

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment - Rev D

Proposed new dwellings on land at Stickling Green, Clavering.

Date: May 2020 (reviewed and updated: September 2023)



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1.0 Introduction

Purpose of this document

1. Kirsten Bowden CMLI was originally appointed in April 2020 to provide a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment as part of an application for new houses on land to the north of Eldridge Close, Stickling Green, Clavering, Saffron Walden. In September 2023 the project was reviewed due to the submission of revised proposals.
2. The land is currently under arable cultivation and bordered by hedges on three out of four sides. There are also a number of trees to the east, including mature elms. Access to the Site is from the Public Right of Way leading from Clatterbury Lane to the east, via a field to field access to the north and through gates on Eldridge Close.
3. Proposals are for 28 new homes and the creation of an access joining into Eldridge Close at the northern end. Layout proposals have been collated by Arcady Architects, Purleigh, Chelmsford. The buildings would be mostly positioned where possible, centrally within the Site and retained vegetation would help soften any potential impact by forming a physical and visual buffer between the neighbouring properties to the east and the proposed houses.
4. The location of the proposed buildings, existing vegetation and orientation have all been considered and care has been taken to ensure that existing vegetation is retained where possible. Proposals have been put together with the environment in mind, with better management of existing hedges, new planting and other features that support wildlife.
5. The Site sits in gently rolling countryside within the Langley Chalk Upland (H3) which is to the south-west of Saffron Walden. The Site is located at the northern end of Clavering, to the west of Clatterbury Lane. To the south and east, there are a series of dwellings, some with direct views towards the Site. The Site is part of a village edge, more intimate rural setting, with properties divided by trees and hedges.
6. In order to illustrate how the proposed buildings would sit within the Site and the wider landscape, a landscape and visual impact assessment has been prepared. This has been produced in order to gain a greater understanding of the landscape and in order to highlight any potential visibility issues. It has also been used to illustrate the capacity of the setting to accommodate the proposed new buildings and possible mitigations which could be used to strengthen the existing landscape character and soften any impact.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

7. Landscape and visual appraisals are a tool used for predicting and evaluating the effects of a development on the surrounding landscape character, heritage features and on views from the wider area. It aims to achieve avoidance, reduction or mitigation of detrimental effects identified. The appraisal broadly follows the principles set out in GLVIA 3.
8. The study initially comprised of a desktop exercise to review relevant designations and policies, landscape character assessments and aerial mapping. This was followed by a site visit to establish viewpoints and the extent of the visual envelope.
9. The site visit was undertaken on 22.04.2020 and all photos taken on this day. Weather conditions were clear and dry. The appraisal was able to assess the Site visibility in winter conditions with very little vegetative cover. It is considered that in summer, foliage on the trees and hedges would mean that the Site is less visible.
10. The visual assessment of the Site looked at how visible the new dwellings are likely to be and identified which neighbouring properties and/or publicly accessible views are likely to be affected. It judged how particular views of the landscape are impacted upon and how the visual amenity of those using it might be affected by the proposals.

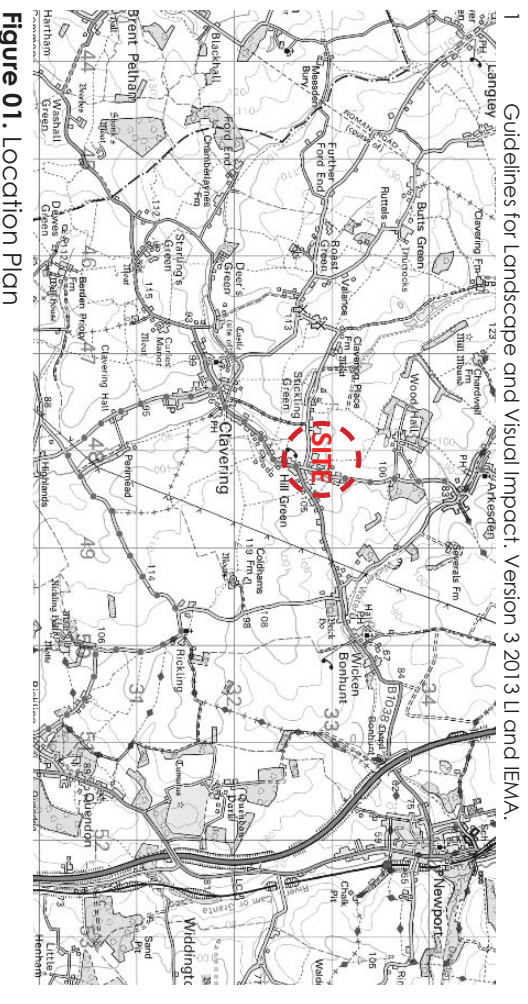


Figure 01. Location Plan

2.0 Landscape context

Stickling Green, Clavering

The Site

1. The landscape of this part of north Essex falls within the jurisdiction of Uttlesford District Council. The landscape is defined by its agricultural use which has evolved and changed according to market demands and management techniques. The rolling large arable fields wrap around small settlements like Clavering, where smaller fields on the village edge create a zone of transition between the houses and the larger scale landscape beyond.
2. Houses and businesses that have established in a linear manner along Clatterbury Lane and Eldridge Close comprise the built character, to the northern end of Clavering village. There are already dwellings to the north, south and east of the Site, but to the west are open fields. There are no buildings on the Site and no areas of hard-standing.
3. To the north of the Site the gardens of Elearon House and Allington House adjoin the Site and the evergreen boundary hedge means that views into the Site are prevented. Woody vegetation to the east of the Site screens adjacent properties and since much of this is in the gardens and would therefore be retained. This means that any impact would largely be limited and contained to a small area.
4. To the south, the Site is bordered by a recent development. This has been designed with an access into the Site which would be used to connect the Site on to Eldridge Close. Many of the properties have views into the Site from the first floor and in some cases the ground floor. There is little or no intervening vegetation.
5. To the east of the Site there is an established hedge with a large percentage of elm and other mixed natives. This hedge separates the Site from the arable fields beyond on rising ground.

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

6. There are a number of inter connecting Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the wider area. PROW 10_19 cuts across the top north-east corner of the Site. The proposals have been designed to work around this feature and it would become an integral part of the scheme, connecting the Site to the wider landscape.
7. The footpaths in the wider landscape would in some cases have views back towards the Site, but in many cases there is intervening vegetation, the angle oblique or the Site is not the main focus of the outlook.

Planning

8. Uttlesford District Council is currently in the process of updating its Local Plan. Therefore the adopted Local Plan (LP) from 2005 and the background documents that support it are still the main point of reference.
 9. The adopted local plan notes that '*...different character areas have a greater or lesser capacity to accommodate development*' and this is affected by the restraints related to the historic rural landscape. In the case of Clavering, the layout and character of the village is such that some small scale development can be accommodated, but it must be sensitive to the setting and it needs to be in scale and proportion to that which exists.
 10. The LP notes that 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. In accordance with Planning Policy and the need to strike a balance between development and protection of their character, Clavering is noted as a village where there are opportunities for sensitive infilling of small gaps outside development limits. This would need to meet a number of criteria, but amongst other things it would need to be close to the existing settlement and in character with the surroundings, with a limited impact on the countryside.
 11. With this in mind the proposals have taken into account the existing structure, pattern and character of the landscape locally. Whilst the proposals are outside the village development boundary, they are immediately adjacent to the core built up settlement of the village. There is scope to strengthen relevant landscape characteristics, including open green space, feature trees and improved hedges with improved wildlife value.
- ### Heritage
12. There are 28 Grade II listed buildings within 1 km of the Site. The nearest are Peacocks and Old Home, both of which are to the east of the Site. These houses are to the east of Clatterbury Lane and their setting would remain unaffected by the proposals. Clavering Court to the west of the Site is screened from the Site by farm buildings and vegetation.
 13. The proposed development takes into account significant features listed locally. These have been incorporated into the design to ensure that any potential impacts are limited and contained where possible.

