



Rosconn Strategic Land

Land south of Rush Lane, Elsenham

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

August 2023

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CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION 2

2.0 METHODOLOGY..... 3

3.0 PLANNING POLICY 7

4.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS..... 13

5.0 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS 25

6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS 26

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 35

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Site Location Plan
- Figure 2: Aerial Photograph
- Figure.3: Landscape Character
- Figure 4: Designations
- Figure 5: Topography Plan
- Figure 6: Visual Appraisal
- Figures 7-12: Photo Viewpoints

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: LVA Methodology and Appraisal Criteria
- Appendix B: Landscape Effects Table
- Appendix C: Visual Effects Table

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out for the proposed development of land south of Rush Lane, Elsenham by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR). The purpose of this LVA study is to provide an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in the planning application (Drawing BW 289a-PL-02 rev C and Design and Access Statement (DAS).
- 1.2 FPCR is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy established over 65 years, with expertise in architecture, landscape, ecology, arboriculture, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and is frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public and Local Plan Inquiries.

Site Location

- 1.3 The village of Elsenham is located adjacent to the M11 within the District of Uttlesford in northwest Essex. Nearby towns include Bishop's Stortford, Saffron Walden, and Stansted Mountfitchet.
- 1.4 The assessment site (hereafter referred to as the site) comprises a single pasture field situated at NGR TL 53379 25938 (centre of site) on the southern edge of Elsenham. It is located approximately 250 metres from the village centre and is bounded by Rush Lane to the northwest and Robin Hood Road to the east and northeast. The southern site boundary abuts Stansted Brook and the West Anglia Mainline Railway which effectively separates it from the wider surrounding countryside to the south and east. An existing residential area - including a large area of recently completed development on Elsenham Vale Estate - is located to the north of Rush Lane. Land immediately to the south of the site at Fuller's End – on the opposite side of the railway – has also been granted planning approval for residential use - comprising a small number of dwellings - with the approved development, which is now complete.
- 1.5 Figures 1 and 2 show the location and context of the site.

Proposed Development

- 1.6 The proposed development is to develop the site for residential use. The overall extent of the assessment site is 2.25 ha (5.56 acres). The proposed development would comprise up to 40 dwellings. The balance of the site would be used for infrastructure, open space and related purposes. The existing public right of way running through the site would be realigned and formalised within the new development to ensure existing pedestrian connectivity is maintained. The Proposed Site Layout (Drawing Ref. BW 289a-PL-02 rev C) shows how an appropriate edge to the settlement can be created, addressing the interface with Rush Lane, neighbouring properties and also with Stansted Brook and the railway to the south, with new homes facing onto the public realm in order to present a "fair face" and to maximise passive surveillance.
- 1.7 For the purposes of the appraisal, it has been assumed that the development on the site will be predominantly 2 storeys to a maximum height of ca 8.5m to ridge above ground level (AGL).
- 1.8 Vehicle access is proposed from a single location off Robin Hood Road along the eastern boundary of the site.

- 1.9 In addition to the retention of the perimeter hedgerows and trees, new trees, shrub and hedgerow planting would take place, as part of the development.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 This LVA has been prepared based upon the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013. The assessment of Landscape Value also takes account of guidance in Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02-21 “Assessing landscape value outside national designations”.

- 2.2 In summary, the GLVIA3 states:

“Landscape and Visual impact assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.” (GLVIA3 paragraph 1.1.)

- 2.3 There are two components of LVIA:

- *“Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;*
- *Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 2.21.)

- 2.4 The GLVIA3 states:

“LVIA can be carried out either as part of a broader EIA, or as a standalone ‘appraisal’ of the likely landscape and visual effects of a proposed development...”

- *As a standalone ‘appraisal’ the process is informal and there is more flexibility, but the essence of the approach – specifying the nature of the proposed change or development; describing the existing landscape and the views and visual amenity of the area that may be affected; predicting the effects, although not their likely significance; and considering how those effects might be mitigated – still applies”.* (GLVIA paragraph 3.2)

- 2.5 The components of this report include: baseline studies; description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation measures to be adopted as part of the scheme; and identification and description of likely effects arising from the proposed development.

- 2.6 In terms of baseline studies, the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape that may be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline, this includes an understanding of the area in which the development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

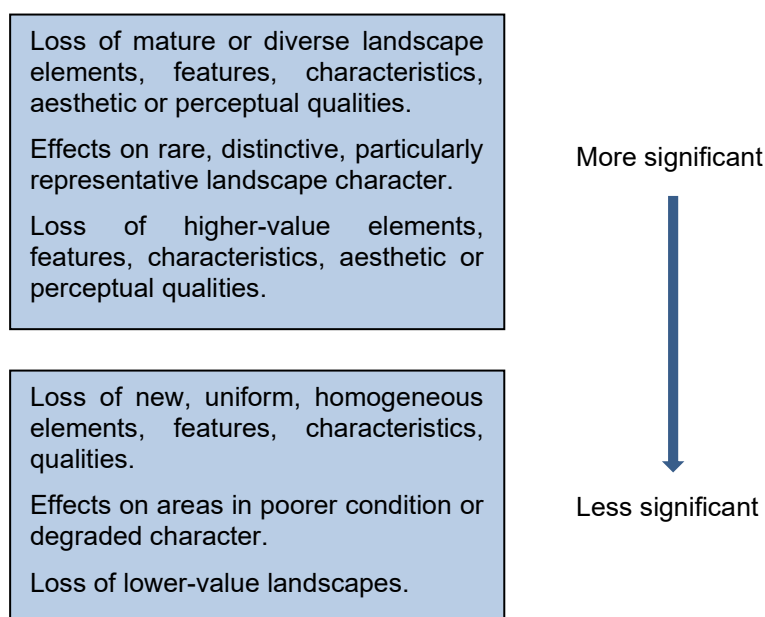
Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 2.7 GLVIA3 states that *“An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource”* (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.1).

- 2.8 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing published Landscape Character Assessments and by a description of the site and its context.

- 2.9 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:

- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
 - Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
 - Combined effects of these changes.
- 2.10 The characteristics of the existing landscape resource are considered in respect of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to the change arising from this development. The value of the existing landscape is also considered.
- 2.11 Each effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. In terms of size or scale of change, the judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or addition of new elements. Geographical extent is considered by reference to the extent of the area over which there will be a change. Duration is considered for the landscape effects, with short term effects being defined as those lasting less than 5 years, medium term effects lasting between 5 and 10 years and long-term effects being defined as anything over 10 years in duration.
- 2.12 The level of effect is determined by considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of effect on the landscape. Final conclusions on the overall landscape effects are drawn from the assessment components described. This appraisal describes the nature of the landscape effects, and whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1) and longer term (year 15).
- 2.13 GLVIA3 sets out some guidance on the underlying principles, which are used in this appraisal. This includes Figure 5.10, Scale of significance. Whilst this scheme is not EIA development, and judgements on significance are not therefore required, the Figure does provide useful guidance on reaching an overall judgement on the level of effects. This is repeated below (note this includes the correction of a typo, from the published document).



2.14 The criteria used in the appraisal are set out in Appendix A.

Assessment of Visual Effects

2.15 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. This appraisal describes the nature of the visual effects and, whether these are adverse or beneficial, at the following stages of development; construction, completion (year 1 Winter) and longer term (year 15 Summer).

2.16 The first stage in the assessment is to identify approximate visibility/ visibility mapping. This is done by either a computerised Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)¹, or by manual methods using map study and field evaluation. A series of viewpoints are included within the assessment that are representative of views towards the site from surrounding visual receptors. Other views of the site are included where it supports the description and understanding of the site's landscape and visual characteristics.

2.17 The views also typically represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the development and different viewing experiences.

2.18 It is important to remember that visual receptors are all people. For each affected viewpoint, the assessment considers both the susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views.

"The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:

- *Residents at home;*
 - *People, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views;*
 - *Visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;*
 - *Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area;*
- Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of moderate susceptibility to change. Where travel involves recognised scenic routes awareness of views is likely to be particularly high." (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.33.)*

"Visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include:

- *People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;*
- *People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings, and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life (although there may on occasion be cases where views are an important contributor to the setting and to the quality of working life)." (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.34.)*

2.19 Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility.

¹ Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV): A map usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible. [GLVIA3]

- 2.20 In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:
- *“The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;*
 - *The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line height, colour and texture;*
 - *The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses” (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.39).*
- 2.21 The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:
- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
 - The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development;
 - The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.
- 2.22 As with landscape effects, the duration of the effect could be short to long term or permanent and the same definitions apply.
- 2.23 GLVIA3 states that there are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach since circumstances vary with the location and context and with the type of proposal, but the following points should be noted;
- *Effects on people who are particularly sensitive to changes in views and visual amenity are more likely to be significant*
 - *Effects on people at recognised and important viewpoints or from recognised scenic routes are more likely to be significant*
 - *Large-scale changes which introduce new, non-characteristic or discordant or intrusive elements into the view are more likely to be significant than small changes or changes involving features already present within the view. (GLVIA3 paragraph 6.44)*
- 2.24 The criteria used in this appraisal are set out in Appendix A.

Overall Landscape and Visual Effects

- 2.25 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.
- 2.26 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following terms have been used for this appraisal:
- **Major**
 - **Moderate**
 - **Minor**

- **Negligible**

- 2.27 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021)

- 3.1 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for well-designed places, promoting healthy and safe communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 3.2 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for the countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives include protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.
- 3.3 Paragraph 174 states at part a) that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes and goes on to clarify that this should be in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan. Part b) states that planning policies and decisions should recognise "*the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*".
- 3.4 Paragraph 175 advises that:
"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries".
- 3.5 Paragraph 176 goes on to add:
"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues". And
"The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."
- 3.6 The site is within an undesignated landscape with no special protected status, and is not in the setting of a nationally designated landscape however it is located within a Country Side Protection Zone as defined by the adopted Uttlesford Local Plan. The character of the site and its immediate context is assessed within this report to help inform decisions regarding "*the intrinsic character and*

beauty of the countryside". The potential to enhance green infrastructure networks is also considered.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

- 3.7 The PPG was first published on 6th March 2014 and is a regularly updated online planning resource which provides guidance on the NPPF and the planning system. The NPPF continues to be the primary document for decision making.

Local Planning Policy

Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted January 2005)

- 3.8 *The Uttlesford Local Plan (ULP) (adopted January 2005) forms the statutory development plan in the district of Uttlesford. The following policies are considered to be of relevance in the context of the proposed development and landscape and visual matters:*
- 3.9 **S3** – Other Development limits - notes that:
- "Elsenham, Great Chesterford, Newport, Takeley and Thaxted are identified as Key Rural Settlements. Their boundaries, including village extensions at Takeley and Thaxted, and the boundaries of other settlements are defined on the Proposals Map. Development compatible with the settlement's character and countryside setting will be permitted within these boundaries".*
- 3.10 The site abuts the defined Development Limits associated with Elsenham to the north east.
- 3.11 **S7** – The Countryside - states that:
- "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."*
- 3.12 **S8** – The Countryside Protection Zone - states that:
- "The area and boundaries of the Countryside Protection Zone around Stansted Airport are defined on the Proposals Map. In the Countryside Protection Zone planning permission will only be granted for development that is required to be there, or is appropriate to a rural area. There will be strict control on new development. In particular development will not be permitted if either of the following apply:*
- a) New buildings or uses would promote coalescence between the airport and existing development in the surrounding countryside;*
- b) It would adversely affect the open characteristics of the zone."*
- 3.13 The assessment site lies outwith the Limits to Development as defined on the ULP Proposals Map, and thus within an area subject to the general countryside policies in S7; it is also defined as an area subject to Policy S8 – Countryside Protection Zone.

- 3.14 **GEN2** – Design - seeks a high standard of design in new developments, by reference to a number of criteria as follows:

“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.”*

- 3.15 **GEN7** - Nature Conservation – notes that:

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

- 3.16 **ENV2** - Development affecting Listed Buildings – notes (inter alia) that:

“Development affecting a listed building should be in keeping with its scale, character and surroundings.”

- 3.17 **ENV3** - Open Spaces and Trees - notes that:

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

- 3.18 **ENV7** - The Protection of the Natural Environment - Designated Sites - states that:

“Development proposals that adversely affect areas of nationally important nature conservation concern, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves, will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs the particular importance of the nature conservation value of site or reserve. Development proposals likely to affect local areas of nature conservation significance, such as County Wildlife sites, ancient woodlands, wildlife habitats, sites of ecological interest and Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites, will not be

permitted unless the need for the development outweighs the local significance of the site to the biodiversity of the District. Where development is permitted the authority will consider the use of conditions or planning obligations to ensure the protection and enhancement of the site's conservation interest.

3.19 **ENV8** – Other Landscape Elements of Importance for Nature Conservation - notes that:

“Development that may adversely affect these landscape elements:

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

will only be permitted if the following criteria apply:

a) The need for the development outweighs the need to retain the elements for their importance to wild fauna and flora;

b) Mitigation measures are provided that would compensate for the harm and reinstate the nature conservation value of the locality.

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

3.20 **ENV9** – Historic Landscapes - notes that:

“Development proposals likely to harm significant local historic landscapes, historic parks and gardens and protected lanes as defined on the proposals map will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs the historic significance of the site.”

Uttlesford New Local Plan

3.21 The Local Plan Team is preparing a draft Local Plan for consultation in the autumn.2023.

Other Relevant Strategies, Guidelines or Documents

Essex Design Guide²

3.22 The Essex Design Guide was first established in 1973 by Essex County Council. The latest 2018 web based edition comprises a reference guide to assist with the design of high quality places in the context of the County of Essex. The Design Guide sets out the following Key Messages with regard to the design of Landscape and Green Spaces:

- *“Landscape and strategic open spaces should be co-located within the layouts of new developments. High-quality communal spaces should be provided with supporting facilities and infrastructure which encourage activity by all users.*
- *Amenity spaces should be provided in a format that is multifunctional and flexible, and which can therefore be adapted (presently and over time) to cater for a range of uses by people of all ages and abilities.*
- *Green infrastructure should be allowed to shape and structure developments, while good landscape design should provide wayfinding cues and sensory stimulation – features which can provide valuable reassurance to older people and those with dementia.*
- *Amenity spaces should be aligned to make best use of sunlight, thereby encouraging residents to use outside spaces.*
- *The impact of the built environment on the local environment should be mitigated with green infrastructure features including green roofs, gardens and planted walls.*
- *The provision and type of ground surfaces should be considered from the outset of any development, and an approach taken that balances the needs of all users in terms of patterns, colours and materials with the technical requirements and future maintenance of highways.*
- *Existing ecology and natural habitats found on sites must be safeguarded and enhanced, and new opportunities for increasing biodiversity should be explored.*
- *Opportunities for community food production should be integrated into the proposed landscape.*
- *Surface water run-off systems should be considered to minimise flood risk and increase biodiversity.*
- *Care should be taken in the selection of tree and shrub species that are appropriate to the area, fitting in scale and colour, climatic requirements and growth habits.*
- *The future management and care of green spaces and infrastructure should be considered at the planning stage.*
- *Landscape proposals should look to ensure proposed landscape schemes complement and draw from the positive aspects of the sites wider landscape setting, this often identified through landscape or townscape character assessment.”*

Uttlesford Countryside Protection Zone Study (June 2016, LUC)

3.23 As noted above the CPZ was developed to limit the physical size of London Stansted Airport and to maintain an area of open countryside around it. The Uttlesford Countryside Protection Zone

² [REDACTED]

Study (CPZ Study) was undertaken by LUC to assess the extent to which the land within the CPZ meets its purposes - as set out in Policy S8 of the ULP - thereby enabling the Council to make informed decisions about amending the CPZ through the emerging Local Plan process.

- 3.24 The study divides the CPZ into ten parcels - based on natural or man-made features - and assesses each parcel against four purposes:
1. To protect the open characteristics of the CPZ;
 2. To restrict the spread of development from London Stansted Airport;
 3. To protect the rural character of the countryside (including settlements around the airport); and
 4. To prevent changes to the rural settlement pattern of the area by restricting coalescence.
- 3.25 The Study locates the application site within Parcel 10: "Elsenham", and makes the following recommendation: *"Consider moving the northern boundary of the parcel to the line of the railway line, which itself could prevent the outward spread of development from the airport and the coalescence between the airport and Elsenham to the north."*
- 3.26 As illustrated on the New Local Plan Policies Map³ this would effectively remove the site – and a large area of recently developed land to the northwest – from the CPZ.

Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003, Chris Blandford Associates)

- 3.27 This document is considered in the following 'Baseline Conditions' section of this report.

Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (September 2006, Chris Blandford Associates)

- 3.28 This document is considered in the following 'Baseline Conditions' section of this report.

Policy Summary

- 3.29 The identified policy requirements relate to; high quality design, respect and sensitivity towards the local character, the protection of important views, retention and enhancement of biodiversity - including protection of hedgerows, trees and other landscape features - and the provision of public open space.
- 3.30 The proposed development and associated landscape framework proposals have been prepared with due regard to the relevant planning policy context as outlined above. Key considerations in this have been the potential effects upon landscape character and resources and the opportunities to enhance the landscape character and resources of the local area as part of the proposed development. Effective mitigation in the form of well planned, linked and useable green infrastructure will be an essential part of the development, both in terms of meeting policy objectives as well as ensuring new development is successfully integrated into its context.

