Land at Lyndon Top

Hambleton, Oakham, Rutland

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Revision B

DSA
ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN

REVISIONS

Initial Issue	14th January 2020
Revisions	-
A	15th May 2020. See para 1.1.5.
B	27th May 2020. Drawing 1143 806 amended to remove planting outside of land ownership boundary.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DSA Environment & Design Ltd have been commissioned to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of the proposed development at land at Lyndon Top. The appraisal is to accompany a planning application for this development. Previously the site has been subject to a planning application, refusal and dismissal of appeal. The reason for dismissal was on landscape impacts. The appeal decision is found in **Appendix K**.

The proposal, shown in **Appendix J**, is for a redevelopment of part of an existing vineyard/orchard into a new free-range rabbit farm. The proposed site layout has been iterated in response to operational needs and the conclusions of this LVA, further details of which are found in the Introduction (Chapter 1). A sizeable agricultural building and temporary rural worker's dwelling are proposed at the centre of the land ownership on the side of the north facing slope. Additional fencing, runs and hutches to accommodate up to 300 does are also proposed.

The proposed site is approximately 0.75 hectares in size and is part of an existing vineyard with a number of remnants of its past use as a plant nursery. To the north, lies a plateau which then slopes steeply towards Rutland Water from around 120m AOD to around 90m AOD in the very north western corner of the site. The ground levels out at the bottom (northern part) of the site.

Built form around Rutland Water consists of scattered farmsteads and small settlements. Locally in the villages of Manton and Lyndon, built form is a mixture of two storey houses constructed from either stone or brick with a tile roof. Some properties have a thatched roof, closer to the core of the settlements.

In the wider landscape small blocks of woodland are present, breaking up the dominant agricultural land use. The woodland is generally associated with ridge and hill tops, or the lower slopes of small river and stream corridors, especially around the edges of Rutland Water. Agricultural fields are predominantly pastoral on the slopes of Rutland Water, becoming more arable further away. These are generally bounded by mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees. Where woodland is more sparse, mature hedgerow trees maintain the 'wooded' character.

Due to the undulating nature of the local topography, views can range from open and expansive on slightly higher ground to more restricted on lower ground and around mature woodlands, hedgerows and built form.

The site lies at the extreme south eastern edge of National Character Area **NCA 74: Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds**. At a local level the site is within the Rutland Landscape Character Assessment (RLCA), 2003, **LCT 'Rutland Water Basin'**. The site is broadly typical of the local character area, being agricultural in nature. The existing trees and hedgerows around the site generally screen it to proximal views, although local topography allows for more distant views from the north.

Landscape impacts are predicted to be **moderate adverse**, with **slight or negligible adverse effects** predicted in time, through the appropriate and suggested landscape mitigation and management. The proposal and mitigation are expected to only affect the landscape fabric of the site itself. Conservation and enhancement of the existing field boundaries and responding to the local architectural style will help to preserve local landscape character.

As much of the study area is visually separated from the site by the local topography, the viewpoints chosen are focussed in two general locations: close to the site where glimpsed views through field boundaries are available and around Hambleton Peninsula to the north. There is an isolated view available from outside the study area at Burley-on-the-hill House (5km north), however from this distance, the proposal is at such a small scale that it is expected to be very difficult to see.

Visual impacts are predicted to be **moderate adverse** initially, but with the completion of development becoming **slight beneficial** in places, with the implementation of the mitigation proposals. The retention and enhancement of the existing field boundaries to provide additional connectivity with the wider landscape and provide further screening to the proposed buildings are key to achieving lower adverse impacts. Careful choice of construction materials, primarily in 'earthy' tones would help the buildings blend into the landscape, especially as viewed from Hambleton in the north.

The existing trees on site should be retained and the age diversity improved with the planting of new large stock size trees. Measures such as a detailed landscape scheme and landscape management plan are suggested to minimise the impacts of the proposed development. It is anticipated that these measures can be adequately secured by landscape conditions attached to a planning consent.

VIEW FROM ON SITE LOOKING NORTH WEST

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

1.1.1 DSA Environment & Design Ltd have been commissioned to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of the proposed development at land at Lyndon Top.

1.1.2 The location of the site is shown in **Appendix C**.

1.1.3 The assessment is to accompany a planning application for this development. The local planning authority is Rutland County Council (RCC).

1.1.4 This report:

- Describes the existing landscape and visual amenity baseline;
- Describes the key landscape and visual related elements of the proposed development;
- Assesses the sensitivity of the landscape and visual amenity baseline to the type and scale of development proposed;
- Describes the nature of the change to the landscape and visual amenity baseline;
- Assesses the magnitude and significance of the changes to the landscape and visual amenity baseline; and
- Describes any mitigation measures incorporated to offset the adverse effects identified.

1.1.5 Revision A has been issued in May 2020. The proposed site layout has been iterated in response to operational needs and the conclusions of this LVA drawn in the initial issue. The proposed buildings (agricultural shed and a temporary dwelling) were located on a previous revision of the site layout along the southern boundary, at the most elevated part of the site. The LVA raised concerns with the geometric built form 'cresting' the ridge of a generally wooded skyline, causing adverse visual impacts when viewed from Hambleton Peninsula to the north.

1.1.6 On the most recent site layout (Willis and co. drawing SC/BCH/03 April 2020) the proposed buildings are located at the centre of the land ownership boundary, over 100m further north and importantly further down the slope. The new position of the proposed buildings has been reassessed, focusing on the potential visual impact on the wooded skyline and the opportunity for the appropriate landscape mitigation to reduce the adverse impacts and even offer beneficial effects in the long term.

1.1.7 Further consideration of the operational needs of the agricultural shed have increased the building footprint from 24m x 12m to 42m x 18m. Importantly, the ridge height of the agricultural shed does remain similar at approximately 6m tall.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE

2.1.1 The LVA of the proposed development has been undertaken in general accordance with the "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition" ("GLVIA 3") published by the Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2103, and "Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment" guidance published by Natural England and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), October 2014.

2.1.2 It should be noted that these documents do not provide a prescriptive approach but identify principles and good practice.

2.1.3 The proposed development is located within 1km of some listed buildings and a Scheduled Monument. The following guidance has therefore been taken into account;

- The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 3 (Second Edition): (Historic England December 2017).

2.1.4 It should be noted that since the publication of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (Revised NPPF) on 23 May 2019 some of the references within these documents (especially those relating to specific NPPF paragraphs) may be out-of-date. However, Historic England believe that these documents still contain useful advice and case studies.

2.2 PRINCIPLES AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

2.2.1 The scope of the LVA was defined through desk top research.

2.2.2 Key areas of concern highlighted through desktop survey are the potential visibility from the large recreational area of Rutland Water. However it is anticipated that landform and existing vegetation should provide screening to some of the proposed site, especially from views that may be available from the east, either on land or from the water itself.

2.2.3 In June 2019 the proposed development was subject to a planning appeal and a decision made by a Planning Inspector. The final findings of the Inspector were that a temporary rural workers dwelling was necessary in the context of the rabbit farm, however *'As the development would be unrelated to existing buildings or landscape features it would appear particularly prominent and would cause significant harm to this largely undeveloped sensitive landscape by altering the undisturbed character of the area and reducing the tranquil perception.'*

2.2.3 Best practice guidance suggests the use of a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) to aid in the determination of a relevant study area for the assessment.

2.2.4 Where our methodology would differ to the guidelines is regarding the use of a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). Due to the location of the proposed development being surrounded by areas of built form, and the presence of mature trees and hedgerows in the local area, a ZTV is of limited use in this situation. A ZTV shows the theoretical visibility of a proposed development using 'bare earth' data and as such does not take into account features such as vegetation, including trees and hedges, and built form, including buildings, walls, fences, etc. An Actual Zone of Visibility (AZV) would instead be created during fieldwork, verifying where the proposed development can be seen.

2.2.5 Following a site visit, and study of mapping, areas are identified where views should be available. These were verified through field survey, with photographs from identified locations to demonstrate the extent of views available. Viewpoint locations have been chosen as representative of a range of receptors in a localised area, for example where views would be available from dwellings, a road and a public right of way in the same area.

2.2.6 A representative study area of 3km radius from the centre of the site was used.

BASELINE STUDIES

2.2.7 Baseline studies are necessary to gain an understanding of the existing landscape and visual conditions within the study area.

2.2.8 The baseline is reviewed alongside the proposed development description to identify and describe the changes that would occur and the landscape and visual effects resulting from these changes.

TIMING OF SURVEYS

2.2.9 Due to timing of the project, surveys and fieldwork were carried out in January 2020. This follows best practice guidance to demonstrate the visibility of the site in a 'worst case' scenario where trees and vegetation have lost leaf cover.

IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTS

2.2.10 A systematic approach is applied to identifying the effects on the landscape resource (landscape effects) and visual amenity as experienced by people (visual effects). Likely effects are examined by identifying those elements of the proposed development likely to give rise to effects and the receptors that will be affected by them.

2.2.11 Professional judgement is used to evaluate the 'sensitivity' of the receptors (both landscape and visual, separately) which is based on the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change proposed and the value of the receptor.

2.2.12 The 'magnitude' of the effect is derived from judgements about the size and scale of the effects, extent of area affected, duration of the effect and whether it can be reversed.

2.2.13 The sensitivity and magnitude judgements are then combined to determine the 'overall effect'. The elements that are combined to form this judgement are specific to the project (rather than generic to all projects). 'Overall Effect' is also judged in relation to a wide number of factors, such as direction of travel of the viewer in relation to the view.

2.2.14 Further details of the methodology and general matrices for the judgement of sensitivity, magnitude and 'overall effect'; are included in **Appendix A.**

2.3 ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

PHOTOGRAPHY

2.3.1 Photographs were taken towards the proposed development site from publicly accessible areas.

2.3.2 It is acknowledged that the proposed development may be visible from a number of private, residential properties, as well as private places of work which were not accessible. In such cases representative views of the proposed development have been taken into consideration.

2.3.3 All photographs have been taken from ground level. They are therefore not wholly representative of any views from higher storey windows, elevated views within vehicles or from horse back.

2.3.4 All photography was taken on site by DSA Environment & Design in December 2019 using a Canon EOS 6D 20.2 Megapixel Digital SLR Camera with a Canon EF 50mm lens and 58mm ultra violet filter.

2.3.5 The panoramic views are formed from a number of separate images taken in sequence and stitched together using Adobe Photoshop's 'Photomerge' function. Settings were on 'Cylindrical' with the options 'Blend Images Together', 'Vignette Removal' and 'Geometric Distortion Correction' enabled to give a more accurate image.

3 SITE CONTEXT

3.1 POLICY CONTEXT

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

3.1.1 Government guidance relevant to the consideration of this application is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Revised National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)

3.1.2 The NPPF 2019 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and advises on how these are expected to be applied, seeking to streamline the previous approach and to promote sustainable economic development. It sets out the Government's Requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF is a material consideration to planning application decisions.

3.1.3 The NPPF at paragraph 7 states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 continues to state that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental, and that these dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles.

3.1.4 At Paragraph 11, the NPPF establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In terms of determining planning applications, this means:

- *"Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; and*
- *Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
- *the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposals; or*
- *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."*

3.1.5 The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, as specified at paragraph 124. Paragraph 124 also states that: *'Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'.*

3.1.6 A key part of making better places is responding to the existing character of an area. Paragraph 127(c) requires the consideration of landscape (and historic) character.

3.1.8 Please refer to the Supporting Planning Statement for further details of National Planning Policy.

3.2 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

3.2.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2.2 Rutland County Council (RCC) adopted their current Local Plan Core Strategy on 11 July 2011 - Rutland Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Development Plan Document and establishes the strategic approach to new development in the county and identifies the main strategic allocations.

Rutland Local Plan: Core Strategy - Adopted (July 2011)

3.2.3 The application site is subject to the Rutland Local Plan: Core Strategy. A number of policies from within this document will be considered in the LVA, including:

- Strategic Objective SO8: Rural Economies and Communities
- Strategic Objective SO11: Natural and Cultural Environment
- Strategic Objective SO13: High Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness
- Policy CS13: Employment and Economic Development
- Policy CS15: Tourism
- Policy CS16: The Rural Economy
- Policy CS19: Promoting Good Design
- Policy CS21: The Natural Environment
- Policy CS24: Rutland Water

3.2.4 Please refer to supporting statements for further details Local Planning Policy.

3.3 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

3.3.1 The proposed development site has quite a complex planning history, culminating in a planning appeal determined by a Planning Inspector in June 2019.

3.2.2 The findings of the Planning Inspector in June 2019 form the basis for the key areas of concern for the Landscape and Visual Appraisal. A more detailed history of the site is explained below.

Site History

3.2.3 There have been several previous applications and appeals on this wider site owned by the applicant:

- 2010/0826 – Barn & 2 polytunnels – Invalid – disposed of
- 2011/0193/FUL – Agricultural tracks – refused
- 2011/0870/AGP – Agricultural prior approval – building - refused
- 2012/0602/FUL – Retention and re-surfacing of tracks – Refused – Appeal allowed conditionally 2013/0440/FUL – Agricultural building for winery and blockwork enclosures for plant cultivation – refused. Article 4 served.
- 2013/1088/CLE – Lawful existing use for shed – refused – appeal dismissed
- 2013/1094/CLP – Lawful proposed use for siting of caravan for agriculture – Pending 2016/1088/CLP – Lawful proposed use for siting of caravan for agriculture – Refused – appeal dismissed

- 2013/1094/CLP was by a different applicant who certified that they owned the land, the site of which is now part of this current application, 2018/0155, certified as being owned by the current applicant.

4 LANDSCAPE BASELINE

4.1 LANDSCAPE FABRIC

4.1.1 The 'landscape fabric' of the site refers, in this context to the physical attributes of the proposed development site itself and its immediate surroundings.

4.1.2 The site lies to the south of Rutland Water, some 5km from the centre of Oakham, Rutland

4.1.3 The proposed site is approximately 0.75 hectares in size and is part of an existing vineyard with a number of remnants of its past use as a plant nursery, growing we presume the hedging stock that remains. To the north lies to rest of the wider vineyard site that slopes steeply towards the Rutland Water reservoir from around 120m AOD in the south to around 90m AOD in the very northwestern corner of the site.

4.1.4 The physical boundaries of the site are a mixture of mature clipped hedges with intermittent mature trees (west, south and east) and a mature woodland belt along the northern boundary. The immediate surrounding landscape is generally large agricultural fields with mature hedgerow field boundaries. The exception to this is Lyndon To Camp Site (adjacent south of the site) and Lyndon Hill Visitor Centre (adjacent the site north).

4.1.5 Built form is generally scattered farmsteads and concentrated in the small settlements around Rutland Water. Locally in Manton and Lyndon built form is a mixture of two storey houses constructed from either stone or brick with a tile roof. Some properties have a thatched roof, closer to the core of the settlements.

4.1.6 In the wider landscape small blocks of woodland are present, breaking up the dominant agricultural land use. The woodland is generally associated with ridge and hill tops, or the lower slopes of small river and stream corridors and especially around the edges of Rutland Water. The agricultural fields are generally bound by mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees increasing the 'treed' character of the area.

4.1.7 Due to the undulating nature of the local topography views can range from open and expansive on slightly higher ground to more restricted around mature woodlands, hedgerows and built form, making parts of it (including the site) visually contained.

4.1.8 Small winding roads, often hedge lined, connect the scattered settlements and farms to the two major roads locally that connect Oakham to Corby (A6003 running north south to the west of the site) and Oakham to Stamford (A606 running east west to the north of the site beyond Rutland Water).

4.1.9 The proposed changes to the landscape have been outlined in the 'Proposed Development' (Section 6). These changes have the potential to impact upon the landscape fabric mainly through introduction of additional built form to the local area.

4.2 DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

4.2.1 There are a very limited number of nature and heritage designations of importance within the LVA study area (shown in **Appendix E**):

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - Rutland Water;
- RAMSAR Sites - Rutland Water;
- Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) - including Hambleton Wood;
- Scheduled Monuments - including Bridge over River Chater;
- Listed Buildings - including Bridge by Lyndon Wood; and
- Conservation Areas - including Wing, Edith Weston and Hambleton.

4.2.2 The impact of the proposed development on these heritage and nature designations will be assessed within the 'Landscape Impact Assessment' section.

4.2.3 This LVA will look at the visibility of the proposed development, in particular from the south and west, and propose mitigation recommendations to lessen the impacts of the proposed development.

4.3 WIDER LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.3.1 The Character of England's Landscape, Wildlife and Cultural Features Map (2005) produced by Natural England and English Heritage subdivides England into 159 NCAs and provides an overview of the differences in landscape character at the national scale. Each NCA is accompanied by a character description explaining the influences and features which determine the character of the area.