3.0 Landscape context - map

Sticking Green, Clavering

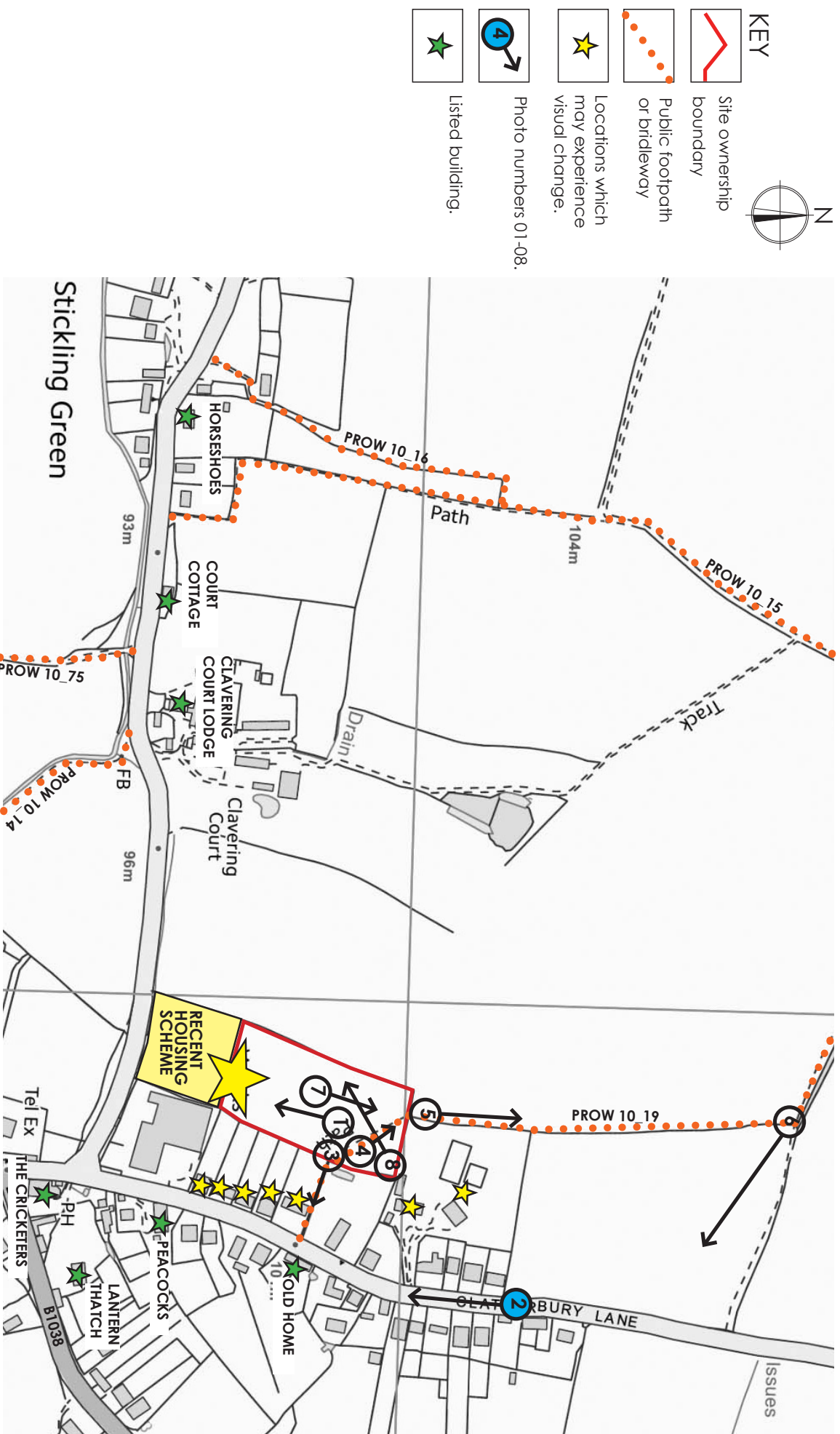


Figure 02. Site in relation to local properties.

4.0 Landscape context photographs

Stickling Green, Clavering



Photo 01 . Taken from within the Site looking south towards existing new build homes on Eldridge Close which overlook the field. The well vegetated boundaries of the gardens to the east of the Site overhang the field and the existing hedge to the west filters views out towards the wider landscape.



Photo 02. Looking south along the section of Clatterbury Lane running parallel with the Site, the houses are set back from the road with garden vegetation to the front filtering views of the properties themselves.



Photo 03. The footpath from the edge of the Site to Clatterbury Lane runs between Affeneys and Summer House. The well vegetated gardens on either side create an enclosed character with the path opening up as it enters the Site.

4.0 Landscape context photographs

Stickling Green, Claverling

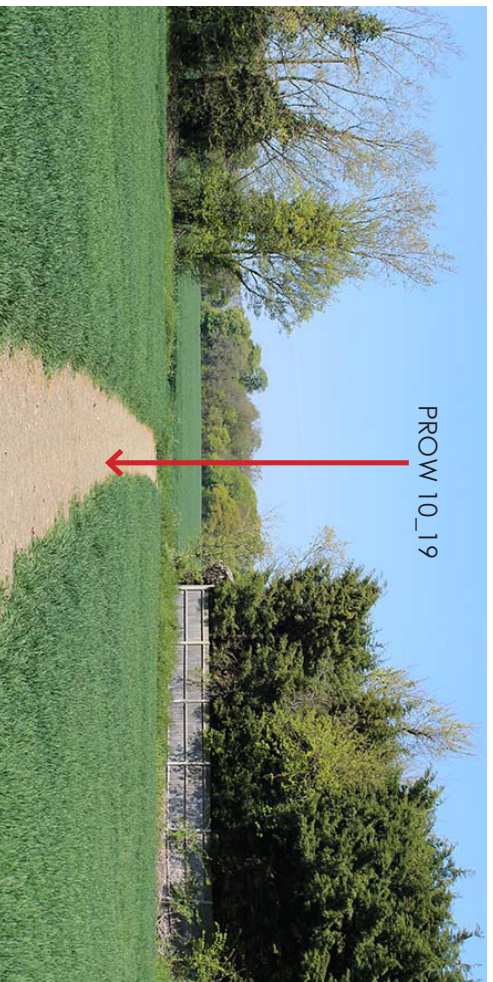


Photo 04. PROW 10_19 cuts across the top north-east corner of the site and is a well established recreational route linking into a wider network of paths.



Photo 05. The route of PROW 10_19 follows the field edge up towards Wood Hall which is screened by established woody vegetation on the hill brow.