³ <http://udc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=7cc9bd5aef43445bbb6c454741364a7>

4.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Landscape Character

National Character

- 4.1 A review of the following published Landscape Character Assessment information has been undertaken to assist with understanding the site's landscape character context:
- National Character Areas: Natural England's National Character Area Profiles (2014)⁴
 - County Landscape Character Areas: Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)⁵
 - District Landscape Character Areas: Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (September 2006)⁶
- 4.2 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have been prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCAs defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics. Figure 3 illustrates the NCAs and other defined character areas within the context of the site.
- 4.3 At this very broad landscape scale the site lies within National Character Area (NCA) 86: South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands. NCA 86 covers *"the four counties of Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It stretches from Bury St Edmunds in the north-west to Ipswich in the north-east, roughly following the line of the A14 trunk road through the Gipping Valley. 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"*.
- 4.4 The Key Characteristics for the NCA are:
- *"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.*
 - *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. Field margins support corn bunting, cornflower and brown hare.*

⁴ [REDACTED]

⁵ https://www.essex.gov.uk/AnalyticsReports/CB_LCA_Essex_2002.pdf

⁶ <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/4937/Environment>

- *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."*

4.5 Under the heading "Landscape Change" identified landscape opportunities include:

- *Plan for a landscape depleted of ash by planting replacement hedgerow tree species such as oak, which is also characteristic of the area.*
- *Enhance the species rich hedgerow network, encouraging the uptake of agri-environment options that aid replanting where they have been lost. Positively manage and maintain those which have become neglected, to strengthen the historical field patterns, improve wildlife networks and enhance landscape character.*
- *Protect the pastoral river valley landscape from further fragmentation by resisting inappropriate use and development, promoting traditional management practices, protecting existing pasture from conversion to arable use (especially those containing archaeological features), and seeking opportunities to create more permanent grassland as appropriate, through the uptake of agri environment options.*
- *Strengthen the historic character of the river valley landscape, encouraging traditional management methods, including willow pollarding along river banks, and the planting of native rare black poplar.*
- *Reconnect rivers with their flood plains as part of integrated flood management and wildlife enhancement schemes by supporting the operation of natural processes. Link and extend existing habitats and restore or create new river valley grasslands, fens, reedbeds and wet woodland where possible, for their contribution to the historic record of traditional landscapes, their biodiversity value and contribution to the sense of place.*
- *Conserve the rural settlement pattern by ensuring that new development is complementary to intrinsic local character.*
- *Conserve rural settlement character by using traditional materials in new developments especially the use of colour-washed render and pegtiles.*

- *Conserve the strongly nucleated character of settlements by encouraging new development to take place within the existing curtilage of settlements.*
- *Protect and sustainably manage the rich heritage of country houses with designed parklands, while also conserving landscapes linked to the arts...*
- *Raise the design quality of new and existing development. Incorporate green infrastructure that provides opportunities for wildlife and public access within urban areas and screens intrusive urban influence (especially on the periphery of settlements), with the use of substantial and appropriate landscaping, such as woodland planting, earthworks and green roofs.*

Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)

4.6 Prepared by Chris Blandford Associates, The Essex Landscape Character Assessment provides an assessment of the existing landscape character of the County of Essex and comprises five sections as follows:

- *Section One introduces the Landscape Character Assessment, explains its purpose, and describes the general approach and methodology for the study;*
- *A summary of the physical and cultural evolution of the landscape and an overview of the historic landscape can be found in Section Two, which also reviews the current planning policy framework for guiding change in the plan area;*
- *For those wishing to understand how this assessment fits into the hierarchy of landscape character assessments in England, Section Three explains the relationship of the national classification defined by the Character of England Map with the county-scale classification, and its relationship to more detailed District or other local assessments;*
- *Descriptions of the Landscape Character Areas and their sensitivity are provided in Section Four;*
- *A summary of the key issues for the planning and management of the landscape in the plan area can be found in Section Five.*

4.7 Within the assessment the site falls within the Stort Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA C2) which in turn forms part of the River Valley Landscape Type. The extent of the Landscape Character Areas are illustrated in Figure 3.

4.8 The Key Characteristics of LCA C2 are listed as follows:

- *Shallow and narrow valley with moderately sloping arable valley sides;*
- *Fairly enclosed character due to the frequency of hedgerows/hedgerow trees, small woods/copses and riverside trees;*
- *Small pastures and large floodplain meadows on the valley floor;*
- *Numerous small estates and parklands;*
- *Substantially undeveloped character.*

4.9 Under the heading "Overall Character" the assessment notes that:

"The Stort Valley is shallow and fairly narrow for much of its length, only opening out northwest of Harlow where large floodplain meadows extend over the valley floor. A patchwork of pasture and

wetland vegetation along the course of the river contrasts with the arable fields of the valley sides, but thick hedgerows, small woods and tree belts provide a sense of enclosure. Views are mostly confined and urban development and major roads are only occasionally visible. Church spires are an occasional feature appearing above wooded skylines.”

4.10 With regard to Landscape Condition - described on page 78 – the assessment notes that:

- *“There are localised areas of abandoned, or overgrazed pastures.*
- *Overall the condition of hedgerows and woodlands in the farmland is moderate to good.*
- *The condition of the settlements is moderate to good. A few villages show signs of poor quality modern development.*
- *Light industrial sheds on the valley floor at the northern edge of Harlow are visually intrusive.”*

4.11 The Sensitivity Evaluation - on page 79 - notes that the landscape sensitivity of LCA C2 to small urban extensions (<5 ha) is ‘moderate’. Landscape settings and low to moderate intervisibility are listed as key landscape sensitivity and accommodation of change issues.

4.12 Under the heading ‘Overall Character’ the assessment notes that:

“The Stort River Valley possesses a varied character area that changes from a relatively peaceful and rural character in the north, progressing to a busier and more urban character around Stansted Mountfitchet and the Hallingburys in the south. This area is characterised by scattered farmsteads, moats, small lanes and historic buildings that demonstrate the river’s historic importance as a site for settlement and industry. The location of Stansted Airport within this Character Area has brought rapid growth to the surrounding villages, and the effects of heavy traffic and aircraft noise are evident particularly near Stansted Mountfitchet and Elsenham. The valley floor is identified as a distinctive sub-unit in itself. It is extremely narrow and heavily wooded in places, and comprises primarily arable farmland right up to river’s edge for much of the valley’s length. On the lower slopes, in the valley floor and near settlements, pasture and some mixed farming can also be seen. Open and continuous views are frequent along the slopes from higher ground in the northern part of the valley, but become more enclosed south of Stansted Mountfitchet due to urban development and woodland blocks. The valley has a semi-enclosed character due to the density of the hedgerows, copses and tree belts/woodland hangars that frame most views. This is a medium to large scale landscape, with a fairly regular field pattern. Small winding lanes are typical along the valley slopes, often sunk between highly embanked species-rich verges that sometimes contain old oaks. Small villages, dispersed hamlets, and isolated agricultural buildings characterise the settlement pattern over the slopes to the north. Traditional buildings are primarily cream or white colour-washed plaster with thatched roofs, although mellow red brick predominates in some villages like Manuden. Stansted Mountfitchet has a historic core with a large number of vernacular buildings, although it is surrounded by modern infill developments. Villages such as Great and Little Hallingbury have developed around distinctive village greens/commons.”

Designations

- 4.13 Designations are identified on Figure 4.
- 4.14 The site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory landscape designations at a National level such as a National Park or AONB.
- 4.15 As noted above a Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ) designation applies to the land wrapping around the southern edge of Elsenham. This is designated within the adopted ULP and covered by Policy S8.
- 4.16 A number of listed buildings are present within the locality, however the majority of these are physically and visually separated from the site by intervening features including transport infrastructure (M11 and West Anglian Mainline Railway) settlement or vegetation – including mature hedgerows and trees.
- 4.17 Elsenham Hall (Grade II listed) and the Church of St Mary the Virgin (Grade I listed) are located within a designated Historic Landscape (as defined by Policy ENV9 of the ULP) approximately 640m to the east of the site, to the east of Hall Road.
- 4.18 Within the wider site context, the outer (north-east) edge of the Uttlesford / Metropolitan Green Belt - encompassing Stansted Park - is located approximately 500m to the south west of the site beyond the M11. Stansted Park is designated as a Historic Landscape by the ULP; however the site is physically and visually separated from the Green Belt and Stansted Park by the railway and the M11 road corridor.
- 4.19 The visual effects of the proposed development on relevant designated features have been assessed with reference to publicly accessible views from existing dwellings, roads and public rights of way which lie in close proximity. Heritage matters are considered in the Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment prepared by others.

Topography

- 4.20 The following should be read in conjunction with Figure 5.

Context – Landform

- 4.21 The landform surrounding Elsenham has a varied topography with a gently undulating character. It is principally influenced by Stansted Brook which flows from east to west, to the south of Elsenham, following the course of a shallow valley. The valley floor falls from around 85m above ordnance datum (AOD) near Pennington Hall, east of Elsenham, to around 74m AOD immediately to the south of the site. The valley then continues in a westerly direction towards Stansted Mountfitchet where it levels out at between 60 and 65m AOD. From Stansted Mountfitchet the West Anglian mainline railway follows the course of this valley before turning northwards along a secondary shallow valley which extends through the settlement of Elsenham to the east of Station Road.
- 4.22 To the east and west of Elsenham, which lies at between 85 and 95m AOD, the landform rises gently to form two small plateaus. Alsa Wood occupies a local high point on the westernmost plateau at around 100m AOD. To the south of Stansted Brook the topography also increases in height towards the south east - forming a low ridge - where the hamlet of Tye Green sits at around 100 - 103m AOD.

Site - Landform

- 4.23 The site occupies a south-easterly facing slope on the north side of Stansted Brook falling broadly within the same natural ground levels as existing properties on the southern edge of Elsenham and at Fuller's End, to the south east. On the northern site boundary, adjacent to Rush Lane, levels range from ca 88.5m AOD - at the eastern end - to ca 85m AOD. Rush Lane then dips towards the south west corner of the site which lies at approximately 76m AOD. At this location Mill House occupies a low point to the south of the site, and Stansted Brook, at around 74m AOD. The southern site boundary extends eastwards along Stansted Brook from this low point to the south east corner of the site where a number of residential properties front onto Robin Hood Road at between 82 and 85m AOD. The eastern site boundary then follows the course of Robin Hood Road northwards up to the junction with Rush Lane at around 88m AOD.

Site and Immediate Context

- 4.24 An assessment of landscape character of the site and its immediate context has been carried out, providing a finer level of assessment than the published studies.
- 4.25 The village of Elsenham is a village and civil parish in the district of Uttlesford – in northwest Essex. Its neighbouring towns include Bishop's Stortford, Saffron Walden, and Stansted Mountfitchet. The village is located to the east of the M11 and is largely contained to the south and east by the West Anglian mainline railway. The village has a predominantly linear form, strongly influenced by the alignment of the railway, with residential development extending out from a central crossroads along the High Street, Henham Road, Stansted Road and Station Road. Historically the village developed as a series of discrete settlement groupings and one such grouping has become established to the south of the railway line at Fullers End, along Tye Green Road.
- 4.26 The landscape surrounds to Elsenham comprise a mixture of pasture and arable farmland - in fields of varying size – together with large, primarily deciduous, woodland blocks and linear tree belts, which are generally associated with either watercourses or major transport corridors (M11 and West Anglian mainline railway). Woodland blocks include Alsa Wood - to the west of Elsenham – together with Mill Wood, Long Plantation and Wilkins Plantation – to the south - which are key features in the wider surrounding landscape. Elsenham Hall is located to the south east of the village and is set within an area of parkland including woodland blocks of varying size. The field pattern comprises medium and large sized fields of arable farmland together with smaller pasture fields adjacent to settlements and watercourses where farmsteads with equestrian facilities are evident features in the landscape. Fields are bounded by a combination of established native hedgerows – with hedgerow trees - and more recent post and wire and post and rail fences. The numerous woodland blocks and belts together with the well-established field boundary hedgerows give the landscape a well treed appearance and a semi-enclosed character.
- 4.27 An extensive area of completed development on the Elsenham Vale housing estate - is located to the north west of the site between Rush Lane and Stansted Road. In addition to this land immediately to the south of the site at Fuller's End – on the opposite side of the railway – has also been granted planning approval for residential use - comprising a small number of dwellings - with the approved development now fully completed.
- 4.28 The site lies on the southern edge of Elsenham and comprises a single field of semi-improved rough pasture extending to 2.25 ha (circa 5.56 acres). The field is subdivided into two paddocks by a post and rail fence and is contained to the north and east by Rush Lane and Robin Hood

Road. Well established hedgerows with a number of mature hedgerow trees are located along these boundaries providing a high degree of visual containment. The hedgerows are largely overgrown and suffering from a lack of positive management. The site has a somewhat neglected and unkempt appearance with stands of ruderal vegetation and scrub encroaching into the grassland. Stansted Brook and the embanked West Anglian mainline railway abut the site to the south.

- 4.29 Existing residences front onto the northern side of Rush Lane and the eastern side of Robin Hood Road - opposite the site. A single private dwelling (Mill House) with extensive grounds and outbuildings occupies a low lying position to the south of Stansted Brook - near the southwest part of the site.
- 4.30 There are no large permanent structures or buildings on the site although a small timber horse shelter is located near the access point at the south west corner. Additionally, telephone lines run on telegraph poles from east to west through the site. Three telegraph poles are located within the site.

A Public Footpath (Ref. PROW 13-29) crosses the site from the southwest corner to the south east corner connecting Rush lane and Robin Hood Lane. Another Public Footpath (Ref. PROW 13 28) runs along the length of Rush Lane and passes to the north of the site. To the north west of Rush Lane is a large area of public open space associated with the new residential development. Private vehicular access to the site is currently possible from Rush Lane via a gateway in the south west corner.

Landscape Value

- 4.31 In terms of "landscape value" it is appropriate to examine the role of the site and its immediate context in terms of the range of local factors set out in LI TGN 02-21 and summarised in the methodology. This considers the landscape in terms of a range of factors as set out below. As a starting point, landscape designations have been considered.
- 4.32 Landscape Designations: The site and its wider landscape context are not subject to any national, landscape designations as stated above. The site currently falls within the Countryside Protection Zone as defined by the adopted ULP, but this is not a landscape value designation.
- 4.33 Natural Heritage: The site does not have any designated ecological value. The Ecological Appraisal⁷ prepared for the planning application concludes that the site is of low wildlife interest.
- 4.34 Cultural Heritage: A number of listed buildings are present within the locality, however the majority of these are physically and visually separated from the site by intervening features including transport infrastructure (M11 and West Anglian Mainline Railway) settlement or vegetation – including mature hedgerows and trees. Elsenham Hall (Grade II listed) and the Church of St Mary The Virgin (Grade I listed) are located within a designated Historic Landscape (as defined by Policy ENV9 of the ULP) approximately 640m to the east of the site, to the east of Hall Road.
- 4.35 Landscape Condition: The landscape surrounds to Elsenham are generally considered to be in good landscape condition with features that are intact and consistent throughout the character area. However, there are also a number of detracting features, including the M11 and West Anglian mainline railway together with ongoing construction activity to the west of the village – off Stansted Road – and at Fuller's End, to the south of the railway. Geographically the site is closely related to

⁷ Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Cotswold Wildlife Surveys (02.11.18).

the urban form of Elsenham and includes few features of landscape value. Most noteworthy at a localised scale are the peripheral hedgerows and a number of mature hedgerow trees. The grassland trees, and hedgerows associated with the site currently suffer from a lack of management, with the hedgerows being overgrown and stands of ruderal vegetation and scrub encroaching into the grassland.

- 4.36 Associations: No particular associations with the site or local area have been identified.
- 4.37 Distinctiveness: The site contains no unusual or rare landscape features and is not unusual or important in the context of the Stort River Valley LCA. It has a close relationship with existing residential properties on the edge of the settlement and a relatively enclosed character featuring well established hedgerow boundaries. The embanked railway line to the south and the M11 to the west effectively separate the site from the wider Stort Valley LCA.
- 4.38 Recreational Value: A large area of multi-functional public open space – associated with new residential development on the Elsenham Vale Estate – is located to the north of Rush Lane. This area provides opportunities for play and passive recreation. An extensive public rights of way network surrounding Elsenham, and the site also provides connections to the wider rural area including Alsa Wood and the Aubrey Buxton Nature Reserve to the northwest.
- 4.39 Recreation within the site is limited to the Public Footpath (Ref: PROW 13-29) which extends through the lower lying southern part of the site, connecting Robin Hood Road with Rush Lane. There is no other recreational use within the site.
- 4.40 Perceptual (Scenic): The site is not considered to have any unusual scenic quality or unique characteristics. However, the site is reasonably attractive being an enclosed field with a number of mature hedgerow trees on the settlement edge.
- 4.41 Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity): The site is perceived as being reasonably enclosed by virtue of the surrounding mature hedgerows and trees, although there is a degree of intervisibility from the existing residential properties fronting onto Rush Lane to the north and Robin Hood Road to the east. The locality is influenced by major transport infrastructure (M11 and railway) and is not perceived as a particularly “wild” or “tranquil” landscape.
- 4.42 In conclusion and having analysed the above factors it is judged that the site and the immediate landscape context is of no more than medium local landscape value, and would not be judged to be a “valued” landscape in the context of NPPF paragraph 174, based upon the criteria in TGN 02-21
- 4.43 It is considered that the site has the potential to accommodate change in the form of well planned development, yet it is recognised that the master planning response needs to take into account the site’s relationship with the railway line and Stansted Brook to the south, the existing public rights of way - and public open space - within and in close proximity to the site, and neighbouring properties including Mill House and those fronting onto Rush Lane and Robin Hood Road.