4.3.2 The site lies within **NCA 74: Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds**, which covers all of the 2km study area. **NCA 93: High Leicestershire** is the nearest different NCA just outside 1km to the west and the south. This neighbouring character area is separated from the proposed development site by existing houses and infrastructure meaning that the wider NCA would not be impacted at a landscape level. The key characteristics of **NCA 74** of relevance to this study are:

- A range of rolling hills, with elevated plateaux, narrow river valleys and distinctive scarp slopes.
- Jurassic mudstones (towards the west), limestone, sandstone and ironstone overlain by glacial till throughout much of the area produce moderately fertile soil.
- Woodland cover is generally sparse, except for some wooded scarps and in the Wreake Valley and adjacent to Rutland Water. Elsewhere, spinneys, fox coverts, hedgerows, hedgerow trees and streamside trees provide moderate cover.
- Agricultural land use dominates with arable farming on the plateaux tops and pasture on steep sloping valley sides.
- Agricultural land use has diminished semi-natural habitat although important habitats do remain, including species-rich neutral grasslands, wet meadows, parkland, reservoirs, rivers and streams.
- The establishment of Rutland Water reservoir has created a major wetland of international importance for water birds that combines open water, lagoons, islands, mudflats, reedswamp, marsh, old meadows, pastures, scrub and mature woodland.
- Evidence of many deserted and shrunken settlements, as well as extensive areas of ridge and furrow separate small villages and farms linked by country lanes with wide verges.
- Red brick buildings with pantile roofs are widespread and most abundant clustered around churches, which are constructed from ironstone and limestone contributing to the local vernacular.

4.4 LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.4 1 At a local level, the Rutland Landscape Character Assessment (RLCA), 2003, covers the site and the 3km study area. **Appendix E** shows landscape character designations.

4.4.2 The RLCA provides a detailed district level analysis of landscape character in Rutland and is used as the basis for assessment in section 7.

4.4.3 The assessment recognises a number of Landscape Character Types (LCTs), within Rutland. Each presenting unique and distinctive characters with detailed description and recommendations for Landscape Objectives for each area. Some are subdivided further into Landscape Character Sub Areas (LCsA).

4.4.4 The proposed site lies within LCT 'Rutland Water Basin'.

4.4.5 The nearest other LCT is 'High Rutland (Sub Area - Ridges and Valleys)' some 300m south, across Lyndon Road. This LCT, similar to the wider NCAs, is physically separated from the proposed development due to landform and vegetation, therefore landscape impacts will not be experienced by this area due to the proposals.

4.4.6 Characteristic features of the Rutland Water Basin include:

- This landscape character type is unique and dominated by Rutland Water. The middle valley of the River Gwash and its northern tributary, flowing from Oakham, were dammed and flooded to create a major new water storage reservoir, now owned and managed by Anglian Water. The flooded valley now has the character of a basin, with the flat expanse of water surrounded by generally low, gently sloping hills to skylines formed by the Rutland Plateau to the north and the High Rutland hills to the south. Its geology is principally

ironstone overlain by glacial till and alluvium.

- For the most part, the reservoir is curiously unobtrusive from many of the surrounding roads essentially as a result of the undulating topography and high level of tree cover around its shores. The openness of this huge mass of water is also significantly softened by the presence of the Hambleton peninsula, a long finger of steeply rising land which protrudes deep into the reservoir from the western end. This important landscape feature helps the reservoir to retain a relatively intimate scale despite it being one of the largest man-made water bodies in Great Britain. The flowing landform, surrounding woodlands and the Hambleton peninsula reduce the visual impact of the water and the rawness of such a large artificial landscape feature. Only at the eastern end does the true scale of the reservoir, together with its dam and other infrastructure, become more apparent. The feeling of a large scale landscape is accentuated at the east of the reservoir by the contrast with the lower, enclosed valley below the dam and the exposed windswept conditions of the open water and dam top.
- The landform immediately adjacent to the water varies, but most of the basin has a distinct profile, especially along its southern and northern shores, where the land dips sharply down to the water from a shoulder of high ground, effectively obscuring many views of the water below. Alternatively, along its western shores, the landform is characterised by a very gradual down-slope towards the waters edge, particularly around the village of Egleton. Consequently, for significant parts of the Vale of Catmose west of the reservoir the water is totally obscured by the built and vegetational cover, with vistas towards the Hambleton peninsular containing no visible water.
- Established, pre-reservoir trees and woodland and subsequent planned landscaping, particularly around the recreational and interpretation centres at Whitwell and Edith Weston combine to provide a surprisingly detailed mosaic of pasture and woodland on the shores. Elsewhere, arable land sweeps down to the shores in large, geometric fields with low cut hedges. The shorelines of Rutland Water vary according to the water level but may include water lapping close to the field edges or noticeable patches or strips of mud between the fields and the water.
- The water surface varies considerably in accordance with prevailing weather conditions. It is a flat, bright, reflective, light blue, almost glass-like surface with waterfowl dotted about and boats slowly moving on bright sunny days. In windy and cloudy conditions, storms can create substantial wave energy and the surface breaks up into a rough, dark, grey sea. Through most of the year the waterfowl and boating movements are important elements in the landscape and the large bird populations and other wetland species have contributed to the national and international importance of the reservoir for wildlife, recognised by the notification of Rutland Water as a Site of Special Scientific Interest by English Nature, and Government designation as a Ramsar site and Special Protection Area for birds of international importance.
- Generally, Rutland Water is a large-scale, open, exposed, busy, varied, colourful, modern landscape that is still maturing and evolving from a landscape and ecological point of view. Thus, the rawness of the large scale engineering works and the relatively artificial appearance of the vast water body are slowly changing.

4.4.7 The LCA continues to suggest Recommended Landscape Objectives for each LCT, which for the Rutland Water Basin are as follows:

To encourage the continued maturity and evolution of the modern reservoir landscape, to enhance its visual amenity and biodiversity and recreational potential and to conserve the best elements of a large-scale, sweeping, open, busy, varied, colourful and modern landscape. To accommodate any new water-related developments into the landform and woodland cover and to avoid inappropriately located or conspicuous developments that would detract from landscape character. To encourage the further establishment and improved management of woodlands, wetlands and other semi-natural habitats.

4.5 PERCEPTUAL CHARACTER

4.5.1 In Topic Paper 6, it is noted that the layers of natural, socio-cultural, and perceptual information should be analysed and viewed together to identify the relative value or importance attached to a landscape.

4.5.2 People's responses to landscapes are subjective and can vary based on the different experiences of any one individual. Professionally informed judgements about perceptual character have been made, based on recommended factors for assessment such as tranquillity, movement, noise and naturalness in making the overall assessment of landscape character.

4.5.3 A landscape that is perceived as being more tranquil than another could make it more sensitive to development. The existing site is impacted upon by a number of factors that mean the tranquillity of the site is possibly dissimilar to the wider character area. The main factor is the influence of road noise from high speed traffic along the main Manton Road. The proximity of the site to the nearby village of Edith Weston and the fact that Lyndon Lane forms the access route to Lyndon Visitor Centre all impact upon the relative tranquillity of the site.

4.5.4 However, it is acknowledged that the area is still relatively tranquil and opportunities to mitigate against any potentially adverse effects on tranquillity should be taken as part of the landscape mitigation. Significant areas of new tree planting around the boundaries will help to reduce the perception of movement and activity on site, and may well have a small beneficial effect on reducing any general agricultural noise.

5 VISUAL BASELINE

5.1 RECEPTORS

Residential Receptors

5.1.1 The scattered nature of the settlements around Rutland Water combined with the widely changing topography and presence of mature woodland and hedgerow belts mean the proposed development site is generally well hidden in the wider landscape.

5.1.2 Residential receptors in the local area are very restricted, especially during summer months. In the winter some views may be available from the eastern edge of Manton, just off Lyndon Road. Any further into Manton and existing built form would provide screening to the development site.

5.1.3 Some views may be available from the southern side of Upper Hambleton, although most are surrounded by dense woodland and tree cover, screening views.

5.1.4 There is a single, isolated view available from outside the study area. This is from the private residences at Burley-on-the-Hill and the surrounding area. The orientation of the main mansion house, along with the design of the grounds with a mature avenue of trees, direct views south towards the proposed development site. At this distance however the existing site, with mature hedge boundaries screening majority of the buildings, would blend in well with the surrounding landscape. Construction activity may be noticeable, but at this distance would appear very small and it would be a short term and temporary change.

5.1.5 The construction is expected to have the worst impacts on visual receptors with the movement of site machinery drawing attention to the development. Once completed the development should be relatively well screened in the local area from residential receptors. Construction material choices will be an important part of helping the development blend in with the local vernacular.

Road Receptors

5.1.6 Due to a general lack of roads in the local area, combined with local topography, vegetation and built form road receptors are limited to close to the site. Most roads in the local area are flanked by mature hedgerows and woodland belts, which allow views along the roads, but little out to the wider landscape. Due to local topography and intervening vegetation views are not even available from Lyndon road, close to the site.

5.1.7 There is not expected to be any impacts on road receptors.

Public Right of Way Receptors

5.1.8 Public rights of way are generally quite limited in the local area. Generally, around 5 routes radiate out from each settlement, but most 'end' out in the wider countryside with no clear connection to other locations. There are however a number of circular routes associated with Rutland Water itself, a cycle route and a long distance route close to the site (as can be seen in **Appendix G**). Due to the local topography, vegetation and the presence of existing built form, views from most of the PRoW in the area are restricted to very proximal to site or more distant, across Rutland Water in Hambleton

5.1.9 There are four Long Distance Paths (LDPs) that are shown on the OS 1:25,000 mapping and are promoted by the Long Distance Walkers Association. These are The Macmillan Way, Uppingham Round and Rutland Water Circular Walk (which all run around 300m south of the site along Lyndon Road) and finally the Rutland Round, some 3km from the site, near Egleton. Only the Macmillan Way that runs along the access road to Lyndon Hill Visitors Centre is expected to experience impacts of the proposed development as it passes closest to the site. The wider footpaths that the LDPs cover do not experience views of the site.

5.2 SELECTION OF VIEWPOINTS

5.2.1 The following viewpoints, as described below, were considered and selected for assessment during field study verification of viewpoints. The locations are shown on drawing 1143 805 in **Appendix G.**

5.2.2 Viewpoints have been selected in accordance with the following criteria:
- distance to the receptor (from the centre of the site),
- the proportion of the target likely to be visible
- the scale of the target relative to the view

- the number of people likely to be experiencing the view
- whether the view shows a character typical of the area
- whether the viewpoint has a high potential for visual impact

5.2.3 Note: Distance and direction from site is measured from viewpoint to centre of the site.

Viewpoint Name: Lyndon Visitors Centre access road
Distance and Direction from site: 240m North
National Grid Reference: SK 8947 0549
Receptors represented: Drivers and users of the footpaths.
Image Number: VP1

Viewpoint Name: Lyndon Visitors Centre access road, South
Distance and Direction from site: 100m East
National Grid Reference: SK 8961 0525
Receptors represented: Drivers and users of the footpaths.
Image Number: VP2

Viewpoint Name: Rutland Water Cycle Route, Hambleton South Shore, West
Distance and Direction from site: 1920m North
National Grid Reference: SK 8979 0715
Receptors represented: Cyclists and pedestrians along the public right of way.
Image Number: VP3

Viewpoint Name: Rutland Water Cycle Route, Hambleton South Shore, East
Distance and Direction from site: 1950m North
National Grid Reference: SK 9011 0710
Receptors represented: Cyclists and pedestrians along the public right of way.
Image Number: VP4

Viewpoint Name: Public footpath at Upper Hambleton, north of Limes Farm.
Distance and Direction from site: 2160m North
National Grid Reference: SK 8995 0738
Receptors represented: Users of the public right of way
Image Number: VP5

Viewpoint Name: Goldeneye Hide, Rutland Water Nature Reserve
Distance and Direction from site: 1100m North West
National Grid Reference: SK 8887 0617
Receptors represented: Users of the nature reserve
Image Number: VP6

6 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

6.1 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.1.1 The proposed development is for a redevelopment of part of an existing vineyard/ orchard into a new free range rabbit farm with runs and hutches to accommodate up to '300 does' along with security fencing, a temporary rural workers dwelling and a larger agricultural building. The current location of the proposed development is shown in **Appendix C**.

6.1.2 The proposal is to retain the existing site access and access tracks, but clear the existing vegetation from a 0.75 hectare area at the centre of the site and establish the rabbit farm in this area. The temporary rural workers dwelling is proposed to be a single storey, two bedroom timber cabin located towards the eastern boundary of the site. The agricultural barn is much larger at around 6m in height and approximately 42m x 18m in footprint. This is proposed at the centre of the site, slightly closer to the eastern boundary.

6.1.3 The proposed development would also necessitate the erection of permanent security fencing, rabbit runs and hutches. The fencing would surround the extent of the proposed red line boundary site and the runs and hutches would fill the remainder of the space (minus access tracks). It was noted by the Planning Inspector that *'it seems unlikely that they would be visually conspicuous and as such do not materially influence my assessment.'* Therefore our appraisal will concentrate on the impacts of the proposed dwelling and agricultural buildings.

6.1.4 A key part of the iterative nature of the LVA process is to determine necessary mitigation measures, in particular with regards to layout and landscape treatment of the site.

6.1.5 The initial site proposals can be seen in **Appendix J.**

7 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

7.0.1 The impact of the proposed development on the landscape character of the study area at a range of scales is assessed below;

7.0.2 The development is not of a large enough scale to affect National Character Areas and as such '**NCA 74: Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds'** has not been assessed. Direct impact on the landscape fabric and features would be limited to the site itself.

7.0.3 The site lies within the Rutland Landscape Character Assessment (RLCA), 2003, **landscape character type (LCT) 'Rutland Water Basin'**.

Landscape Character Area: Rutland Water Basin
Sensitivity: Medium

The character type is large in comparison to the proposed development site and covers the entirety of Rutland Water and the associated slopes around it. The location of the site on the north facing slopes of Rutland Water, along with the mature hedge and hedgerow vegetation locally screen the site from large parts of the LCT and limit its area of influence, focussing it primarily to the north.

The current proposals, which only include for the provision of a temporary workers dwelling and agricultural building with little landscape enhancement, are thought to present a medium adverse impact on the local landscape.

Magnitude: Medium

A key characteristic of this landscape type is, plainly, Rutland Water itself. A large expanse of open water, which is curiously unobtrusive from many of the surrounding roads essentially as a result of the undulating topography and high level of tree cover around its shores. Established, pre-reservoir trees and woodland and subsequent planned landscaping, particularly around the recreational and interpretation centres at Whitwell and Edith Weston combine to provide a surprisingly detailed mosaic of pasture and woodland on the shores. Elsewhere, arable land sweeps down to the shores in large, geometric fields with low cut hedges. It is these features, in particular, combined with the local topography that visually contain the proposed site.

With landscape mitigation measures to reinforce hedgerow boundaries and create small areas of woodland (similar to those west of the site, north west of Normanton and around Lyndon), it is thought the visual prominence of the proposed development could be reduced similar to that of the existing buildings at Lyndon Top Caravan Park as viewed from Hambleton Peninsula. As planting matured, a stronger ecological connection across the southern bank would establish and reduce the impact of the proposed development.

Impact: **Moderate adverse, reducing to slight or even negligible adverse in time.**

7.1 DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES, NATURE AND HERITAGE ASSETS

Statutory Designated Landscapes

7.1.1 There are no statutory designated landscapes in the local area. However there are a number of heritage and nature designations locally that will be assessed below.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and RAMSAR

7.1.2 Rutland Water is designated as a SSSI, SPA and RAMSAR site. All three designations cover the entirety of the open water area and lower shores. The proposed development is generally well screened from this location due to local topography and existing vegetation. With landscape mitigation to reinforce woodland and hedgerow pattern locally the proposed development would be screened from these areas. Therefore the proposed development is not thought to have any impact on the SSSI, SPA and RAMSAR sites.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

7.1.3 Hambleton Wood is the only LWS close to the proposed development site. Situated low on the southern side of the Hambleton peninsula views up towards the site are available but generally screened by existing vegetation and the slope of the southern ridge on which the site sits. The view across is at quite an oblique angle to the slope of the land also making the site difficult to pick out amongst the existing field pattern. The inclusion of landscape

mitigation to reinforce hedgerow boundaries and create small woodland blocks to increase the wooded horizon would mostly screen the development from this location.

Scheduled Monuments

7.1.4 Three scheduled monuments lie within the 3km study area. None are within 2km of the proposed development site and are physically separated by existing settlements and large infrastructure, such as the A6003.

7.1.5 Therefore it is thought that no Scheduled Monuments will experience impacts as part of the proposed development.

Listed Buildings

7.1.6 A number of listed buildings lie within the 3km study area around the proposed site. A large number are separated from the proposed development by the existing villages and vegetation. The closest lies within 1km of the site, a Bridge by Lyndon Wood, but due to local topography and vegetation is completely separated from the proposed site and would not impact it.