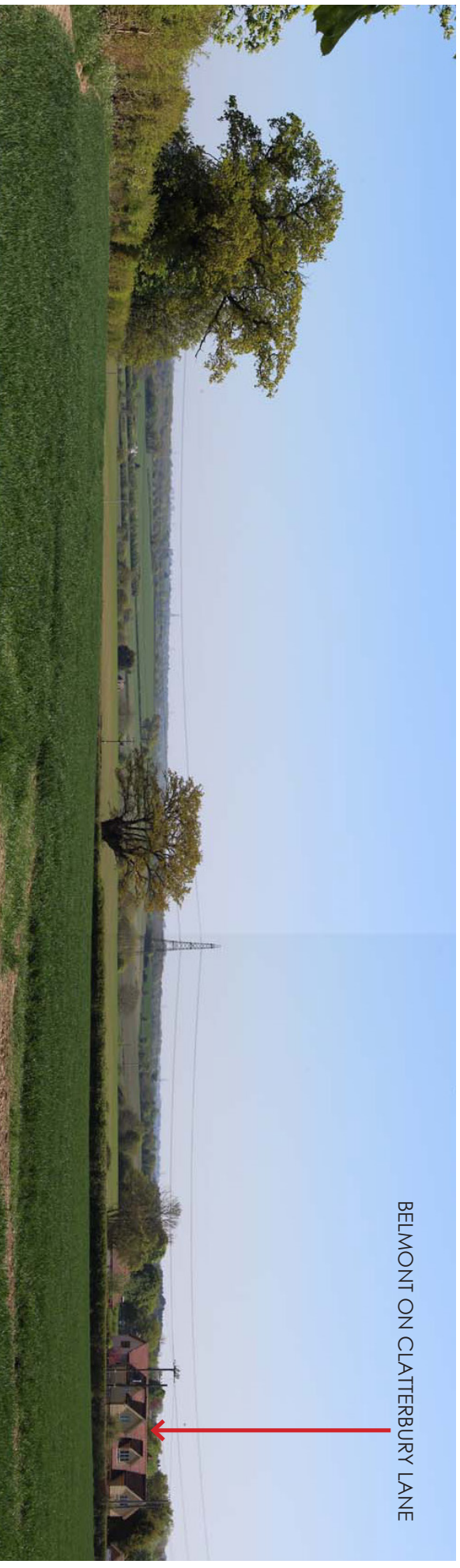


Photo 06. Clatterbury Lane is a historic route that runs the length of the village, around which the village has evolved in a linear fashion. Taken from PROW 10_19 the photo looks east across the rolling arable and treed landscape. Power lines are a dominant feature of the rural scene.

4.0 Landscape context photographs

Stickling Green, Clavering



Photo 07. Elearon House to the north of the Site is bordered by a 1.8m close-boarded fence and a conifer hedge which prevents views to the house beyond from the Site. The trees at Affeneys are deciduous and the different canopy levels mean that views through to the Site are filtered.



Photo 08. The mixed native hedge on the western edge of the Site is made up of mixed native species with a high percentage of Elm. Standing deadwood has in many cases shot from the base. It is recommended that the health of the trees within the hedge are monitored for any signs of elm disease.

5.0 Landscape character - National level study

Sticking Green, Clavering

National Landscape Character Assessment Profile

1. At a national level the Site is located well within the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland Character Area (Area 86) and the character of the Site is typically representative of this landscape character type.

South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands (Area No. 86)

2. The South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands cover a diverse area which extends from Bury St Edmunds in the north-west to Ipswich in the north-east, roughly following the line of the A14 trunk road through the Gipping Valley. It then embraces the Colchester hinterland before encompassing the urban areas of Braintree and Chelmsford in the south and stretching to Bishop's Stortford and Stevenage in the west. The key characteristics are:
 - Gently undulating, chalky boulder clay plateau, the undulations being caused by the numerous small-scale river valleys that dissect the plateau.
 - A complex network of old species-rich hedgerows, ancient woods and meadows with streams and rivers that flow eastwards.
 - Traditional irregular field patterns are still discernible over much of the area, despite field enlargements in the second half of the 20th century.
 - Rich archaeology provides evidence of a long history of settlement and significant past wealth and importance, including Palaeolithic finds, Roman sites, medieval monasteries and castles, isolated moated farmsteads, barns and a number of large country houses. An intricate maze of narrow, winding lanes link settlements as evident near the Site.
 - Semi-natural habitats which include sparsely scattered, small lowland meadows and ancient woodlands. Parts of the river valley floors contain pasture and willow pollards, which contribute an uncommon pastoral quality. Mosaics of valley floor habitats such as grazing marsh, fen and wet woodland support European protected species including great crested newt, otter and pipistrelle bats, as well as the rare black poplar tree.
 - Farming, predominantly for arable crops, utilises 84% of the land area, supported by the moderately fertile soils and equable climate. Recent changes in farming methods have had an impact on farmland habitats such as hedges and ponds. Uptake of agri-environment options for land management has increased the potential to restore much of the lost in-field wildlife of the area.

3. The key opportunities in this area must take into consideration the sensitivity of the landscape. At a national character area level, the change of landuse would have a limited impact on the character due to the location of the Site on the village edge. Limiting the potential cumulative effects that this kind of development may have on the character area is an important aspect of the design process. The addition of dwellings in this case would see the use of a small enclosed arable field on the village edge and the settlement pattern would not therefore be significantly altered as there is newer housing already located on this side of the village that would tie in well.

4. In the local area, there have already been new developments and although this kind of new housing is important, it is noted that such sites should be established in a sustainable way that minimises the effects on the areas' character in order to retain a sense of place and preserve the local history. In this case the new housing would consolidate the existing pattern, rather than being a standalone proposal.

5. The treed skyline and scale of the landscape in this area, means that at this level there would be a limited impact on the wider character. The fact that the new buildings would be located in a well screened location, means that changes to the character would be contained to an extent. The main impact is likely to relate to a change in outlook to those properties adjacent. The design process has been used to reduce the potential impact on the village edge location, ensuring that the proposals respect the rural setting.



Figure 03. National Landscape Characterisation Map (extract) - Area 86

6.0 Landscape character - Local level study

Stickling Green, Clavering

Local Landscape Character Assessment Profile

6. At a more local level, Uttlesford District Council (UDC) published a detailed Landscape Character Assessment as part of the evidence base for the adopted local plan. The Site falls within the Langley Chalk Upland (H3) and detail has been provided for this area as it is typical of the wider landscape surrounding the Site.
7. The character of this area is defined by Wicken Water on its eastern edge, the River Stort and Langley on its western side, Duddenhoe End to the north and Clavering at the mid-point of its southern boundary. It is a landscape of contrasts: intimate, small scale and populated in the valleys then expansive, open and thinly populated on the plateau ground. The high ground near Langley is rolling plateau with big farms and vast arable fields. Fields are medium to large, and patterns regular to semi-irregular with broken hedgerows and occasional trees on the field boundaries. Woodland is often seen as a dense block on the horizon or lining the valleys below where it forms a background enclosure to the open views.

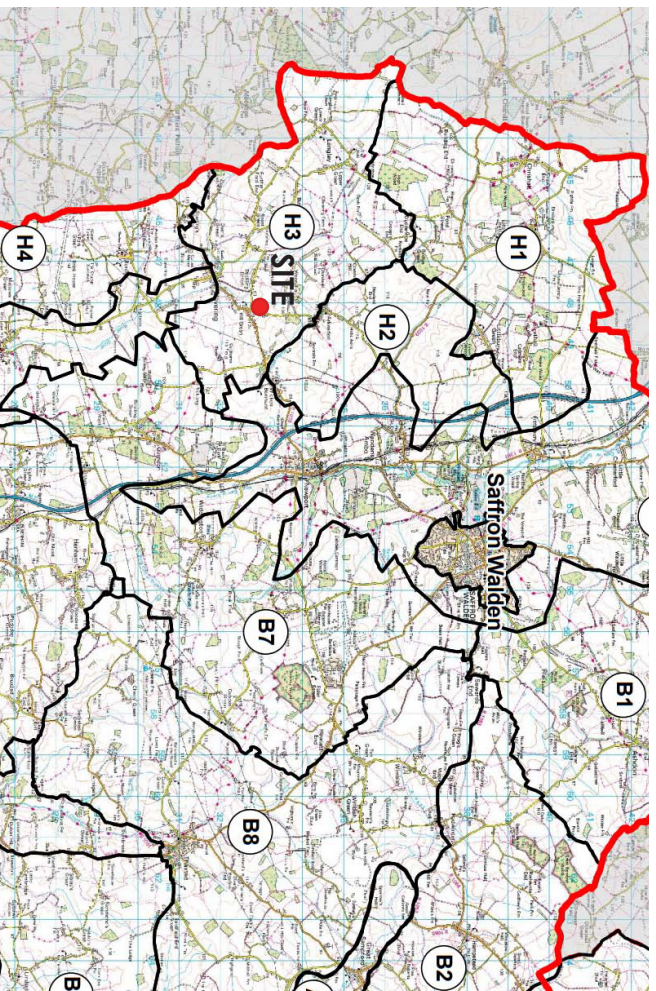


Figure 04. Local Landscape Characterisation Map - Area H3 (extract)

