notable contribution to the character and can not accommodate the proposed development or change without affecting the baseline situation and/or achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies are of high sensitivity. Those resources which are replaceable or contribute little to the overall character of the landscape and can accommodate the change without affecting the baseline situation are of low sensitivity.

Level	Landscape Susceptibility to Change
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Features which are dominant within the landscape and are fundamental in defining the distinct landscape character of an area.</li><li>• Important characteristics and features forming an intrinsic part of the landscape.</li><li>• Distinctive individual or rare features.</li><li>• No or very limited potential for substitution or replacement.</li><li>• A landscape of strong positive and distinctive character with limited capacity to accommodate the proposed development without affecting the baseline situation.</li><li>• Low potential for replacement or for mitigation</li></ul>
MEDIUM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Locally important and notable features that contribute to the overall character of the area.</li><li>• Features and elements protected by local policy.</li><li>• Some potential for substitution or replacement.</li><li>• A landscape of positive character with some evidence of erosion with some capacity to accommodate the proposed development without affecting the baseline situation.</li><li>• Specific opportunities for replacement, restoration or enhancement.</li></ul>
LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Elements that make a limited contribution to the overall character of the area.</li><li>• Features or elements that are uncharacteristic and detract from the landscape character of the area.</li><li>• Good potential for substitution or replacement.</li><li>• A landscape of ordinary character with some evidence of erosion and capacity to accommodate the proposed development without affecting the baseline situation.</li><li>• Opportunities for restoration and enhancement.</li></ul>

Table 4. Assessing Landscape Receptor Susceptibility



### Magnitude of Landscape Change

A3.32 The description of the magnitude of change includes the likely extent, scale and duration of:

- Changes to the existing landscape fabric (eg the loss of trees and hedges or other landscape features)
- New elements introduced to the Site (built and natural)
- Changes to local perceptions of the Site.

A3.33 The descriptions inform a judgement on the magnitude of landscape change classified on a sliding scale from High to Negligible based on the criteria established in Table 5. Changes can be positive or negative.

A3.34 A High magnitude of Change is described as a prominent and notable change potentially occurring over or influencing a wide area and a Low or Negligible Magnitude of change describes changes that are small and/or are restricted to the site level.

A3.35 The effect of the proposed changes to the Site and the identified landscape receptors considers the changes to the existing landscape resource, the introduction of new elements within the landscape and changes to local perceptions of the Site. These changes are assessed during construction, on completion of the scheme (Year 1) and at Year 15 when proposed vegetation has matured.

MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	LANDSCAPE CHANGE EXPERIENCED as a result of the Proposals	
	Negative	Positive
<b>High</b>  Changes relate to a wide area and will be apparent as such in the wider landscape of the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Result in the permanent loss of characteristic landscape elements and features/characteristics and/or their setting;</li> <li>• Introduce uncharacteristic or dominant elements;</li> <li>• Be at complete variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Substantially erode landscape character and/or condition;</li> <li>• Undermine any designation or the nature of a vulnerable landscape;</li> <li>• Be at complete variance with the landscape objectives and policy guidelines for the area;</li> <li>• Be incapable of mitigation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain the majority of existing landscape components and/or enable the full restoration and/or replacement of characteristic landscape elements and features;</li> <li>• Introduce new landscape elements and features that through good design enables a sense of place to be fully restored;</li> <li>• Have a strong contextual fit with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Substantially enhance landscape character and/or condition;</li> <li>• Deliver substantial landscape objectives and policy guidelines for the area; and be fully capable of mitigation.</li> </ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Result in the partial loss or alteration of characteristic landscape elements and features and/or reduce or remove their setting;</li> <li>• Introduce uncharacteristic components alongside characteristic features or elements;</li> <li>• Be at odds with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Be a noticeable change, although not necessarily uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape;</li> <li>• Result in a deterioration of landscape character and/or condition;</li> <li>• Be at variance with the landscape objectives and policy guidelines for the area; and be capable of some mitigation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain existing key features and/or enable partial restoration of characteristic landscape elements and features;</li> <li>• Introduce new landscape elements and features that through good design enables sense of place to be restored;</li> <li>• Fits well with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Enhance landscape character and/or condition;</li> <li>• Deliver some landscape objectives and policy guidelines for the area;</li> <li>• Be capable of mitigation to deliver local benefits.</li> </ul>
<b>Low</b>  Changes are localised in extent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Result in the temporary or minor loss or alteration of landscape elements and features and/or reduce their setting;</li> <li>• Introduce some uncharacteristic components alongside characteristic features or elements;</li> <li>• Not quite fit with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Be a discernible change, although not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape;</li> <li>• Result in a minor deterioration of landscape character and/or condition;</li> <li>• Not fulfil landscape objectives and policy guidelines for the area;</li> <li>• Be capable of mitigation that maintains existing scenario.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development would from the baseline condition:</li> <li>• Retain existing key features and/or allow limited restoration of characteristic landscape elements and features;</li> <li>• Introduce new landscape elements and features that through good design enables some sense of place to be restored;</li> <li>• Respects the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;</li> <li>• Enables limited enhancement of landscape character and/or condition;</li> <li>• Deliver limited landscape objectives and policy guidelines for the area;</li> <li>• Be capable of mitigation to ensure that the proposals would blend in well with the surrounding landscape.</li> </ul>
<b>Negligible</b>	The development would introduce barely discernible elements or physical change to the landscape from the baseline condition. Key characteristics of the landscape and its integrity are unaffected.	