Visual Baseline

- 4.44 A visual appraisal has been undertaken for the site. This has explored the nature of the existing visual amenity of the area and sought to establish the approximate visibility of the site from surrounding locations and receptors. A series of photo viewpoints have been selected which support this analysis.

- 4.45 Photographs have been taken to illustrate a view from a specific vantage point, or to demonstrate a representative view for those receptors that are moving through the landscape, e.g. rights of way users. The photographs may demonstrate varying degrees of visibility and include both short and long range views. The photographs were taken on the 14th of June 2023 and seasonal differences have been taken into account when determining the visual effects on these receptors viewpoint 8 and 9 has been used from the previous version as access couldn't be obtained into farmers field as the farmer was working within the field on the date of the survey.
- 4.46 'Photo Viewpoints', as referred to in this report are 'Type 1 Visualisations' or 'Annotated Viewpoint Photographs', as referred to in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note on 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' (TGN 06/19). The photos were taken on the 15th of June 2023.

Photo Viewpoints

- 4.47 An assessment of the likely visual effects of the proposed development upon surrounding receptors is detailed in the subsequent section. Figure 6 details the location of the Photo Viewpoints and Figure 7-13 illustrates the photo viewpoints. They are briefly described below.
- 4.48 An assessment of the likely visual effects of the proposed development upon surrounding receptors is detailed in the subsequent section. They are briefly described below.

Viewpoint 1

- 4.49 This westerly view is available from the public footpath (PROW 13-29) which extends through the site. The foreground is dominated by an unmanaged grass paddock which makes up the eastern part of the site. A further paddock - forming the western part of the site - can be seen beyond a post and rail fence. The site is bounded to the south by the embanked railway line and established vegetation along the course of Stansted Brook. To the north and east the mature boundary hedgerows and trees curtail views beyond the site although there are glimpsed views of residential properties on Rush Lane.

Viewpoint 2

- 4.50 This represents the view looking east from the public footpath (PROW 13-28) which approaches the site from the west and follows the course of Rush Lane along the northern site boundary. Rush Lane - which is enclosed on both sides by mature hedgerows and trees - can be seen extending eastwards along the northern site boundary. The current site access - formed by a timber gate and post and rail fence - is clearly visible in the foreground. Beyond the gateway there is a channelled view of the site framed on either side by mature hedgerows and trees. The eastern site boundary hedgerow can be seen in the distance with the rooflines of properties on Robin Hood Road beyond. To the south of the site the ground falls away towards Stansted Brook. Mature vegetation can be seen along the course of the brook together with a glimpsed view of Mill House.

Viewpoint 3

- 4.51 This view is taken from Robin Hood Road at the junction with Rush Lane. Robin Hood Road can be seen extending southwards with residential properties on its eastern side enclosing the view. Rush Lane extends westwards from the viewpoint with the site to the south and a continuous line of two storey residential properties to the north. Although the perimeter vegetation along the

northern site boundary is clearly visible, views into the site itself are effectively screened by this vegetation.

Viewpoint 4

- 4.52 Taken from the public footpath which connects Rush Lane and Stansted Road (PROW 13-30) this view looks south east towards the site location. A channelled view is available looking along the footpath which is bordered to the east by a well-established hedgerow. The hedgerow prevents longer views in this direction. To the west of the footpath the view is similarly enclosed by a number of newly built residential properties on the Elsenham Vale Estate. The site itself is screened by the hedgerows and trees which can be seen at the end of the footpath to either side of Rush Lane.

Viewpoint 5

- 4.53 This represents the view available to users of the public open space associated with the Elsenham Vale estate. The view looks south east towards the site and takes in an area of open space – incorporating a footpath - which can be seen in the foreground. Recently completed residences forming part of the Elsenham Vale housing estate are clearly visible to the east and west. Established tree and hedgerow vegetation along the course of Rush Lane to the south effectively screens the site.

Viewpoint 6

- 4.54 In common with Viewpoint 5 this view looks south east towards the site and takes in an area of public open space – incorporating a footpath - which can be seen in the foreground. To the right of the view a storm water attenuation basin connected with the Elsenham Vale housing estate can be seen. Residences on the southern edge of the development are also clearly visible. Established tree and hedgerow vegetation along the course of Rush Lane to the south effectively screens the site.

Viewpoint 7

- 4.55 This represents the view available looking east from a recently completed footpath - forming part of a trim trail - associated with Elsenham Vale housing estate. A large area of open space can be seen in the foreground extending across rising ground towards the new residences on the southern edge of the development. A short distance away – at the foot of the slope can be seen some recently installed trim trail equipment. To the south the landform falls gently towards Stansted Brook and Mill Wood which forms the backdrop to the view. To the east the site location is screened by the overlapping effects of intervening hedgerows and trees.

Viewpoint 8

- 4.56 This view looks north from the public footpath (PROW 13-4) which extends in an easterly direction from The M11 and Mill Wood towards Fuller's End. The foreground is formed by two medium sized pasture fields bounded by post and rail fences. Mill Wood can be seen to the west of the view and the rooflines of new residential properties on Elsenham Vale estate are visible to the north set within a framework of established vegetation including hedgerows and trees. Beyond this Alsa Wood forms the wooded skyline. To the east of the viewpoint an avenue of trees draws the eye northwards, however the site location and the larger part of Elsenham village are screened by the

intervening landform, hedgerows and trees. The railway, which follows the course of the Stansted Brook valley in the middle distance is also hidden from view.

Viewpoint 9

- 4.57 Similar to Viewpoint 8 this view is available from PROW 13-4 where it emerges from the rear of residential properties fronting on to Tye Green Road at Fuller's End. Looking north eastwards an open pasture field can be seen in the foreground bounded to the north by a post and rail fence. Mill Wood, together with intervening hedgerows and trees, can be seen to the west of the view and the rooflines of new residential properties on Elsenham Vale estate are visible to the northwest set within a framework of established vegetation. Alsa Wood is also visible on the skyline. The rear gardens of properties on Tye Green Road – which lie to the east – are screened by established hedgerows and trees. The site location is also screened by intervening vegetation and built fabric.

Viewpoint 10

- 4.58 This view looks northwest from Tye Green Road immediately to the south of the Fuller's End pedestrian railway crossing. The foreground is formed by an access road into a former timber yard, which is currently being re-developed to accommodate a number of new dwellings. Adjacent to this the embanked railway line and associated overhead power lines are clearly visible. The site location, which lies beyond the railway line is largely concealed from view, although a number of the taller trees within the northern site boundary hedgerow can be seen projecting above the railway embankment. Properties to the north, on Robin Hood Road, are also screened from view.

Viewpoint 11

- 4.59 Looking west from a public footpath (PROW 13-13) which extends south west from Hall Road, to the north of Stansted Brook, an open pasture field can be seen in the foreground. At the far side of the field the rooflines of a number of residential properties on the south eastern edge of Elsenham are discernible beyond the boundary hedgerow, however there are no views of the site, which lies beyond the tree line and the railway.

Viewpoint 12

- 4.60 This view is taken from the public footpath which extends in a north westerly direction from Hall Road (east of Elsenham Hall) to the south of Stansted Brook. A pasture field occupies the foreground which extends northwards across falling ground towards Stansted Brook. To the south west Elsenham House, and associated outbuildings, are visible occupying a relatively elevated position on the skyline. Views towards Elsenham and the site location are wholly truncated by the extensive layers of intervening vegetation along the course of Stansted Brook.

Viewpoint 13

- 4.61 This view has been taken looking south down Robin Hood Road towards the proposed site entrance. Housing is on the left-hand side while some of the field where the public footpath (PROW 13-4) runs through. The site sits on the right hand side of this view being screened by the existing vegetation.

Viewpoint 14

- 4.62 This view was taken looking north up Robin Hood Road toward the proposed entrance way to the new development. Housing is on the right hand side, while thick screen vegetation obstructs the view into the development field.

Summary of Visual Baseline

- 4.63 The baseline analysis results in a number of reasoned conclusions which are summarised below:
- The interaction of undulating topography, existing built form and overlapping vegetation results in a relatively restricted visual envelope. Receptors of high susceptibility to change are limited to the public rights of way running through the south part of the site (PROW 13-29) and adjacent to the northern site boundary (PROW 13-28) together with those residential properties abutting or in close proximity to the site boundaries.
 - Existing residential properties and recently established built development at Elsenham Vale to the north of Rush Lane, together with established hedgerows and trees along the course of the lane, contain the site and reduce viewing opportunities of the site from the north and northwest;
 - Established site boundary vegetation, including hedgerows and trees along the western side of Robin Hood Road, limits views towards the site from this location;
 - The southern site boundary - which extends west from Robin Hood Lane - is largely open to views from the adjoining embanked railway for approximately 100m; however the remaining 150m – to the west - adjoins the well vegetated course of Stansted Brook and trees and vegetation along the northern side of the brook provide a good level of screening for this section. Beyond the railway to the south publicly accessible site views are curtailed by the overlapping effects of intervening features including the railway embankment, established vegetation and built fabric.
 - A relatively small number of residential properties on the southern edge of Elsenham have views from predominantly upper storey windows towards the site, however views from ground and lower storey windows are largely screened by intervening features including existing garden vegetation, fences, hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
 - The main views towards the assessment site, and which are most likely to be sensitive to the development of the site, are from the single dwelling at the south west corner of the site (Mill House), a small number of residential properties fronting on to Rush Lane and Robin Hood Road and the views from public rights of way which extend through or are in close proximity to the site.
 - There are no site views from the vast majority of properties within Elsenham.
 - Circa 3 properties to the south of the railway are complete and have close range northerly views towards the site, albeit the embanked railway and extensive vegetation along the course of Stansted Brook partially screens the site in these views.

5.0 LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Introduction

- 5.1 The development proposals are described in the Design and Access Statement and other information accompanying the planning application. The existing landscape resource and the visual receptors and amenity of the site have been considered by the planning and design process and have informed the resultant scheme. This approach has entailed collaboration between landscape, urban design, ecological and other professionals. The landscape components of the scheme are an important integral part of the proposals.

Landscape Design and GI Objectives

- 5.2 The key objectives of the landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are to:
- Provide new accessible public open space within the development to include; play facilities, recreational space and new planting to create a soft settlement edge;
 - Retain and enhance existing landscape features of value and provide additional landscape features such as new hedgerows and trees;
 - Create a well-designed development, sensitive to its location on the settlement edge;
 - Ensure development is in keeping with the context and character of Elsenham and its landscape surrounds;
 - Be sensitive to the adjacent residential areas to ensure the retention of the privacy and light of the adjoining properties;
 - Minimise any potential adverse landscape and visual effects of the development through careful layout design of the proposed development and location of public open space and screening vegetation; and
 - Create a well landscaped development with appropriately designed gateways, open spaces, footpaths, buildings and streets which will be safe and attractive to use.

Landscape and Green Infrastructure (GI) Proposals

- 5.3 The landscape and GI proposals for the scheme are detailed in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the planning application. In summary these proposals include:
- Retention of existing landscape features of value where possible including the majority of existing mature trees and perimeter hedgerows.
 - The provision of land dedicated to landscape, public open space, play and habitat related proposals
 - Retention, realignment and enhancement of the existing public right of way running through the site – together with the introduction of new pedestrian routes and access points - to ensure existing pedestrian connectivity is maintained within areas of high quality landscaped green space.
 - New areas of public open space including a Local Area of Play (LAP) - the detailed design and layout of the play space would be developed in liaison with Uttlesford District Council.

- Setting back of buildings from the southern, south eastern and south western boundaries of the site to create landscaped buffers between the new housing, Stansted Brook and the railway. New houses will also be set back from the boundaries of nearby properties including Mill House and neighbouring properties on Robin Hood Road to retain privacy and light for these existing properties.
 - Consideration of the relationship between the proposed development and the Rush Lane frontage to ensure that the new dwellings integrate well with the existing settlement whilst minimising impacts upon boundary vegetation and the character of the lane.
- 5.4 New tree planting within areas of public open space across the whole of the site. This will soften the development for close proximity views in particular.

Landscape Management

- 5.5 All of the landscape areas and public open space features will be managed and maintained. This would be achieved through the implementation of a comprehensive Landscape Management Plan (LMP), to ensure the successful establishment and continued thriving of the landscape proposals.

6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

- 6.1 The following section outlines the likely landscape and visual effects that would arise from proposed development on the site. Schedules detailing these likely landscape and visual effects for the receptors are included in Appendices B and C respectively. Please refer to these in conjunction with the following descriptions.

Landscape Effects

Construction

- 6.2 The location and design of temporary site compounds, lighting, signage and perimeter screen fencing, combined with effective project management would aim to minimise the potential adverse landscape effects during the construction phase. It is anticipated that the construction working methods would adopt best practices and be agreed with the Local Planning Authorities and Statutory Bodies where necessary.
- 6.3 The landscape character of the site would inevitably change during the construction period and would include the active presence of plant and machinery and the increasing presence of new built development and infrastructure. However, beyond the site boundaries, the effects upon local landscape character would generally dissipate quickly due to the relatively contained and enclosed nature of the site and its immediate context.
- 6.4 Conservation of the existing perimeter hedgerows and hedgerow trees where possible would assist in limiting the effects locally and these conserved hedgerows and trees would be protected during the course of the construction activity. Consequently the significance of the construction activities upon the landscape character would be localised and limited.
- 6.5 Permanent vegetation within the site comprises rough grassland – with stands of ruderal vegetation and encroaching scrub – together with overgrown boundary hedgerows and mature trees. The proposed development would involve the loss of some of the eastern boundary hedgerow - to provide the site access which will be situated where the current turning head is on Robin Hood

Road, a small area of vegetation will remain on the southern eastern side next to Robin Hood Road along with the boundary hedge at the Rush Lane and Robin Hood Road junction. Areas of rough grassland would be lost to accommodate the new dwellings and associated infrastructure. Further details concerning the retention and removal of hedgerows and trees are included within the Arboricultural Assessment submitted with the application. The consequent degree of change at the site wide scale would be medium entailing a partial loss of grassland and hedgerow boundaries.

- 6.6 Overall, it is judged there would be a moderate adverse landscape effect on the site and immediate context during the construction phase. However, effects would largely be limited and localised to the site itself, the boundaries adjoining Rush Lane and Robin Hood Road and the adjoining settlement edge of Elsenham.

Operation (following Completion)

Landscape Character

- 6.7 The development proposals would change the character of the site from an undeveloped site to a medium density built residential development with associated infrastructure including access roads, drainage measures, structural planting and public open space. The loss of the existing open 'greenfield' use would be permanent and irreversible.
- 6.8 In the context of the national scale landscape character assessment study - covering extensive landscape tracts - the proposed development would have no discernible effects upon NCA 86.
- 6.9 At a County scale, the construction of the proposed development would give rise to very limited effects on the Stort Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA C2), resulting primarily from the loss of a small area of poor quality semi improved pasture. The characteristic boundary hedgerows would largely be retained and would be supplemented with new planting across the site. The magnitude of landscape change upon LCA2 during the construction period will be Negligible - Low, resulting in a Negligible - Minor Adverse effect during construction of the proposed development.
- 6.10 With regard to the Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment the site and its immediate landscape context falls within the eastern reaches of the Stort River Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA A3) which in turn forms part of the River Valley Landscape Type. LCA A3 has a distinctive landscape character as set out by the published assessment and the Stansted Brook valley landscape, to the south and southwest of Elsenham is characteristic of the LCA. Notwithstanding the site forms a relatively small parcel of land within LCA A3 which has a relatively enclosed character - featuring well established boundary hedgerows and hedgerow trees – and has a close relationship with the settlement edge of Elsenham. It is strongly defined along its southern boundary by the embanked railway line which effectively separates it from the wider countryside to the south.
- 6.11 The completion and operation of the proposed development will have direct effects upon LCA A3 altering the immediate context of the site as it changes from an enclosed pasture field to settlement edge development. Although the proposed development will inevitably change the character of the landscape locally it will give rise to both adverse and beneficial effects. A number of key landscape features, including the majority of mature trees and hedgerows, would be retained and incorporated into the development layout. The proposed development also includes significant areas of new

green infrastructure which would provide opportunities for enhanced biodiversity and greater public access.