The key character descriptions of the Langley Chalk Upland are summarised as follows:

- Gently rolling plateau landform, broad ridges eroded by valleys with small narrow streams.
- Thickly wooded valley bottoms and along streams.
- Small settlements along water courses and few on the higher ground.
- Distinctive settlement pattern around village greens, with many villages and hamlets identifying them in their names (ex: Stickling Green, Upper Green, Deer's Green, etc.).
- Area of striking contrasts - small-scale intimate and wooded versus expansive, large scale and somewhat isolated at higher elevations.
- The line of the ancient Roman Road traverses the area southwest to northeast.
- Scattering of ancient mounds, a castle and moated dwellings.

Overall character and sensitivity

8. The Langley Chalk Upland covers a wide range of characters from the open large scale fields surrounding Clavering to the more intimate small scale character of fields on the village edge and this has been considered when collating the proposals.
9. The proposals would consolidate the existing settlement pattern at the northern end of Clavering. The proposals would represent an opportunity to utilise an area of ground on the immediate edge of the village which would relate well to those which have grown up around the Stickling Green junction with Clatterbury Lane.
10. The proposals would result in the loss of a small arable field, but no significant landscape features as the existing hedges would be retained and also the mature trees on the eastern boundary. Therefore the characterising features of note would remain unaffected.
11. The ability of this area in particular, to accommodate this kind of change is moderately good due to the location of the proposed development on the village edge. The houses would be in a contained location and since they would be set adjacent to another group of new dwellings, it is considered that the proposals would not look out of place.

7.0 Proposals

Sticking Green, Clavering

The proposals

1. The Site consists of a small arable field to the north of Eldrige Close where there are proposals for 28 new dwellings. These have been spaced to make the most of the setting.
2. The existing trees and hedges would be retained where possible, but it would be necessary to prune and manage the existing native hedges to ensure that the risk of falling deadwood is reduced and healthy new growth encouraged. This would be in keeping with the local landscape and new native planting would ensure that the character of the setting is maintained.
3. The small scale intimate character of the field means that the Site is not visually prominent in the wider landscape. The relationship between the Site and the neighbouring houses is of key importance and the position of the proposed new dwellings has taken this into account.
4. To the north of the Site there is an area of open ground and this would be retained as green open space enhancing the route of the PROW. There would also be scope to have additional features for ecological enhancement.
5. The new buildings would represent considerable change to the setting, but the proposed new planting and carefully considered layout should help ensure that any detrimental impact is mitigated against through good planting and layout design.



8.0 Visual analysis

Stickling Green, Claverling

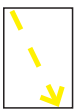
KEY



Site boundary



Public footpath or bridleway



Heavily filtered glimpses of the roof top in winter conditions may be possible.



Visual envelope - approximate zone from which views of the proposed house would be possible in winter conditions. In summer conditions the extent of the views are likely to be reduced due to leaf cover.



Viewpoints considered

Viewpoint locations:

1. Properties to the west of Clatterbury Lane with rear gardens adjoining the Site.
2. View from 10_19 looking south-east towards the Site.
3. View towards the Site looking north-east from PROW 10_14.
4. Properties on Eldridge Close with direct and indirect views north towards the Site.

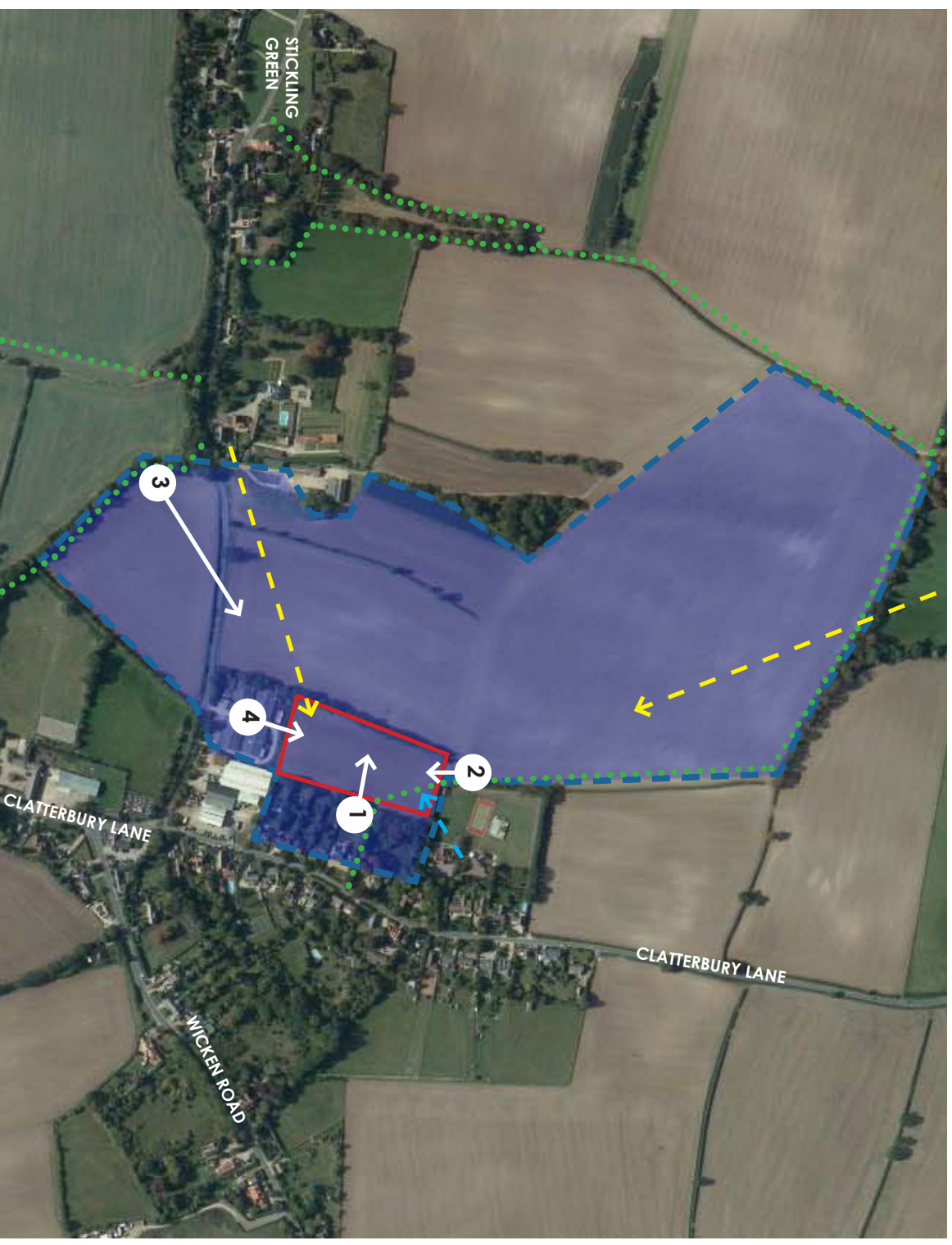


Figure 06. Site in relation to local properties and the wider landscape.