7.1.7 There are a small group of listed buildings on Hambleton Peninsula that are likely to experience some change in there setting from the proposed development. These listed buildings are Hambleton Hall (a Grade II listed building some 2300m north), Old Hall (Grade II around 1750m north and Orchard House) and another Grade II listed property around 2km north. From these locations, views of the site are available, especially the existing ornate hedge pattern which is easy to identify on the hillside. The site does however form a very small part of a wide panoramic view across the water.

7.1.8 It is predicted that the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the listed buildings, with aspirations to change to slight beneficial in time with the improvement of field boundaries and existing tree stock on site to increase screening of the new cafe building.

7.1.9 There are isolated instances of more distant views available towards the site. Burley-on-the-Hill House and its grounds sit on the northern ridge of Rutland Water, overlooking a lower part of the Hambleton Peninsula. This drop in landform, the orientation of the building and the avenue of mature trees within the grounds direct views towards the site. The house is located approximately 5km north of the proposed development site. At such a distance, the existing field boundaries around the site provide a screen to the existing buildings. Views will be available of distant construction traffic. Upon completion, the establishing surrounding landscape framework would return views to their existing condition.

Conservation Areas

7.1.10 There are four conservation areas within 3km from the proposed development site. These are Wing (to the south), Egleton and Hambleton (to the north) and Edith Weston (to the east). All of these areas are around 2km or further from the site. Existing vegetation, topography and built form separate the proposed site form these areas.

7.1.11 The southern edge of Hambleton Conservation Area, near Hambleton Hall, experiences views out across the water to the southern slopes of Rutland Water, as noted in the Listed Building section previously.

7.1.12 It is therefore thought that the proposed development would have a negligible impact on the Conservation Area, with aspirations to change to slight beneficial in time with the improvement of field boundaries and existing tree stock on site to increase screening of the new buildings.

7.2 SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

7.2.1 No significant impacts are predicted on landscape character resulting from the proposed development.

7.2.2 A **moderate adverse** impact is expected for the LCT 'Rutland Water Basin' initially, with **potentially a reduction to slight or negligible adverse impact in time** with the reinforcement of characteristic hedged and woodland boundaries.

7.2.3 Within the study area there are no statutory designations of national landscape value. There are a number of important nature and heritage designations. No significant effects are expected for any areas with a nature

or heritage designation. The generally contained nature of the proposed development is predicted to limit the impact these designated landscapes experience.

7.2.4 As the existing landscape character type (Rutland Water basin) is visually very well contained, maintaining and enhancing this character will be important for the proposed development as this area. In order to reduce the impacts of the proposed development, the following suggestions should be taken into account.

7.2.5 A careful choice of the appropriate locally responsive materials for the proposed buildings is likely to reduce their prominence. Maintenance and strengthening of a strong wooded and hedged framework providing a high level of visual screening is predicted to maintain the limited visibility of the site.

7.2.6 The creation of woodland blocks and dense hedgerows (including scattered trees) is likely to, in time, screen the proposed buildings, as suggested in the Outline Landscape Mitigation Proposals found in **Appendix L.** The site, when viewed from Hambleton Peninsula, is predicted to in time, have a wooded skyline rather than a skyline broken by geometric built form.

7.2.7 It is suggested that a **landscape management plan**, with a requirement for active monitoring and reporting, be produced, to help guide future work to sustain the landscape over the longer term. Details should include a **landscape scheme**, that reflects both the need to conserve and reinforce the existing features of the landscape (including, importantly, trees and hedges). It is anticipated that these measures can be adequately secured by landscape conditions attached to a planning consent.

8 VISUAL EFFECTS

8.1 VIEWPOINT DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT

The viewpoints are described and visual impact evaluated below. Sensitivity and magnitude are combined using the matrix in **Appendix A**, as a guide, to produce an assessment of the overall effect in each case.

8.1.1 *Viewpoint Number:* VP1 - Lyndon Hill Visitors Centre access road

Description and Evaluation: This view is taken from the Lyndon Visitors Centre access road, opposite the existing site entrance. It shows the mature tree belt that divides the access road from the proposed site. The road is also a cycle route and long distance footpath, the Macmillan Way. The view is representative of walkers, cyclists and drivers.

The access road is generally enclosed by the mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees, focussing views down the length of the road towards Lyndon Top. The access to the site is visible in the foreground and the field east of the site can just be seen over the clipped hedge to the left of the image. Other than parts of the visitor centre to the north, no other built form is visible from here.

The existing mature field boundaries provide a great deal of screening to the proposed development site. The dense nature of the hedges mean that views through, even in winter, are still well screened. In the short term, an unobstructed but slight glimpsed view through towards the proposed buildings is likely to be available.

Works would be most noticeable during the construction period where larger material and plant may be visible over the hedges. This would be a short term and temporary impact. Additional woodland planting around the new building would increase the amount of tree canopy cover, reinforcing this wooded view and further screening the proposed buildings, even in winter.

The *sensitivity* of the receptor, as representative of users of a public right of way is deemed to be high. The magnitude of change is assessed as low / negligible. Once construction is complete the proposed development should sit behind the existing vegetation and, providing materials are chosen with particularly 'earthy' tones, blend into the existing landscape. Overall visual impacts are expected to be slight adverse during construction, reducing to potentially slight beneficial with time by reinforcing field boundaries and creating small areas of woodland cover.

Sensitivity: High
Magnitude of Change: Low / Negligible
Impact: **Slight adverse** in the short term, potentially **reducing to slight beneficial in time.**

8.1.2 *Viewpoint Number:* VP2 - Lyndon Visitors Centre access road, South

Description and Evaluation: This view is taken from the access road to Lyndon Visitors centre, further south of VP1, near Barn Owl House. The road is also a cycle route and long distance footpath, the Macmillan Way. The view looks through a field gate that creates a break in the otherwise dense clipped hedge field boundary that flanks the road. The view is representative of walkers, cyclists and drivers.

This view is located at a field gate and rare gap in the dense hedge. This view is uncommon along the road. This view is also partially representative of the views that would also be available from Barn Owl House. The break in the hedge allows for a distant vista out over Rutland Water towards Rutland Water Nature Reserve.

The existing mature clipped hedge of the southeast corner of the site is visible across a pastoral field. The proposed shed is predicted to be seen rising above the hedge, with potential to partially screen views of Rutland Water in the background. Landscape mitigation in the form of woodland planting and large stock size trees along the eastern boundary of the site is likely to 'soften' and eventually screen views of the buildings in the long term.

The sensitivity of the receptor, as representative of a public right of way has a sensitivity of high. The magnitude of change is assessed as medium. Careful consideration of material choices and landscape treatments (in particular to boundaries), will help to mitigate against the impacts of this

change. Construction machinery would be visible from here, but this would be a temporary short term impact. The new buildings would be a permanent change to the view, but can be mitigated for in the long term through a substantial woodland and hedgerow planting scheme. Therefore it is thought that impacts can be reduced to slight in time. Iterations to the proposed building location to move it further north (down the slope) have lowered the apparent ridge height from this viewpoint.

Sensitivity: High
Magnitude of Change: Medium
Impact: **Substantial adverse** in the short term during construction, reducing to **slight adverse in time**, with the establishment of a strong woodland framework.

8.1.3 *Viewpoint Number:* VP3 - Rutland Water Cycle Route, Hambleton South Shore, West

Description and Evaluation: This viewpoint is taken from part of the Rutland Water Cycle route on the south shore of Hambleton Peninsula. This route can be accessed from the west along the cycle route or from a public road that finishes just north - Lyndon Road. It is representative of views available from the lower shore and is representative of walkers and cyclists.

The views available from the south shores of the Hambleton Peninsula are open and expansive over the water. The south bank of Rutland Water is visible and the pattern of large rectilinear fields with mature hedgerows and woodland blocks is noticeable. The site is visible but specific features within it are difficult to pick out.

The proposed buildings sit on the slope of site. The agricultural shed may crest the skyline in the short term. The generally wooded skyline is already broken by a telephone mast close to the site. The landscape mitigation proposals will enhance this skyline by establishing woodland blocks that in a fairly short period, will remove the visual presence of this built form on the skyline.

The proposed viewpoint represents pedestrians and cyclists and so the sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as high. The magnitude of change is assessed as low, as the scale of the development is very small compared to the scale of the panoramic view. Once construction is complete, the impact is predicted to be negligible as construction traffic is predicted to be the most noticeable part of this development. The establishment of a strong wooded framework would largely screen views of the new buildings, blending the site into the existing woodland and hedgerows along this slope.

Sensitivity: High
Magnitude of Change: Low
Impact: **Moderate adverse**, reducing to **negligible in time**.

8.1.4 *Viewpoint Number:* VP4 - Rutland Water Cycle Route, Hambleton South Shore, East

Description and Evaluation: This viewpoint is located on the Rutland Water Cycle Route, further to the east of VP3. The viewpoint is included to illustrate the change in view as the receptor travels east from VP3. The view is representative of pedestrians and cyclists.

This view across the water towards the south shore of the reservoir is very open. The angle of view to the proposed buildings is more acute than VP3 (ie. the shorter side elevation is visible, rather than the longer front elevation).

The expected magnitude of change is predicted to be similar or slightly smaller to that of VP3, due to the acute angle of the view. It is expected that in time, when the proposed woodland planting matures, the visibility of the proposed buildings would be greatly reduced.

The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as high as it is representative of pedestrians and cyclists. During the construction period the magnitude of change is assessed as low, reducing to negligible in time with the establishment of a proposed landscape scheme to reinforce the wooded boundaries.

Sensitivity: High

Magnitude of Change: Low
Impact: **Slight adverse**, reducing to **negligible in time**.

8.1.5 *Viewpoint Number:* VP5 - Public footpath at Upper Hambleton, north of Limes Farm.

Description and Evaluation: This view is from the public footpath Rutland 169 E344/1 that runs north south from Upper Hambleton down to Limes Farm on the shore of Rutland Water. It is representative of users of the public right of way.

The existing view is from elevated ground on the Hambleton Peninsula and allows for better visibility to the top part of the southern slope of Rutland Water. Again the geometric pattern of agricultural fields, hedgerow boundaries and small woodland blocks can be seen. Built form on the edge of the shore is visible, as too is the telephone mast on the skyline behind the site. Woodland blocks and prominent hedgerow trees define much of the existing skyline.

Views of the site are unobscured, distinguished by an irregular pattern of smaller fields compared to the surrounding agricultural land. The high number of hedges in this area make the site less visually prominent than the larger agricultural fields. The view of the site is distant so details are difficult to pick out.

This viewpoint sits at a higher elevation than VP3 and VP4. Slightly clearer views of the site are predicted, and possibly slightly more of the proposed buildings could be visible.

The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as high. The magnitude of change is deemed to be low, due to the significant distance of the site from the viewpoint. It is felt that the attention of receptors is generally focussed towards the west over the Rutland Water Nature Reserve area. As the woodland blocks establish as part of the landscape mitigation, the proposed buildings would be well disguised. The creation of woodland blocks would also enhance local landscape character by further increasing vegetation cover on site to the point where the field is not visible and the site appears as woodland from a distance. This would restore the uniform pattern of the surrounding larger agricultural fields on this hillside.

Sensitivity: High
Magnitude of Change: Low
Impact: **Moderate adverse**, changing to **slight beneficial in time** with establishment of the proposed landscape scheme.

8.1.6 *Viewpoint Number:* VP6 - Goldeneye Hide, Rutland Water Nature Reserve

Description and Evaluation: This view is from within the Goldeneye Hide, part of the Rutland Water Nature Reserve. Most views towards the site from within the Reserve's footpath network are screened by mature woodland and earth mounds. This viewpoint is representative of users of the Nature Reserve.

The view is available at quite an acute angle, taken out of the far left viewing window on the south eastern facing side of the hide. The existing trees along the southern boundary of the site form part of the skyline. The distinct pattern of mature hedgerows and woodland boundaries across the site is visible from here. At around 1km, these details on site are noticeable, especially given that at such a viewpoint, it is likely that the viewer will have binoculars through which to view the site.

The proposed buildings would initially be visible, partially screened by the existing hedges and vegetation on site. Construction traffic would also be visible however this is a short term and reversible impact.

It is expected that the landscape mitigation proposals would provide screening to the front of the development by reinforcing the existing hedged boundary. Additional woodland planting and reinforcement of hedgerows is expected to, in time, form a dense wooded backdrop to the buildings and significantly reduce any visual prominence of the proposed development.

The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as high as a recreational facility where users attention is focussed on the landscape. The magnitude of change is deemed to be medium, due to the proximity of the view from the site.

Once the landscape proposals have established the impacts are expected to reduce to slight or even negligible. It should be noted that users of these hides attention would generally be focussed on the wildfowl in the foreground.

Sensitivity: High
Magnitude of Change: Medium
Impact: **Substantial adverse**, changing to **slight or even negligible in time** with establishment of the proposed landscape scheme.

8.2 SUMMARY OF VISUAL EFFECTS

8.2.1 The proposed development is considered to present **moderate adverse** impacts on the visual amenity of the local area in the short term, changing to **slight beneficial in time** in some instances, assuming mitigation through the appropriate and suggested landscape scheme. The predicted impacts of the groups of receptors and individual viewpoints are summarised below.

8.2.2
VP1 **Slight adverse** in the short term, potentially reducing to **slight beneficial in time**.
VP2 **Substantial adverse** in the short term during construction, reducing to **slight adverse in time**, with the establishment of a strong woodland landscape framework.
VP3 **Moderate adverse**, changing to **negligible in time**.
VP4 **Slight adverse**, reducing to **negligible in time**.
VP5 **Moderate adverse**, changing to **slight beneficial in time** with establishment of the proposed landscape scheme.
VP6 **Substantial adverse**, changing to **slight or even negligible adverse in time** with establishment of the proposed landscape scheme.

8.2.3 Of the six viewpoints assessed, there are two that experience substantial adverse impacts. VP2 is largely due to the proximity of this viewpoint to the proposed development and the potential for the building to partially screen views of Rutland Water to the rear. The viewpoint from the hide (VP6) has an increased impact initially due to the likeliness of the viewer using optical equipment when in the hide, allowing for a greater level of detail of the site to be noticed and seen.

8.2.4 Given time to complete the development and the landscape proposals to establish and mature, almost all visual impacts will have reduced by a great deal.

8.2.5 The magnitude of the adverse impacts from the proximal viewpoints (VP1 and VP2) are somewhat overstated, due to the very close proximity of the viewer to the site. These views are only available from very small sections of a single track road, right next to the proposed site. The vast majority of distant views are completely restricted by the hedgerows, with only distant views up and down the road and through these gaps in the field boundaries available.

8.2.6 Although the visual appraisal identifies a number of impacts that initially seem quite adverse, the very limited extent of the proposed development and area of influence must be taken into consideration. The context of these viewpoints should also be taken into consideration within the overall visual impact appraisal and visual influence of the proposed development across the wider study area.

8.2.7 The worst impacts are predicted during the construction period which is a short term and temporary phase of the development. Once complete and allowing time for establishment of the landscape mitigation scheme, most of the visual impacts are expected to greatly reduce.

8.2.8 With the implementation of a detailed landscape scheme of mitigation proposals to improve field boundaries immediately around the site and increase the number and age diversity of trees present on site, it is believed that nearly all of the predicted impacts can be reduced to negligible adverse, or even slight beneficial, in time by enhancing the character of the immediate area.

9 CONCLUSIONS

9.0.1 The proposed development is for a redevelopment of part of an existing vineyard/ orchard into a new free range rabbit farm with runs and hutches to accommodate up to '300 does' along with security fencing, a temporary rural workers dwelling and a larger agricultural building.

9.0.2 The proposed site is approximately 0.75 hectares in size and is part of an existing vineyard with a number of remnants of its past use as a plant nursery, growing we presume the hedging stock that remains. To the north lies to rest of the wider vineyard site that slopes steeply towards the Rutland Water reservoir from around 120m AOD in the south to around 90m AOD in the very north west.

9.0.3 Built form is generally scattered farmsteads and concentrated in the small settlements around Rutland Water. Locally in Manton and Lyndon built form is a mixture of two storey houses constructed from either stone or brick with a tile roof. Some properties have a thatched roof, closer to the core of the settlements.

9.0.4 In the wider landscape small blocks of woodland are present, breaking up the dominant agricultural land use. The woodland is generally associated with ridge and hill tops, or the lower slopes of small river and stream corridors and especially around the edges of Rutland Water. The agricultural fields are generally bound by mature hedgerows with hedgerow trees increasing the 'treed' character of the area.