- 6.12 Overall, the effect on LCA A3 due to the change in use of this site will be minor adverse, this is likely to change to negligible once the new tree planting and soft landscaping around the southern perimeter of the site has established, providing some minor beneficial effects for the area and helping to offset the adverse effects of the change of use.
- 6.13 The Broxted Farland Plateau (LCA B10) extends across the more elevated land to the north, east and west of the Stansted Brook valley and washes over the settlement of Elsenham. However due to the overlapping effects of existing built fabric, hedgerows, tree belts and woodland there is very limited intervisibility between this LCA and the site. Consequently, it is considered that the proposed development would not give rise to any discernible lasting operational effects upon the LCA.
- 6.14 The effect of the proposed development upon the character of the landscape at a site wide scale would be more marked yet still contained and localised in its extent. The primary change would arise as a direct result of the replacement of a small area of pasture with residential development and associated infrastructure together with areas of landscaping and public open space.
- 6.15 The significance of this change to the character would be lessened to some extent by the well contained nature of the site, its orientation adjacent to the existing settlement and the presence of nearby transport infrastructure (the M11 and West Anglian mainline railway) as well as recently completed residential development to the northwest at Elsenham Vale.
- 6.16 Given this context it is considered that changes arising from the proposed development will have a moderate adverse effect on the local landscape upon completion reducing to an overall minor – moderate adverse effect after 15 years.

Landscape Features:

- 6.17 *Landform:* The landform would not be dramatically changed due to the development. There may be localised changes in topography to level out areas for housing development, roads and footpaths to ensure the appropriate gradients as well as localised changes for the proposed attenuation pond. However, in general the underlying direction and gradient of falls would generally remain as existing and therefore there will be a minor adverse effect at worst upon completion and a negligible effect after 15 years once the development and associated landscaping becomes established.
- 6.18 *Woodland, Trees and other Vegetation:* Existing vegetation within the site comprises rough grassland – with stands of ruderal vegetation and encroaching scrub - boundary hedgerows and mature trees. Although the development will be reducing the area of open space and there will be a limited loss of hedgerow vegetation to facilitate access, the proposals will include an extensive amount of new tree, hedgerow and shrub planting together with the retention of the majority of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, apart from at the site access. Retained vegetation around the site will be protected throughout the construction phase and will be improved upon as a part of the GI proposals.
- 6.19 Overall, the vegetation on the site is considered to be of medium overall sensitivity as a landscape receptor. The magnitude of effect of the development upon existing trees and hedgerows is considered to be medium. Consequently, upon completion there would be a moderate adverse

effect upon vegetation. The maturing of the proposed landscaping will give rise to some longer term benefits helping to offset the initial loss of site vegetation.

- 6.20 *Water features:* Stansted Brook lies outwith the site but follows part of the southern boundary. The existing watercourse will be retained in its current alignment - adjacent to areas of open space - and will remain largely undisturbed although minor works will be required to enable construction of a new surface water drainage outfall from the site. New wetland habitats would be created in association with the proposed storm water attenuation basin which would give rise to localised biodiversity benefits.
- 6.21 *Land Use and Open Space:* The development would alter the use of the site from an enclosed pasture field - with perimeter hedgerows and trees - to a new housing development with landscaped areas and new tree, hedgerow and shrub planting. The proposed development includes a generous belt of Green Infrastructure around the southern perimeter of the site ensuring that an effective buffer is created between the extended settlement and the adjoining Stansted Brook and embanked railway line. The site would become more enclosed with part of the landscape changing from an open field to residential development giving rise to a moderate – major adverse effect during construction. However this would reduce to moderate adverse once the new perimeter landscaping becomes established and helps to soften the development and provide some minor beneficial landscape features.
- 6.22 In overall terms, the development of the site as proposed would give rise to a range of landscape effects in respect of the identified landscape receptors. The loss of semi improved pasture and open space would constitute moderate landscape effects at the site wide scale upon completion; however these effects would be reduced to minor or moderate adverse in the longer term offset by the beneficial effects arising from the maturing of the GI proposals. For other landscape receptors including landform and water features effects would be no worse than minor adverse at the outset. Whilst there would be, to varying degrees, some elements of change to each of these receptors, the nature and extent of these changes would not bring about any unacceptable adverse landscape effects. The implementation of a suitably robust GI framework and the application of an appropriate landscape management regime would also offer some localised and longer term benefit.

Visual Effects

- 6.23 Construction
- 6.24 Construction activities and plant movements within the site will be visible at times from those receptors with views of the site, in particular those receptors in closest proximity to the site, such as the properties adjacent to or opposite the site boundaries. All construction works will be carried out in accordance with best practice procedures to minimise, as far as practicable, adverse effects on visual amenity.
- 6.25 The visual implications of the construction process on the properties immediately surrounding the site are potentially greater for those properties which have clear, unfiltered views across the site. There are a number of properties that surround the site. Some of these properties have existing garden vegetation filtering or screening views, others benefit from the screening effects of other vegetation in the locality, including the site boundary hedgerows; however a small number will have clear and uninterrupted views of construction activities. The effect upon some of these properties during the construction phase is likely to be major adverse with effects for other properties being reduced to minor or moderate adverse due to filtered or partial views.

- 6.26 Beyond the residential properties immediately surrounding the site the visual effects are limited. The overall visual effect of the construction period is limited due to the small visual envelope of the site. The greatest effect will be upon the adjacent properties, roads and public rights of way - both within and in close proximity to the site - with limited effects on other receptors within the surrounding village edge context.
- 6.27 The visual effects for all of these receptors would vary during the course of construction and would generally increase at the peak of construction activity. The overall visual effects during the construction phase would be over a relatively short duration and consequently there would be short term effects as a result. Overall effects for the construction phase are considered to be moderate – major adverse for properties, roads and public rights of way adjacent to/within the site and between moderate adverse and none for other receptors within the area.

Operation (following Completion)

- 6.28 The following provides a summary of the visual effects assessment included at Appendix C.
- 6.29 Include also details of the longer term effects arising as the landscape/planting matures under the headings below

Residential Properties and Settlement

- 6.1 For Mill House (Receptor A) oblique views from rear facing windows and the surrounding grounds are currently restricted by extensive vegetation along the course of Stansted Brook – which separates the site from the dwelling. This vegetation will be retained and upon completion existing filtered views of the pasture field will be replaced with an area of green space – accommodating an attenuation basin – in the foreground with residential properties seen beyond giving rise to initial minor adverse effects due to the level of change in views. With maturing of the perimeter landscaping visual effects will be reduced.
- 6.2 For properties fronting onto Rush Lane to north of site (Receptor B) the nature and extent of views will vary depending on the position and orientation of the individual property in relation to the site. For the majority of dwellings - the proposed development will be screened or filtered by the retained mature hedgerows. Overall, it is considered that visual effects for these properties would be minor adverse upon completion.
- 6.3 For circa nine properties fronting onto Robin Hood Road (Receptor C) development will be visible from a small number of windows overlooking the site, although for the most part views towards the site are heavily filtered or screened by the hedgerow along the western side of Robin Hood Road. The new access point which will be where the current turning head is on Robin Hood Road will affect five of these nine properties. This will mean some of the existing hedgerow will have to be removed to create the access, however new residential properties around the access point within the proposed development will be set back from the site frontage reducing the impact in this location with buffer planting implemented to create a soft frontage. Upon completion the new dwellings would be set back from the site boundary further up from the access point opposite the other four affected properties on the eastern boundary along with a generous area of Green Infrastructure provided at the south east corner of the site, adjacent to the retained public footpath. These properties are expected to experience moderate adverse effects resulting from the proposed development upon completion reducing to minor – moderate adverse over time.

- 6.4 For the four listed properties fronting onto Robin Hood Road – north east of the site – (Receptor D) partial or glimpsed views of the proposed development will be available from a small number of mainly upper storey windows. The proposed development would retain and reinforce the existing boundary hedgerow at the north east corner of the site and the new site access would be located further to the west, along Rush Lane. Furthermore, residential properties within the proposed development would be set back from the site boundary with views being screened by the retained perimeter hedgerow, shrub and tree planting. It is anticipated that these properties will experience minor adverse effects upon completion reducing to negligible after 15 years with improved management to the retained boundary vegetation and once the Rush Lane frontage landscaping proposals have become established.
- 6.5 For dwellings on the southern edge of Elsenham Vale housing estate (Receptor E) the site is largely screened by the intervening overgrown hedgerows to either side of Rush Lane. This well-established vegetation would be retained with the proposed development and would continue to provide an effective screen to the development. Upon completion the built development would be set back from the northern site boundary and the resulting visual effects would be no worse than minor – moderate adverse. In the longer term, with improved management to the retained boundary vegetation and with the maturing of on-site landscaping effects would be reduced to negligible or minor adverse.
- 6.6 For properties fronting onto Tye Green Road (Receptor F) no views of the site have been identified due to the screening effects of intervening vegetation along the course of the railway, together with that provided elsewhere in the surrounding landscape. As such no adverse visual effects are anticipated for these properties.
- 6.7 Three properties, which are located to the south of the railway line, (Receptor G) are currently being developed. When occupied these two storey properties will have views towards the site. Following completion residential properties within the proposed development would be set back from the southern site boundary with a landscaped buffer to the railway corridor reducing the impact on any views from this location. Resultant visual effects for these properties are considered to be moderate adverse at worst upon completion and minor – moderate adverse after 15 years.

Public Rights of Way

- 6.8 Public Footpath PROW 13-29 (Receptor H) extends through the southern part of the site connecting Rush Lane with Robin Hood Road. Upon completion users of PROW 13-29 will pass through new landscaped public open space within the site. There will be a high level of change in views from the current situation resulting in a moderate - major adverse effect for footpath users. In the longer term - once the proposed landscaping has established - views will be softened by the surrounding trees and planting and the level of impact of the new properties on the receptor will be reduced to moderate adverse.
- 6.9 Public footpath PROW 13-28 (Receptor I) runs adjacent to the northern site boundary for approximately 320m. It then continues in a westerly direction towards the M11. For the section which follows the northern site boundary – along the course of Rush Lane – there would be a medium level of change post completion. With increasing distance from the site – between the site and the M11 - any built development and associated activity within it would be progressively more screened by intervening vegetation along the course of the footpath and Stansted Brook. Ultimately views in the direction of the proposals will include the retained boundary hedgerow together with

perimeter site landscaping, incorporating new tree and shrub planting, with filtered views of the upper parts of built development. At the eastern end of Rush Lane this filtered development edge would be experienced in context with the existing residences fronting on to the northern side of the lane. Visual effects for users of PROW 13-28 are considered to be minor - moderate adverse upon completion as filtered views of residential properties beyond the retained hedgerow and landscaped edge will be available. Effects would reduce to minor adverse or negligible once the soft landscaping has established and helps to filter and soften the new properties within the view. With increasing distance from the site any views of built development would be progressively more screened by intervening hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

- 6.10 Public Footpath PROW 13-30 (Receptor J) extends north from Rush Lane to Stansted Road. From this footpath there is a channelled view southwards towards the site location, however the site is screened by the mature hedgerows and trees which can be seen at the end of the footpath to either side of Rush Lane. This well-established vegetation would be retained with the proposed development and would continue to provide an effective screen to the development. Given that viewing opportunities from PROW 13-30 are minimal it is considered that overall visual effects for users of the route would be none or negligible.
- 6.11 For users of other public footpaths in the locality - to the south of Stansted Brook and south east of Elsenham - (Receptors K, L and M) the site location is hidden from view by a combination of the intervening topography, built fabric, hedgerows and trees. As such it is considered that users of these footpaths would not experience any adverse visual effects.

Roads

- 6.12 Upon completion users of Robin Hood Road (Receptor N) would have restricted views of the proposed development - near the Rush Lane road junction. The pedestrian railway crossing at the southern end will have views into the new site access- albeit the views would be limited in extent due to the southern eastern green area proposed within the development and some of the retained hedgerow. Glimpsed or partial views of the completed development would include the new site access and new housing. The new dwellings would be set back behind the retained roadside hedgerow and public open space to the south as well as the new landscaped frontage to Robin Hood Road. Views of the proposed development will result in moderate adverse effects upon completion, reducing to minor adverse once the new Robin Hood Road frontage landscaping has become established.
- 6.13 Users of Rush Lane (Receptor O) have restricted viewing opportunities of the site for approximately 150m, where it runs adjacent to the northern site boundary. Views are currently heavily filtered by the well-established roadside hedgerow, although the site can be glimpsed through gaps in the vegetation. Views of the proposed development –, landscaped frontage and new dwellings - will result in a minor adverse effect upon completion (including gapping up of the existing hedgerow and new tree and shrub planting) has become established.
- 6.14 For users of Tye Green Road (Receptor P) the site location, which lies beyond the embanked railway line, is largely concealed from view. It is anticipated that glimpsed views of the new built development (predominantly rooflines in the early years post completion) would occur over a relatively short stretch of Tye Green Road immediately to the south of the railway crossing. With increasing distance from the site any built development and associated activity within it would be progressively more screened by intervening built fabric and vegetation along the course of Tye

Green Road. Upon completion it is anticipated that there would be negligible or minor adverse visual effects at worst for road users.

Other Receptors

- 6.15 Views from the public open space associated with Elsenham Vale housing estate (Receptor Q) to the north west of the site are heavily filtered or screened by existing vegetation – including mature hedgerows and trees to either side of Rush Lane. Upon completion it is anticipated that the development would largely be screened by the retained vegetation albeit there would be some filtered views of the upper parts of new residential units on the north western edge of the site. Upon completion the visual effects upon views from the open space will be minor adverse.
- 6.16 For passengers on trains using the West Anglian mainline railway (Receptor R) there would be fleeting partial views of the proposed development. To the south of the site the railway corridor includes some continuous mature hedgerows and tree belt planting. This effectively limits the opportunity for views out from the railway corridor towards the site. Nonetheless partial views of the proposed development will be possible briefly on a short section to the south west of the Fuller's End crossing, where the new perimeter landscaping and dwellings will be visible. Upon completion visual effects for railway passengers are considered to be minor adverse at worst.

Residual Effects

Landscape

- 6.1 In general the landscape effects of the completed development will lessen over time with the successful establishment and maturing of the planting and other habitat creation measures. In addition to the beneficial effects arising from the proposed landscaping, the application of appropriate long term management and maintenance operations to the existing conserved habitats, trees and hedgerows will also deliver some localised benefits. An assessment of the residual landscape effects of the proposals (at Year 15) on the identified receptors is included in the Landscape Effects Table at Appendix B.
- 6.2 The main benefits in landscape terms will arise from the maturing of the landscape and planting proposals which will assist in assimilating the built development proposals into the surrounding landscape and will deliver other related public open space and access benefits.

Visual

- 6.3 The retention and improved management of existing boundary vegetation together with successful establishment and maturing of the planting and habitat creation proposals, chiefly throughout the outer and perimeter landscape areas, will provide some valuable localised benefits to many of the receptors with views towards the proposed development. An assessment of the residual visual effects of the proposals (at Year 15) on the identified receptors is included in the Visual Effects Table at Appendix C.
- 6.4 The improved long term management of boundary vegetation together with maturing of the landscape and planting proposals will offer the greatest localised visual benefits to those receptors generally closest to the main built development area including local residents, footpath users and road users in close proximity to the site. At these locations, the maturing of the perimeter

landscaping and structure planting will assist in assimilating the proposed development with the surrounding landscape setting.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The site lies on the southern edge of Elsenham and comprises a single field of semi-improved rough pasture extending to 2.25 ha (circa 5.56 acres). The field is subdivided into two paddocks by a post and rail fence and is contained to the north and east by Rush Lane and Robin Hood Road. Well established hedgerows with a number of mature hedgerow trees are located along these boundaries providing a high degree of visual containment. The hedgerows are largely overgrown and suffering from a lack of positive management. The site has a somewhat neglected and unkempt appearance with stands of ruderal vegetation and scrub encroaching into the grassland. Stansted Brook and the embanked West Anglian mainline railway abut the site to the south.
- 7.2 It is proposed to develop the site for residential use. The overall extent of the assessment site is 2.25 ha (5.56 acres). The proposed development would comprise up to 40 dwellings. The balance of the site (ca 0.80 ha) would be used for infrastructure, open space and related purposes. The existing public right of way running through the site would be realigned and formalised within the new development to ensure existing pedestrian connectivity is maintained. The Proposed Site Layout shows how an appropriate edge to the settlement can be created, addressing the interface with Rush Lane and Robin Hood Road, neighbouring properties and also with Stansted Brook and the railway to the south, with new homes facing onto the public realm in order to present a “fair face” and to maximise passive surveillance.
- 7.3 For the purposes of the appraisal, it has been assumed that the development on the site will be predominantly 2 storeys to a maximum height of ca 8.5m to ridge above ground level (AGL).
- 7.4 Vehicle access is proposed from a single location off Robin Hood Road along the northern boundary of the site.
- 7.5 The LVA has assessed the landscape character and visual amenity and the resulting landscape and visual effects of the proposed development on the receiving landscape and visual resource. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposed land uses and the parameters that are defined on the plans and accompanying information submitted with the application.
- 7.6 The proposed development would alter the character of the site from an undeveloped pasture field to a medium density built residential development. The loss of the existing poor quality grassland would be permanent; however proposals include:
- Retention of existing landscape features of value where possible including the majority of existing mature trees and perimeter hedgerows.
 - The provision of land dedicated to landscape, public open space, play and habitat related proposals;
 - Retention, realignment and enhancement of the existing public right of way running through the site – together with the introduction of new pedestrian routes and access points - to ensure existing pedestrian connectivity is maintained within areas of high quality landscaped green space.
 - New areas of public open space including a Local Area of Play (LAP) - the detailed design and layout of the play space would be developed in liaison with Uttlesford District Council.