9.0 Landscape effects

Stickling Green, Claveing

Landscape appraisal

1. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment considers effects on the physical landscape, as well as on character and the perceptual aspects of the experience of the landscape. Two types of receptors in this study have been considered relevant:

A) The landscape itself - its features and fabric

B) The character of the landscape, the **Langley Chalk Upland (H3)** character type.

Effects are generally considered to be confined to the zone from within which those effects are experienced – inside the visual envelope (see Page 13).

Landscape value and sensitivity

2. This is a rural village with outlying open countryside, featuring medium to large fields, trees and fragmented hedges. This mixed vegetative cover combines to form a varied and often treed skyline. They also collectively add height and local interest. The trees and hedges which are physical features that add to the character of the local area and particularly in the villages where well vegetated gardens filter views and soften the intervening spaces.
3. The settlement pattern of Claveing consists principally of dwellings which have grown up and around the main arterial roads of the village, including Clatterbury Lane. Smaller lanes link the main road to the wider landscape and the village remains broadly representative of the local settlement type with similar village layouts in Manuden and Arkesden nearby. The location of listed buildings reflects the historical growth pattern of the settlement.
4. The proposed new dwellings on land to the north of Eldridge Close have been designed to reflect the existing local layout and they would sit comfortably with adjacent buildings (some of which are relatively modern).
5. The appearance of the proposed dwellings would take into consideration proximity of neighbouring properties and scale. They would be largely hidden from the wider village by existing buildings, trees and hedges.
6. The fact that there is already good vegetative screening on the edge of the Site, in combination with the topography, means that the local landscape character could accommodate change without great detrimental effects, but the character of the Site would benefit from being strengthened with additional planting.

Impacts to (A) landscape features

7. Description of effect: Effects on physical features would be limited to the management of the existing hedgerow vegetation, but wherever possible any hedges, shrubs and trees that are healthy would be retained to become part of the green front setting. It is recommended that there is new planting throughout in order to help the new homes fit in with the local landscape character.

Sensitivity of receptor: **MODERATE.**

Magnitude of change: **MODERATE** (adverse) The overall impact to site features remains limited. The management of the existing hedgerow is likely to result in limited temporary loss of some vegetation, but other than this there would be no noticeable change. The addition of new planting would strengthen and improve the existing landscape features.

Impact significance: **MEDIUM - LOW**

Impacts to (B) Character type – 'Langley Chalk Upland'

8. Description of effect: There is likely to be little impact on the wider character area due to the nature of the proposals. The proposed buildings within a well treed site on the edge of the village, would not be out of character with the immediate surroundings and the majority of the village would remain unaffected.

Sensitivity of receptor: **MODERATE** The proposed new dwellings would introduce additional new built structures adjacent to an existing modern development and subsequently the capacity of the character area to absorb this kind of development without undue adverse impacts on the wider character of the landscape is increased reduces the sensitivity of the receptor.

Magnitude of change: **SLIGHT** (neutral) The development would result in a slight noticeable change over a small area of the landscape receptor. The combined effects of retaining much of the existing vegetation, with the introduction of nine new dwellings would not necessarily represent an adverse change as the proposed new buildings would be in proportional scale to those already there locally.

Impact significance: **LOW**

10.0 Visual effects

Visual impacts methodology

1. Visual impact assessment aims to understand the influence a proposal would have on the view and appearance of the landscape, its amenity, and the people who experience it. It considers the likely effects on viewpoints including dwellings, roads, rights of way, and other publicly accessible land.
2. A visual envelope was established, following the site visit, which shows the approximate extent of the area from where the site can be seen (see Figure 06). The site photographs were taken in spring at the same time as the Site visit when the vegetation was coming into leaf.
3. Four viewpoints within the visual envelope were selected for this appraisal. Photographs were taken at each viewpoint and the current view described. The existing view was then compared to the likely changes to the view at year 1 (winter conditions) and year 15 (summer conditions). The effects were described, and the magnitude of the change quantified.
4. The viewpoints are shown on Figure 06:

Viewpoint 1. Properties to the west of Clatterbury Lane with rear gardens adjoining the Site.

Viewpoint 2. View from the junction of PROW 10_15 and 10_19 looking south-east towards the Site.

Viewpoint 3. View towards the Site looking north-east from PROW 10_14.

Viewpoint 4. Properties on Eldridge Close with direct and indirect views north towards the Site.

Visual conditions - views out

5. From the Site, views out are visually affected by either buildings and/or vegetation. There are hedges and trees on the east, north and west peripheries of the Site and beyond these, to the north, east and south are houses. Therefore, although the character of the village is still rural, it has seen recent new development and the proposals would therefore not be discordant with the setting.
6. To the north, views are largely prevented by an existing conifer hedge and 1.8m close-boarded fence. This means that the adjacent property is not visible at all. This established hedge has been allowed to grow unchecked on the field side and now forms an impenetrable visual screen to a height of

approximately 8m. At the western end of the hedge there is a gap into the adjoining field and from here there are views across rising ground to the treed skyline of Wood Hall.

7. The eastern edge of the Site is made up of both trees and hedges, most of which are in the gardens of the neighbouring properties. This means that views of the actual houses are largely filtered and in many cases obscured. Some properties have maintained views into the field by keeping the boundaries devoid of vegetation and in these situations it is possible to see the houses and gardens more openly.
8. To the west there is an established mixed native hedge. This limits and filters views to the landscape beyond. Where it is possible to see into the adjacent fields, the view is of rising and rolling farmland, interjected with woody copses and farm buildings. Beyond this, treed horizons combined with the topography prevent extended views.
9. Views directly south are curtailed by the properties on Eldridge Close. The two storey buildings are built relatively close to the boundary and therefore they dominate this aspect. Trees in the countryside beyond provide a vegetated backdrop.
10. Overall the views out from the Site are often filtered by vegetation on the boundaries and this means that views towards the adjacent properties are interrupted, apart from those to the south. As a result the impact of the proposed houses on properties to the north and east are likely to be foreshortened. Views back into the Site are therefore likely to be correspondingly limited and this is explored further in the next section.

1.1.0 Site photographs & visual effects - Viewpoint 1

Viewpoint 1. Properties to the west of Clatterbury Lane with rear gardens adjoining the Site.

Existing view description

The following properties; Affeneys, Summer House, Brockhams, Country House, Saffrons, Timberscombe and possibly Elearon all have gardens which adjoin the Site. Many of the properties have extensive and mature gardens which filter views of the Site in its current field state. Summer House has more open views into the Site as there is no hedge at the end of its garden, but all the others have filtered views. Elearon has been included as although it cannot see the Site as it is, it may be able to see roof tops in the future.

Expected changes at Year One (winter)

In year one the new housing combined with the new boundary fence would block views directly into the Site and this in combination with the existing vegetation (even in winter) would mean that views of the new houses would be limited. Even though views are in many cases filtered, the new houses would add a built element where previously there was none.

Year 1: The visual impact significance is medium-high as the current view (where possible) of an open field, bordered by a hedge, would see the change to one of houses set within a small field. The lack of foliage in winter means that the new dwellings would be more noticeable.

Expected changes at Year Fifteen (summer)

By year fifteen the visual change experienced from the properties facing towards the Site would reduce in terms of magnitude of impact. The trees and hedges, combined with the new fence means that the houses would be less dominant visually.

Year 15: The visual impact significance is considered to be medium-low. Additional planting would be beginning to take effect and although the new development would remain noticeable, the impact is likely to be softened over time.