9.0.5 Due to the undulating nature of the local topography views can range from open and expansive on slightly higher ground to more restricted around mature woodlands, hedgerows and built form, making parts of it (including the site) visually contained.

9.0.6 The site lies within National Character Area **NCA 74: Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds**. At a local level the site is within the Rutland Landscape Character Assessment (RLCA), 2003, LCT 'Rutland Water Basin'.

9.0.7 The site is broadly typical of the local character area, being agricultural in nature. The existing trees and hedgerows around the site generally screen it to proximal views, although local topography allows for more distant views from the north.

9.0.8 Landscape impacts are predicted to be **moderate adverse**, with **slight or negligible adverse effects** predicted in time, through the appropriate and suggested landscape mitigation and management. The proposal and mitigation are expected to only affect the landscape fabric of the site itself. Conservation and enhancement of the existing field boundaries and responding to the local architectural style will help to preserve local landscape character.

9.0.9 As much of the study area is visually separated from the site by the local topography, the viewpoints chosen are focussed in two general locations: close to the site where glimpsed views through field boundaries are available and around Hambleton Peninsula to the north. There is an isolated view available from outside the study area at Burley-on-the-hill House (5km north), however from this distance, the proposal is at such a small scale that it is expected to be very difficult to see.

9.0.10 Visual impacts are predicted to be **moderate adverse** initially, but with the completion of development becoming **slight beneficial** in places, with the implementation of the mitigation proposals. The worst impacts are predicted during the construction period which is a short term and temporary phase of the development.

9.0.11 The retention and enhancement of the existing field boundaries to provide additional connectivity with the wider landscape and provide further screening to the proposed buildings are key to achieving lower adverse impacts. Careful choice of construction materials, primarily in 'earthy' tones would help the buildings blend into the landscape, especially as viewed from Hambleton in the north.

9.0.12 The existing trees on site should be retained and the age diversity improved with the planting of new large stock size trees. Measures such as a detailed landscape scheme and landscape management plan are suggested to minimise the impacts of the proposed development. It is anticipated that these measures can be adequately secured by landscape conditions attached to a planning consent.

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APPENDIX A

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY FOR APPRAISAL

INTRODUCTION

The appraisal process aims to establish the following:
- A clear understanding of the site and its wider landscape setting, identifying its landscape character, value and sensitivity to the development proposed;
- The nature of the development proposals and or any mitigation measures;
- The potential direct and indirect impacts of the proposals on the landscape resource (i.e. Landscape elements and character);
- The potential impacts on visual receptors; and
- Conclusions concerning the residual effects of the development proposal.

The process follows a standard approach:

- Establishment of existing baseline conditions (i.e. the character, quality and value of the landscape resource, and preliminary identification of the type and location of visual receptors);
- Description of the proposal including any preliminary measures included to mitigate potential impacts;
- Appraisal of the sensitivity of the landscape resource and of visual receptors to the development as proposed;
- Identification of potential impacts on the existing baseline i.e. on the landscape resource and on visual receptors through desk study and through field appraisal;
- Prediction/quantification of changes to the existing baseline i.e. the magnitude of effects and appraisal of their significance on the landscape resource and on visual receptors; and
- Identification of further mitigation and/or enhancement measures if practicable.

The approach and methodology used in this appraisal are based on a synthesis of guidance offered by a range of sources, tailored to the requirements of the project. The following publications are of particular relevance:

- 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, third edition 2013.) (GLVIA3);
- 'The Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment' (2004) Institute for Environment Management and Assessment;
- 'Landscape and Seascape Character Assessment' guidance published by Natural England and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), October 2014.; and
- Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland: Topic Paper 6 – Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity. Countryside Agency (now Natural England)/SNH.

Landscape and visual effects of development are key aspects for appraisal through the EIA process. Landscape and visual effects are assessed through separate but linked procedures. The appraisal of potential impacts on the landscape concern effects on an environmental resource i.e. the landscape. This underpins the appraisal of visual effects, which are assessed as an interrelated effect on populations.

GLVIA advise that;
"*An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource. The concern here is with how the proposal will affect the elements that make up the landscape, the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape and is distinctive character*" (GLVIA3, Paragraph 5.1, page 70); and

"*An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. The concern here is with assessing how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the content and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape and/or introduction of new elements*" (GLVIA3, Paragraph 6.1, page 98).

APPRAISAL OF THE LANDSCAPE BASELINE

The appraisal of the landscape baseline draws upon a desk study of previously published regional and local studies and on fieldwork within the local area. It considers the individual elements and features that make up the landscape and their value and importance, and the characteristics that derive from individual elements (or combinations of elements) that make a particular contribution to the character of an area. It also analyses the way in which these elements combine in distinctive and recognizable patterns of landform, land cover, land use and built development to create the character of the landscape. These represent landscape receptors that may be directly or indirectly affected by the proposal. Any special value or importance ascribed to the landscape and particular cultural and ecological interests and associations etc should also be established.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER APPRAISAL AND EVALUATION

Analysis of the baseline information enables descriptions to be prepared of the existing landscape character of the site and surrounding area, including a classification, as appropriate, of the landscape into distinctive types or areas which share common features and characteristics. This may take account of or adapt from other landscape character assessments prepared for the area.

The relative value of a landscape needs to be considered as part of the appraisal process. Appraisal of landscape quality currently combines judgements concerning the physical state/strength of landscape structure, character/intactness of a landscape, together with judgements on the condition or state of repair of individual features or elements that contribute to character. However other considerations may also be of relevance such as distinctiveness, sense of place, appropriateness of management, and the presence of features worthy of conservation. Landscape value is concerned with the relative value or importance attached by the community or by society as a whole to different landscapes, which expresses national or local consensus, because of its quality, special qualities (such as scenic beauty, tranquillity, wildness, cultural and ecological associations).

A landscape of high quality is frequently also a highly valued landscape. However it is important to recognize other possibilities, including landscapes of lower quality in a broad context that may be highly valued locally. 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' (2002) contains current Countryside Agency / Scottish Natural Heritage advice as follows:

"*In a policy context the usual basis for recognizing certain highly valued landscapes is through the application of a local or national landscape designation. Yet a landscape may be valued by different communities of interest for many different reasons without any formal designation, recognizing for example, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wilderness; special cultural associations; the influence and presence of other conservation interests; or the existence of a consensus about importance, either nationally or locally.*"

Landscape value is among the factors that feed in to the subsequent evaluation of the sensitivity of a landscape to accommodate change arising from a particular development, without detrimental effects on character. Landscape sensitivity is discussed further below.

SENSITIVITY OF THE LANDSCAPE RESOURCE

The sensitivity of the landscape resource to the proposed development will vary with existing land use, the pattern and scale of the landscape, visual enclosure/openness of views and distribution of visual receptors, the scope for mitigation that would be in character with the landscape, and the value placed on the landscape by local communities and by society in general. Evaluation of sensitivity will reflect the quality, value, contribution to landscape character of key elements or characteristics of the landscape, and the extent to which they can be replaced or substituted.

The sensitivity of landscape receptors reflects a combination of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape.

Current advice suggests that a landscapes 'susceptibility to change' is based on judgements about "*the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies or strategies*" (GLVIA3, paragraph 5.40, page 88).

Sensitivity is not absolute and is likely to vary according to the existing landscape, the nature of the proposed development and the type of change being considered. The revised 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) note at paragraph 5.39 that '*Landscape receptors need to be assessed firstly in terms of their sensitivity, combining judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change and the value attached to the landscape. In LVA sensitivity is...specific to the particular project or development that is being proposed and to the location in question*'.

The document Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland: Topic Paper 6 – Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity (Countryside Agency (now Natural England) /SNH) provides further guidance on the assessment of sensitivity.

LANDSCAPE VALUE

Landscape value is concerned with the relative value attached to different landscapes, and is often associated with a landscape designation. 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' (2002) contains current Countryside Agency / Scottish Natural Heritage advice as follows:

"*In a policy context the usual basis for recognising certain highly valued landscapes is through the application of a local or national landscape designation. Yet a landscape may be valued by different communities of interest for many different reasons without any formal designation, recognising for example, perceptual aspects such as scenic beauty, tranquillity or wilderness; special cultural associations; the influence and presence of other conservation interests; or the existence of a consensus about importance, either nationally or locally.*"

The higher the value of a landscape resource (in its own right as a component of character, or in terms of designation) the higher its level of sensitivity.

The level of sensitivity assessed for individual landscape receptors reflects a particular combination of quality, value, and contribution to landscape character as evaluated for each individual receptor. The following descriptors are intended to indicate the overall approach to the classification of relative landscape sensitivity:

High sensitivity landscapes
e.g. Internationally designated/ recognized landscape/ feature important / highly valued components of the landscape or landscapes of particularly distinctive character and without detracting features, vulnerable to relatively small changes.

High/Medium sensitivity landscapes
e.g Nationally designated / recognised landscape /feature. Strong landscape structure, distinctive characteristics, patterns, balanced combinations of landform and land cover with some detracting features and tolerant of some change.

Medium sensitivity landscapes
e.g County/locally designated/ recognized landscape/ feature
Recognisable landscape structure, characteristics, patterns and combinations of landform and land cover moderately valued characteristics with some detracting features and reasonably tolerant of changes.

Medium/Low sensitivity landscapes
e.g Non designated landscape but locally valued components/ features
Weak landscape structure, partly degraded with frequent detractors and potentially tolerant of significant changes.

Low sensitivity landscapes
e.g Non designated landscape, very weak or degraded structure, extensive detracting features and tolerant of substantial change.

In terms of landscape character, judgements concerning the likely sensitivity of the local landscape to the changes which would result from the development, and its ability or capacity to accommodate the development, derive from the assessments made of landscape character, quality and value. Consideration must therefore be given to the capacity of the site and the wider landscape to accommodate the development. Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' (2002) contains current Countryside Agency / Scottish Natural Heritage advice as follows:

"Landscape capacity refers to the degree to which a particular landscape character type or area is able to accommodate change without significant effects on its character, or overall change of landscape character type. Capacity is likely to vary according to the type and nature of change being proposed."

APPRAISAL OF EFFECTS

Development has potential to affect the landscape and visual resource in three main ways. These are:

- The direct physical effect that the development would have on the fabric of the site, such as the removal of trees, walls or other landscape elements;
- The effect that the development would have on the landscape character of the site and surrounding area due to changes that would occur in the composition of the landscape as a result of the presence of the development. The changes or impacts are assessed in relation to identified land scape character types and designated areas and features of landscape value; and
- The effect that the development would have on views from within the study area,including changes that would occur in the composition and character of the view. The changes or impacts are assessed in relation to the viewpoints identified within the study area, which have been selected to represent a range of location types and viewing distances.

This approach to appraisal of effects on the landscape involves the identification of the likely landscape effects of the development proposals and prediction of their likely magnitude or level of impact according to descriptive criteria. The likely magnitude or level of effect is considered in relation the sensitivity of the landscape to the development as proposed. This enables conclusions to be drawn concerning the overall effects. Different criteria are used to assess sensitivity and magnitude of change in respect of landscape effects and visual effects. These are described below.

LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Two main types of potential landscape effects are considered:

- Effects on landscape fabric, that is the direct impacts of the development on the physical fabric of the landscape through losses of or additions to the range of elements (e.g forestry, pasture, trees, hedgerows) that together make up the landscape; and
- Effects on landscape character, that is the indirect effects of the development on the character, quality and value of the landscape resource and the way in which it is experienced. Effects occur due to changes in the composition of the landscape as a result of the presence of the development, and are assessed in relation to identified landscape character types and designated areas and features of landscape value.

Magnitude of Landscape Effects

As GLVIA3 notes in paragraph 5.48, '*Each effect on landscape receptors needs to be assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility*.' As such there is no standard methodology for quantifying the scale or magnitude of relative effects on the landscape due to the amount of variation between the aforementioned criteria. As a general guide, the criteria used in this appraisal to assess magnitude of predicted effects on the landscape resource are set out below:

High
Major alteration to or loss of key landscape features or elements of the baseline that are important to character, introduction of features/elements totally uncharacteristic or uncharacteristic of the area.

High/Medium
Major alteration to or loss of one or more key landscape features or elements of the baseline that are important to character resulting from the development, introduction of features/elements substantially uncharacteristic of the area.

Medium
Noticeable alteration to or loss of one or more key landscape features or elements of the baseline that are important to character, introduction of features or elements that are not substantially uncharacteristic of the area.

Medium/Low
Minor alteration to or loss of one or more key landscape features or elements of the baseline that are important to character, introduction of features or elements that are characteristic or not uncharacteristic of the area.

Low
Very minor alteration to or loss of to one or more key landscape features or elements of the baseline that are important to character, introduction of features or elements that are characteristic or uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape.

Appraisal of 'Overall Landscape Effects'

The appraisal of 'Overall effects' on landscape fabric and on landscape character is based on the combined consideration of all of the factors considered in assessing the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change upon it. For physical effects on landscape fabric, this includes the value and quality of the landscape element, the extent to which it would be altered or removed, and the potential for/appropriateness of mitigation. For indirect effects on landscape character, the factors considered include quality, value, and existing landscape character, physical separation (intervening distance) between the development and the receptor and the extent to which the receptor would be affected.

The 'Overall Effect' Matrix shown at the end of this methodology is a graphic representation of the approach to appraisal of overall effect based on a combined consideration of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change upon it. The matrix is a general guide to the appraisal process; it should not be regarded as prescriptive.

VISUAL EFFECTS

Potential visual effects concern the effects that the development may have on views from within the study area, including changes that would occur in the composition and character of the views of visual receptors such as local residents and those viewing the site from roads, amenity locations and other recreational resources in the vicinity. Visual effects have been predicted by reference to the likely appearance of the development in the landscape using computer generated photomontages of the proposed development when viewed from the selected viewpoints, and field appraisal of the local landscape.

The approach to appraisal of visual effects involves the identification of the likely effects of the development proposals on views and prediction of their likely magnitude or level of impact according to descriptive criteria. The likely magnitude or level of effect is considered in relation the sensitivity of the visual receptor to the development proposal. This enables conclusions to be drawn concerning the overall significance of the impacts, including whether such impacts may be regarded as equivalent to likely significant effects when discussed in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (England and Wales) Regulations 1999.

Magnitude of Visual Effects

There is no standard methodology for quantifying the scale or magnitude of visual effects. GLVIA3 advises at paragraph 6.38 that '*each of the visual effects identified needs to be evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility.*' It continues to explain the magnitude should be quantified with reference to the scale of change in the view, the degree of contrast or integration of any new features, the duration and nature of effects, the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor, viewing distance and the extent of the area over which changes would be visible.

The factors that influence the visual effects of development fall into five main categories. These are:

- The attributes of the landscape in which the development is sited i.e. the presence or absence of landscape features and the scale /enclosure of the landscape within the field of view;
- The design (including materials) and siting of the development itself;
- The atmospheric conditions prevalent at the time of viewing;
- The distance of the viewer; and
- The perceptions of the viewer.

There is general agreement that the visual impact of development reduces with increasing viewing distance. The magnitude of visual impact at any given distance will vary according to a range of factors, including the scale and massing of the development, the presence of other features in the view that draw the eye, and the extent to which views of the development from the viewpoint in question are obstructed or filtered by intervening landform or by landscape elements such as trees, woodlands, hedgerows or by built structures. Atmospheric conditions may also affect the extent to which a development may be visible in the view. Comments concerning visibility conditions and viewing distance reflect the following Meteorological Office guidance:

Visibility Conditions visibility distance bands:

Thick Fog	0m to 199m
Very Poor	1000m to 1700m
Poor	1800m to 3500m
Moderate	3600m to 7km
Good	8km to 17km
Very Good	18km to 35km
Excellent	35km plus

The relationship between viewing distance and field of view is an important consideration, and one that affects the proportion of a field of view that is occupied by a development in relation to other features. As distance increases, the relative size of the development reduces and a broader area is viewed in which peripheral landscape features occupy more of the view and so compete for the attention of the viewer.

The criteria used in this appraisal to assess magnitude of predicted visual effects are set out on the following page:

High
Major permanent/long term change in the existing view, change very apparent involving high level of change in character and composition of baseline i.e. pre-development view.

High/Medium
Major-medium permanent/long term change in the existing view, change apparent involving high –medium level of change in character and composition of baseline i.e. pre-development view.

Medium
Medium permanent/long term change in the existing view, change noticeable involving medium level of change in character and composition of baseline i.e. pre-development view.

Medium/Low
Medium-minor permanent/long term change in baseline i.e. pre-development view change will be distinguishable involving medium-low level of change in character and composition of baseline i.e. pre-development view.

Low
Minor permanent/long term change in baseline i.e. pre-development view - change will be distinguishable from the surroundings whilst composition and character of view, although altered will be broadly similar to pre-change circumstances.

The Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

'It is important to remember at the outset that visual receptors are all people. Each visual receptor, meaning the particular person or group of people likely to be affected at a specific viewpoint, should be assessed in terms of both their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views.' (GLVIA3, Paragraph 6.31, Page 113) These factors may be expressed in terms of:

- The value of the view/viewpoint – which reflects the intrinsic character and scenic qualities of its location and context. Where recognised through the designation of an area (such as a National Park or AONB), value is *increased*, while the presence of detracting features in a view will generally *reduce value*. Higher value views are likely to be more sensitive to change;
- The importance of the viewpoint – as indicated by some form of recognition, for example as noted in a guide book, marked on a map or indicated on the ground by a sign or other visible feature. The provision of facilities e.g seating, parking, footpath may also indicate a location of higher importance. Views gained from locations where people gather in the outdoors may also be of higher importance; and
- The nature of the viewer and their expectations, occupations and activities when experiencing the view. High sensitivity viewers/viewpoints include those where the attention of users may be focused on the landscape e.g from public rights of way and other outdoor recreational facilities, and from residential properties. Viewers in cars and trains are considered to be of relatively lower sensitivity due to the transient moving nature of the view.

The levels of sensitivity assessed for individual visual receptors reflect a particular combination of these factors as evaluated for individual receptors. Views from residential properties have been included in the 'high' sensitivity category for the purposes of impact appraisal as they represent an important aspect of the visual amenity of local people. However the key issue is whether the proposal would unacceptably affect amenities and the existing use of land and buildings that ought to be protected in the public interest.

The following descriptors are intended to indicate the overall approach to the classification of the relative sensitivity of visual receptors:

High sensitivity visual receptors
residential properties, public rights of way and other outdoor recreational facilities where the attention of users may be focused on the landscape.

High/Medium sensitivity visual receptors
minor roads, lanes by users travelling through the local area at slower speeds.

Medium sensitivity visual receptors
'A' and 'B' roads routes by users travelling through or past the local area at speed; outdoor sporting and recreational facilities; outdoor working environments.

Medium/Low sensitivity visual receptors
Motorways and trunk roads.

Low sensitivity visual receptors
industrial plants, working environments (indoor), prisons.

Appraisal of 'Overall Visual Effect'

The appraisal of 'overall effect' of visual effects is based on the combined consideration of all of the factors considered in assessing the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change in the view. The 'Overall Effect' Matrix shown below is a graphic representation of the approach to appraisal of overall effect based on a combined consideration of the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change upon it. The matrix is a general guide to the appraisal process; it should not be regarded as prescriptive.

'Overall Effect' Matrix

		Magnitude of Change				
Receptor Sensitivity		**High**	**High/Medium**	**Medium**	**Medium/Low**	**Low**
	High	Very Substantial	Very Substantial/Substantial	Substantial	Substantial/Moderate	Moderate
	High/Medium	Very Substantial/Substantial	Substantial	Substantial/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Slight
	Medium	Substantial	Substantial/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Slight	Slight
	Medium/Low	Substantial/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Slight	Slight	Slight/Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Moderate/Slight	Slight	Slight/Negligible	Negligible

APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

This glossary defines the meanings given to these terms as used in the context of this report. The definitions provided have been taken from GLVIA3.

Baseline Studies

Work done to determine and describe the environmental conditions against which any future changes can be measured or predicted and assessed.

Characteristics

Elements, or combinations of elements, which make a contribution to distinctive landscape character.

Compensation

Measures devised to offset or compensate for residual adverse effects which cannot be prevented/avoided or further reduced.

Designated Landscape

Areas of landscape identified as being of importance at international, national or local levels, either defined by statute or identified in development plans or other documents.

Direct Effect

An effect that is directly attributable to the proposed development.

Effect

The result of an action being taken or the change within an existing view or landscape resulting from the impact e.g the construction of a development forming a new and dominant element within a view

Elements

Individual parts which make up the landscape, such as, for example, trees, hedges and buildings.

Enhancement

Proposals that seek to improve the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the proposed development site and its wider setting, over and above its baseline condition.

Feature

Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements in the landscape, such as tree clumps, church towers of wooded skylines OR a particular aspect of the project proposal.

Heritage

The historic environment and especially valued assets and qualities such as historic buildings and cultural traditions.

Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC)

Historic characterisation is the identification and interpretation of the historic dimension of the present-day landscape or townscape within a given area.

Impact

The action being taken; e.g. The felling of trees

Indirect Effect

Effects that result indirectly from the proposed project as a consequence of the direct effects, often occurring away from the site, or as a result of a sequence of interrelationships of a complex pathway. They may be separated by distance or time from the source of the effects.

Iterative Design Process

The process by which project design is amended and improved by successive stages of refinement which respond to growing understanding of environmental issues.

Key Characteristics

Combinations of elements which are particularly important to the current character of the landscape and help to give an area its particularly distinctive sense of place.

Landform

The shape and form of the land surface which has resulted from combinations of geology, geomorphology, slope, elevation and physical processes.

Landscape

'*Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*' (Council of Europe, 2000) This is the definition adopted by the European Landscape Convention used in GLVIA3.

Landscape Character

A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that make one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.

Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) or Regional Character Areas (RCAs)
These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type.

Landscape Character Assessment
The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape, and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combinations of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment.

Landscape Character Types (LCTs)
These are distinct types of landscape that are relatively homogeneous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but wherever they occur they share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historical land use and settlement pattern, and perceptual and aesthetic attributes.

Landscape Effects
Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.

Landscape Quality (condition)
A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.

Landscape Receptors
Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by the proposal.

Landscape Value
The relative value that is attached to different landscape by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.

Magnitude (of effect)
A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effects, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is of short or long term in duration.

Overall Effect
A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by criteria specific to the environmental topic.

Photomontage
A visualisation which superimposes a computer-generated image of a proposed development upon a photograph or series of photographs.

Sensitivity
A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.

Susceptibility
The ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences.

Time Depth
Historical layering - the idea of the landscape as a '*palimpsest*', or much written-over manuscript.

Visual Amenity
The overall 'pleasantness' of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.

Visual Effects
Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.

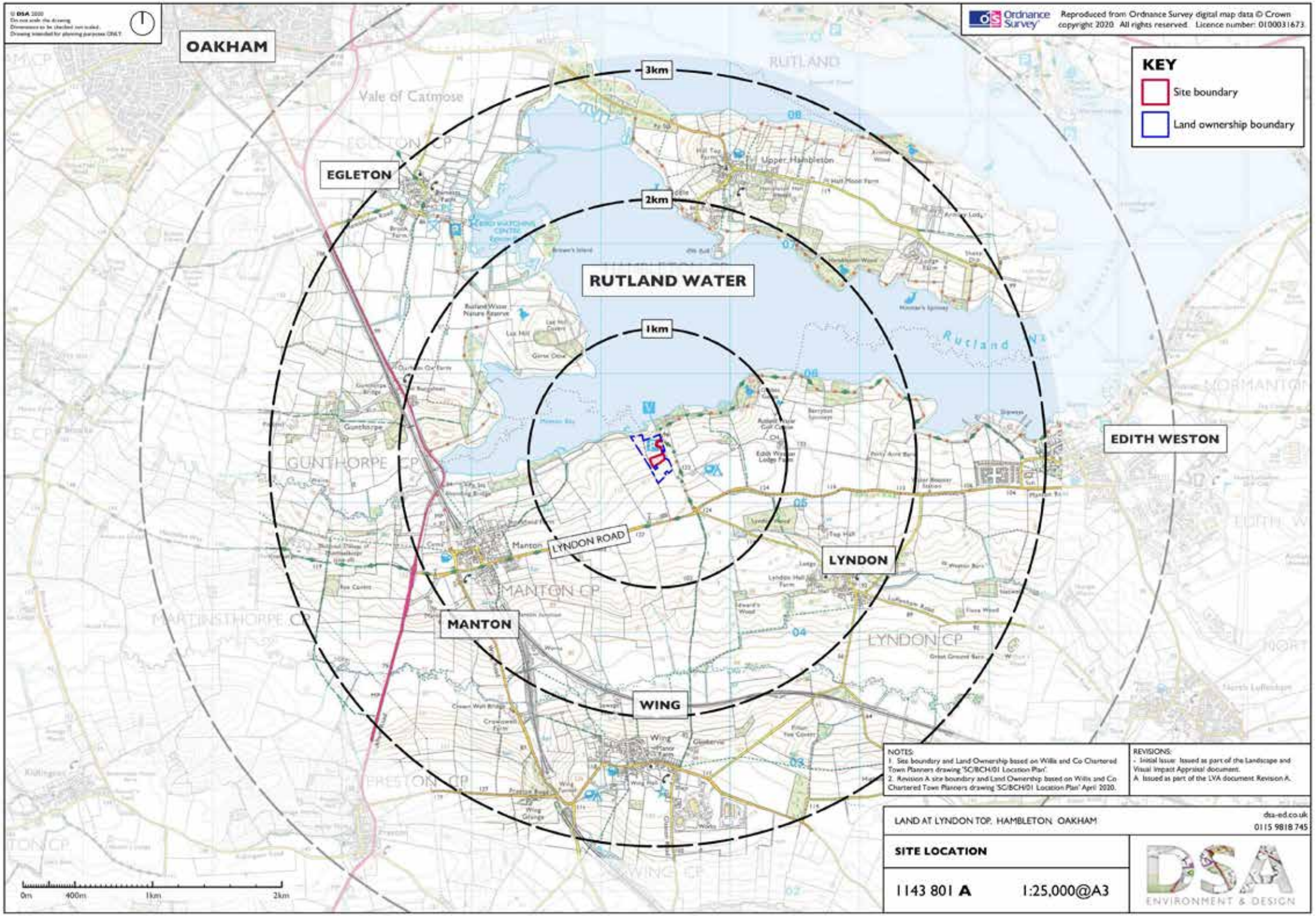
Visual Receptors
Individuals and/or groups of people with the potential to be affected by a proposal.

Visualisation
A computer simulation, photomontage or other technique illustrating the predicted appearance of a development.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)
A map, usually digitally produced, showing the area of land within which a development is theoretically visible, based on 'bare earth' contour data.

APPENDIX C

SITE LOCATION: 1143 801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OAKHAM
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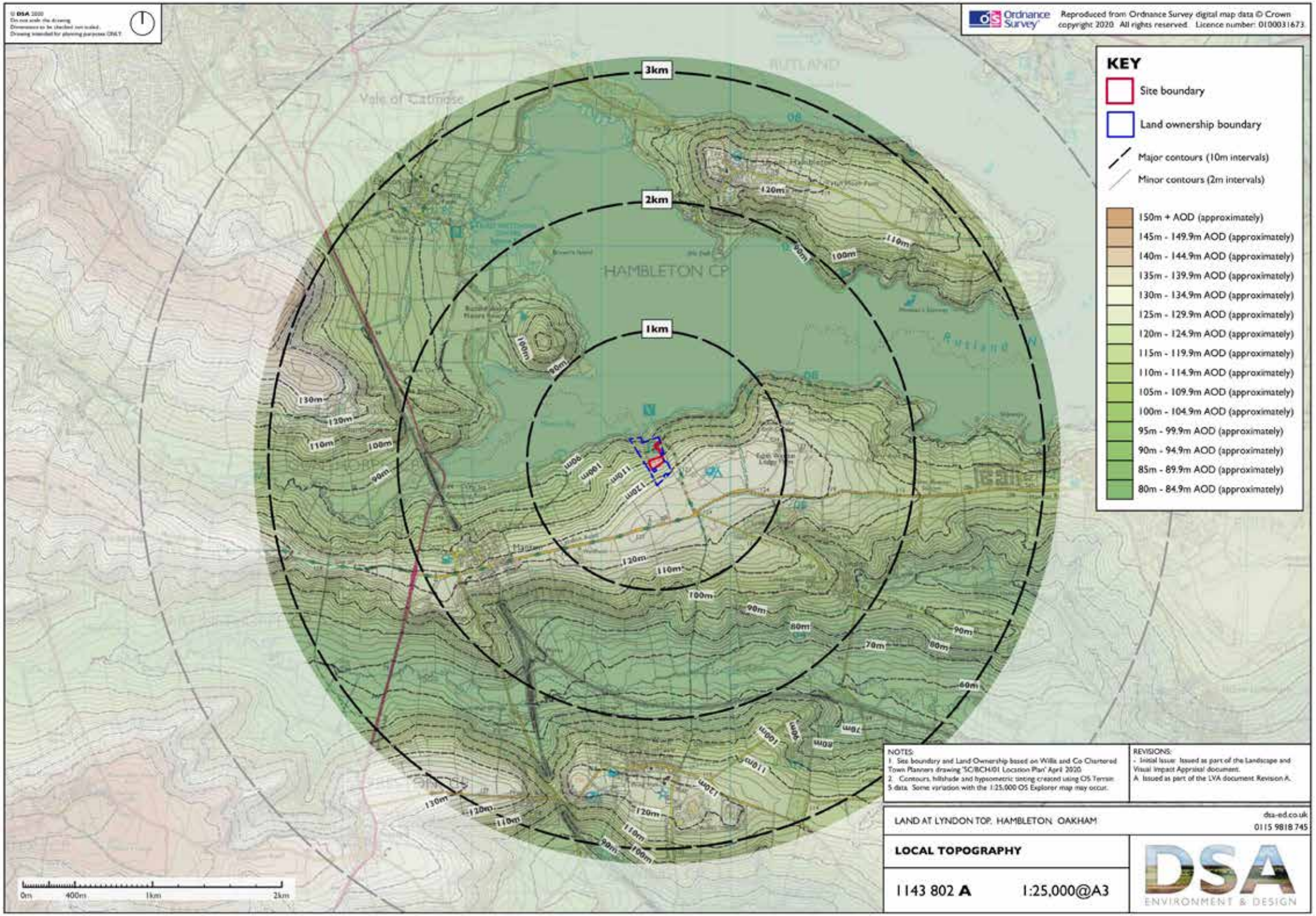
KEY
Site boundary
Land ownership boundary
3km
2km
1km
EGLETON
RUTLAND WATER
EDITH WESTON
LYNDON ROAD
LYNDON
MANTON
WING
Vale of Catmose
RUTLAND
Upper Hambleton
Rutland Water Nature Reserve
Gunthorpe
GUNTHORPE CP
MANTON CP
LYNDON CP
MARTINSTHORPE CP
EGLETON CP
WING CP
0m
400m
1km
2km
NOTES:
1. Site boundary and Land Ownership based on Wills and Co Chartered Town Planners drawing 'SC/BCH/01 Location Plan'.
2. Revision A site boundary and Land Ownership based on Wills and Co Chartered Town Planners drawing 'SC/BCH/01 Location Plan' April 2020.
REVISIONS:
- Initial Issue: Issued as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal document.
A. Issued as part of the LVA document Revison A.
LAND AT LYNDON TOP, HAMBLETON, OAKHAM
dsa-ed.co.uk
0115 9818 745
SITE LOCATION
1143 801 A
1:25,000@A3
DSA
ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN

APPENDIX D

LOCAL TOPOGRAPHY: 1143 802



KEY

- Site boundary
- Land ownership boundary
- Major contours (10m intervals)
- Minor contours (2m intervals)

- 150m + AOD (approximately)
- 145m - 149.9m AOD (approximately)
- 140m - 144.9m AOD (approximately)
- 135m - 139.9m AOD (approximately)
- 130m - 134.9m AOD (approximately)
- 125m - 129.9m AOD (approximately)
- 120m - 124.9m AOD (approximately)
- 115m - 119.9m AOD (approximately)
- 110m - 114.9m AOD (approximately)
- 105m - 109.9m AOD (approximately)
- 100m - 104.9m AOD (approximately)
- 95m - 99.9m AOD (approximately)
- 90m - 94.9m AOD (approximately)
- 85m - 89.9m AOD (approximately)
- 80m - 84.9m AOD (approximately)

0m 400m 1km 2km

NOTES:
1. Site boundary and Land Ownership based on Wilks and Co Chartered Town Planners drawing 'SC/BCH/01 Location Plan' April 2020.
2. Contours, hillshade and hypsometric tinting created using OS Terrain 5 data. Some variation with the 1:25,000 OS Explorer map may occur.

REVISIONS:
- Initial Issue. Issued as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal document.
A. Issued as part of the LVA document Revison A.