Table 5. Assessing Magnitude of Landscape Change

Assessing the Visual effects

- A3.36 The visual effects are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect or cumulative. The assessment involves a systematic identification and description of the visual effects, supported by plans and photographs.
- A3.37 The assessment of the visual effects requires a methodical consideration of the sensitivity of the visual receptors and the magnitude of change from the proposed development.

Assessing Sensitivity of the Visual Receptors

- A3.38 The sensitivity of the people and user groups within the visual envelope of the Site (visual receptors), is defined by combining judgements of their susceptibility to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value of the views which were identified during the baseline study.
- Susceptibility + Value = Sensitivity
- A3.39 The sensitivity of the visual receptors is classified on a sliding scale from high to low and is determined by a combination of value and susceptibility as set out in the matrix in Table 6.

		VALUE / VISUAL AMENITY		
	SENSITIVITY	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
SUSCEPTIBILITY	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 6. Sensitivity Matrix

Visual Susceptibility to change

- A3.40 Susceptibility is classified on a sliding scale from High to Low based on the criteria set out in Table 7.

Visual Sensitivity

- A3.41 In accordance with GLVIA, the sensitivity of visual receptors is dependent on the location and context of the view, the number of people likely to be affected by the change, the expectations and occupation/activity of the receptor and the importance of the view, including the presence of designations.
- A3.42 Those receptors which are classified as being of high sensitivity include users of rights of way or nearby residents, while those of low sensitivity may include people in their place of work or travelling through the landscape in cars or other modes of transport. The assessment of views from private residences, particularly those bordering the site is based on representative views from groups of dwellings or streets based on the nearest possible publicly accessible location.
- A3.43 Local residents tend to have a high sensitivity to visual changes; the most important views being those from homes, although residents will also be sensitive to views from the wider landscape when travelling or walking. Views from private property are not a material consideration in determining planning applications unless the proposed change is so intrusive as to cause unacceptable harm to residential amenity.
- A3.44 Other users of higher sensitivity generally include users of rights of way including recreational walkers, equestrians and cyclists, along with others engaged in cultural pursuits whose occupation is the enjoyment of the outdoor environment. Users of lower sensitivity generally include users of major trunk routes and A Roads where the primary focus is getting to the intended destination rather than appreciation of their surroundings. Particularly scenic, slow or local routes are generally of medium sensitivity.