Summary results table viewpoint 1

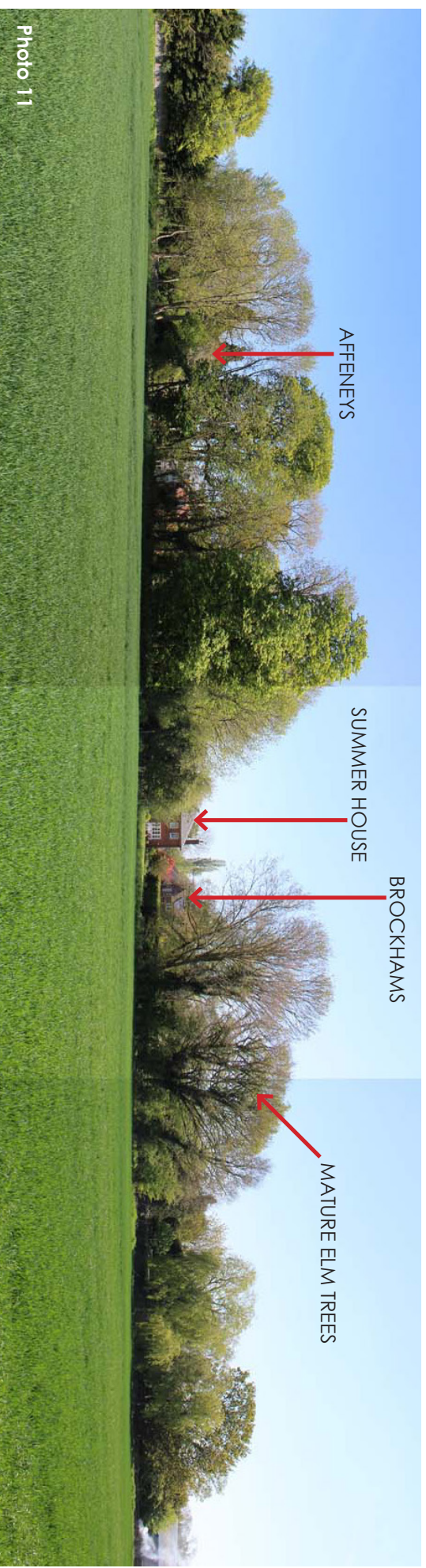
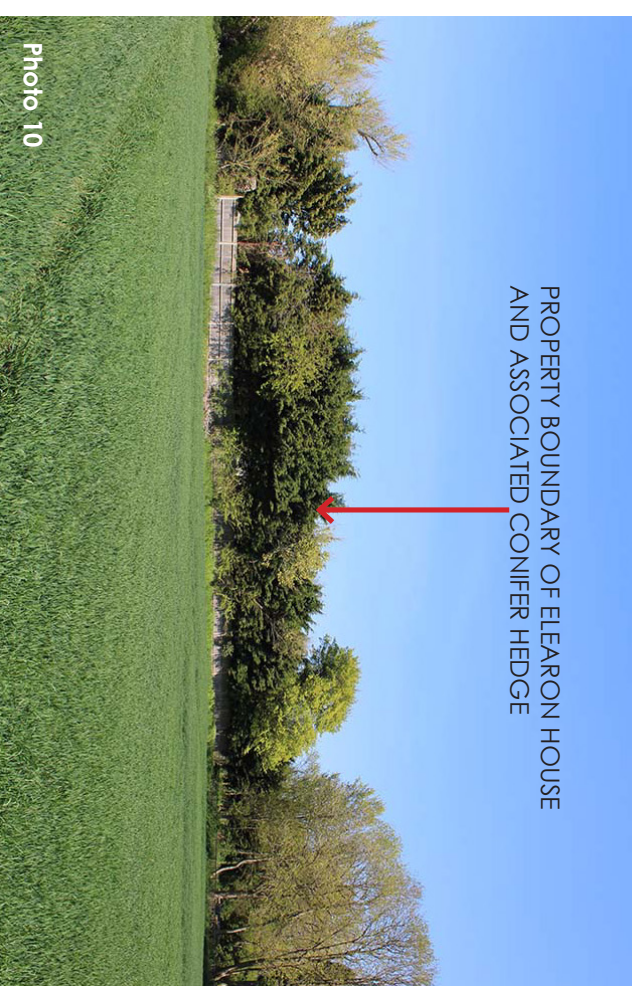
Factor	Judgement value	Definition (see appendix 3)
Sensitivity	MODERATE	View is predominantly from upstairs or oblique with intervening vegetation partly obscuring or filtering views.
YEAR 1 (winter) Magnitude of Impact	MAJOR	Proposals would introduce a large component within the view and cause deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of medium to long duration or almost completely irreversible.
YEAR 1 (winter) Impact Significance	MEDIUM - HIGH	
YEAR 15 (Summer) Magnitude of Impact	MODERATE	Proposals would introduce noticeable components to the view and cause some deterioration to existing visual amenity, but the softening effects of retained vegetation would reduce the impact significance over time.
YEAR 15 (summer) Impact significance	MEDIUM - LOW	



Figure 07. Places likely to experience visual change (yellow stars).

11.0 Site photographs & visual effects - Viewpoint 1

Stickling Green, Clavering



1.1.0 Site photographs & visual effects - Viewpoint 2

Stickling Green, Clavering

Viewpoint 2. View from 10_19 looking south-east towards the Site.

Existing view description

PROW 10_19 runs across the top north-east corner of the Site and then heads north along the Side of the next field and eventually joins with PROW 10_15 on the southern woody edge of Wood Hall. The views from this path vary along its route and subsequently the degree of impact. The current view is of a small arable field, bordered by trees and hedges and houses to the south.

Expected changes at Year one (winter)

In year one, the new dwellings would add a large and noticeable component to a rural village edge setting, where views of the wider landscape dominate. The new houses, fences and planting would freshen the outlook in most directions and result in a major change to the outlook.

Year one: The magnitude of change is considered major (adverse) and the subsequent impact significance is high due to the fact that there would be buildings where currently there are none.

Expected changes at year fifteen (summer)

After fifteen years, the summer foliage in conjunction with new planting means that although the character and setting of the path would still be very different, the degree of impact would have reduced and become an accepted part of the outlook.

Year fifteen: The magnitude of change is considered medium - high (adverse). As the new buildings become part of the landscape and the vegetation around them grows up, the presence of new houses would reduce in significance over time.

Summary results table viewpoint 2

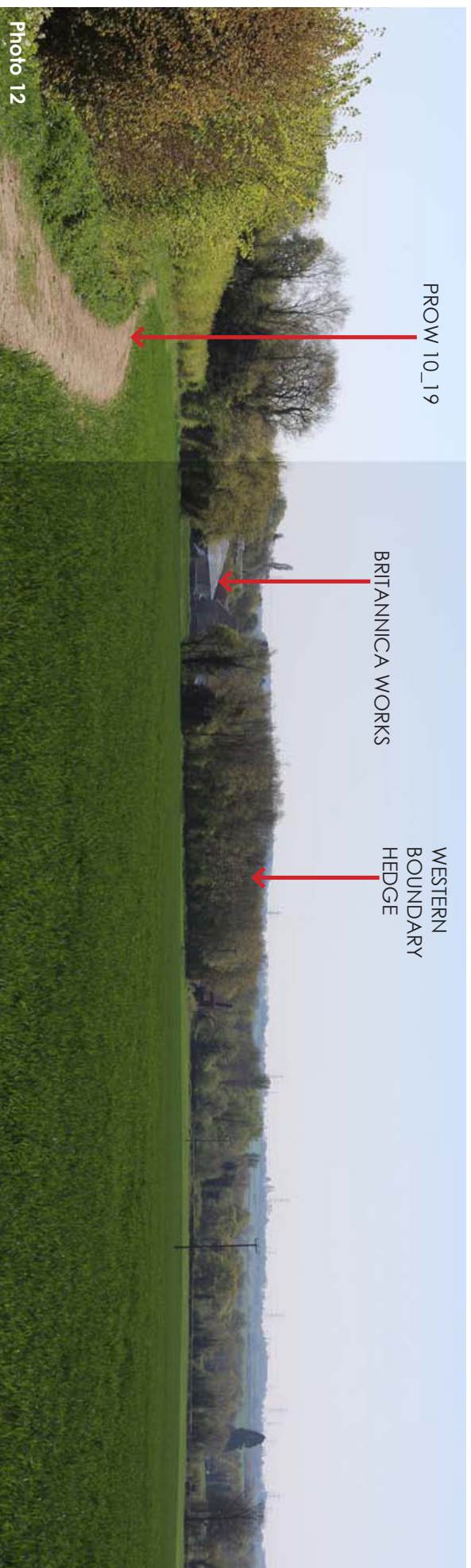
Factor	Judgement value	Definition (see appendix 3)
Sensitivity	HIGH	Direct views where the view is of principal interest and where the focus of the view is on the landscape.
YEAR 1 (winter) Magnitude of Impact	MAJOR	Proposals would introduce noticeable components within the view and cause some deterioration to existing visual amenity, but the retained vegetation would soften the impact.
YEAR 1 (winter) Impact Significance	HIGH	
YEAR 15 (Summer) Magnitude of Impact	MODERATE	Proposals would introduce noticeable components to the view and cause some deterioration to existing visual amenity, but the softening effects of retained vegetation would reduce the impact significance over time.
YEAR 15 (summer) Impact significance	MEDIUM - HIGH	