- Setting back of buildings from the southern, south eastern and south western boundaries of the site to create landscaped buffers between the new housing, Stansted Brook and the railway. New houses will also be set back from the boundaries of nearby properties including Mill House and neighbouring properties on Robin Hood Road to retain privacy and light for these existing properties.
- Consideration of the relationship between the proposed development and the Robin Hood Road frontage to ensure that the new dwellings integrate well with the existing settlement whilst minimising impacts upon boundary vegetation and the character of the lane.
- New tree planting within areas of public open space across the whole of the site. This will soften the development for close proximity views in particular.

7.7 The proposed development is considered to have overall negligible effects on the landscape character of the area at a national level. At the County and District level it is considered that landscape effects would be no worse than minor adverse, due to the small scale of the development in relation to the extensive nature of the relevant character areas/types and because of its relatively contained location adjacent to the existing settlement edges of Elsenham. The proposals would also give rise to some minor benefits for the landscape of the area in the longer term.

7.8 In terms of landscape effects caused by the proposed development at a site wide scale it is considered that the loss of a short length of hedgerow (to enable access) together with an area of poor quality grassland and open space would constitute a moderate landscape effect at the site wide scale upon completion; however this adverse effect would be reduced to minor - moderate adverse in the longer term offset by the beneficial effects arising from the maturing of the GI proposals. For other landscape receptors including landform, vegetation and watercourses effects would be no worse than minor adverse at the outset. Whilst there would be, to varying degrees, some elements of change to each of these receptors, the nature and extent of these changes would not bring about any unacceptable adverse landscape effects. The implementation of a suitably robust GI framework and the application of an appropriate landscape management regime would also offer some localised and longer term benefit.

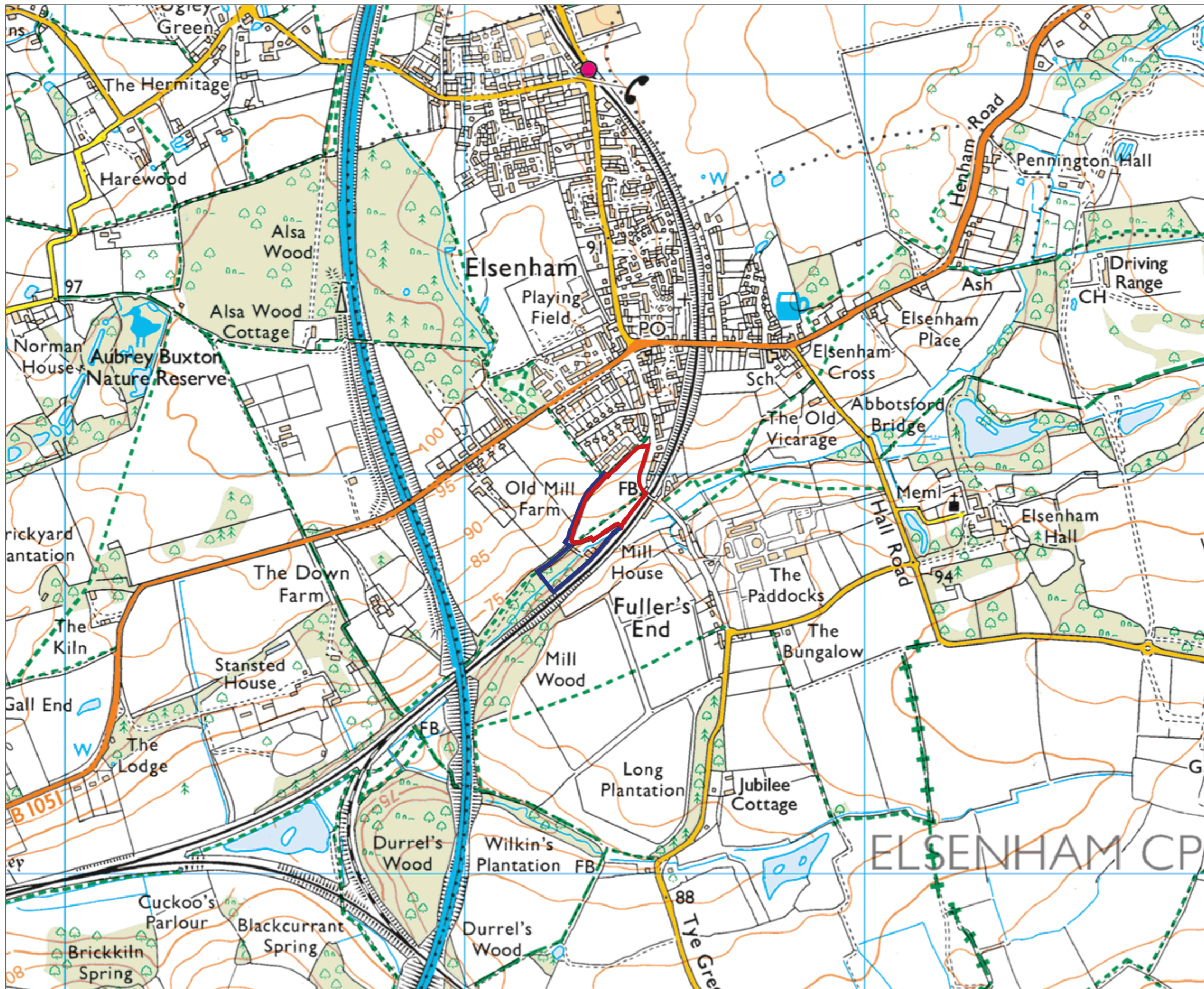
7.9 Properties adjacent or in close proximity to the site boundary will experience the greatest visual effects arising from the proposed development, especially during the construction phase when change will be most conspicuous. It is anticipated that those properties which immediately abut or are in close proximity to the site (will initially experience moderate or moderate-major adverse effects at worst, reducing to negligible, minor or moderate adverse after fifteen years.

7.10 A number of Public Rights of Way will also experience adverse effects resulting from the proposed development particularly where they pass directly through, or adjacent to, the site. Overall users of public rights of way extending through or in close proximity to the site will experience moderate – major adverse effects initially reducing slightly to become minor or moderate adverse once the proposed landscaping has established. For users of more distant public rights of way, including those to the south of Stansted Brook and south east of Elsenham, the site location is hidden from view by a combination of the intervening topography, built fabric, hedgerows and trees. As such it is considered that users of these footpaths would not experience any adverse visual effects.

7.11 Users of adjacent roads including Rush Lane and Robin Hood Road – which will have the clearest views into the site - will experience moderate adverse effects at worst upon completion of the

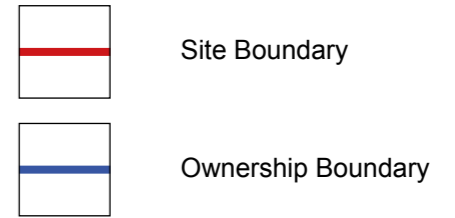
scheme. The visual effects for the majority of other road users are considered to be none or negligible upon completion of the scheme.

- 7.12 Over time it is anticipated that the maturing of the perimeter landscaping and structure planting will assist in assimilating the proposed development with the existing surrounding landscape setting and that overall landscape and visual effects would be reduced.
- 7.13 To conclude, despite the inevitable adverse effects of built development upon the local landscape character and on a limited number of visual receptors immediately adjacent to the site, it is considered that there would be no unacceptable adverse effects that should preclude the proposed development in landscape and visual terms.

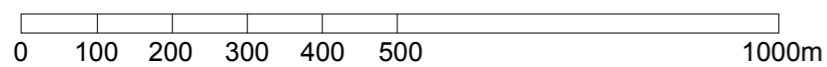


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client
Rosconn Strategic Land

project
Land south of Rush Lane,
Elsenham

drawing title
SITE LOCATION

scale
1:10,000 @ A3

drawn
JDE

issue date
November 2018

rev

Figure 1



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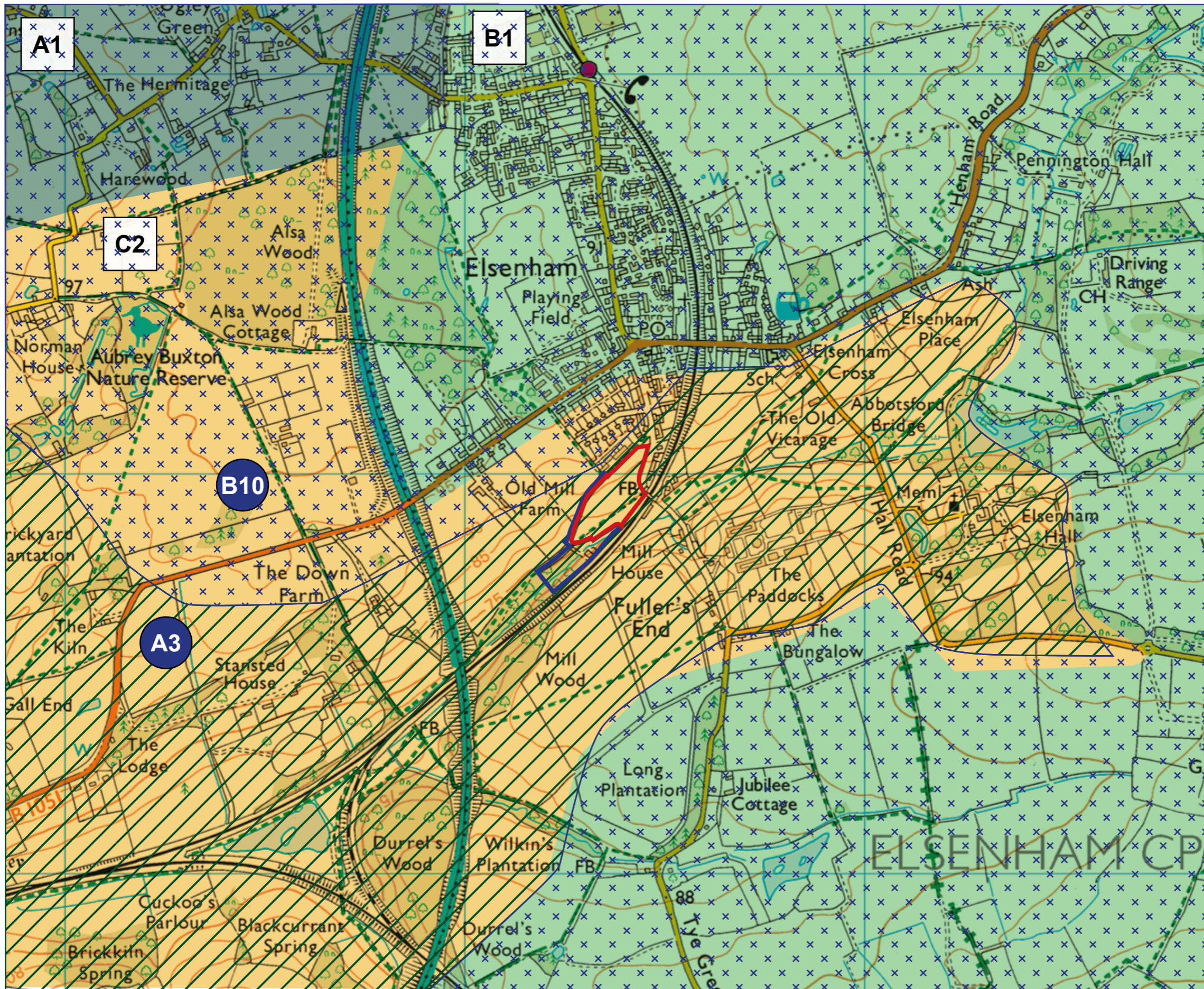
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client
Rosconn Strategic Land
project
Land south of Rush Lane,
Elsenham
drawing title
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

scale
NTS @ A3
drawing / figure number
drawn
HGK
issue date
January 2019
rev
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Figure 2



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-  Site Boundary
-  Ownership Boundary

Note: National Character Area (NCA) 86: South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands covers all mapping extents shown.

Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment - August 2006

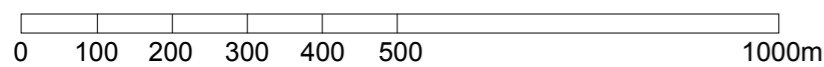
District/Borough Landscape Character Types & Areas in the Study Area

-  River Valley Landscape Type
Stort River Valley (LCA A3)
-  Farmland Plateau Landscape Type
Broxted Farmland Plateau (LCA B10)

County Landscape Character Types & Areas

-  Chalk Uplands (LT)
NW Essex Chalk Farmland (LCA A1)
-  Glacial Till Plateau (LT)
Central Essex Farmland (LCA B1)
-  River Valley Landscape (LT)
Stort Valley (LCA C2)

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client
Rosconn Strategic Land

project
Land south of Rush Lane,
Elsenham

drawing title
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

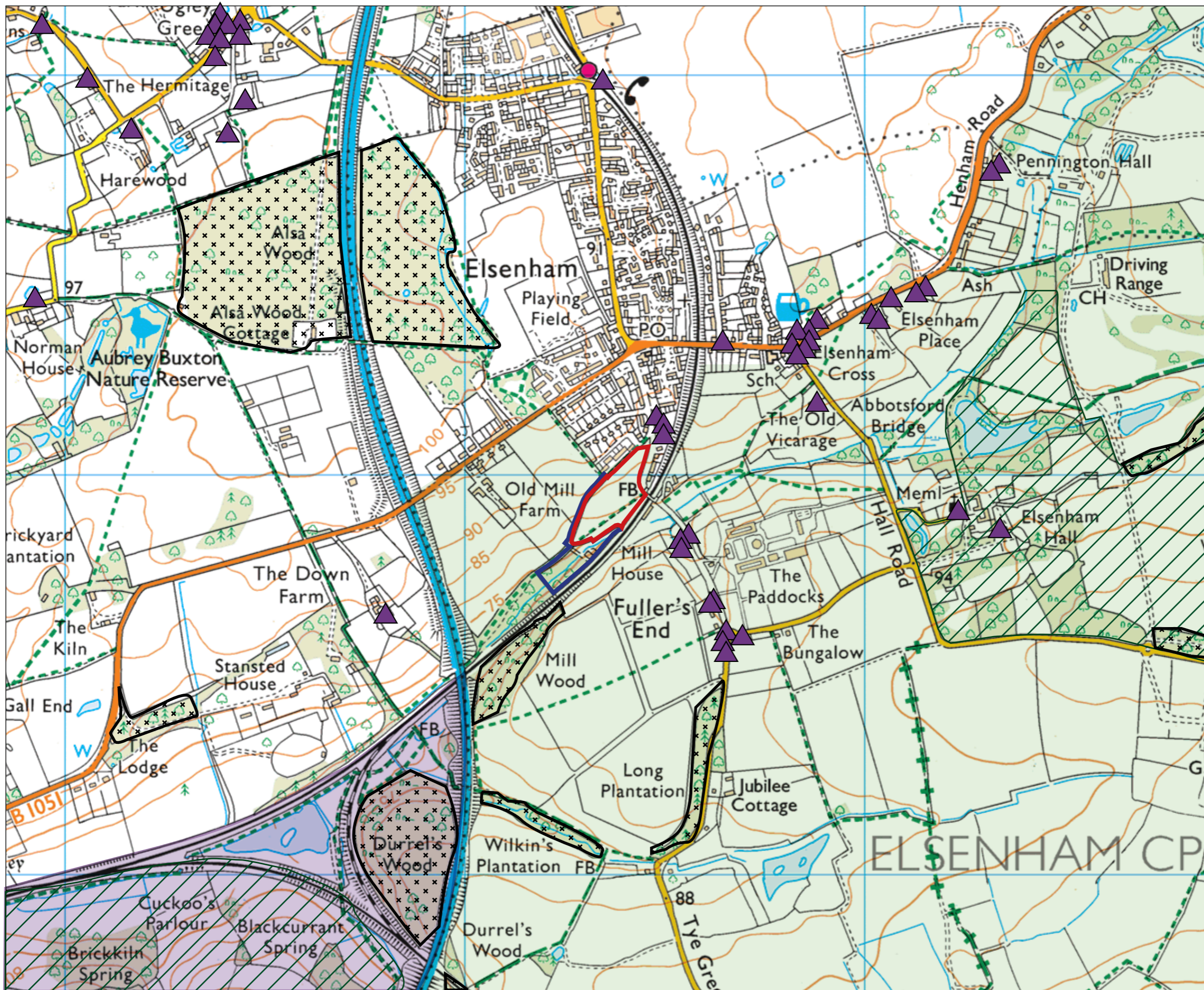
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HGK

issue date
January 2019








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Figure 3

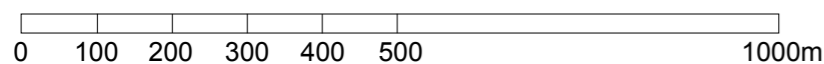


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-  Site Boundary
 -  Ownership Boundary
 -  Listed Buildings
- Utlesford Local Plan (Adopted January 2005)**
-  Metropolitan Green Belt - Policy S6
 -  Historic Landscape - Policy ENV 9
 -  Countryside Protection Zone - Policy S8
 -  Important Woodland - Policy ENV 9