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0115 9818 745

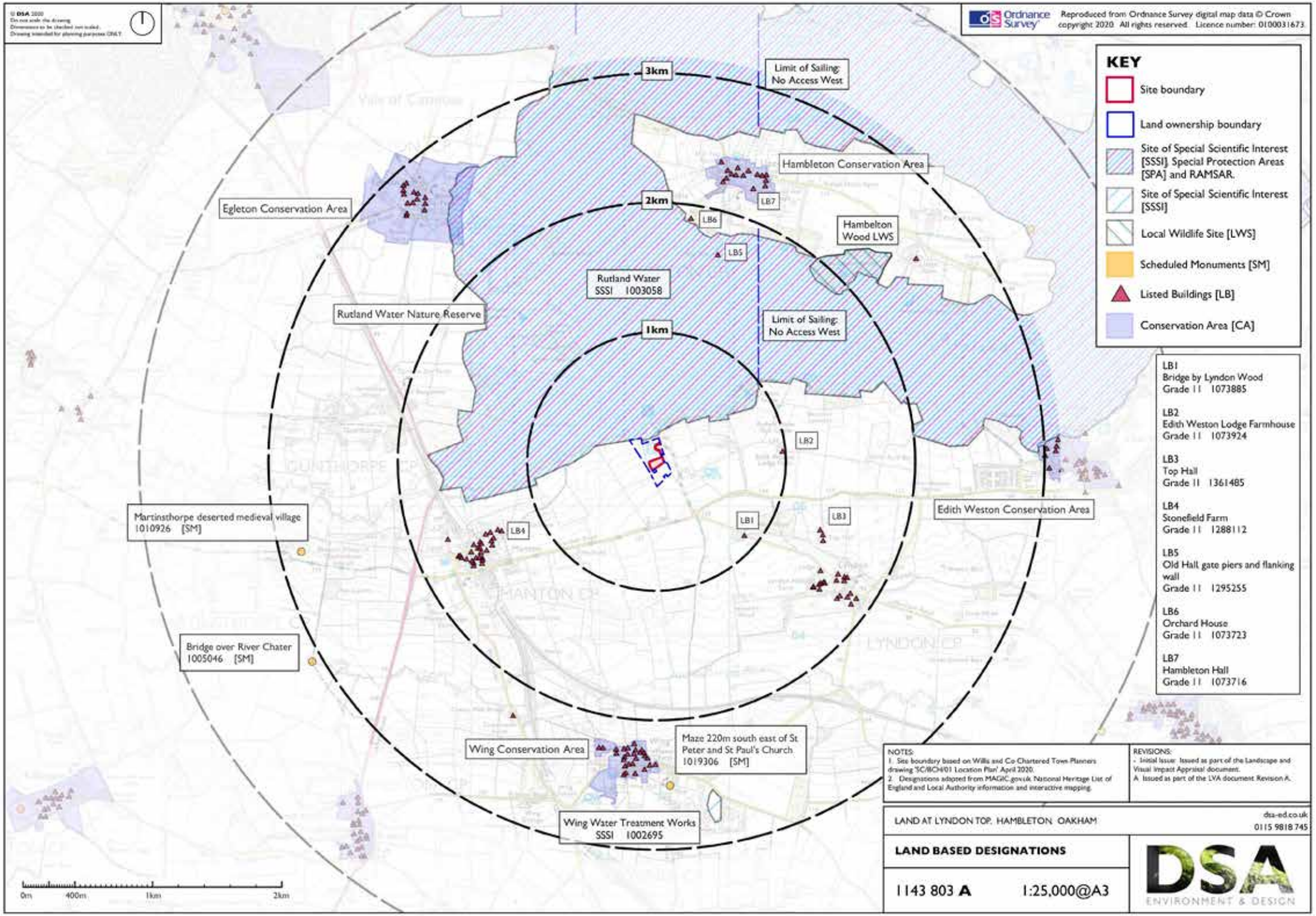
LOCAL TOPOGRAPHY

1143 802 **A** 1:25,000@A3

DSA ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN

APPENDIX E

LAND BASED DESIGNATIONS: 1143 803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Ordnance Survey
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KEY
Site boundary
Land ownership boundary
Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI] Special Protection Areas [SPA] and RAMSAR.
Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI]
Local Wildlife Site [LWS]
Scheduled Monuments [SM]
Listed Buildings [LB]
Conservation Area [CA]
3km
2km
1km
Limit of Sailing: No Access West
Limit of Sailing: No Access West
Hambleton Conservation Area
Egleton Conservation Area
Hambleton Wood LWS
Rutland Water SSSI 1003058
Rutland Water Nature Reserve
Edith Weston Conservation Area
Martinsthorpe deserted medieval village 1010926 [SM]
Bridge over River Chater 1005046 [SM]
Wing Conservation Area
Maze 220m south east of St Peter and St Paul's Church 1019306 [SM]
Wing Water Treatment Works SSSI 1002695
LB1 Bridge by Lyndon Wood Grade II 1073885
LB2 Edith Weston Lodge Farmhouse Grade II 1073924
LB3 Top Hall Grade II 1361485
LB4 Stonefield Farm Grade II 1288112
LB5 Old Hall gate piers and flanking wall Grade II 1295255
LB6 Orchard House Grade II 1073723
LB7 Hambleton Hall Grade II 1073716
NOTES:
1. Site boundary based on Willis and Co Chartered Town Planners drawing 'SC/RCH/01 Location Plan' April 2020.
2. Designations adopted from MAGIC.gov.uk National Heritage List of England and Local Authority information and interactive mapping.
REVISIONS:
- Initial Issue: Issued as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal document.
A. Issued as part of the LVA document Revison A.
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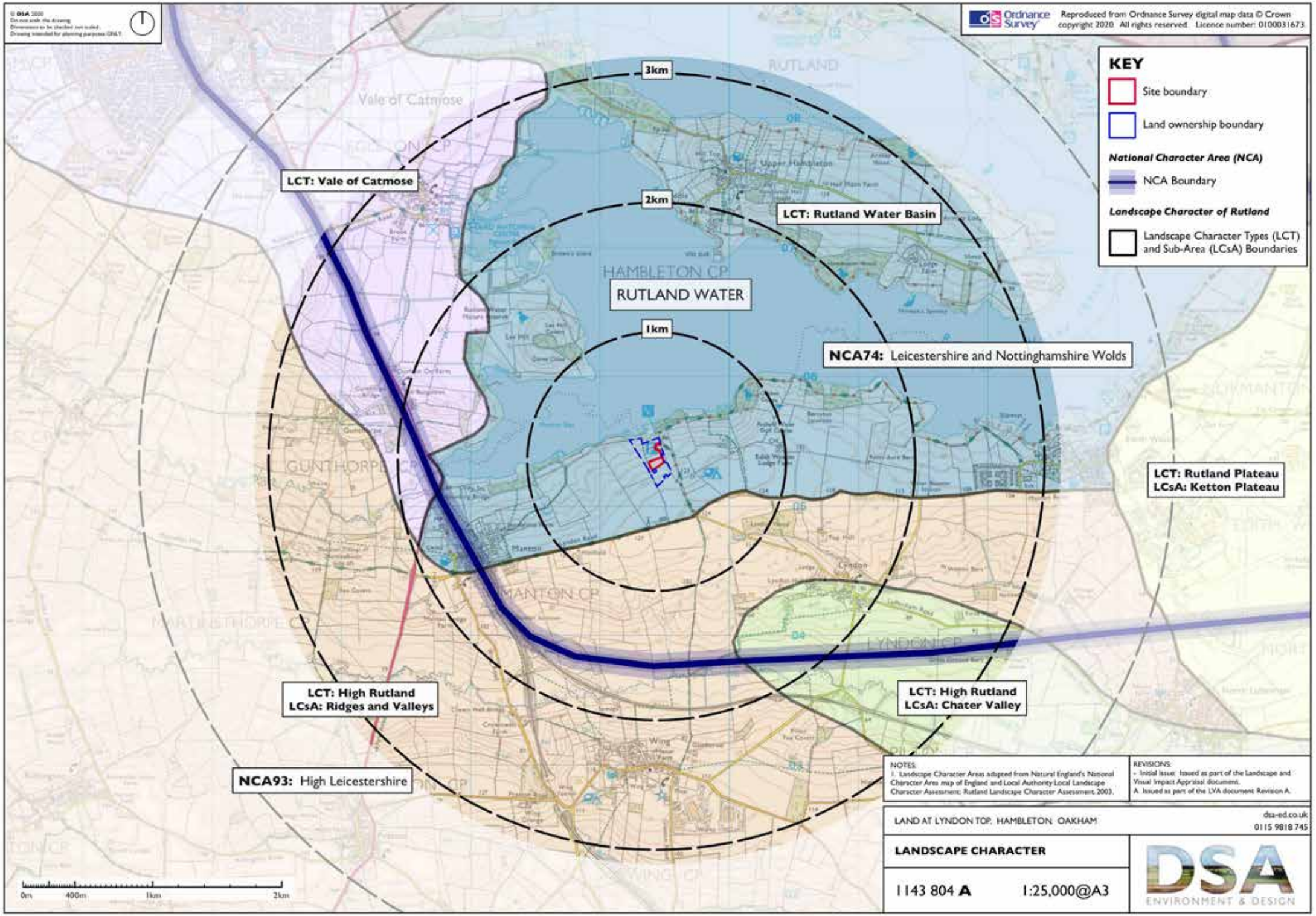
LAND BASED DESIGNATIONS
1143 803 A
1:25,000@A3
DSA
ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN
0m
400m
1km
2km

APPENDIX F

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS: 1143 804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Drawing intended for planning purposes ONLY
Ordnance Survey
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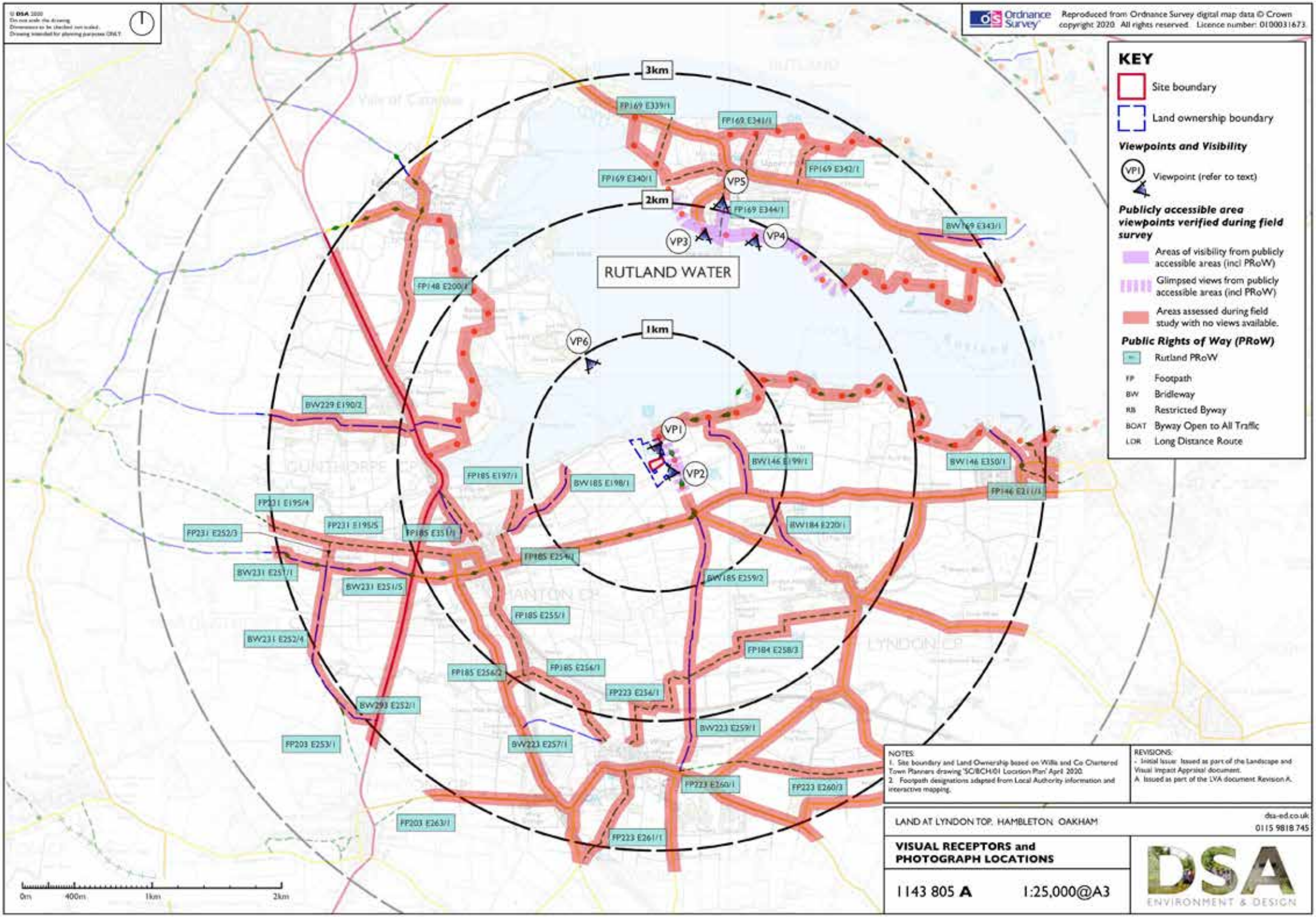
KEY
Site boundary
Land ownership boundary
National Character Area (NCA)
NCA Boundary
Landscape Character of Rutland
Landscape Character Types (LCT) and Sub-Area (LCsA) Boundaries
3km
2km
1km
LCT: Vale of Catmose
LCT: Rutland Water Basin
RUTLAND WATER
NCA74: Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds
LCT: Rutland Plateau
LCsA: Ketton Plateau
LCT: High Rutland
LCsA: Ridges and Valleys
LCT: High Rutland
LCsA: Chater Valley
NCA93: High Leicestershire
Vale of Catmose
RUTLAND
HAMBLETON CP
GUNTHORPE CP
MANTON CP
LYNDON CP
Upper Hambleton
Lyndon
Manton
0m
400m
1km
2km
NOTES:
1. Landscape Character Areas adopted from Natural England's National Character Area map of England and Local Authority Local Landscape Character Assessment; Rutland Landscape Character Assessment, 2003.
REVISIONS:
- Initial Issue: Issued as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal document.
A. Issued as part of the LVIA document Revision A.
LAND AT LYNDON TOP, HAMBLETON, OAKHAM
dsa-ed.co.uk
0115 9818 745
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER
1143 804 A
1:25,000@A3
DSA
ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN

APPENDIX G

VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS and RECEPTORS: 1143 805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Do not scale the drawing
Dimensions to be checked not scaled.
Drawing intended for planning purposes ONLY
Ordnance Survey
Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data © Crown copyright 2020. All rights reserved. Licence number: 0100031673
KEY
Site boundary
Land ownership boundary
Viewpoints and Visibility
VP1 Viewpoint (refer to text)
Publicly accessible area viewpoints verified during field survey
Areas of visibility from publicly accessible areas (incl PRoW)
Glimpsed views from publicly accessible areas (incl PRoW)
Areas assessed during field study with no views available.
Public Rights of Way (PRoW)
Rutland PRoW
FP Footpath
BW Bridleway
RB Restricted Byway
BOAT Byway Open to All Traffic
LDR Long Distance Route
3km
2km
1km
RUTLAND WATER
VP1
VP2
VP3
VP4
VP5
VP6
FP169 E339/1
FP169 E341/1
FP169 E342/1
FP169 E340/1
FP169 E344/1
BW169 E343/1
FP148 E200/1
BW229 E190/2
FP185 E197/1
BW185 E198/1
BW146 E199/1
BW146 E350/1
FP146 E211/1
FP231 E195/4
FP231 E195/5
FP231 E252/3
FP185 E351/1
BW184 E220/1
FP185 E254/1
BW231 E251/1
BW231 E251/5
BW185 E259/2
FP185 E255/1
BW231 E252/4
FP184 E258/3
FP185 E256/2
FP185 E256/1
FP223 E256/1
BW293 E252/1
BW223 E259/1
FP203 E253/1
BW223 E257/1
FP223 E260/1
FP223 E260/3
FP203 E263/1
FP223 E261/1
0m 400m 1km 2km
NOTES:
1. Site boundary and Land Ownership based on Wills and Co Chartered Town Planners drawing 'SC/BCH/01 Location Plan' April 2020.
2. Footpath designations adapted from Local Authority information and interactive mapping.
REVISIONS:
- Initial Issue: Issued as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal document.
A. Issued as part of the LVA document Revison A.
LAND AT LYNDON TOP, HAMBLETON, OAKHAM
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VISUAL RECEPTORS and PHOTOGRAPH LOCATIONS
1143 805 A
1:25,000@A3
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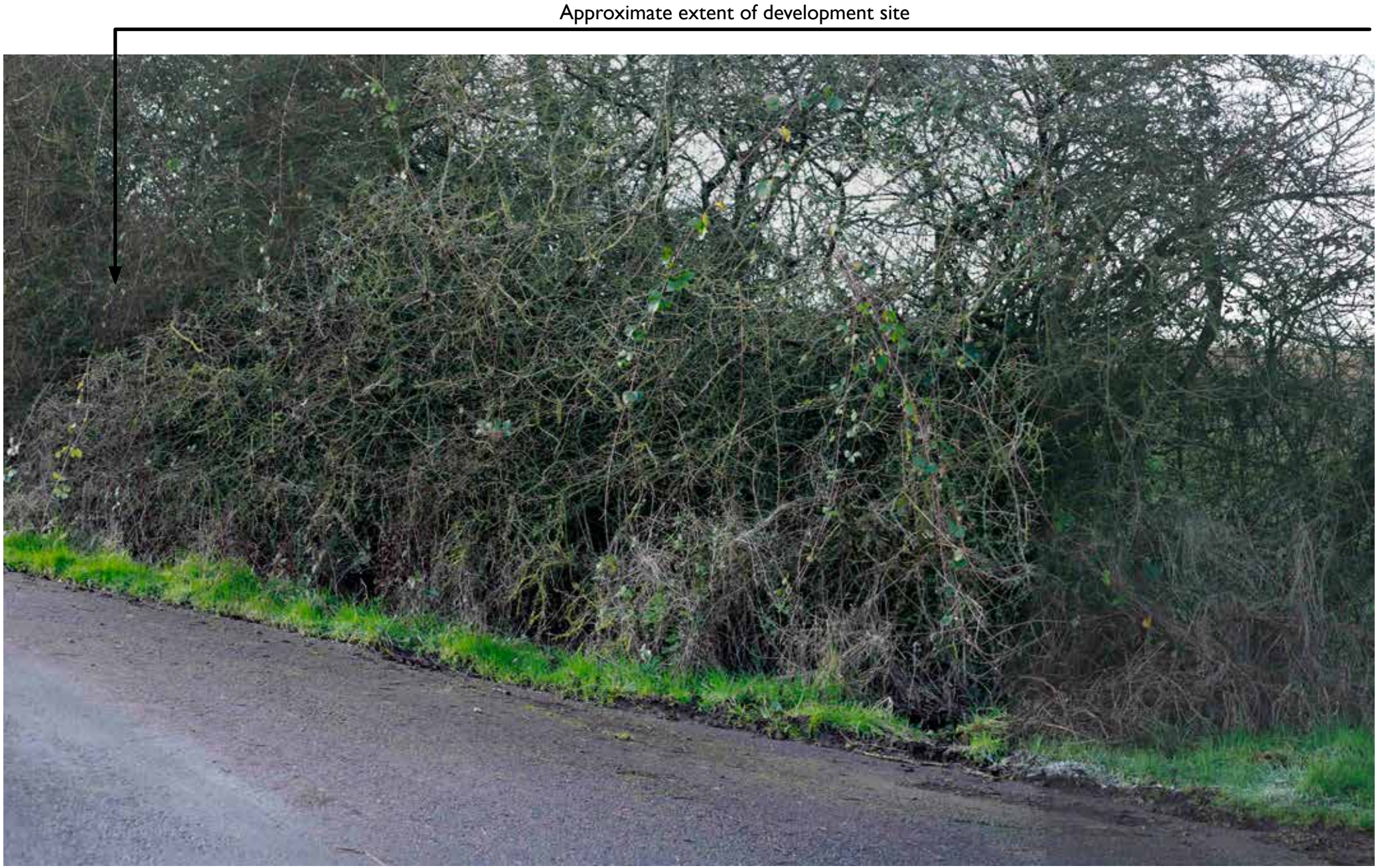
ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN

APPENDIX H

VIEWPOINT PHOTOGRAPHS



Viewpoint 1: Lyndon Hill Visitors Centre access road

Date taken: 29th January 2020 *Time taken:* 08:59 (GMT) *Height of camera:* 1.65m *OS Grid Reference:* SK 8947 0549 *Direction of View:* South

Viewpoint 1: Lyndon Hill Visitors Centre access road

Direction of View: East *Image type:* Panorama

Viewpoint 2: Lyndon Hill Visitors Centre access road, near Barn Owl House

Direction of View: West *Image type:* Panorama

Approximate extent of development site

Viewpoint 2: Lyndon Hill Visitors Centre access road, near Barn Owl House

Date taken: 29th January 2020 *Time taken:* 09:06 (GMT) *Height of camera:* 1.65m *OS Grid Reference:* SK 8961 0525 *Direction of View:* West

Viewpoint 3: Rutland Water Cycle Route, Hambleton South Shore, West

Date taken: 29th January 2020 *Time taken:* 10:44 (GMT) *Height of camera:* 1.65m *OS Grid Reference:* SK 8979 0715 *Direction of View:* South

Viewpoint 3: Rutland Water Cycle Route, Hambleton South Shore, West

Direction of View: South *Image type:* Panorama

Viewpoint 4: Rutland Water Cycle Route, Hambleton South Shore, East

Direction of View: South *Image type:* Panorama

Viewpoint 4: Rutland Water Cycle Route, Hambleton South Shore, East

Date taken: 29th January 2020 *Time taken:* 10:50 (GMT) *Height of camera:* 1.65m *OS Grid Reference:* SK 9011 0710 *Direction of View:* South

Viewpoint 5: Public Footpath at Upper Hambleton, north of Limes Farm

Date taken: 29th January 2020 *Time taken:* 11:01 (GMT) *Height of camera:* 1.65m *OS Grid Reference:* SK 8995 0738 *Direction of View:* South

Viewpoint 5: Public footpath at Upper Hambleton, north of Limes Farm

Direction of View: South *Image type:* Panorama

Viewpoint 6: Goldeneye Hide, Rutland Water Nature Reserve

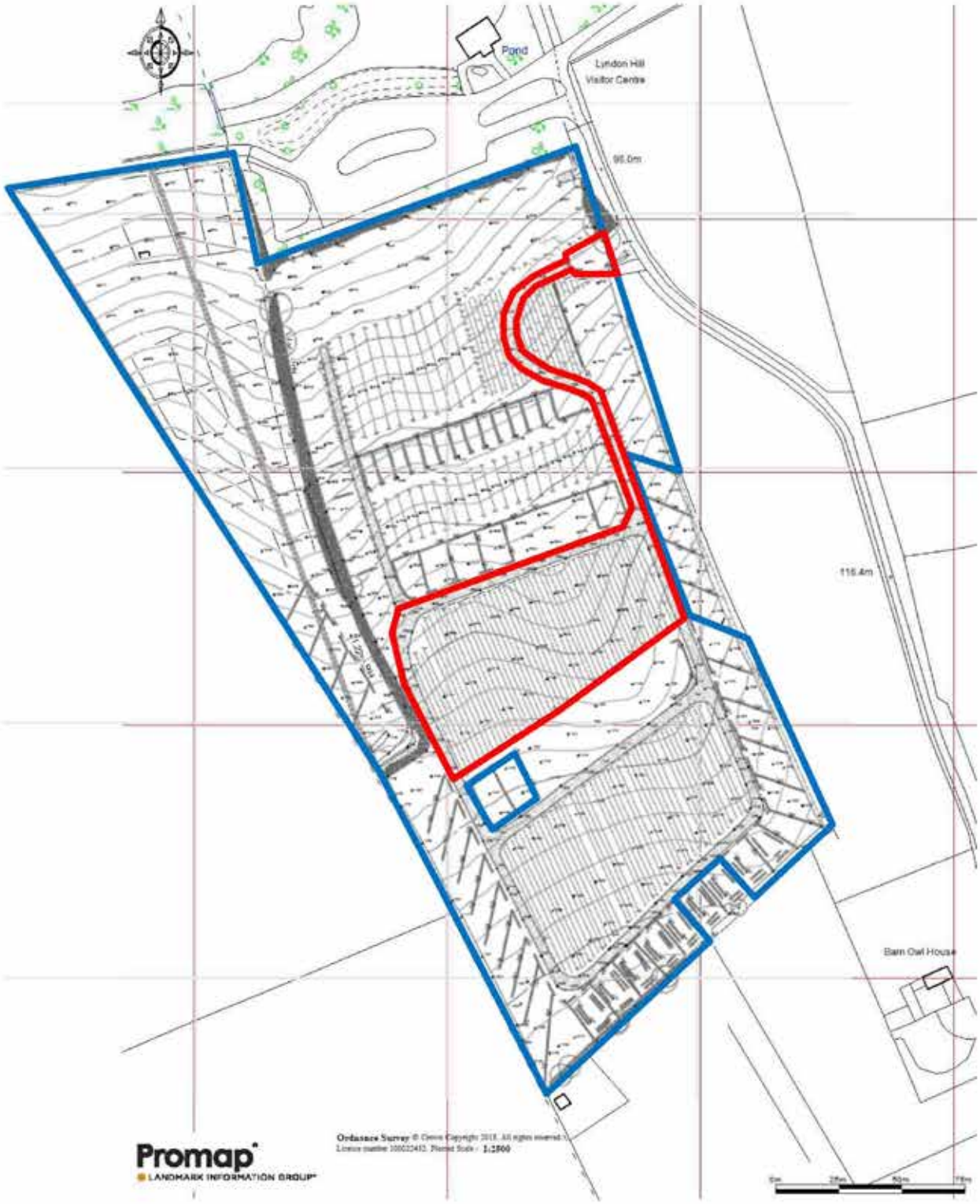
Direction of View: South East *Image type:* Panorama

Viewpoint 6: Goldeneye Hide, Rutland Water Nature Reserve

Date taken: 29th January 2020 *Time taken:* 11:43 (GMT) *Height of camera:* 1.65m *OS Grid Reference:* SK 8887 0617 *Direction of View:* South East

APPENDIX J

PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT



Willis & Co.

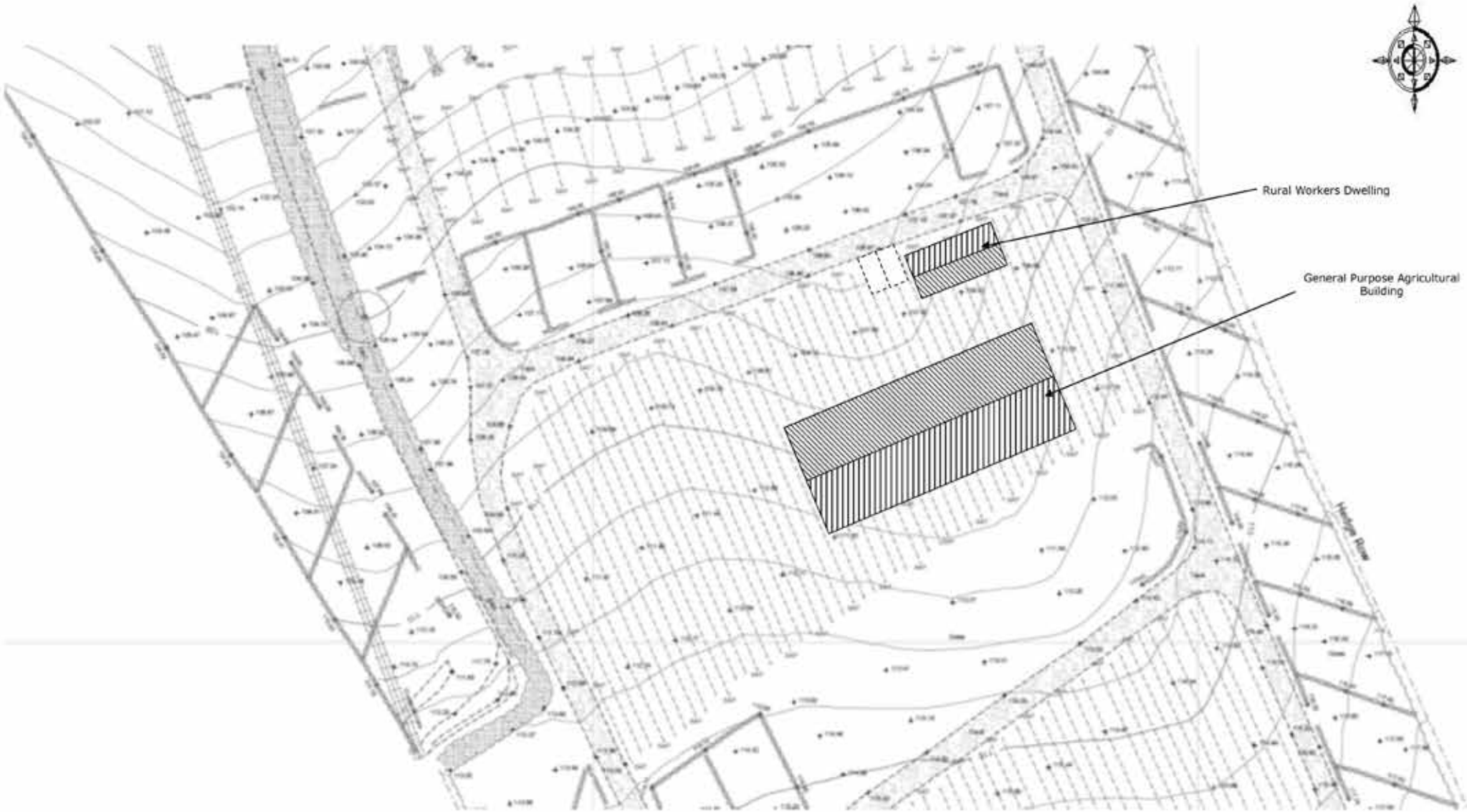
Chartered Town Planners

30 The Causeway, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 3DB
Telephone; 01249 444975 Email; Willisplan@aol.com

Title; Land at Lyndon Top, Hambleton, Oakham LE15 8RN

Location Plan

Scale; 1/2,500 @ A4 **Date;** April 2020 **Plan No;** SC/BCH/01



Willis & Co.

Chartered Town Planners

30 The Causeway, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 3DB

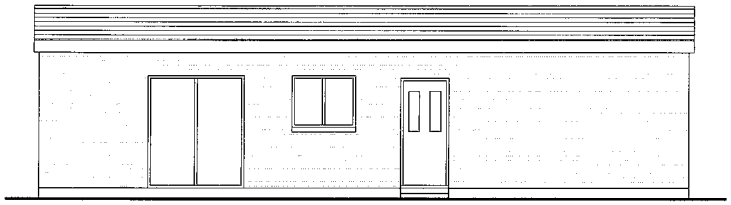
Telephone: 01249 444975 Email; Willisplan@aol.com