Level	Visual Susceptibility
<b>HIGH</b> Observers whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape and recognised views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Specific recognised or important views, including those identified within and protected by policy. These views may include tourist destinations and those marked on maps.</li><li>Designed views particularly from within and to historic landscapes.</li><li>Residential properties with views from the main living space during daylight / waking hours (predominantly ground floor).</li><li>Users of rights of way and recreation trails.</li><li>Users of land with public access including Open Access and National Trust land.</li></ul>
<b>MEDIUM</b> Views of the landscape are part of, but not the sole purpose of the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Residential properties with views from rooms not from the main living space unoccupied during daylight / waking hours (predominantly first floor rooms) or at distance from the Site.</li><li>Those playing or spectating at outdoor sports or undertaking formal outdoor recreation.</li><li>Users of local and scenic/tourist routes and low levels of traffic.</li></ul>
<b>LOW</b> Attention is focused upon the activity and not the wider landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Users of trunk and main roads travelling at speed to an intended destination.</li><li>Places of work, in particular office based or indoor workers.</li></ul>

Table 7. Assessing Visual Receptor Susceptibility



Magnitude of Visual Change

A3.45 Changes to views identified during the baseline study and the subsequent effect on visual receptors were identified and described with reference to the following:

- The nature of the view of the development e.g. full or partial views, or only a glimpse;
- The proportion of the development or particular features that would be visible;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the Site;
- Whether the viewer would focus on the development due to its scale and/or proximity or whether it would comprise a small, minor element in a panoramic view;
- Whether the view is stationary/fixed, transient, or one of a sequence of views experienced along a route or moving vehicle; and
- The nature of the change resulting from the development through the removal or introduction of features (both natural and man-made) and any associated changes to the profile of the skyline, visual simplicity/complexity, enclosure/openness and scale.

A3.46 The description was used to inform a judgement on the magnitude of visual effects classified on a sliding scale from High to Negligible based on the criteria established in Table 8. High is described as a prominent and notable change in the view with Low or Negligible a small and/or barely perceptible degree of change in a wider composition. The nature of the effect can be either positive or negative. There may be instances where an impact results in an effect that is neither; these are considered to be neutral in nature.

MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	VISUAL CHANGE EXPERIENCED as a result of the Proposals	
	Negative	Positive
<b>High</b> Changes effect a large number of receptors; A wide area; The duration of the view is prolonged, uninterrupted and/or unavoidable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposal results in the total, permanent loss of a highly valued view.</li><li>• Proposal introduces dominant or discordant elements altering the composition or balance of the view.</li><li>• Proposal introduces features not already present on/or part of the skyline.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposal removes substantial visual detractors.</li><li>• Proposal introduces positive elements that substantially enhance the composition of the view.</li><li>• Development introduces an immediately apparent landmark or feature.</li></ul>
<b>Medium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposal is clearly visible and recognisable but not prominent in views.</li><li>• Proposal introduces elements that are not necessarily already characteristic and/or are incongruous;</li><li>• Development may form skyline features amongst existing development and/or vegetation.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposal removes some visual detractors.</li><li>• Proposal is a visible but characteristic element complementing the composition of the view.</li></ul>
<b>Low</b> Changes effect a low number of receptors; A localised area; The duration of the view is fleeting or interrupted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposal is only a minor component or slightly uncharacteristic part of the view and does not introduce incongruous features.</li><li>• Proposal does not alter the overall composition of the view or dominance or balance of elements within it and therefore might be missed by a casual observer.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposal removes limited visual detractors.</li><li>• Proposal is only a minor component of the view and complements the composition and balance of existing elements.</li></ul>
<b>Negligible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposal is perceived as a background component in a view or are subservient to other elements within it.</li><li>• The development would be barely discernible.</li></ul>	

Table 8. Assessing Magnitude of Visual Change

**Assessing the Significance (scale) of the Effects**

A3.47 The significance( or scale) of both the landscape and visual effects is a function of the sensitivity of the landscape / visual receptor and the magnitude of change that they would experience:

Sensitivity + Magnitude of Change = Significance

A3.48 Effects can be considered to be Adverse, Neutral or Beneficial and may vary over time, as set out in Table 10. Generally, the effects of a development are assessed on completion of the scheme. However the effects during the construction phase should also be considered (these might be particularly relevant in long term or large scale projects such as mineral extraction projects).

A3.49 In accordance with the GLVIA, significance is not absolute and whilst a judgement is made on both the overall sensitivity of each identified receptor and the magnitude of change, the conclusion is based on the professional judgement of the assessor.