Scale: 1:10000 @ A3



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client
Rosconn Strategic Land

project
Land south of Rush Lane,
Elsenham

drawing title
DESIGNATIONS

scale
1:10,000 @ A3

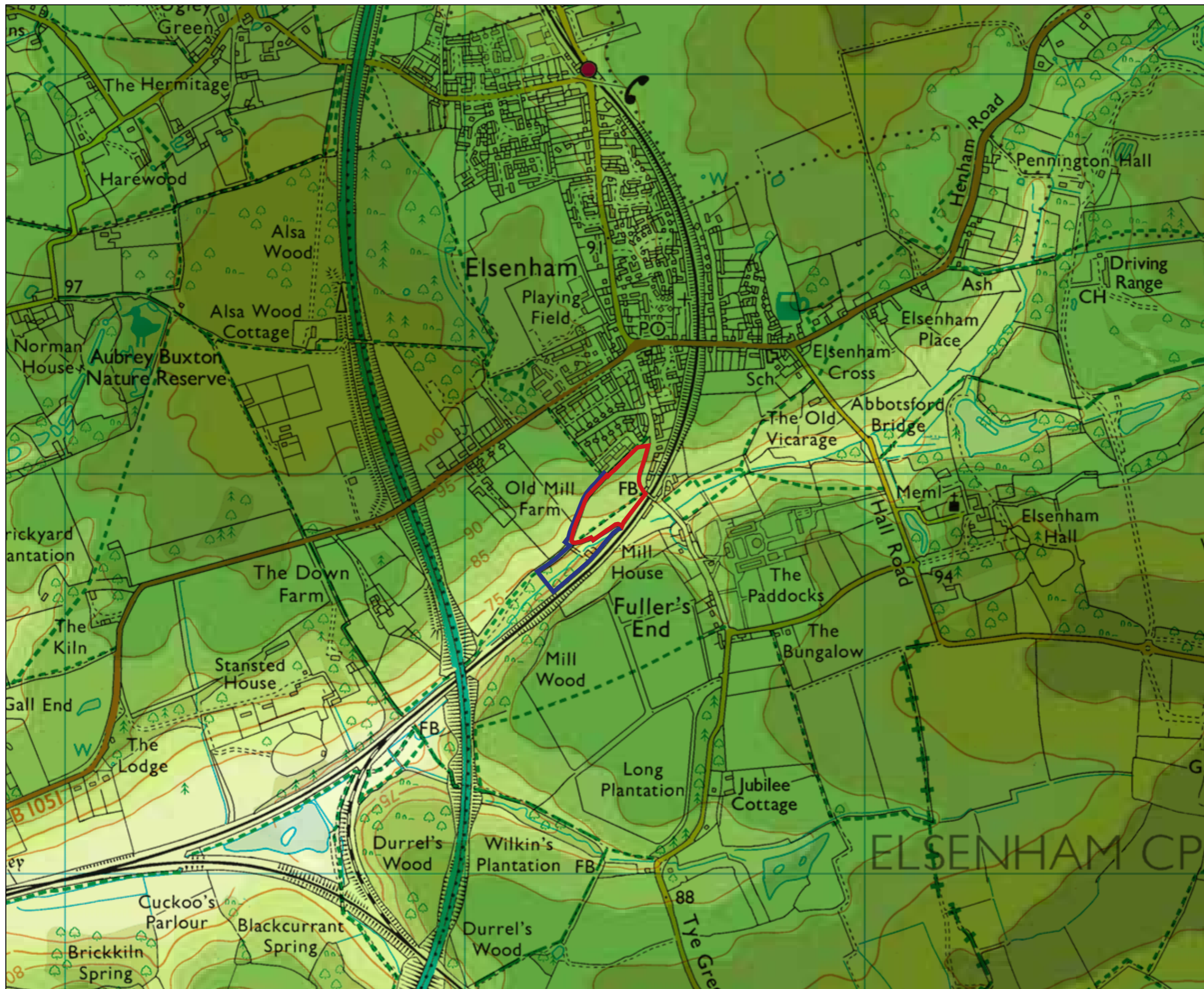
drawn
HGK

issue date
January 2019

rev

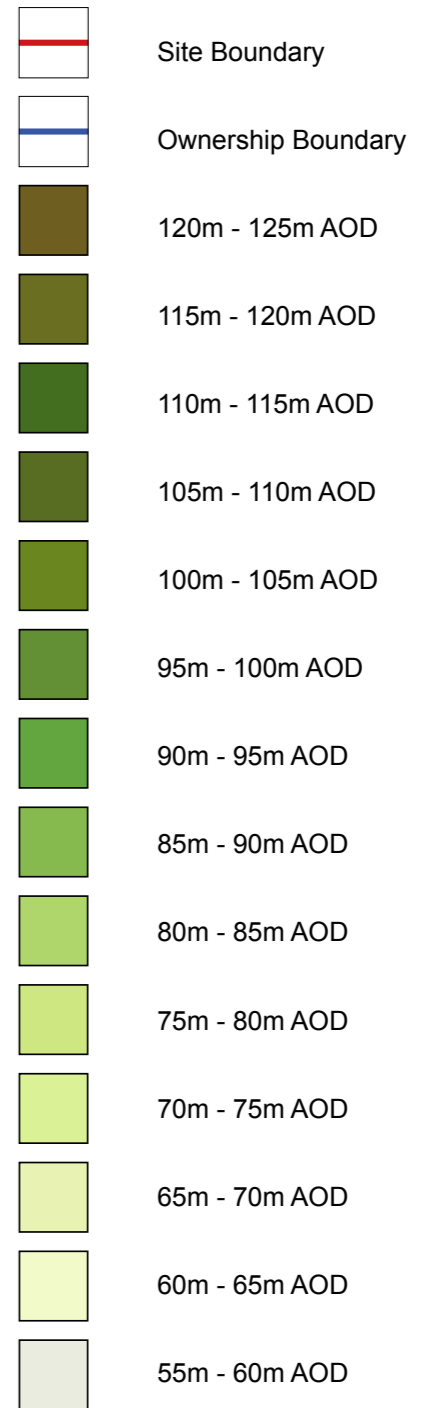


Figure 4

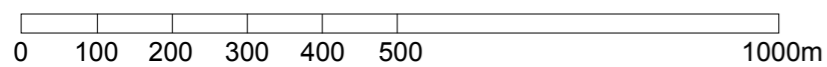


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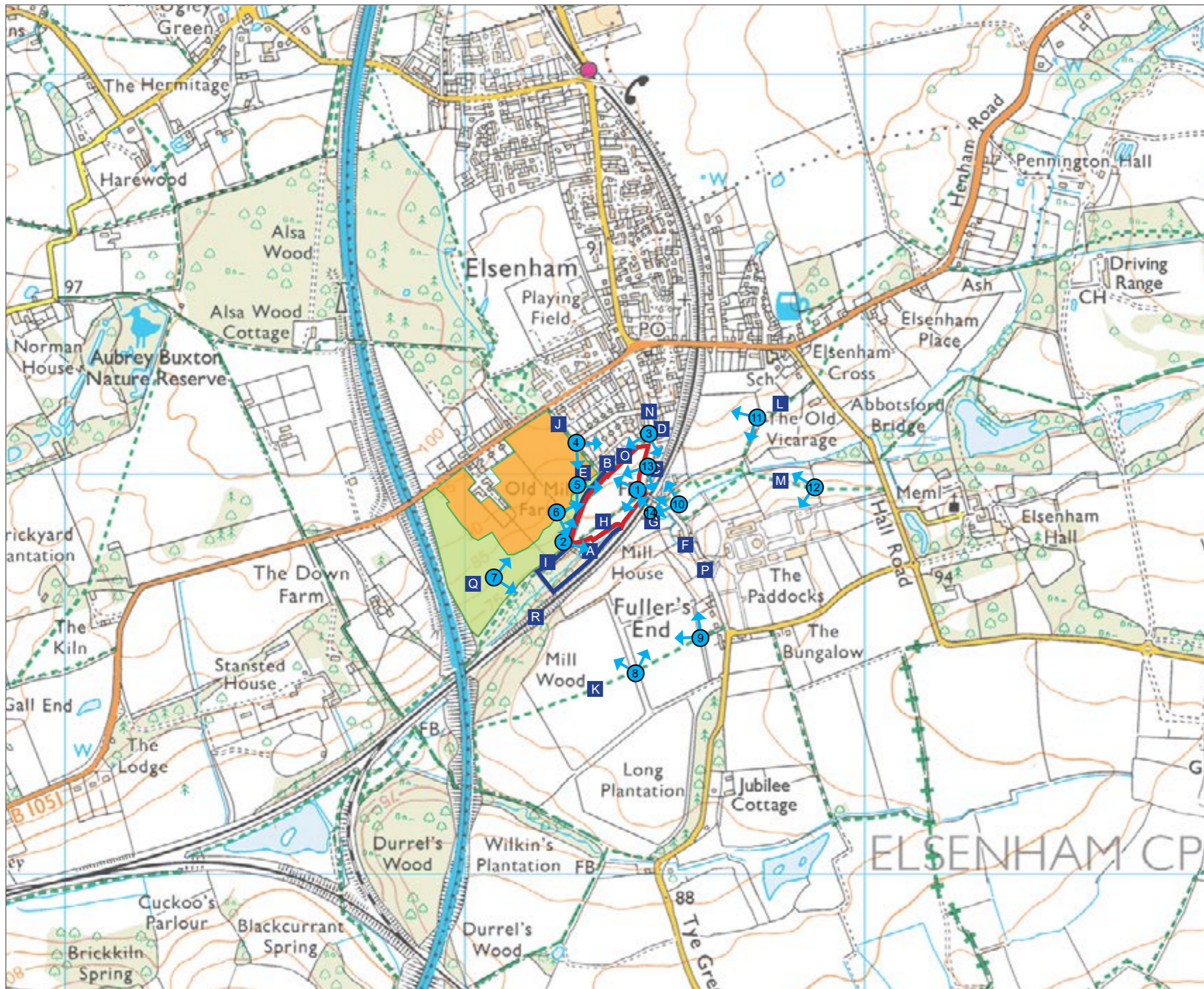
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Elsenham
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TOPOGRAPHY







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-  Site Boundary
-  Ownership Boundary
-  Recent New Development (Outline Planning Ref. UTT/13/1790/OP) Built Component
-  Recent New Development (Outline Planning Ref. UTT/13/1790/OP) Landscape Component
-  Photoviewpoints
-  Visual Receptors

- A - Mill House (1 dwelling)
- B - Properties fronting onto the north side of Rush Lane (20 dwellings)
- C - Properties fronting onto Robin Hood Road (9 dwellings)
- D - Listed Buildings on Robin Hood Road (4 dwellings)
- E - New properties on Elsenham Vale (9 dwellings)
- F - Properties fronting onto Tye Green Road
- G - New Properties south of railway line (3 dwellings)
- H - Users of PROW 13-29
- I - Users of PROW 13-28
- J - Users of PROW 13-30
- K - Users of PROW 13-4
- L - Users of PROW 13-13
- M - Users of PROW 13-17
- N - Users of Robin Hood Road (pedestrians and motorists)
- O - Users of Rush Lane (pedestrians and motorists)
- P - Users of Tye Green Riad (pedestrians and motorists)
- Q - Users of POS - Elsenham Vale
- R - West Anglian Mainline Railway

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VISUAL APPRAISAL

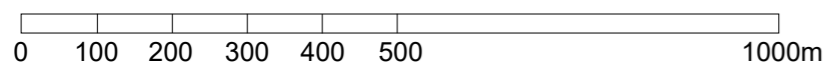
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August 2023

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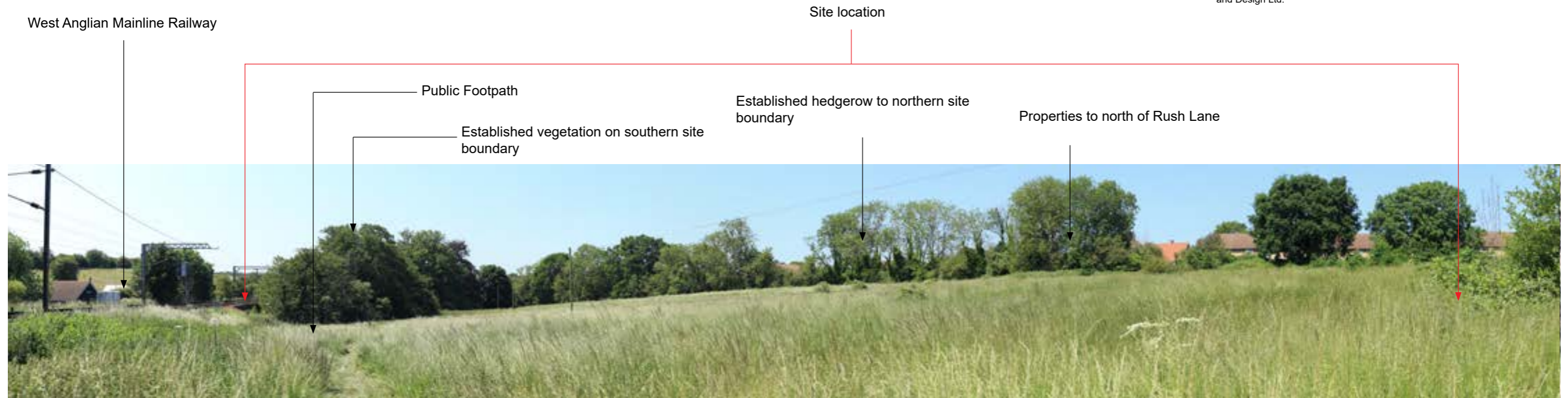


PHOTO VIEWPOINT 1: West from public footpath (Ref. PROW 13-29)

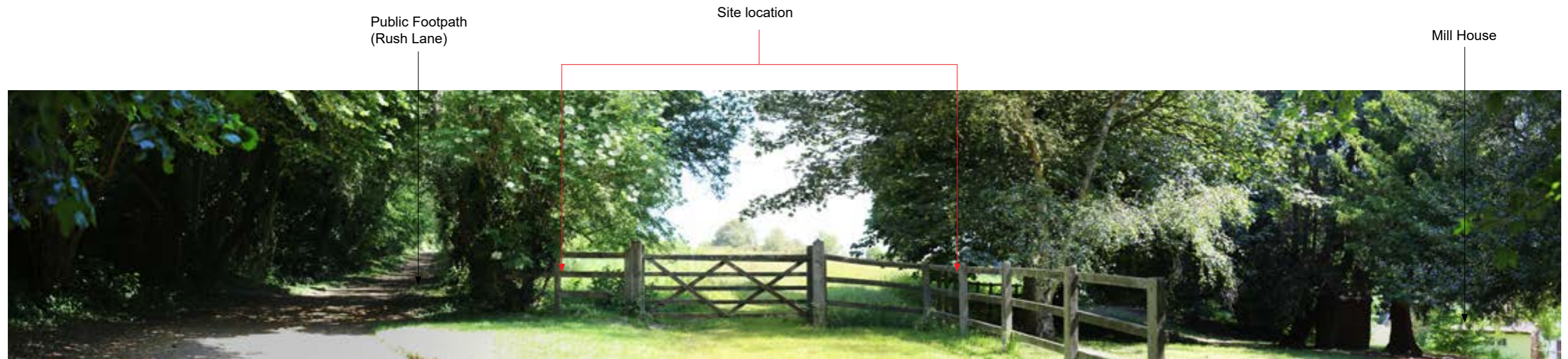



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 2: East from public footpath (Ref. PROW 13-28)


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 PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 1 & 2
 scale
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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 3: South east from Robin Hood Road/Rush Lane junction

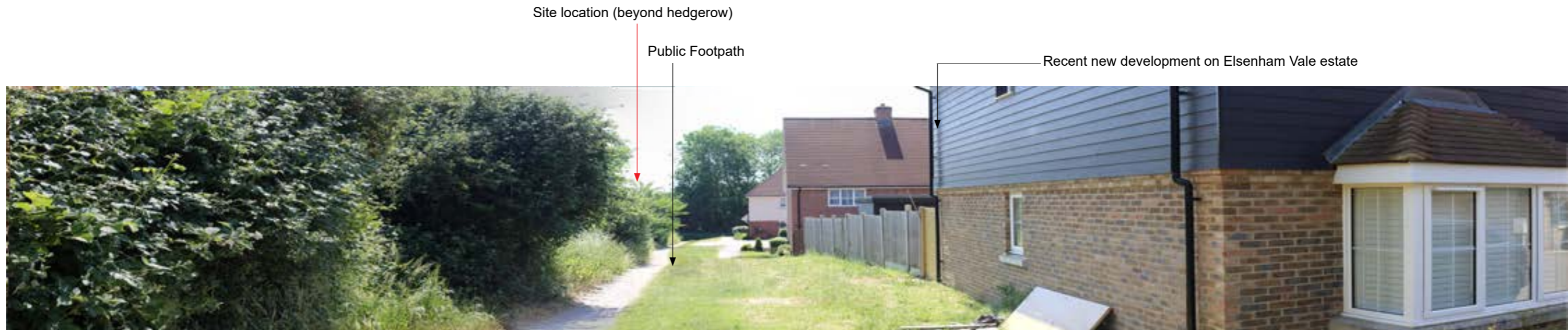


PHOTO VIEWPOINT 4: South east from Public footpath (Ref. PROW 13-30)

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Land south of Rush Lane,
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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 3 & 4

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rev

Figure 8



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 5: South from public open space - Elsenham Vale estate.