Title; Land at Lyndon Top, Hambleton, Oakham LE15 8RN

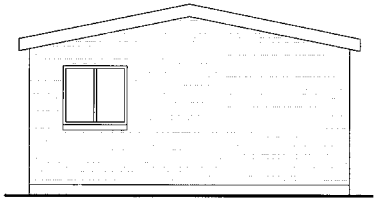
Block Plan

Scale; 1/500 @ A3 **Date;** April 2020 **Plan No;** SC/BCH/03

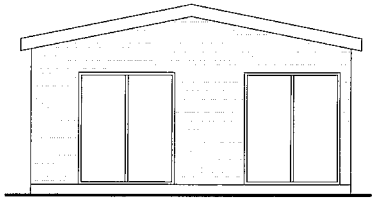
0 1 2 3 4 5m



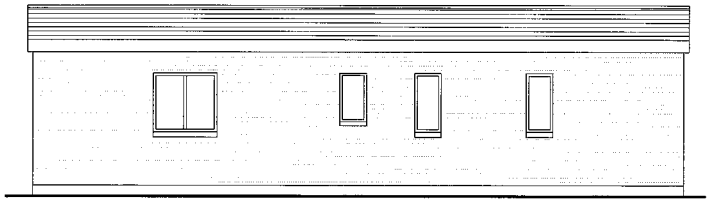
Front Elevation



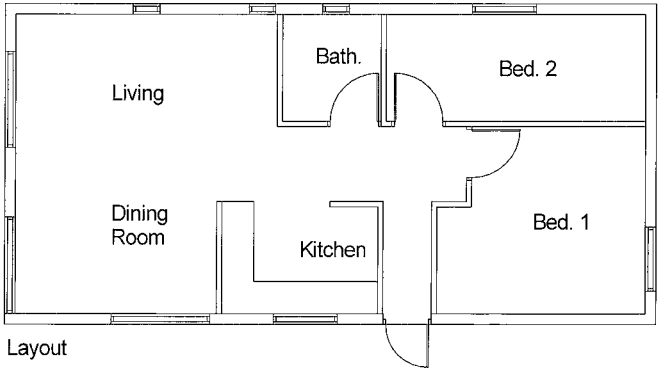
End Elevation



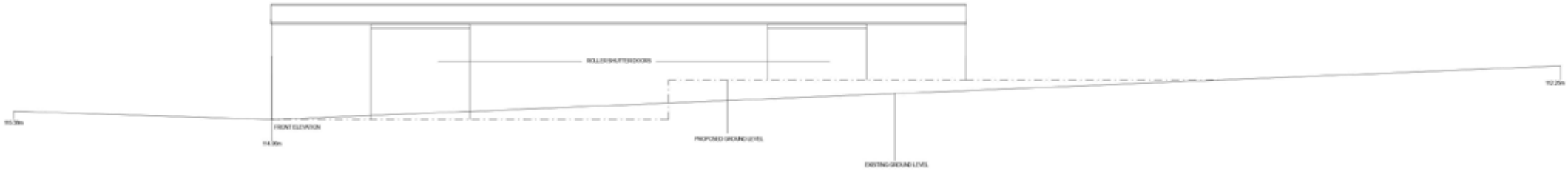
End Elevation



Rear Elevation



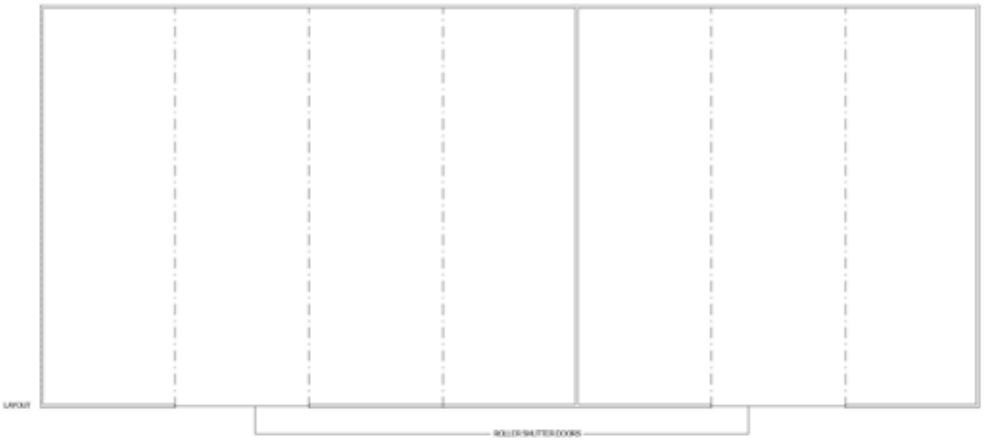
Layout

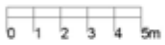

ROLLER SHUTTER DOORS
152.25m
155.38m
FRONT ELEVATION
114.38m
PROPOSED GROUND LEVEL
EXISTING GROUND LEVEL


SIDE ELEVATION


REAR ELEVATION


SIDE ELEVATION


LAYOUT
ROLLER SHUTTER DOORS


0 1 2 3 4 5m

APPENDIX K

PLANNING APPEAL DECISION

The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Hearing Held on 5 June 2019

Site visit made on 5 June 2019

by Felicity Thompson BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 11th July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/A2470/W/18/3211129
Lyndon Top Farm, Lyndon Road, Manton, LE15 8RN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr Kerry against the decision of Rutland County Council.
- The application Ref 2018/0155/FUL, dated 9 February 2018, was refused by notice dated 19 April 2018.
- The development proposed is erection of a temporary rural workers dwelling and agricultural building.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application plans refer to a timber cabin however, at the hearing the appellant clarified that the proposal is for a mobile home. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis.

Application for costs

3. Applications for costs have been made by Mr Kerry and Rutland County Council. These applications will be the subject of separate Decisions.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:

   - whether there is an essential need for a rural worker to live on the site; and
   - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

Policy context

5. Policy CS4 of the Rutland Local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document adopted July 2011 (the Core Strategy) sets out the spatial aims for the location of development across Rutland and states that development in the open countryside will be strictly limited to that which has an essential need to be located in the countryside.

6. Policy CS16 of the Core Strategy states that the strategy for the rural economy is (a) to encourage agricultural, horticultural and forestry enterprises and farm diversification projects where this would be consistent with maintaining and enhancing the environment and contribute to local distinctiveness.

7. Policy CS24 of the Core Strategy is specific to the defined Rutland Water area, within which the appeal site is located. It states that outside the defined 5 recreation areas new development will be restricted to certain types including where essential for operational requirements of existing facilities and subject to being appropriate in terms of location, scale, design and impact on the landscape.

8. Policy SP6 of the Rutland Local Plan Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document adopted October 2014 (the Local Plan) states that applications for mobile workers dwellings will only be permitted when it can be clearly demonstrated that there is an established existing functional need in accordance with advice set out at Appendix 1. Appendix 1 requires a functional test to establish whether it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times. Paragraph 12 of the appendix refers to temporary agricultural dwellings and requires that a number of criteria are satisfied, which will be considered in my reasoning however, it does not require an existing established functional need to be demonstrated. The appendix forms part of the policy and as such I attach considerable weight to it.

9. Paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that planning decisions should avoid development of isolated homes in the countryside unless there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside. As the Inspector in the appeal decision[1] relating to the appellant's business at Granby considered, whilst the Framework does not define what constitutes an essential need, it would be reasonable to assume that there would have to be a physical or functional need for someone to be on the site at most times to meet the requirement and, that there is evidence that the business is likely to endure in the long term. Paragraph 83 of the Framework states that planning decisions should enable the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses.

10. It was agreed by both main parties at the hearing that Policies SP13, SP15 and SP23 of the Local Plan and Policies CS19 and CS21 of the Core Strategy relate to landscape protection and design matters and neither party raised any specific comments about these policies.

Essential need

11. The appeal site consists of an area of land comprising around 1.21 hectares planted with vines and apple trees, with the edges of the site being divided into small plots with angled hedges subdividing them. At the hearing there was discussion about whether the land is used for agricultural purposes. The appellant states that at present they take cuttings from the vines for propagation elsewhere and also use the land to grow potted trees for sale. Whilst there may be some dispute between the parties about the use of the land, there is no substantive evidence to demonstrate that it is being used for

[1] APP/P3040/W/17/3168150

purposes other than agriculture. In any event, it was agreed that the proposal and any need relates to the proposed rabbit farming enterprise and that there is currently no functional need for a rural worker to live on site.

12. The proposal is for the development of a free-range rabbit farming enterprise growing from 100 Does in the first year to 300 Does in the third year, with around 50% of the rabbits being produced for meat and others sold live. The proposed site would be operated by a manager with the appellant providing the necessary training. It is evident that the appellant has experience of establishing and operating such an enterprise and has a functioning unit in Granby, Nottinghamshire and 2 others being developed in East Bridgford and Derbyshire.

13. In support of the proposal the appellant has submitted an appraisal produced by Reading Agricultural Consultants (RAC), a business plan and 3 years of accounts relating to the Granby unit. The appraisal by RAC indicates that there would be a need for an excess of one full time worker and that it would be essential that someone is readily available at most times to manage the enterprise, specifically to manage the birthing process, ensure the health and well-being of stock generally, provide a security deterrent against human intruders, manage predators and provide a point of contact for customers.

14. On the basis of the submitted evidence and discussion at the hearing I consider the primary need relates to the management of the birthing process. In this regard the appellant explained that Does would give birth throughout the year at all times of the day and night. Whilst experienced Does will return to their hutches at night, inexperienced Does will give birth anywhere including outside. In winter kittens born outside will die within approximately 3 minutes and in rain showers Does may smother kittens to protect them from the rain. The appellant referred to another enterprise where losses were reduced from 25% to 10% following on site occupation, as a result of kittens born outside during the night being taken into hutches. Whilst the appellant could increase the number of Does to make up for such losses, I accept that there is a requirement to seek to minimise such losses for animal welfare reasons.

15. The appellant acknowledged that it may be possible to return some Does to hutches at night during the birthing period which lasts around 2 or 3 days however, it would be difficult to return all the Does to hutches because of the time taken to gather them, particularly those in communal runs. The appellant also explained that they had had incidences of live rabbits infected with myxomatosis being thrown into rabbit enclosures and therefore an onsite presence is required for security.

16. Whilst individually none of the circumstances cited would in my view justify the need for an on-site presence at all times of the day and night, cumulatively the requirement to manage the birthing process by ensuring kittens are moved inside after birth, protecting animals from human intruders and predators and being on hand to deal with emergencies, leads me to conclude that there would be a functional need for a rural worker to live at or near their place of work, in this case the rabbit farm. In reaching this conclusion I have had regard to the Inspector's findings in respect of the Granby unit where a functional need was demonstrated, based primarily on the rabbit farming business.

17. The rabbit meat produced, based on the proposed method of operation, can only be sold within the same and neighbouring counties however, live rabbits

can be sold anywhere in the country. The appellant referred to figures in respect of the number of enquiries received about rabbit meat, which suggest that there has been a significant increase in demand, such enquiries coming from wholesalers, dog food manufacturers and individual buyers. Whilst the appellant could not provide a breakdown of where the enquiries came from, even with the restrictions on where meat can be sold, it would seem reasonable to conclude that there is demand for rabbit meat in Rutland and its neighbouring counties. Further, the appellant stated that the reason for the restriction on sales relates to more stringent licensing in respect of the processing of meat, but if necessary, they could gain such a licence or transport the rabbits for slaughter elsewhere. Therefore, this would not be an insurmountable barrier to the success of the business.

18. The submitted accounts relate to the period from 2015 to 2017. The Council raised concerns that the accounts are not signed, and the accountant stated that they had not verified the accuracy and completeness of the accounting records. Nevertheless, I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the accounts and am satisfied that they demonstrate that a development of this nature could be financially sound, albeit these accounts relate to a different site in a different County. The appellant's view is that the accounts relate to the same owner and product and provide evidence of potential profitability and that the evidence demonstrates that the proposal is planned on a sound financial basis. In the absence of substantive contrary evidence, I see no reason to disagree.

19. The Council provided evidence to demonstrate that there are 5 houses available for rent located within 2 miles of the site however, for the reasons given above the appellant considers this would not meet the needs of the unit. In addition, the use of CCTV was discussed however, the appellant considers this would not be able to give the required coverage for the number of rabbits and hutches and therefore would not be practical. Furthermore, this would not satisfy the need to inspect rabbits at unsocial hours. Therefore, I find that the need could not be met by existing accommodation as it would not be close enough to enable the level of supervision and security required. I have also had regard to government guidance which states that at least one member of staff should always be available to deal with any emergencies.

20. I acknowledge the Council's concerns in respect of the sale of 2 and the attempted sale of a third similar enterprise owned by the appellant. However, this has little bearing on the planning merits of the proposal in respect of functional need.

21. Consequently, I conclude that there is an essential need for a rural worker to live on the site in accordance with Policies CS4 and CS16 of the Core Strategy, Policy SP6 of the Local Plan and the Framework.

Character and appearance

22. The site is located on the southside of Rutland Water and consists of a field planted with vines surrounded by hedgerows, accessed from Lyndon Lane. The surrounding area is characterised by pastureland bound by hedgerows with a touring caravan site located to the south. Development on this side of the water is sparsely located and the landscape is well preserved, this and the wide-reaching views across the water and surrounding landscape, gives the site an open and tranquil feel, recognised by its inclusion in The Rutland Water Area

- designated to recognise and protect its quiet, tranquil and undeveloped nature.

23. The Rutland Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) states that the landform immediately adjacent to the water varies, but most of the basin has a distinct profile, especially along its southern and northern shores, where the land dip sharply down to the water from a shoulder of high ground, effectively obscuring many views of the water below. The site is located on that shoulder of high ground.

24. The aims of the LCA are to encourage the continued maturity and evolution of the modern reservoir landscape, to enhance its visual amenity and to conserve the best elements of a large scale, sweeping, open, busy, varied, colourful and modern landscape. And, to avoid inappropriately located or conspicuous developments that would detract from the landscape character.

25. The proposed development would introduce a mobile home and relatively large agricultural building to the site, and it is evident from discussions at the hearing that it would also necessitate the erection of permanent security fencing, rabbit runs and hutches. The appellant considers the runs and hutches would not amount to development however, it is not for me in the context of an appeal made under section 78 to determine whether or not that is the case. Whilst I have had regard to their necessity, it seems unlikely that they would be visually conspicuous and as such do not materially influence my assessment.

26. The appeal site is relatively well screened from close range views by existing hedges however, it is visible from wider views in particular from the Hambleton Peninsula, as agreed by the main parties at the hearing. Both main parties had taken photographs looking over the water towards the site from approximately the same position on the Hambleton Peninsula. There was some discussion about whether the Council's photograph was taken using a zoom. Whether or not that is the case, I visited and viewed the site from this location.

27. I observed that the site is visible from the Hambleton Peninsula albeit in reasonably distant views. However, given the proposed elevated siting of the building and mobile home, they would undoubtedly be visible from the well-used circular footpath and cycle way around Rutland Water as well as from the water itself. Some intermittent and relatively localised views would be possible from Lyndon Lane during the winter months when there is less tree coverage. I acknowledge that the hedges offer some shielding from views to the south, east and west. Nevertheless, the relatively short distance to the shores of the water and the open nature and long-distance views that are a feature of Rutland Water, mean the proposed mobile home and building would be clearly seen. As the development would be unrelated to existing buildings or landscape features it would appear particularly prominent and would cause significant harm to this largely undeveloped sensitive landscape by altering the undisturbed character of the area and reducing the tranquil perception.

28. The appellant referred to a previous Inspector's decision[2] which related to the formation of tracks on the site, where it was considered that the tracks were visible from the well-used circular footpath and cycle way around Rutland Water but that the distance of such views, to an extent, ameliorated their

[2] APP/A2470/A/13/2191981

impact. Nevertheless, tracks laid into the ground are not comparable to the appearance of buildings with height above ground, which would be more prominent in the landscape and as such this is of little weight in my assessment. In any event, I have considered this proposal on its own merits.

29. There is a further touring caravan site located broadly to the south east of the site which the appellant referred to. The Council stated that in their view this is unauthorised and currently under investigation, as such its existence is a matter of limited weight. In any event, touring caravans by nature come and go and do not have the same degree of permanence and are not comparable to the appeal proposal.

30. Overall, for the reasons given above the proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of this part of Rutland Water contrary to Policies SP13, SP15 and SP23 of the Local Plan and Policies CS19, CS21 and CS24 of the Core Strategy. Taken together these policies seek to ensure that new development is designed to be sensitive to the landscape setting, makes a positive contribution towards the unique character of Rutland's countryside and does not have an adverse impact on the landscape and general tranquil and undisturbed environment of Rutland Water. It would also conflict with the landscape protection aims of Policy SP6 and the aims of the Framework to enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Other Matters

31. That there would be no harm to residential amenity or the nearby SSSI, subject to conditions, are neutral matters which cannot outweigh my above findings.

Conclusion

32. Whilst the evidence demonstrates that there is a functional need for a rural worker to live on the site, that need doesn't currently exist. The appellant's evidence demonstrates that there is a demand for rabbit meat throughout the country however, there is no evidence which suggests that demand should be met through the development of this site or that it could not be met by locating the development elsewhere. As such the significant harm to the landscape would not be outweighed by the functional need for a worker to be present on site.

33. For the reasons given above and having regard to all matters raised, I conclude the proposal would conflict with the development plan read as a whole, and the appeal should be dismissed.

Felicity Thompson

INSPECTOR

APPENDIX L

OUTLINE LANDSCAPE MITIGATION PROPOSALS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Dimensions to be checked and scaled
Drawing intended for planning purposes ONLY
Ordnance Survey
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KEY
Site boundary
Land ownership boundary
Retain existing access track network
Infill plant the existing hedge compartments with woodland blocks to create some screening to views, in particular, Hambleton Penisula to the north.
Create small woodland blocks similar to those present in the local area to provide visual screening to, in particular, Rutland Water Nature Reserve to the north west.
Reinforce existing hedges with additional planting, in particular specimen tree species to add height to boundaries around the proposed buildings and screen proximal views.
Create small woodland blocks, similar to those present in the local area, to provide screening to views and a backdrop to break up the geometric silhouette of the buildings as viewed from Hambleton peninsula in the north.
RURAL WORKERS DWELLING
PROPOSED GENERAL PURPOSE AGRICULTURAL BUILDING
Reinforce existing hedges with additional planting, in particular specimen tree species to add height to boundaries around the proposed buildings and screen proximal views
Create small woodland blocks, similar to those present in the local area, to provide screening to views, in particular, as viewed from Hambleton peninsula in the north.
Retain and bring under management existing hedges and hedgerows particularly along the eastern, southern and western boundaries
Areas available for runs and hutches
Gaps in the existing woodland planting maintain some of the open views available from Barn Owl House over the reservoir.
0m 10m 25m 50m 100m
NOTES:
1. Site boundary and Land Ownership based on Wills and Co Chartered Town Planners drawing 'SC/BCH/01 Location Plan' April 2020.
REVISIONS:
- Initial Issue: Issued as part of the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal document.
A Issued as part of the LVA document Revision A.
B Issued as part of the LVA document Revision B.
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