A3.50 The nature and relative significance of the effects depends on the degree to which the Proposals:

- Complements, respects and fits into the existing landscape and views;
- Enables retention, enhancement or restoration of landscape character and visual amenity and delivers landscape guidelines and/or policy aspirations; and
- Influences the visual context and in particular strategic and important views.

		MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE Landscape/ Visual			
	Sensitivity	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	NEGLIGIBLE
SENSITIVITY	HIGH	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Neutral
	MEDIUM	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Neutral
	LOW	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Minor	Neutral

Table 9. Significance / Scale of Effect Matrix

LEVEL	SIGNIFICANCE / SCALE OF EFFECT
Major adverse effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change the landscape character type to a major degree with a total loss or major alteration to key attributes.</li><li>• Proposed changes cannot be mitigated and will be completely uncharacteristic and/or introduce elements that are totally uncharacteristic of the surrounding area.</li><li>• The Proposals would be visually intrusive and would result in a substantial deterioration to visual amenity;</li></ul>
Moderate adverse effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change the landscape character type to a moderate degree with a partial loss of key attributes.</li><li>• Proposed changes cannot be fully mitigated and will be uncharacteristic and/or introduce elements that are prominent but may not be substantially characteristic of the surrounding area.</li><li>• The Proposals would be visually intrusive and would result in a noticeable deterioration to visual amenity.</li></ul>
Minor adverse effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change the landscape character type to a minor degree with a minor loss of key/characteristic elements/features;</li><li>• Proposed changes cannot be fully mitigated and will be uncharacteristic and/or introduce elements that may not be uncharacteristic of the surrounding area.</li><li>• The Proposals would cause limited visual intrusion and would result in a barely perceptible deterioration to visual amenity;</li></ul>
Negligible/Neutral effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where the proposals will be in keeping with the landscape character type;</li><li>• Proposed changes result in the removal of incongruous/ intrusive elements and the introduction of new elements;</li><li>• The development would result in very limited change to the existing landscape resource or visual amenity.</li></ul>
Minor beneficial effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reinforce/complement the landscape character type to a minor degree and make a minor improvement to landscape character;.</li><li>• Proposed changes result in the removal of incongruous/ intrusive elements and the introduction of new elements and/or introduce elements that are characteristic of the surrounding area maintaining landscape character.</li><li>• The Proposals would visually complement the existing view and would result in a barely perceptible improvement to visual amenity.</li></ul>
Moderate beneficial effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reinforce the landscape character type to a moderate degree and make a noticeable improvement to the landscape character through well-designed planting and mitigation measures;</li><li>• The Proposals would fit in well with and enhance the key elements or features of the landscape and/or introduce elements that maintain and/or enhance landscape character.</li><li>• The development would visually integrate into the existing view and would result in a noticeable improvement to visual amenity;</li></ul>
Major beneficial effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reinforce the landscape character type to a major degree and substantially mitigate an existing adverse effects with a major improvement to the local landscape character by restoring the integrity of a damaged landscape;</li><li>• The development would entirely fit in well with and substantially enhance the key elements or features of the landscape and/or introduce elements that substantially enhance landscape character.</li><li>• The development would visually integrate into the existing view and would result in a substantial improvement to visual amenity.</li></ul>

Table 10. Assessing Significance/ Scale of Effect



## CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

A3.51 Where several developments are affecting the same landscape, an assessment of cumulative effects may be required.

A3.52 The Guidelines (7.3) define cumulative effects as follows:

- *‘Cumulative effects - the additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together’ (Scottish National Heritage (SNH), 2012, 4)*
- *Cumulative landscape effects can impact on either the physical fabric or character of the landscape, or any special values attached to it (SNH, 2012:10)*
- *Cumulative visual effects can be caused by combined visibility, which occurs where the observer is able to see two or more developments from one viewpoint and/or sequential effects which occur when the observer has to move to another viewpoint to see different developments’ (SNH 2012: 11).*

A3.53 The Guidelines (7.28) state that *‘the emphasis must always be on the main project being assessed and how or whether it adds to or combines with the others being considered to create a significant cumulative effect’.*

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