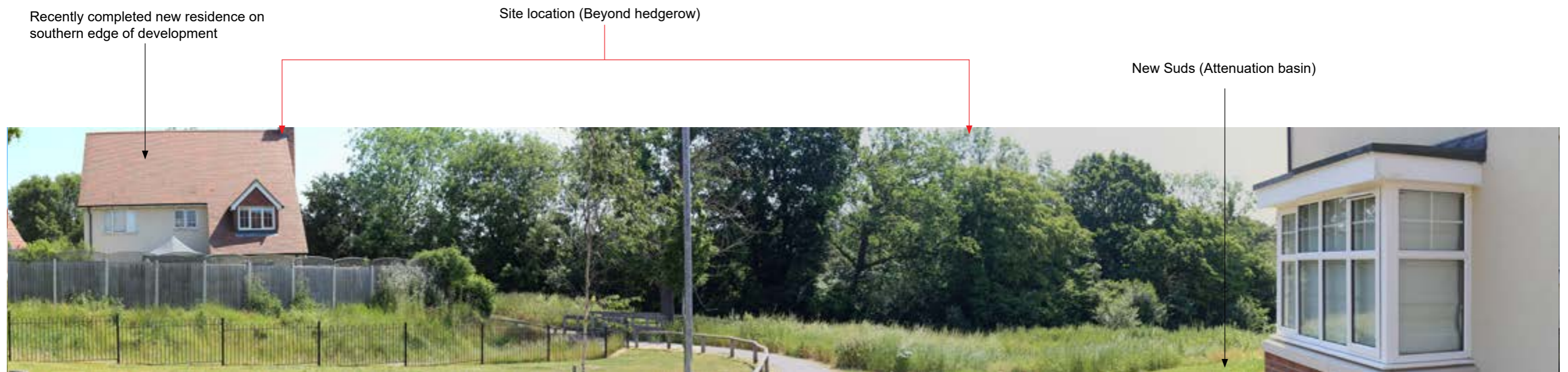


PHOTO VIEWPOINT 6: South east from public open space - Elsenham Vale Estate.

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project
Land south of Rush Lane,
Elsenham

drawing title
PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 5 & 6

scale
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Figure 9

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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 7: East from public open space, south of Elsenham Vale estate.

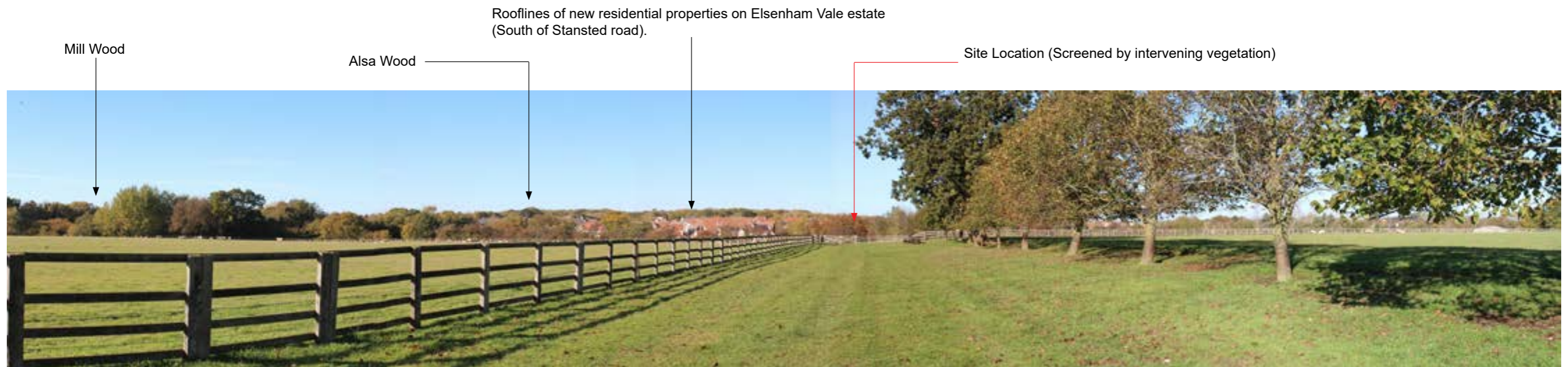



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 8: North from public footpath (Ref. PROW 13-4)


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 Land south of Rush Lane,
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 PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 7 & 8
 scale
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Figure 10
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Rooflines of new residential properties (South of Stansted road)

Site Location (Screened by intervening vegetation)

Rear gardens of properties fronting on to Tye Green Road.

Mill Wood

Alsa Wood



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 9: North west from public footpath (Ref. PROW 13-4)

West Anglia Mainline railway

Site Location (Beyond railway line)

Fullers End footpath/railway crossing



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 10: North west from Tye Green Road

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project
Land south of Rush Lane,
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drawing title
PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 9 & 10

scale
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Figure 11

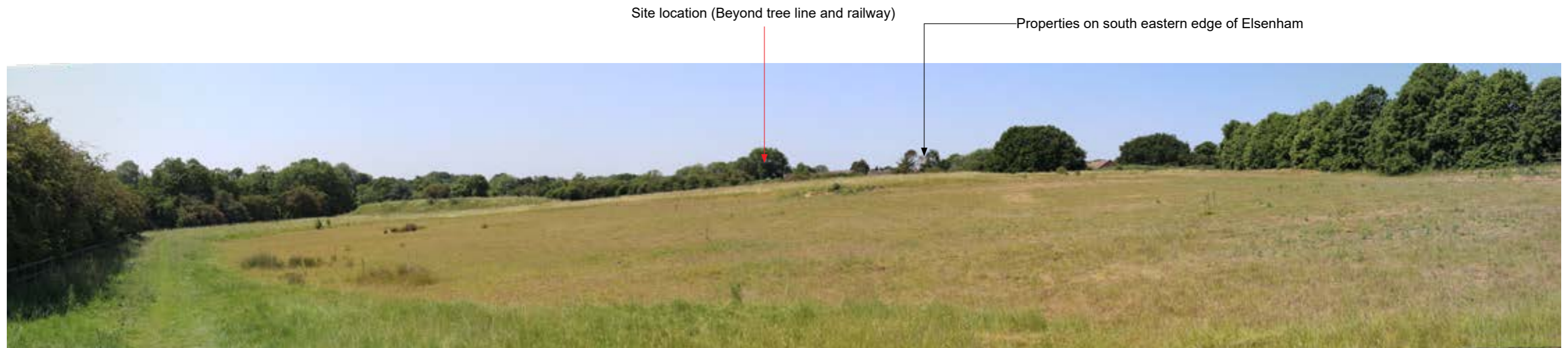


PHOTO VIEWPOINT 11: West from public footpath (Ref. PROW 13-13)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 12: North west from public footpath (Ref. PROW 13-17)

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Land south of Rush Lane,
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PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 11 & 12

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Figure 12

Properties on Robin Hood Road

West Anglia Mainline railway

Approximate Site location (Screened by intervening trees and vegetation)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 13: South on Robin Hood Road

Approximate Site location (Screened by intervening trees and vegetation)

Properties on Robin Hood Road

Potential new development entrance



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 14: North west on Robin Hood Road

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project
Land south of Rush Lane,
Elsenham

drawing title
PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 13 & 14

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rev

Figure 12

Appendix A

Landscape and Visual Appraisal – Methodology and Assessment Criteria

Introduction

- 1.0 The methodology for the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) undertaken for the proposed development is detailed in the LVA report. The following information should be read in conjunction with this methodology.
- 1.1 As advised in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) (GLVIA3), the judgements made in respect of both landscape and visual effects are a combination of an assessment of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of the landscape or visual effect. The following details the definitions and criteria used in assessing sensitivity and magnitude for landscape and visual receptors.
- 1.2 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as High/ Medium or Moderate/ Minor etc. This indicates that the assessment lies between the respective definitions or encompasses aspects of both.

Landscape

Landscape Sensitivity

- 1.3 Landscape receptors are assessed in terms of their 'Landscape Sensitivity'. This combines judgements on the value to be attached to the landscape and the susceptibility to change of the landscape from the type of change or development proposed. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed below.
- 1.4 There can be complex relationships between the value attached to landscape receptors and their susceptibility to change which can be especially important when considering change within or close to designated landscapes. For example, an internationally, nationally or locally valued landscape does not automatically or by definition have a high susceptibility to all types of change. The type of change or development proposed may not compromise the specific basis for the value attached to the landscape.

Landscape Value

- 1.5 Value can apply to a landscape area as a whole, or to the individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions which contribute to the character of the landscape. The following criteria have been used to categorise landscape value. Where there is no clear existing evidence on landscape value, an assessment is made based on the criteria/ factors identified below (based on the guidance in GLVIA3 paragraph 5.28, Box 5.1).

- Landscape quality (condition)
- Scenic quality
- Rarity
- Representativeness
- Conservation interest
- Recreation value
- Perceptual aspects
- Associations

Landscape Value	Definition
High	Landscape receptors of high importance based upon factors of quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities and associations.
Medium	Landscape receptors of medium importance based upon factors of quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities and associations.
Low	Landscape receptors of low importance based upon factors of quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreational value, perceptual qualities and associations.

Landscape Susceptibility to Change

- 1.6 This means the ability of the landscape receptor (overall character type/ area or individual element/ feature) to accommodate the change (i.e. the proposed development) without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline position and/ or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies. The definition and criteria for the assessment of Landscape Susceptibility to Change is as follows:

Landscape Susceptibility to Change	Definition
High	A highly distinctive and cohesive landscape receptor, with positive characteristics and features with no or very few detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features intact and in very good condition and/ or rare. Limited capacity to accept the type of change/ development proposed.
Medium	Distinctive and more commonplace landscape receptor, with some positive characteristics/ features and some detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features in moderate condition. Capacity to accept well planned and designed change/ development of the type proposed.
Low	Landscape receptor of mixed character with a lack of coherence and including detracting or intrusive elements. Landscape features that may be in poor or improving condition and few that could not be replaced. Greater capacity to accept the type of change/ development proposed.

Magnitude of Landscape Effects

- 1.7 The magnitude of landscape effects is the degree of change to the landscape receptor in terms of its size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. The table below sets out the categories and criteria adopted in respect of the separate considerations of Scale or Size of the Degree of Change and Reversibility. The geographical extent and duration of change are described where relevant in the appraisal.

Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change

Scale or Size of the Degree of Landscape Change	Definition
High	Total loss of or substantial alteration to key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements totally uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be fundamentally changed.
Medium	Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key characteristics / features and the introduction of new elements that would be evident but not necessarily uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be obviously changed.
Low	Limited loss of, or alteration to one or more key characteristics/ features and the introduction of new elements evident and/ or characteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be perceptibly changed.
Negligible	Very minor alteration to one or more key characteristics/ features and the introduction of new elements characteristic to the receiving landscape. Overall landscape receptor will be minimally changed.
None	No loss or alteration to the key characteristics/ features, representing 'no change'.

Reversibility

Reversibility	Definition
Irreversible	The development would be permanent and the assessment site could not be returned to its current/ former use.
Reversible	The development could be deconstructed/ demolished and the assessment site could be returned to broadly its current/ historic use (although that may be subject to qualification depending on the nature of the development).

Visual

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 1.8 Visual sensitivity assesses each visual receptor in terms of their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views. The definition and criteria adopted for these contributory factors is detailed below.

Visual Susceptibility to Change

- 1.9 The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of; firstly, the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and secondly, the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focussed on the views and visual amenity they experience.

Visual Susceptibility to Change	Definition
High	Residents at home with primary views from ground floor/garden and upper floors. Public rights of way/ footways where attention is primarily focussed on the landscape and on particular views. Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and/ or on particular views. Communities where views make an important contribution to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents. Travellers on recognised scenic routes.
Medium	Residents at home with secondary views (primarily from first floor level). Public rights of way/ footways where attention is not primarily focussed on the landscape and/ or particular views. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes.
Low	Users of outdoor recreational facilities where the view is less important to the activities (e.g. sports pitches). Travellers on road, rail or other transport where views are primarily focussed on the transport route. People at their place of work where views of the landscape are not important to the quality of the working life.

Value of Views

- 1.10 The value attached to a view takes account of any recognition attached to a particular view and/ or any indicators of the value attached to views, for example through guidebooks or defined viewpoints or references in literature or art.

Value of Views	Definition
High	A unique or identified view (e.g. shown as such on Ordnance Survey map, guidebook or tourist map) or one noted in literature or art. A view where a heritage asset makes an important contribution to the view.
Medium	A typical and/ or representative view from a particular receptor.
Low	An undistinguished or unremarkable view from a particular receptor.

Magnitude of Visual Effects

- 1.11 Magnitude of Visual Effects evaluates each of the visual effects in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. The table below sets out the categories and criteria adopted in respect of the Scale or Size (including the degree of contrast) of Visual Change. The distance and nature of the view and whether the receptor's view will be stationary or moving are also detailed in the Visual Effects Table.

Scale or Size of the Degree of Visual Change	Definition
High	The proposal will result in a large and immediately apparent change in the view, being a dominant and new and/ or incongruous feature in the landscape.
Medium	The proposal will result in an obvious and recognisable change in the view and will be readily noticed by the viewer.
Low	The proposal will constitute a minor component of the wider view or a more recognisable component that reflects those apparent in the existing view. Awareness of the proposals will not have a marked effect on the overall nature of the view.
Negligible/ None	Only a very small part of the proposal will be discernible and it will have very little or no effect on the nature of the view.

Level of Effect

- 1.12 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement is formed from a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the assessment criteria.
- 1.13 GLVIA3 notes, at paragraphs 5.56 and 6.44, that there are no hard and fast rules with regard to the level of effects, therefore the following descriptive thresholds have been used for this appraisal:
- **Major**
 - **Moderate**
 - **Minor**
 - **Negligible**
- 1.14 Where it is determined that the assessment falls between or encompasses two of the defined criteria terms, then the judgement may be described as, for example, Major/ Moderate or Moderate/ Minor. This indicates that the effect is assessed to lie between the respective definitions or to encompass aspects of both.