Figure 08. Location of viewpoint.

11.0 Site photographs & visual effects - Viewpoint 2

Stickling Green, Claverling



1.1.0 Site photographs & visual effects - Viewpoint 3

Stickling Green, Clavering

Viewpoint 3. View towards the Site looking north-east from PROW 10_14.

Summary results table viewpoint 3

Factor	Judgement value	Definition (see appendix 3)
Sensitivity	MODERATE	View is from a right of way, but view towards the Site is not the dominant aspect.
YEAR 1 (winter) Magnitude of Impact	MODERATE	Proposals would introduce a noticeable component within the view and cause some deterioration to the existing visual amenity.
YEAR 1 (winter) Impact Significance	MEDIUM - LOW	
YEAR 15 (Summer) Magnitude of Impact	SLIGHT	Small/minor component within the view and cause little deterioration to the existing visual amenity and/or be of medium duration or partly reversible.
YEAR 15 (summer) Impact significance	LOW	

Existing view description

The view from Viewpoint 3 looks north-east across rising ground and Mill Lane towards the new development. Beyond this it is possible to see the western boundary hedge of the Site. The fields in the foreground and surrounding treed hedges soften the appearance of the village edge.

Expected changes at Year one (winter)

In year one, it is possible that there would be filtered views through the hedge of the tops of the proposed new houses. The majority of the development would be screened by properties on Eldridge Close which dominate this side of the approach to the village.

Year one: The magnitude of change is considered medium-low due to the fact that in the winter months there would be less vegetative screening. Although the houses would be noticeable, they would not represent a change to the character of the view in this direction.

Expected changes at year 15 (summer)

After fifteen years the proposed houses would have bedded into the setting and although the roof tops may just be visible, set amongst the trees, they would not dominate or detract from the existing outlook.

Year fifteen: The magnitude of change is considered low as the new planting in combination with the existing would help to screen the Site and the summer vegetation would ensure that any negative effects experienced in year one are almost fully reversed in the long term.

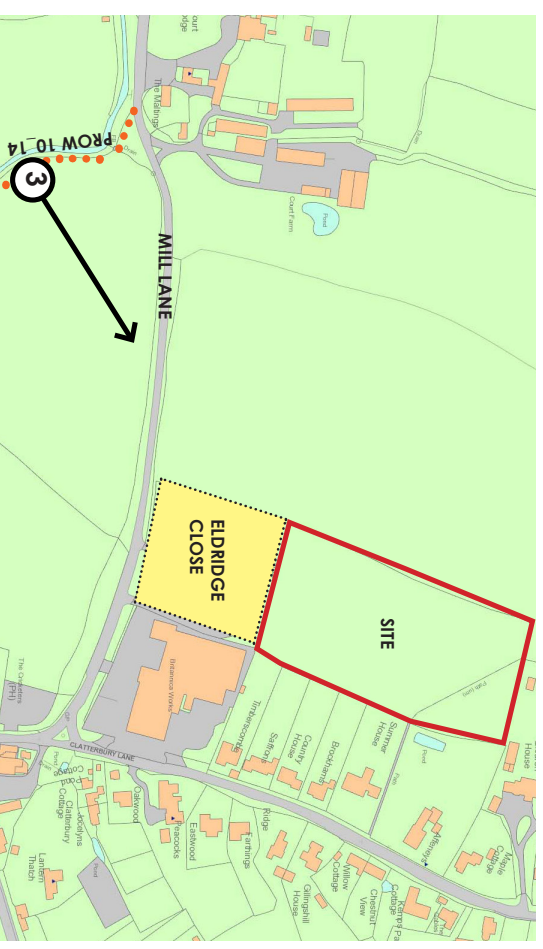


Figure 09. Viewpoint location.

11.0 Site photographs & visual effects - Viewpoint 3

Stickling Green, Clavering



11.0 Site photographs & visual effects - Viewpoint 4

Stickling Green, Clavering



Photo 16



Photo 17

1. The Site is located in the settlement of Clavering which is under the jurisdiction of Uttlesford District Council. It is a small rural settlement which has grown up along the length of Clatterbury Lane. The area in which the Site is located is typical of the local landscape character type H3 Langley Chalk Upland.
2. This appraisal considered both the physical effects the development might have on the landscape, its features and character, and on the visual amenity or the changes to views within the area.
3. The proposal is for 28 new homes and the Site presents an opportunity to provide additional dwellings which would fit in well with the rural village setting. The addition of the proposed housing at this location would consolidate the existing layout pattern in the village and help to prevent the cumulative effects of creeping settlement out into the wider landscape. The trees and hedges surrounding the Site add a sense of maturity and form a treed skyline. This characteristic would be preserved through the retention of trees and hedges and a green open area to the western side of the Site.
4. The impact of the proposals on the physical landscape are limited to the potential removal of some material in the western boundary hedge to ensure that any risk associated with falling dead wood is removed. In addition to this, new planting would be incorporated to ensure that any long term impact on the wider landscape is minimised and this would add to the retained vegetation.
5. In terms of landscape character, it is concluded that although the Proposals would have a slight impact on the immediate area, the Site does have some capacity to absorb development without undue detrimental effects to the 'Langley Chalk Upland (H3)' landscape characteristics, i.e. gentle topography, arable farmland, woodlands and well-treed skylines. The location of the Site adjacent to existing new housing would mean that visual change would not be discordant with the existing local landscape setting.
6. The characteristics of the landscape surrounding the Site combine to form a relatively contained visual envelope; its location on the village edge and boundary vegetation helps to limit views in most directions. This is reflected in the visual impact significance values of the four selected viewpoints, all of which are in close-proximity to the Site. The magnitude of the visual impact varies from high to low. The high score relates to the existing PROW 10_19 which cuts across the top north-east corner of the site. The close proximity to neighbouring properties and the degree of change to their outlook is in many cases softened by the surrounding trees and hedges. The visual impact on properties in the rest of the village and the wider landscape would be low.
7. When viewed from Mill Lane approaching the village, the outward appearance of the Site would not differ greatly to that currently seen as there is already a new development on the village edge and the proposed new houses would be tucked behind them and views filtered by the hedge.
8. Although the building of houses in this location would result in a small change to the local landscape character, but this would be limited to the immediate area. It is therefore considered that a development of dwellings of a similar scale or layout to that shown on the plan would not detract from the local setting. Over time any visual effects of the new dwellings would reduce with the increasing maturity of the existing and proposed vegetation, and the weathering of building materials. In addition to this, the proposals present an opportunity to conserve the well treed character of the village in a sustainable and attractive manner.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Summary of LVIA methodology

This study follows the guidance in 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3' (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition, April 2012). Impacts to landscape and visual receptors are considered separately. Landscape Character assessment methodology is set out in 'Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland' (Countryside Agency/Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002).

Values of sensitivity of the receptor (landscape or view type) were cross-referenced against the size and nature of the change likely to occur. Text justifications are provided to validate and explain the judgements reached.

Landscape methodology

ESTABLISH VISUAL BASELINE AND IDENTIFY RECEPTORS

Physical receptors comprise landscape features such as trees or other natural aspects and are identified through site visits. More significant often is the impact on the local landscape character. Identify character receptors through evaluation of available character assessments as well as through site work to establish contribution made by site and any local variances. Assess value and sensitivity of receptors - see tables in Appendix 2.

PREDICT EFFECTS ON RECEPTORS

Describe the likely effects on each landscape receptor and assess the magnitude of the effects likely to arise. Include consideration of the effect of time passing by comparing likely effects at Year 1 to those likely at Year 15 to understand the effect of maturing vegetation. Effects should be assigned a positive, negative or neutral value.

ASSESS SIGNIFICANCE

Derive judgement of the significance of landscape effects by cross referencing the values of magnitude and sensitivity using the table below and through the application of professional judgements. Judgements must be described and justified fully in the text.

Visual methodology

ESTABLISH VISUAL BASELINE AND IDENTIFY RECEPTORS

Map the area within which the site is visible on foot or from a vehicle, assuming an observer eye height of approx. 1.7m. Within this 'zone of visual influence' identify the number and type of visual receptors, i.e. the routes, places and people, that are likely to be affected by the proposals. Select representative and specific viewpoints for the assessment of likely changes to the view and describe the current views. Provide illustrative photographs

of each viewpoint. Assess value and sensitivity of receptors - see tables in Appendix 3.

PREDICT EFFECTS ON VIEWPOINTS

Describe the likely visual effects on each viewpoint and assess the magnitude of effects likely to arise. Include consideration of the effect of time passing by comparing likely effects at Year 1 to those likely at Year 15 to understand the effect of maturing vegetation on the selected viewpoints. Visual effects should be assigned a positive, negative or neutral value.

ASSESS SIGNIFICANCE

Derive judgement of the significance of visual effects by cross referencing the values of magnitude and sensitivity using the table below and through the application of professional judgement. Judgements must be described and justified fully in the text.

Magnitude of change	Effect significance values		
	HIGH	MODERATE	LOW
Severe	Very - high	High	Medium - high
Substantial	high	Medium – high	Medium – low
Moderate	Medium – high	Medium - low	Low
Slight	Medium - low	Low	Negligible
Negligible	Low/negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Significance values in darker greys are deemed 'significant' and cause unacceptable effects and strenuous efforts should be made by designers to reduce the significance level.

Values in mid grey are not deemed significant and represent an acceptable level of landscape or visual impact. Values in light grey are dependent on context and significance should be fully discussed in the assessment. Efforts to mitigate effects should be fully explored to reduce impacts to an acceptable level. Visual assessment method.

Finally, proposals for mitigation are presented to prevent/avoid/reduce the potential negative effects identified. Any 'significant' residual effects remaining after mitigation should be identified.

Appendix 2: Landscape assessment - definitions of values used:

Stickling Green, Clavering

Landscape receptor: Sensitivity					
HIGH	MODERATE	LOW			
Receptor with low ability to absorb change without a substantial deterioration of character/quality, comprising significant loss of valued features or characteristics. Development would be highly intrusive and prominent.	Receptor with moderate ability to absorb some level of change without significant deterioration of character/quality. Some loss of valued features or characteristics. Development would be noticeable but not especially intrusive or discordant.	Receptor has good ability to absorb change with little deterioration of character/quality. Little or no loss of valued features or characteristics. Development would not be readily apparent or discordant.			
Landscape receptor: Value					
HIGH	MODERATE	LOW			
Receptor with international or national statutory designation for its character and scenic quality. Rare landscape character type that is irreplaceable or cannot easily be replicated.	Local designation for landscape quality and scenic character, such as Local Plan special landscape policy. Pleasant to ordinary characteristics with reasonably common landscape character type that is partly replaceable or can be replicated.	Landscape with no statutory or policy designation, though likely valued at a community level. Ordinary everyday landscape with some detracting elements. Commonly found landscape character type, and/or that is replaceable or can be replicated.			
Landscape effects – Scale/Size					
NONE	NEGLECTIBLE	MINOR	MODERATE	SEVERE	
No change to landscape character.	Very minor change to one or more characteristics or features, affecting a very small proportion of the landscape.	Noticeable change to one or more characteristics or features affecting a small proportion of the landscape.	Very noticeable change to more than one characteristic or features affecting a moderate proportion of the landscape.	Changes to more than one landscape characteristics or features, are dominating and will affect a large proportion of the landscape.	
Magnitude of landscape impact					
NEGLECTIBLE	SLIGHT	MODERATE	MAJOR	SEVERE	
Very minor/barely noticeable or short-term change to the landscape receptor.	Noticeable change, over a small area of the landscape receptor.	Some long-term or permanent change across a moderate proportion of the landscape.	Long-term substantial changes over a large proportion of the landscape.	Permanent wide-reaching effects with dominant visual changes of a greater proportion of the landscape.	

Appendix 3: Visual assessment - definitions of values used:

Stickling Green, Clavering

Visual receptor: Sensitivity				
HIGH			MODERATE	LOW
<p>People at points with direct views and where the view is of principal interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dwellings with ground floor views from living areas. - Recreational areas or footpaths/trails/waterways in designated landscapes where interest is likely to focus on views of the landscape. 			<p>People at points where the views is less direct or is of moderate interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dwellings where view is from upstairs or is very oblique. - Rights of way/waterways/recreation areas in non-designated landscape. - Scenic drives or rail routes. 	<p>People at points or routes where the view is of cursory interest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Places for sport or recreation where appreciation is not relevant. - Roads, railways in non-designated landscapes. - Places of work or public buildings where setting is not important to quality of working life.
Visual receptor: Value of view				
HIGH			MODERATE	LOW
<p>View is over international or national statutory designated landscape, comprises other valued view with high levels of scenic value and/or strong cultural associations much valued by visitors as well as local people.</p>			<p>View is over landscape designated by policy at district level or comprises other valued view with some scenic value and/or cultural associations, occasionally valued by visitors as well as local people.</p>	<p>View is not over designated, or landscape designated at district level. Low scenic value and/or no cultural associations, value at local level only.</p>
Visual effects – Scale/Size				
NONE	NEGLECTIBLE	MINOR	MODERATE	SEVERE
No change.	Unappreciable or very minor change to composition of existing view.	Noticeable change to small part of view.	Very noticeable change affecting a moderate proportion of the view.	Very large amount of visual change within the view.
Magnitude of visual impact				
NEGLECTIBLE	SLIGHT	MODERATE	MAJOR	SEVERE
Very minor/barely noticeable change would be experienced, no deterioration to visual amenity and/or be of short duration or be fully reversible.	Proposals would be a small/minor component within the view and cause little deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of short duration or be almost completely reversible.	Proposals would introduce a noticeable component within the view and cause some deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of medium duration or be partly reversible.	Proposals would introduce a large component within the view and cause deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of medium to long duration or be almost completely irreversible.	Proposals would become the dominant feature of a view, and cause major deterioration to existing visual amenity and/or be of long duration or be irreversible.