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)								
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape		Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
National/Regional Landscape Character								
Natural England, National Character Area Profile South Suffolk and North Essex Claylands National Character Area (NCA 86)	Medium (Variations will occur)	Medium (Variations will occur)	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	N/A	The site comprises a very small area of this NCA, which encompasses an extensive tract of land stretching from Bury St Edmunds in the north-west to Ipswich in the north-east together with the Colchester hinterland and the urban areas of Braintree and Chelmsford in the south and Bishop's Stortford and Stevenage in the west. In this regard, the assessment is only of relevance in appraising the very broad landscape context of the site and surrounding area. Given the extent of the Character Area and the relatively well contained nature of the site effects will be negligible.	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA): County/ District								
Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003) Stort Valley (LCA C2)	Medium	Medium	Construction: Negligible - Low Completion: Negligible - Low Year 15: Negligible	No	The Stort Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA C2) includes the Stansted Brook Valley extending west from Elsenham Hall. The Stort Valley is described as “shallow and fairly narrow for much of its length”. As set out in the published assessment “A patchwork of pasture and wetland vegetation along the course of the river contrasts with the arable fields of the valley sides, but thick hedgerows, small woods and tree belts provide a sense of enclosure. Views are mostly confined and urban development and major roads are only occasionally visible”. The proposed development would give rise to very limited effects on LCA C2 resulting primarily from the loss of a small area of poor quality pasture. The characteristic boundary hedgerows would largely be retained and would be supplemented with new planting across the site.	Negligible - Minor Adverse	Negligible – Minor Adverse	Negligible

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)								
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape		Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (September 2006) Stort River Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA A3)	Medium	Medium	Construction: Low Completion: Low Year 15: Negligible	No	The proposed development will be altering the immediate context of the site as it changes from an enclosed pasture field to settlement edge development. Although the proposed development will inevitably change the character of the landscape locally it will give rise to both adverse and beneficial effects. A number of important landscape features, including the majority of mature trees and hedgerows, would be retained and incorporated into the development layout. The proposed development also includes significant areas of new green infrastructure which would provide opportunities for enhanced biodiversity and greater public access. Overall the effect on LCA A3 due to the change in use of this site will be minor adverse, this is likely to change to negligible once the new tree planting and soft landscaping around the southern perimeter of the site has established, providing some minor beneficial effects for the area and helping to offset the adverse effects of the change of use.	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible
Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments (September 2006) Broxted Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area (LCA B10)	Medium	Medium	Construction: Negligible Completion: None Year 15: None	No	LCA B10 extends across more elevated land to the north, east and west of the Stansted Brook valley and washes over the settlement of Elsenham. However due to the overlapping effects of existing built fabric, hedgerows, tree belts and woodland there is very limited intervisibility between this LCA and the site. Consequently it is considered that construction effects would be insignificant and that the proposed development would not give rise to any discernible lasting operational effects upon the LCA.	Negligible	None	None

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)									
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape		Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years post Completion	
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	
Landscape Character: Site and Immediate Context									
Site and Immediate Context	Medium	Medium	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Low	No	<p>The proposed development will alter the use of the site from an enclosed pasture field to a residential development with areas of landscaped public open space. These proposals will change the landscape character of the site itself and therefore will alter the character of the landscape immediately surrounding the site.</p> <p>To the north and east the site is contained by Rush Lane, Robin Hood Road and existing residences on the edge of Elsenham together with a combination of hedgerows and woodland which act as a backdrop to both existing residences and the application site. The West Anglian mainline railway wraps around the south of Elsenham and the site – partially on an embankment and partially in a cutting - providing a strongly defined boundary and effectively separating it from the wider countryside to the south east. The proposed development will be a modest extension to the settlement of Elsenham but the additional landscape proposals - together with the well treed Stansted Brook and railway corridor - will help to soften the development in views from the south and south east and will provide a landscape buffer between the settlement and the surrounding agricultural landscape.</p> <p>Due to the change in use of the site there will be a change in the local landscape character of the area and therefore the effect on the landscape will be moderate – major adverse during construction and moderate adverse upon completion. With the establishment of the soft landscape buffers to the southern, south eastern and south western site perimeters this will be reduced to minor – moderate adverse over time.</p>	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor – Moderate Adverse	
Site Landscape Features/ Characteristics									
Site Landscape Features <i>Landform</i>	Medium	Medium	Construction: Low Completion: Low Year 15: Negligible	No	<p>The landform would not be dramatically changed due to the development. There may be localised changes in topography to level out areas for housing development, roads and footpaths to ensure the appropriate gradients as well as localised changes for the attenuation pond. However in general the gentle slope of the site down towards the south west will be retained as existing and therefore there will be a negligible effect after 15 years once the development has established.</p>	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible	

APPENDIX B: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS TABLE (LET)								
Landscape Receptor and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape		Judged Magnitude of Landscape Effect		Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect upon Completion	Overall Effect at 15 Years post Completion
	Susceptibility to Change	Landscape Value	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
	High Medium Low	High Medium Low	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No N/A		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
Site Landscape Features <i>Woodland, Trees, Hedgerows and Vegetation</i>	Medium	Medium	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Low - Medium	No	Existing vegetation within the site comprises rough grassland – with stands of ruderal vegetation and encroaching scrub - boundary hedgerows and mature trees. Although the development will be reducing the area of open space and there will be a limited loss of hedgerow vegetation to facilitate access, the proposals will include an extensive amount of new tree, hedgerow and shrub planting together with the retention of the majority of hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Retained vegetation around the site will be protected throughout the construction phase and will be improved upon as a part of the GI proposals. The maturing of the proposed landscaping will give rise to some longer term benefits helping to offset the initial loss of site vegetation.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse
Site Landscape Features <i>Water Features and Watercourses</i>	Low	Low	Construction: Negligible Completion: Negligible Year 15: Low	No	Stansted Brook is located outwith the site boundary, however no water features currently exist within the site. With development new wetland habitats would be created in association with the proposed storm water attenuation basin.	Negligible	Negligible	Minor Beneficial
Site Landscape Features <i>Land Use and Open Space</i>	High	Medium	Construction: Medium - High Completion: Medium - High Year 15: Medium	No	The development would alter the use of the site from an enclosed pasture field - with perimeter hedgerows and trees - to a new housing development with landscaped areas and new tree, hedgerow and shrub planting. The site would become more enclosed with the majority of the landscape changing from an open field to residential development giving rise to a moderate-major adverse effect during construction and upon completion, however this would reduce to moderate adverse once the new perimeter landscaping becomes established and helps to soften the development and provide some minor beneficial landscape features.	Moderate- Major Adverse	Moderate- Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse

APPENDIX C: VISUAL EFFECTS TABLE (VET)											
Ref (VP Ref where applicable)	Receptor Type and Location (including approx no. of dwellings where applicable)	Judged Sensitivity of Visual Receptor		Judged Magnitude of Visual Effects				Description/ Notes	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect upon Completion (Winter)	Overall Effect 15 Years post Completion (Summer)
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Distance from Site Boundary (or Built Development where stated) (approx. m/km)	Nature of View	Is the View Permanent or Transient?	Size/Scale of Visual Effect (incl. degree of contrast/ integration) (at Stages of Project)		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Glimpse None		High Medium Low Negligible/ None		Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial	Adverse or Beneficial
Settlement & Residential Receptors											
A	Mill House 1 dwelling	High	Medium	Adjacent to south western site boundary	Glimpse - Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Low Year 15: Negligible - Low	Views from rear facing windows and the surrounding grounds are currently restricted by extensive vegetation along the course of Stansted Brook – which separates the site from the dwelling. During the construction phase there are likely to be some moderate adverse visual effects particularly when the new attenuation basin is being formed and during the height of construction activities. However these effects will be temporary in nature. Upon completion existing filtered views of the pasture field will be replaced with an area of green space – accommodating an attenuation basin – in the foreground with glimpsed or partial views of residential properties seen beyond giving rise to initial minor adverse effects due to the level of change in views. With maturing of the perimeter landscaping visual effects will be reduced.	Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible - Minor Adverse
B	Properties fronting onto Rush Lane. Approx. 20 dwellings	High	Medium	Ca 10 -20m	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium - High Completion: Medium Year 15: Medium	For ca 12 properties fronting onto Rush Lane the new site access will be visible. To varying degrees new dwellings within the site will also be visible from predominantly upper storey windows overlooking the north eastern part of the site. Construction activities on the site would be visible from some of these properties although the location and the magnitude of change will vary, being higher where large construction areas, bulk movements and plant are directly visible, and lower where the change is intermittent vehicular movements or partially screened construction activities. Upon completion – for the majority of dwellings - the proposed development will be screened by the retained mature hedgerows. Adjacent to the new site access maturing of a high quality landscaped frontage would ameliorate views in the longer term with new residential properties set back from the site boundary being filtered by hedgerow, shrub and tree planting.	Moderate – Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor – Moderate Adverse
C	Properties fronting onto Robin Hood Road – east of the site. Approx. 9 dwellings	High	Medium	Ca 5 - 20m	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Low - Medium	For ca 9 properties fronting onto Robin Hood Road development will be visible from a small number of upper storey windows overlooking the site. Construction activities on the site would be visible from some of these properties although the location and the magnitude of change will vary, being higher where large construction areas, bulk movements and plant are directly visible, and lower where the change is intermittent vehicular movements or partially screened construction activities. Upon completion – for the majority of dwellings - the proposed development will be screened by the retained mature hedgerows.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor – Moderate Adverse

D	Listed buildings on Robin Hood Road. 4 dwellings	High	High	35 - 45m	Glimpse - Partial	Permanent	Construction: Low - Medium Completion: Low Year 15: Negligible	These listed properties are set within the built up edge of Eisenham and already have views of neighbouring 20th Century dwellings. Glimpsed or partial views of the proposed development will be available from a small number of mainly upper storey windows. Construction activities on the site would be visible from these properties although the location and the magnitude of change will vary, being higher where large construction areas, bulk movements and plant are directly visible, and lower where the change is intermittent vehicular movements or partially screened construction activities. Upon completion the proposed development would retain and reinforce the existing boundary hedgerow at the north east corner of the site and the new site access would be located further to the west, along Rush Lane. Furthermore residential properties within the proposed development would be set back from the site boundary with views being screened by the retained perimeter hedgerow, shrub and tree planting.	Minor – Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible
E	Recently completed properties on the southern edge of Eisenham Vale housing estate. Approx. 9 dwellings	High	Medium	Ca 25m +	None - Glimpse	Permanent	Construction: Low - Medium Completion: Low Year 15: Low	The site is largely screened by intervening vegetation to either side of Rush Lane in southerly views from the Eisenham Vale estate. This well-established vegetation would be retained with the proposed development and would continue to provide an effective screen to the development.	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor – Moderate Adverse	Negligible – Minor Adverse
F	Properties fronting onto Tye Green Road – south of the railway.	High	Medium - High	Ca 100m +	None	Permanent	Construction: None Completion: None Year 15: None	No views of the site have been identified from these properties due to the screening effects of intervening vegetation along the course of the railway, together with that provided elsewhere in the surrounding landscape.	None	None	None
G	Properties to the south of the railway currently nearing completion or under construction. 3 dwellings	High	Medium	Ca 5 - 90m	Partial	Permanent	Construction: Medium Completion: Medium Year 15: Low - Medium	For these two storey properties which look across the railway towards the site, the development will be visible during the construction phase and once completed although the location and the magnitude of change will vary, being higher where large construction areas, bulk movements and plant are directly visible, and lower where the change is intermittent vehicular movements or partially screened construction activities. Following completion residential properties within the proposed development would be set back from the southern site boundary with a landscaped buffer to the railway corridor reducing the impact on any views from this location.	Moderate Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor – Moderate Adverse
Public Rights of Way (PRoW)											
H VP. 1	Users of Public Footpath (Ref. PROW 13-29)	High	Medium	Within site	Partial - Full	Transient	Construction: High Completion: High Year 15: Medium	Photo Viewpoint 1 represents the current views from PROW 13-29 within the site boundary. Within the site boundary during the construction phase there will be a high level of change in views, resulting in a major adverse effect for users of this Public Right of Way. Upon completion the Public Right of Way will pass through new landscaped public open space. Once the proposed landscaping has established views will be softened by the surrounding trees and planting and the level of impact of the new properties on the receptor will be slightly reduced. Therefore the overall effect after 15 years will be reduced to moderate adverse.	Moderate – Major Adverse	Moderate - Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse
I VP. 2	Users of Public Footpath (Ref. PROW 13-28)	High	Medium	Adjacent to northern site boundary for approximately 320m	Partial	Transient	Construction: Low - Medium Completion: Low - Medium Year 15: Low	Views from this route include the established hedgerow forming the northern site boundary in the foreground with the site beyond. For the section which follows the northern site boundary – along the course of Rush Lane – there would be a medium level of change during the construction phase and post completion. With increasing distance from the site – between the site and the M11 - any built development and associated activity within it would be progressively more screened by intervening vegetation along the course of the footpath and Stansted Brook. Ultimately views in the direction of the proposals will include the retained boundary hedgerow together with perimeter site landscaping, incorporating new tree and shrub planting, with filtered views of the upper parts of built development. At the eastern end of	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor – Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse- Negligible

								Rush Lane this filtered development edge would be experienced in context with the existing residences fronting on to the northern side of the lane.			
J VP. 4	Users of Public Footpath (Ref. PROW 13-30)	High	Medium	0 – 200m	None - Glimpse	Transient	Construction: None - Low Completion: None - Low Year 15: None - Negligible	From this public footpath - which connects Rush Lane and Stansted Road – there is a channelled view southwards towards the site location, however the site is screened by the mature hedgerows and trees which can be seen at the end of the footpath to either side of Rush Lane. This well-established vegetation would be retained with the proposed development and would continue to provide an effective screen to the development.	None – Minor Adverse	None - Negligible	None - Negligible
K VP. 8 and 9	Users of Public Footpath (Ref. PROW 13-4) between the M11 and Tye Green Road	High	Medium	350m +	None	Transient	Construction: None Completion: None Year 15: None	Northerly views across the Stansted Brook valley are available from this PRoW taking in the rooflines of new development on the Eisenham Vale housing estate, however the site location is hidden from view by the intervening topography, hedgerows and trees.	None	None	None
L VP. 11	Users of Public Footpath (Ref. PROW 13-13)	High	Medium	42m +	None	Transient	Construction: None Completion: None Year 15: None	Westerly views towards the residential properties on the south eastern edge of Eisenham are available from this footpath, however there are no views of the site, which is screened by intervening vegetation along the course of the railway, together with that provided elsewhere in the surrounding landscape.	None	None	None
M VP. 12	Users of Public Footpath (Ref. PROW 13-17)	High	Medium	120m +	None	Transient	Construction: None Completion: None Year 15: None	Views of pasture fields and Eisenham House, to the south of Stansted Brook, are available from this footpath. However Views towards Eisenham and the site location are wholly truncated by the the extensive layers of intervening vegetation along the course of Stansted Brook	None	None	None
Roads											
N VP. 3	Users of Robin Hood Road (pedestrians and motorists)	Medium	Medium	Adjacent to eastern site boundary for approximately 120m	Glimpse - Partial	Transient	Construction: Low - Medium Completion: Low - Medium Year 15: Negligible - Low	Although the roadside hedge, on the eastern site boundary, largely screens the site, users of Robin Hood Road have partial views of the site near the Rush Lane road junction and the pedestrian railway crossing. Construction works on the new site access and the new housing development would be visible from the Robin Hood Road/ Rush Lane junction, albeit the view would be limited in extent. Views of construction activities would also be possible from the end of the road near the Fuller's End pedestrian railway crossing. On completion there would be glimpsed or partial views of the completed development - including the new site access and new housing. The new dwellings would be set back behind the retained hedgerow and public open space to the south as well as the new landscaped frontage to Rush Lane.	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Negligible - Minor Adverse
O VP. 3	Users of Rush Lane (pedestrians and motorists)	Medium	Medium	Adjacent for approximately 150m	Partial	Transient	Construction: Low-High Completion: Medium Year 15: Low - Medium	Road users of Rush Lane have restricted viewing opportunities of the site for approximately 150m, where it runs adjacent to the northern site boundary. Views are heavily filtered by the well-established roadside hedgerow, although the site can be glimpsed through gaps in the vegetation. A short length of the roadside hedgerow will require removal to facilitate access to the site which will give rise to more open site views where this occurs. Views of the proposed development – including the new site access, landscaped frontage and new dwellings - will result in a moderate adverse effect upon completion, reducing to minor – moderate adverse once road frontage landscaping (including gapping up of the existing hedgerow and new tree and shrub planting) has become established.	Moderate – Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor – Moderate Adverse
P VP. 10	Users of Tye Green Road	Medium	Medium	15m +	Glimpse	Transient	Construction: Negligible - Low	Viewpoint 10 represents the view available from Tye Green Lane on the approach towards the Fuller's End pedestrian/ rail crossing. The site location,	Negligible - Minor Adverse	Negligible - Minor Adverse	Negligible

Land south of Rush Lane, Elsenham – Landscape and Visual Appraisal: Visual Effects Table

	(pedestrians and motorists)						Completion: Negligible - Low Year 15: Negligible	<p>which lies beyond the railway line is largely concealed from view, although a number of the taller trees within the northern site boundary hedgerow can be seen projecting above the railway embankment. Properties to the north, on Robin Hood Road, are also screened from view.</p> <p>It is anticipated that glimpsed views of construction activities and new built development (predominantly rooflines in the early years post completion) would occur over a relatively short stretch of Tye Green Road immediately to the south of the railway crossing. With increasing distance from the site any built development and associated activity within it would be progressively more screened by intervening built fabric and vegetation along the course of Tye Green Road.</p>			
Other Receptors											
Q VP. 5, 6 and 7	Users of public open space associated with the Elsenham Vale housing estate	High	Medium	Ca 10m + from site boundary	Glimpse/Partial	Permanent	Construction: Low - Medium Completion: Low Year 15: Negligible	Views from within the public open space (POS) towards the site are heavily filtered or screened by existing vegetation – including mature hedgerows and trees to either side of Rush Lane. Glimpsed or partial views of construction activities would be possible from the POS although the location and the magnitude of change will vary, being higher where large construction areas, bulk movements and plant are directly visible, and lower where the change is intermittent vehicular movements or largely screened construction activities. Upon completion it is anticipated that the development would largely be screened by the retained vegetation albeit there would be some filtered views of the upper parts of new residential units on the north western edge of the site.	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible
R	West Anglian Mainline Railway	Low - Medium	Medium	Adjacent to site boundary for approximately 100m	Partial	Transient	Construction: Low - Medium Completion: Low Year 15: Negligible	To the south of the site the railway corridor includes some continuous mature hedgerows and tree belt planting. This effectively limits the opportunity for views out from the railway corridor towards the site. Partial views of the proposed development will be possible briefly on a short section to the south west of the Fuller's End crossing, where the new perimeter landscaping and dwellings will be visible.	Minor - Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible