

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL APPRAISAL

GREAT BIRCHWOOD, FYLDE

Prepared by
DEP Landscape Architecture



for

**Bellair Scotland Ltd
on behalf of Fylde Care Village**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

DEP Landscape Architecture have been commissioned by Bellair Scotland Ltd. to produce a Landscape Appraisal for land at Great Birchwood, Fylde in West Lancashire. The site is a former military camp and is currently used as a caravan and camping site with ancillary facilities such as an entertainment facility and an equestrian centre. The Site is located between Warton and Lytham, in the administrative Borough of Fylde. It is located within the Green Belt.

The site is approximately 8.19ha (20.23 acres) and is being put forward by Bellair Scotland Ltd, on behalf of Fylde Care Village as a planning application to demolish existing buildings on site and deliver a residential development across the site. This follows on from the previous approved application for a mixed use caravan park, care facility and residential development. The application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved except for means of access.

A Landscape Appraisal has previously been undertaken by Appletons (June 2016) and again by DEP (May 2017) This document makes reference to the appraisal and shares some baseline information from it.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted has been taken from the current Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3) 3rd Edition 2013 and other recognised published industry standards and techniques. Methodology is set out in Appendix 1.

A desktop study of landscape policies, designations, and published character appraisals was undertaken and an independent appraisal made of the character and value of the proposed development site and surrounding landscape. To determine the effects of development on the landscape the following key aspects were considered:

Elements: Individual elements within the landscape, which are quantifiable and include features such as hills, valleys, woods, trees, hedges and ponds;

Characteristics: Elements or combinations of elements that make a particular contribution to the character of the area for example scenic quality, tranquillity or wildness;

Character: Combination of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.

These features combine to give an indication of the sensitivity of the landscape and its ability to accept change. In addition the landscape condition, value and quality are considered and appraised as part of this assessment.

The visual appraisal relates to the changes to views from identified receptors as a result of the development and the overall effect this has on the visual amenity. The sensitivity of visual receptors depends upon the location of the viewpoint, context of the view, activity of the receptor and the frequency and duration of the view.

The criteria used to assess the visual effects on selected viewpoints includes sensitivity and type of receptor, the degree of visibility, the magnitude of change, and the effects of development on the view. An additional consideration for the sensitivity of a view is the quality of the view where a subjective opinion is considered alongside the objective factors.

The appraisal of visual effects describes the changes in the character of the available views resulting from the development and the changes in the visual amenity of the visual receptor. The appraisal process mirrors that of landscape effects in that it requires the collation of baseline information relating to the nature and type of views and the receptors which will receive them. As with landscape effects, visual impacts are determined by considering the magnitude and nature of change evaluated in consideration of the sensitivity of the receptor. The magnitude of change to the view will depend on numerous factors including the extent and nature of the current view, the distance to the proposed development, the time of year and whether other elements intervene in the view, such as vegetation or moving traffic.

There are three key stages considered in this assessment which reflect the life cycle of the development as follows:

- Construction – this stage considers the effects during construction, which are described in more detail below
- Completion – this stage considers the effects of the development once complete.
- Year 15 – this stage considered the effects of the development upon maturity of any proposed planting.

1.3 SITE CONTEXT

The Site is located approximately 1 km west of Warton and approximately 1 km east of Lytham St Anne's in the administrative Borough of Fylde. It covers an area of approximately 8.19 hectares and is accessed directly from the A584 Lytham Road. The land to the north, east and west is mainly agricultural in terms of land use. To the south, beyond Lytham Road lie extensive marshlands adjacent to the River Ribble. The river is tidal at that point. To the south east is located the large premises of the Land Registry with Warton Aerodrome beyond. Immediately adjacent to the site to the east is a vacant group of buildings previously used as a poultry farm and a small industrial estate and to the west a golf driving range. The closest residential properties are Warton Hall to the west at a distance of 0.5 km and Brook Farm to the east at a distance of 0.3 km. The only public footpath in close proximity to the site is the Lancashire Coastal Way to the south which at its closest joins the Lytham Road immediately to the south of the Site entrance where it crosses a tidal inlet before moving south towards the marshland.

1.4 SITE DESCRIPTION

Great Birchwood occupies an almost rectangular shaped site, bordered to the south by A584 Lytham Road, to the west by Lytham Golf Academy, to the north by farmland towards Lodge Lane Hill and to the east by farmland with the Warton settlement close by. A vacant poultry farm is located adjacent to the south east boundary. The site is a former military camp, and more recently was used as a caravan and camping site with ancillary facilities such as an entertainment facility, equestrian centre, and single storey timber holiday lodges. The camping and holiday facilities are now in the process of winding down although many permanent structures, roads and associated hard surfaces remain. The topography of the site is generally flat with levels ranging from approximately 8m in the south to 10m AOD at the northern boundary. The structure of the site is distinctive, based on a formal grid pattern of concrete road ways and the remaining bases of former wartime accommodation units. The bases are used for caravan parking.

The site is described in the Appletons' Landscape Appraisal as a series of distinct zones as follows (please refer to the Appletons' Landscape Appraisal document for zone location plan and corresponding photographs):

1.4.1 Zone A - Frontage Area

The entrance to the site leads directly off the A584 Lytham Road and is framed by good quality brick flanking walls. Screening is provided by hedge and tree planting. A paddock area and pond are located immediately north west of the entrance and a children's play area with synthetic turf to the north.

1.4.2 Zone B - Reception and Stables

A domestic dwelling with garden areas and parking which serves as a reception building is located to the north of zone A, a stable block and yard to the north east.

1.4.3 Zone C - Central Area

Two large grassed areas form this zone. Both contain ponds, the one to the west is partially occluded with reed, both appear eutrophicated possibly due to intensive use by water fowl.

1.4.4 Zone D - Birch Wood

This is from where the site name is derived. It is a mature woodland with species including oak, ash, birch and sycamore with hawthorn and willow Understorey. A detailed assessment is contained within the separate tree survey report. Many of the oaks are in decline, possibly due to changes in water table.

1.4.5 Zone E - 'San Antone'

This zone is dominated by permanent structures including a large two story building that serves as an entertainment centre with bars and restaurants. The building is constructed from a variety of materials including rustic timberwork intended to convey a 'wild west' theme. Another timber building provides holiday accommodation. Most of the area to the east of this zone consists of caravan parking.

1.4.6 Zone F Northern Sector

Just outside the northern area of the site is a single storey building of brick construction which functions as a rifle range. To the east, located on concrete bases are a series of timber lodges.

1.5 STUDY AREA

The study covers an area with an approximate radius of 1.5 km centred on the site. It includes the immediate properties around the site as well as the wider surrounding landscape, public rights of way and nearby settlements.

The study area has been limited to 1.5 km radius due to the site's contained nature and the relatively flat nature of the surrounding landscape. The site has no particularly elevated features so it is not visually prominent and the surrounding buildings and vegetation screen longer views, this radius was established following a review of mapping and topographical data and a visibility analysis on site and was considered to be the maximum distance at which visibility of the development would be potentially significant in views. Potential for viewing the development at a distance greater than 1 km is not considered significant.

1.6 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The application is for outline residential development, including means of access off Lytham Road (A584). Figure 11 - Indicative Masterplan shows the indicative development proposals for the Site. The proposals would provide up to 62 residential semi-detached and detached residential properties. The existing roadways and concrete bases would be removed together with the 'San Antone' building and other ancillary facilities. The residential area would be arranged with planting belts between. The proposed development will be set generally within the footprint of the existing built form; the scale and density will be similar to existing with a reduction in some areas. There will be generous spacing between the units which will be contained within a landscaped setting.

The site will be allocated for C3 development, comprising residential use with associated amenity, parking, roads and open spaces. Maximum height of development will be two storeys (approximately 6.5m).

The existing woodland would be enhanced; existing vegetation will be retained where feasible and managed on boundaries and reinforced with new planting to mitigate potential landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development. Hedgerows will be planted to enhance biodiversity and to maintain landscape character and pattern. Dead and dying trees would be removed and replacement planting would be introduced. The ponds would be retained and upgraded. Existing boundary planting would be strengthened with new tree planting.

The Landscape and Visual Appraisal is based on an indicative development plan. The indicative plan has also been used to make informed assumptions about the likely effects of the proposed scheme. The findings of the appraisal have enabled the production of an Indicative Landscape Layout Plan (see section 7). The application is supported by this Indicative Landscape Layout. Whilst this plan is illustrative and indicative only, it is a useful tool with which to develop and agree key development principles for the site.

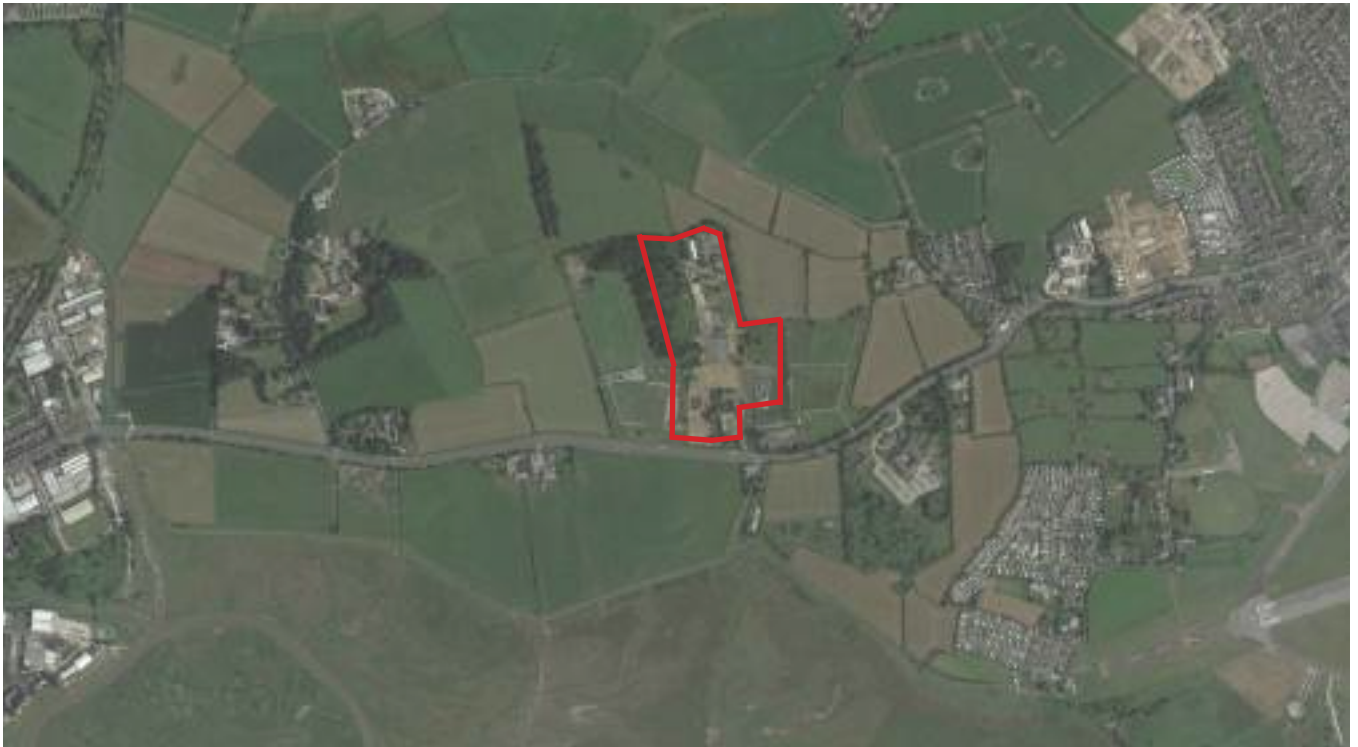


FIGURE 1 - AERIAL VIEW TO SHOW THE DRAFT BOUNDARY EXTENTS OF THE SITE PROPOSED FOR DEVELOPMENT

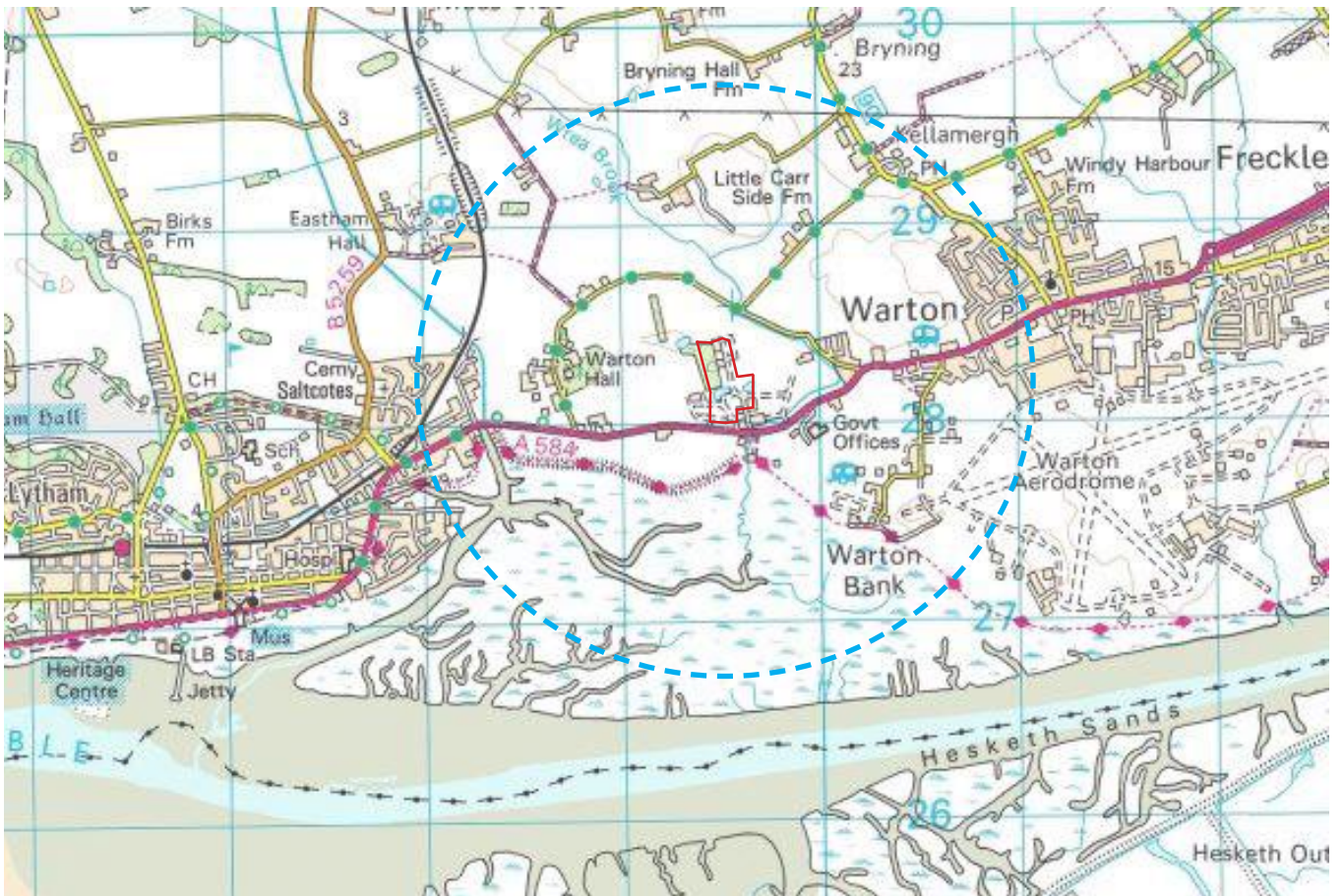


FIGURE 2 - STUDY AREA

2.0 PLANNING POLICY

2.1 PLANNING CONTEXT

Great Birchwood lies within the county of Lancashire and falls within the jurisdiction of Fylde Borough Council. The Fylde Local Plan was adopted 22 October 2018 covering the borough with a statutory planning framework until 2032. This and the relevant policies of the NPPF will form the basis of the Planning Policy review below.

2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

National planning policy for England is defined within the National Planning Policy Framework (herein referred to as the NPPF) that has distilled the content of previous supplementary planning documents into one comprehensive document. The NPPF is the relevant national planning policy document against which to test the proposals.

2.2.1 General Considerations

As a central theme, the NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development (para. 11) for which it defines three mutually interdependent dimensions of sustainability (para. 7) to be jointly sought (economic, social and environmental). With relevance to landscape and visual matters the third dimension states:

“An environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment;...”

The planning system is identified as the vehicle for guiding development to sustainable solutions and seeking positive improvements in the quality of built, natural and historic environments based on local circumstances.

2.2.2 Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places)

Section 12: Achieving Well-Designed Places states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- Add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

The development is located on a brownfield site. It is considered that the proposals have the potential to readily establish a strong sense of place, building on the surrounding local precedents. High quality design will be very important. New development will be expected to preserve or enhance the setting and character of the surrounding area.

The proposed development is located on an existing developed site which comprises a group of buildings of a much larger scale to those proposed. These larger buildings will be replaced with more appropriately sized units which will be in keeping with the surrounding character. In addition, the proposed mitigation scheme includes proposed planting which will reflect and enhance the existing native species that characterise the locality.

The mitigation and enhancement proposals for the site include hedgerow establishment and tree planting which will contribute to the improvement of the landscape character and quality of the area.

NPPF paragraph 130 reinforces the considerations of Section 12 stating that planning decisions should place substantial weight on the retention of local character and distinctiveness from development proposals. This is proposed by use of appropriate building mass, layout, styling and materials and use of existing local boundary styles, along with the arrangement of open space.

2.2.3 2.2.3 Section 13 (Protecting Green Belt Land)

The site is located within land designated as Green Belt. Section 13 Protecting Green Belt Land sets out the importance of Green Belts under the NPPF. It recognises that the Green Belt serves five purposes;

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

None of the above purposes identified are directly relevant to the site, which is already partly developed for uses that would not normally be located within that designation. One of the main objectives of Green Belt is to maintain 'openness', and it is considered for the purposes of this report that due to the historic developments and their associated infrastructure, much of which is still prevalent, the site is considered as previously developed land, and collectively very little of the site displays characteristics of 'openness' normally expected within Green Belt allocation.

The NPPF also identifies in paragraph 149.G that exceptions to inappropriate development are;

- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use, which would: not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

2.2.4 Section 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)

Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan;
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services;
- minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate

This section of the NPPF also identifies a requirement in favour of protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (para 174)

As identified in the NPPF, these valued landscapes are defined as:

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Land designated as Green Belt;
- Local Green Space;
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- Heritage Coast: and
- National Parks

There are no public rights of way or public access into the site, however there are public footpaths close to the site, to the south, which link into a wider footpath network (these will be considered as sensitive receptors within the visual assessment section of this report).

Relevant policies and supplementary planning guidance, which will be referenced and considered through the design process, are as follows:

Replacement Joint Lancashire Structure Plan policies:

Policy 20: Landscape Character Types

Fylde Local Plan policies relevant to site:

- GD2: Green Belt
- GD3: Areas of Separation
- GD4: Development in the Countryside
- GD7: Achieving Good Design in Development
- Policy ENV1: Landscape
- Policy ENV2: Biodiversity

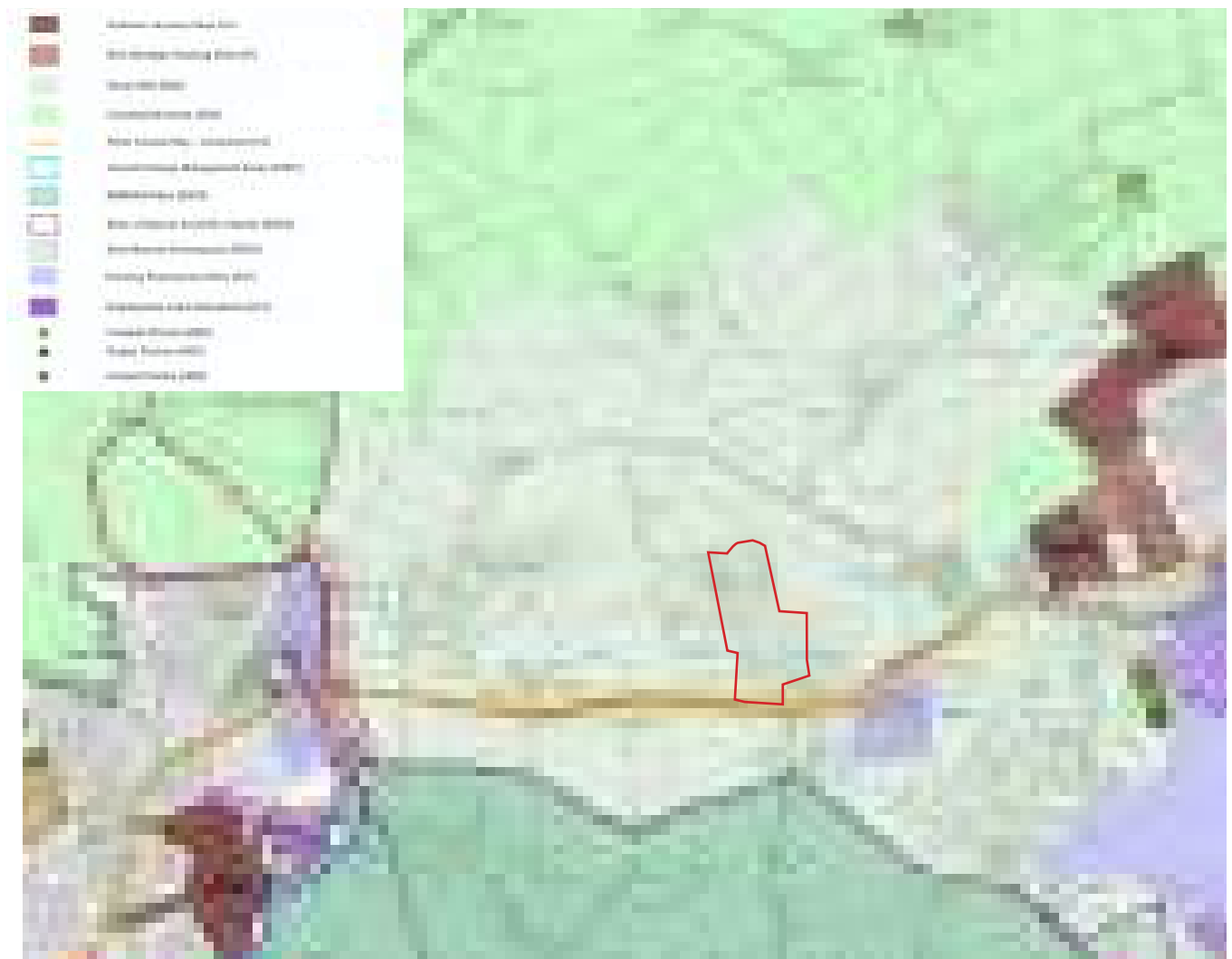


FIGURE 3 - EXTRACT OF FYLDE LOCAL PLAN (2018 TO 2032) POLICIES MAP

THE SITE



3.0 SITE CONTEXT

The following photographs have been chosen to provide a visual overview of the site and the surrounding landscape context.



FIGURE 4 - PHOTO LOCATION MAP

 PHOTO LOCATIONS



1 Site entrance on A584 Lytham Road



2 Road within site adjacent to western boundary



3 Hardstanding and former outdoor dining area



4 Neighbouring poultry farm



5 Looking north into the 'San Antone' area



6 Caravans within the northern sector



7 View of 'Fort San Antone' in the centre of the site



8 View of the eastern elevation of 'Fort San Antone'



9 View of holiday accommodation within the centre of the site



10 View of the western elevation of 'Fort San Antone'



11 View of lodges to the northeast corner of the site



12 View of Great Birch Wood

4.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Landscape Character Assessment is the distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular landscape. It is essential to inform responsible decision making and is a pre-requisite for the planning of sustainable future landscapes, which in turn should protect the environment while accommodating and influencing change.

Particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use, field patterns and human settlement create character. Character makes each part of the landscape distinct and gives each its sense of place. Each character area has its own identity, even though it may share some generic characteristics with other areas.

A baseline for Landscape Character of the surrounding landscape has been taken from published material which includes the Natural England National Character Areas and Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment. These documents have been studied to help determine the key elements and characteristics of the site and surrounding landscape and will be used to help make an assessment of the landscape quality and its sensitivity to change.

4.1 NATURAL ENGLAND NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA

Natural England divides England into 159 distinct National Character Areas NCA. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. The proposed development site falls within NCA32 Lancashire & Amounderness Plain. The Key Characteristics have been taken from this published document and listed below;

4.1.1 NATURAL ENGLAND NCA32: LANCASHIRE & AMOUNDERNESS PLAIN

- A rich patchwork of pasture, arable fields and drainage ditches, on a relatively flat to gently undulating coastal landscape.
- Extensive views across the plain, within which small to medium-sized blocks of mixed woodland (wind-sculpted near the coast) provide punctuation and vertical accents.
- Thickly blanketed by glacial till, with poorly-drained peat-filled hollows that give rise to mosses and meres (now mainly remnants).
- Medium-sized to large fields form an open, large-scale agricultural landscape. Pasture is more dominant north of the Ribble Estuary, with arable to the south. There is a high density of relict pastoral field ponds on the eastern side of the NCA.
- Localised areas of intensive market gardening provide seasonally varied colours and textures.
- A complex network of wide meandering rivers, raised drainage ditches and dykes divide and drain the landscape. Along with fragmented relicts of reedbeds and mosses, and historic place names, these provide a reminder of the area's heritage of wetland reclamation. Coastal habitats and large areas of open water are of international importance for their migratory and wintering wildfowl and wading bird populations.
- Mixed arable and pastoral farmland habitats support a nationally important assemblage of breeding farmland bird species.
- A complex network of channelised rivers, canals, drainage ditches and dykes supports a nationally important population of water vole.
- The Fylde coast, which extends from Fleetwood in the north to the mouth of the Ribble Estuary, includes significant urban areas along the coastal strip (such as Blackpool and Fleetwood).
- Urban settlement is concentrated in the planned Victorian coastal resorts (including Blackpool) and inland towns (the largest of which is Preston).
- The Ribble Link, Lancaster Canal, and Leeds and Liverpool Canal all cross the NCA.
- Designed landscapes associated with large houses are locally common in the south, where they provide enclosure in an otherwise open landscape.
- A rectilinear network of lanes and tracks – usually without fences or hedges – subdivides the landscape, and isolated brick farmsteads occur in rural areas.

- Tourism is an important contributor to the local economy, with many opportunities for informal recreation – particularly along the Fylde coast.
- Several long-distance paths cross the NCA, including the Lancashire Coastal Way, the Ribble Way and the Wyre Way, as well as canal towpaths.
- Large scale residential development and introduction of urbanising elements into the rural landscape such as golf courses and static caravan sites, as well as substantial leisure complexes. Particularly on the fringes of the major coastal urban areas and in the vicinity of the M6 motorway corridor.
- The conversion of historic brick-built barns for use as residential dwellings or for intensive agricultural practices, with harshly coloured imported bricks and other inappropriate materials have, in some areas, resulted in poorly integrated developments which compromise the historic buildings and the wider landscape setting of groups of farm buildings.
- Waste management developments including treatment works and land raising have already had a significant influence on local landscape character, particularly on the Ribble and Wyre estuaries.
- Tranquillity and intrusion levels have declined significantly in the past fifty years, with the total ‘undisturbed’ area of the NCA having decreased from 50 per cent in the 1960s to 18 per cent in 2007.

4.2 SUMMARY OF NATURAL ENGLAND NCA32: LANCASHIRE & AMOUDERNNESS PLAIN

The wider landscape shares attributes described in the NCA 32 which includes; predominantly improved pasture, with isolated arable fields. It is an ordered landscape of medium-sized fields with field ponds, clipped hedgerows and drainage ditches. This is a medium- to large-scale landscape, where blocks of wind-sculpted mixed woodland punctuate the relatively flat to gently rolling plain.

More recent developments include the expansion of towns, residential areas, light industry, and the road and motorway network. In some areas, the conversion of historic brick-built barns for use as residential dwellings or for intensive agricultural practices, with harshly-coloured imported bricks and other inappropriate materials has resulted in poorly integrated developments that compromise the historic buildings and the wider landscape setting of groups of farm buildings. In some areas, farming is now giving way to livery and keeping horses particularly around the fringes of towns and villages

The site shares some attributes as described in the character assessment, typically it is part of a pattern of medium sized fields with hedgerows and drainage ditches. However it is located on the northern edge of the River Ribble estuary and is influenced by the local landscape character; typified by a relatively flat topography with tall hedgerows and blocks of woodland which limit and contain views into the wider landscape. Although, there is some degradation of the wider landscape character due to the presence of transport infrastructure, other man-made influences and the proximity of the urban form of nearby settlements, the immediate landscape within which the site sits, contained by hedgerows and woodland vegetation, is largely unaffected and retains its own character.



FIGURE 5 - NCA32: LANCASHIRE & AMOUNDERNESS PLAIN LOCATION MAP

 SITE LOCATION

4.3 LANCASHIRE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (A LANDSCAPE STRATEGY FOR LANCASHIRE)

The Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment provides an up to date classification of the whole of Lancashire's landscape which can be used for making assessments of landscape character for development management and as a basis in the formulation of a Landscape Strategy in the future.

The aims of a future Landscape Strategy would be:

- To inform new planning policies on landscape, as well as Supplementary Planning Documents.
- To guide and inform the development control process.
- To promote public awareness of landscape character and the importance of conservation and enhancement of the landscape.
- To guide and inform project planning by local and national agencies.
- To assist the formulation of landscape management policies.

The Landscape Character Assessment has been produced on behalf of Lancashire County Council (2000) and provides an overview of the landscape of Lancashire. There are 21 different landscape character types (excluding sub-categories, urban and industrial) which have been mapped out on a 1:325,000 plan produced by Lancashire County Council. The Coastal Plain Character description is further subdivided into different character types depending on the geographic location within Lancashire. The proposed development site lies within sub-area 15d: 'The Fylde'. The wider study area extends southwards out into character area 18a: 'Ribble Marshes'. These character areas have been considered in this assessment.

4.3.1 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER – LANDSCAPE TYPE 15 : COASTAL PLAIN

Generally below 50m, this landscape type is characterised by gently undulating or flat lowland farmland divided by ditches in West Lancashire and by low clipped hedges elsewhere. The Fylde landscape in particular is characterised by a high density of small marl pit field ponds. Many hedgerows have been removed to give very large fields, open road verges and long views. Although woodland cover is generally very low, these views are punctuated by small deciduous secondary woodlands, mostly in the form of shelter belts or estate plantations; they provide a backdrop to views. The history of the area as an arable landscape is reflected in the farm buildings, particularly the highly distinctive red brick barns with brickwork detailing. Settlement is relatively dense in this lowland landscape; clustered red brick farm buildings, hamlets, rural villages and historic towns are all present. Older farm sites and red brick barns are often surrounded by recent development and the many converted barns now provide characterful homes. There is a dense infrastructure network; meandering roads connect the farms and villages while major roads and motorways provide a fast route across the landscape, linking major towns.

The land is highly productive and has a very low proportion of semi natural vegetation. Wildlife habitats are therefore typically small scale and fragmented. Ancient woodland is rare, although estate plantations offer important refuges for many species of flora and fauna.

4.3.2 CHARACTER AREA – 15d : THE FYLDE

The gently undulating farmland of the Fylde occurs between Blackpool to the west and Preston and the M6 corridor to the east. It has been formed of boulder clay deposits which lie on soft Triassic sandstones and mudstones and is naturally poorly drained. Field ponds are a particularly characteristic feature of this area and provide important wildlife habitats. The predominant land use is dairy farming on improved pasture and lowland sheep farming with a small amount of arable on the freer draining soils. Red brick nineteenth century two storey farmsteads with slate roofs and red brick barns are dominant built features of this landscape character area; occasional windmills also reflect the historic importance of the area for corn milling. Other features of the area are the brine fields around Stalmine which have been reclaimed by ICI and form a rare and distinctive land use. Field size is large and field boundaries are low clipped hawthorn, although hedgerow loss is extensive. Blocks of woodland are characteristic, frequently planted for shelter and/or shooting and views of the Bowland fells are frequent between the blocks. There are many man-made elements; electricity pylons, communication masts and road traffic are all highly visible in the flat landscape. In addition, views of Blackpool Tower, the Pleasure Beach rides and industry outside Blackpool are visible on a clear day.

4.3.3 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER – LANDSCAPETYPE 18 : OPEN COASTAL MARSH

Salt marshes and intertidal flats occur around the sheltered waters of the west coast of Lancashire and extend to the low water mark. The Open Coastal Marshes are flat, expansive coastal areas formed on marine alluvium. They are separated from the Enclosed Coastal Marshes and coastal farmland by man-made sea dykes and in places by boulder clay and limestone cliffs. The simplicity of the landscape pattern is visually appealing: usually the fine sward surface is closely grazed and is etched by a maze of creeks and channels which gives texture to the flat, expansive landscape. The marshes are open, except for occasional patches of scrub just beyond the high water mark, whilst the few marshes which are ungrazed are a riot of colour in high summer. There is a striking absence of settlement or man-made features. This sense of remoteness is a dramatic contrast to the surrounding man-made landscapes. Another notable feature is the prolific bird life which brings movement to the landscape and provides a changing scene.

Areas of saltmarsh and mudflats, which include areas of sandy shingle occur in the sheltered waters around estuaries and rise almost imperceptibly from the high tide level where they are often marked by low erosion cliffs of boulder clay. Most of the marshes are enclosed by man made sea dykes.

Ecologically the salt marshes and mud flats are internationally important for their vegetation, as roosting and feeding grounds for tens of thousands of wildfowl and wading birds, including geese swans and ducks. Many species come from as far afield as Canada and Greenland. The seaward edges are characterised by pioneer species such as glasswort and seablite, whilst middle reaches are dominated by common salt marsh grass with herbs such as scurvy grass, sea thrift and sea lavender depending whether they are grazed or not. Transitions to fresh water marsh and dry land have been truncated by reclamation, but are marked by other species only slightly tolerant of salt water and occasionally by brackish pools.

4.3.4 CHARACTER AREA - 18a : RIBBLE MARSHES

An extensive and expanding area of unenclosed coastal marsh occurs in the sheltered estuary of the River Ribble, most of which is protected and managed as a National Nature Reserve. This area is characterised by a fine green sward stretching out to sea. Its amorphous, natural form provides a dramatic contrast to the regular enclosures of the adjacent Hesketh Marsh and the urban form of the Warton Aerodrome. Urban buildings are never far away and provide a backdrop to views. A large number of visiting birds are encouraged by the standing water. Large numbers of waders and wildfowl are attracted to the marshes, adjacent mudflats and estuary.



- Lancashire County, Blackpool and Southburn with Devise Boundary
 - Craven Valley Area
- Landscape Character Types & Areas**
- 1. Moorland Plateau
 - 1a. South Fanning Woods
 - 1a. High Bawand Plateau
 - 2. Moorland Hills
 - 2a. West Parline Moor
 - 2b. Central Bawand Fell
 - 2c. Longridge Fell
 - 2d. West of Longridge
 - 2e. Pendle Hill
 - 2f. West Moorburn Moor
 - 2g. Brecon Fell
 - 3. Eroded Uplands
 - 3a. Rosserdale Hills
 - 4. Moorland Fringe
 - 4a. Fawcett Fringe
 - 4a. Rosserdale Moorland Fringe
 - 4b. Blackburn Moorland Fringe
 - 4c. Bowland Limestone Fringes
 - 4d. Bowland Limestone Fringes
 - 4e. Longridge Fell Fringes
 - 4f. South Fawand Fringe
 - 4g. Leck Fell Fringe
 - 4h. North Fawand Fringe
 - 4i. West Parline Fringes
 - 5. Undulating Lowland Farmland
 - 5a. Upper Hoodey Valley
 - 5a. Lower Hoodey and Leod Valley
 - 5b. Lower Ribbles
 - 5c. Grassbourne/Hill Fold
 - 5d. Lower Ribblesdale (Clitheroe to Bellingham)
 - 5e. Lower Ribblesdale (Bellingham to Hill Fold)
 - 5f. South Fawand Fringes
 - 5g. Garsdale/Hill Fringes
 - 5h. West Bawand Fringes
 - 5i. North Bawand Fringes
 - 5j. Clenden-Budon
 - 6. Industrial Facilities and Valleys
 - 6a. Colne Valley
 - 6a. West Parline Moor Hills
 - 6b. Gilgerr Long
 - 6c. Aughton Coppit
 - 7. Forested Ribbles
 - 7a. Mellor Ridge
 - 7b. Upholland Ridge
 - 7c. Longshaw Ridge
 - 8. Gifford Valley
 - 8a. Inval
 - 9. Reservoir Valleys
 - 9a. Rivington
 - 9b. Linton Reservoir
 - 9c. Heston Reservoir
 - 9d. Belmont
 - 9e. Radcliffe
 - 10. Wooded Rural Valleys
 - 10a. Wyre Valley
 - 10b. North Bawand Valley
 - 11. Valley Woodlands
 - 11a. Lower Ribbles Valley
 - 11b. Long Preston Reservoir
 - 11c. Hill Valley
 - 11d. Lune Valley
 - 12. Low Coastal Dunes
 - 12a. Cartford-Gallop Cockshott
 - 12b. Walton-Darwick
 - 12c. Haydock-Overton
 - 13. Drunken Field
 - 13a. Garsdale Drunken Hill
 - 13b. Berrins-Clepton
 - 13c. Cuckoo-Hill-Lancashire
 - 14. Rolling Lowland Farmland
 - 14a. South Fawand
 - 14b. Lillington and Dingles
 - 15. Coastal Plain
 - 15a. Ormskirk/Lathom-Filling
 - 15b. Longton-Gallop
 - 15c. Drimadon-Hawthorn
 - 15d. The Fylde
 - 15e. Fawand-Overton-Central
 - 15f. West End-Filling
 - 16. Marshes
 - 16a. North Fylde Marshes
 - 16b. South Fylde Marshes
 - 16c. West Newland South West Marshes
 - 16d. Greenhead Marshes
 - 16e. Berrins Marshes
 - 16f. Haydock Marsh
 - 16g. Hooton and Fawand Marshes
 - 17. Eroded Coastal Marsh
 - 17a. Clifton and Hutton Marsh
 - 17b. Cuckoo Hill Coast
 - 18. Open Coastal Upland
 - 18a. Ribbles Marshes
 - 18b. Hill Bank-Silverdale Marshes
 - 18c. Wyre Marshes
 - 18d. Linn Marshes
 - 18e. Pilling and Cuckoo Hill Marshes
 - 19. Coastal Dunes
 - 19a. Fylde Coastal Dunes
 - 20. Wooded Limestone Hills and Plateaus
 - 20a. Arncliffe and Skerdale
 - 21. Limestone Fells
 - 21a. Leck Fell
- Urban Landscape Types**
- Historic Core
 - Industrial Age
 - Suburban
 - Greenfield

FIGURE 6 - LANCASHIRE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER TYPES

● SITE LOCATION

5.0 LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL

A site specific character appraisal for the site and wider landscape has been carried out as part of the landscape assessment. Having a detailed understanding of the local landscape character will help to make an assessment of the quality of the landscape and its sensitivity to change.

5.1 WIDER LANDSCAPE - CHARACTER AREA APPRAISAL

For the purposes of this appraisal the surrounding landscape has been broken down into two different character areas; settlement and surrounding landscape. Each character area will be defined through a variety of characteristics and elements which include; structure, density and scale, land use, topography and visual amenity. A combination of site visits and desk top research have informed this appraisal with both built form and the natural environment considered.

5.1.1 CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTIONS & LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS

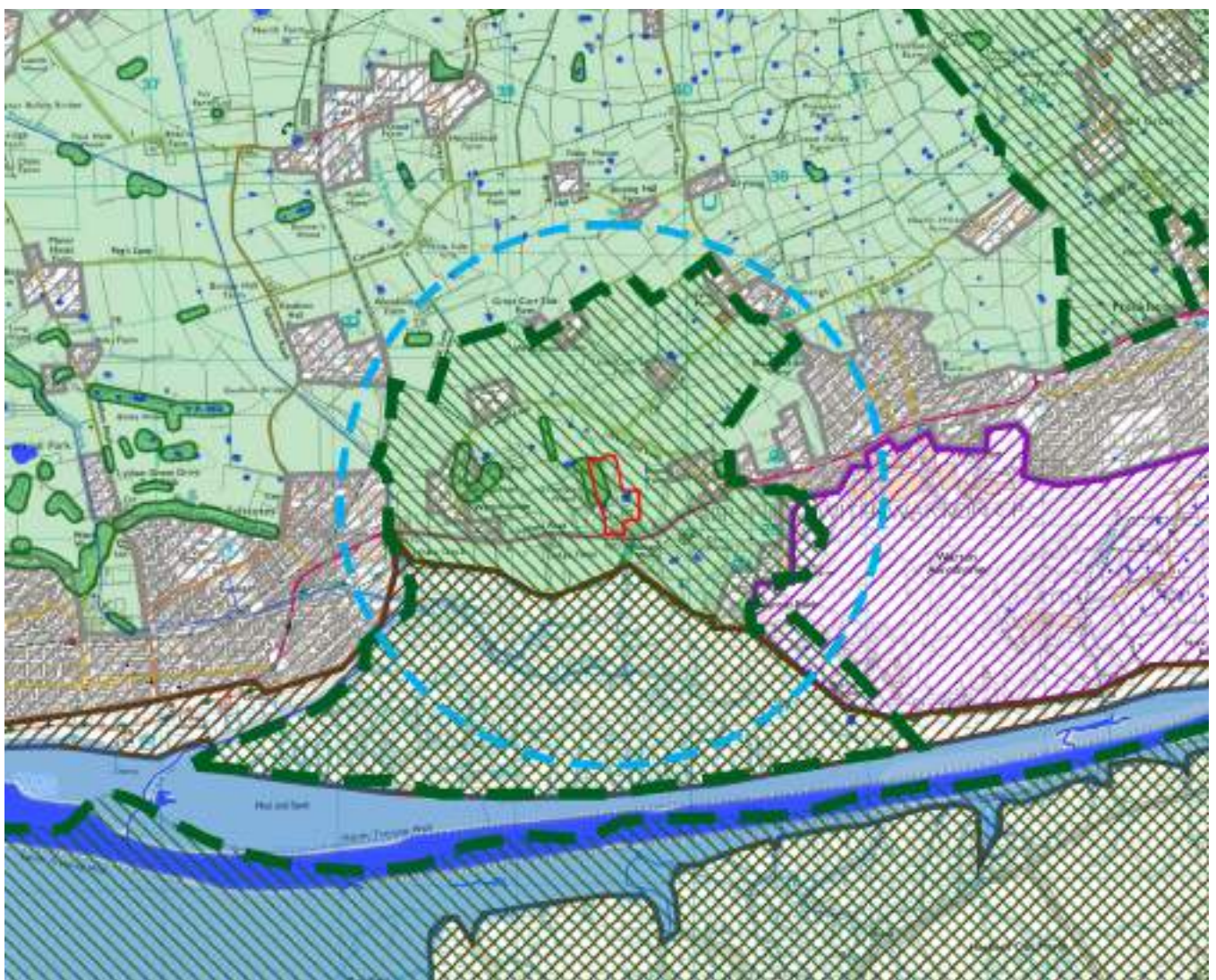
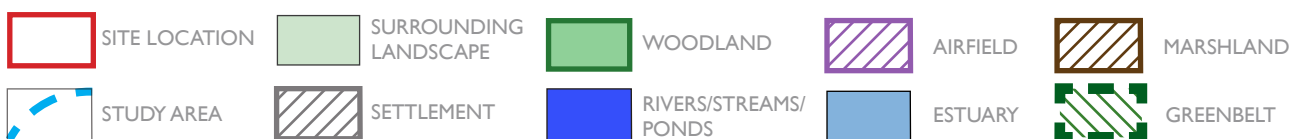


FIGURE 7- CHARACTER AREA & LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS MAP



5.1.2 SETTLEMENT CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTION

Settlement within the study area includes Lytham to its western extent, Warton to the east, scattered farms and dwellings within the open countryside and ribbon development along the A584 Lytham Road. The neighbouring towns of Lytham and St Annes-on-the-Sea have grown together forming Lytham St Annes on the north side of the mouth of the Ribble Estuary. It has a population of approximately 43,000 and is principally a seaside resort, famous for its golf courses. Lytham is an affluent town which expanded at the start of the Industrial Revolution. It is characterised by large Victorian and Edwardian houses, notable public buildings, with tree lined streets and sea frontage.

Warton, on the north bank of the River Ribble is a small scattered village, located along the A584 Lytham Road, with a population of approximately 450. It is best known for its airfield (Warton Aerodrome) and associated aircraft manufacturing plant.

Settlement elsewhere, within and surrounding the study area includes scattered farms and houses within the open countryside, The continuous sprawl of ribbon development along the main roads (principally the A584 Lytham Road) comprises industrial estates/business parks, garages, caravan parks etc. Specific land uses adjacent to the site include the Land Registry offices, Warton Aerodrome, a poultry farm and golf superstore/driving range. More recently, there has been a significant increase in the number of residential developments in neighbouring settlements.

The built form is comprised of a variety of architectural styles and layouts. The residential architecture of Lytham is characterised by traditional Victorian and Edwardian villas, semi-detached and terraced properties. The scattered farms and houses are also generally older and traditional in character. Since the 1970s, housing and associated development has increased significantly, often comprising a mixture of different styles, frequently pastiches of old styles. The use of many different materials, usually not of local origin and standardised architectural detailing of particular styles has resulted in a loss of regional identity; the same house designs recur across the whole country. The quality of the landscape has been degraded by this piecemeal development, with an unplanned, sprawling structure and inconsistent density. Scale varies from individual mobile home and bungalows through to caravan parks, industrial units and agricultural buildings.

The landscape quality of settlement within the study area has been assessed as ordinary. Although the centre of Lytham has a greater level of historical and architectural interest, it is outside the study area. The sprawling suburbs along the A584 encroach into the study area and are much more unplanned in appearance, mixed in use and dominated by post-war development.

The landscape value has been assessed as low as the landscape is without particular noted significance and does not add to the overall context of the area.

Landscape sensitivity has been assessed as low.



Large detached properties in Lytham-St-Annes



Urban sprawl on Lytham Road

5.1.3 SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTION

Landscape pattern typified by the wider landscape character type of the Fylde (Coastal Plain) is characteristic of the study area. Field size is large and field boundaries are low clipped hawthorn, although hedgerow loss is extensive. Blocks of woodland are characteristic. Ground level rises to the north away from the river estuary where it is typically flat, and becomes very gently undulating. There are many man-made elements; electricity pylons, communication masts and road traffic are all highly visible in the flat landscape. The wider landscape is influenced and degraded by urban fringe activities and the area is traversed by transport routes including the Blackpool branch railway line which runs between Preston and Blackpool.

The characteristics typical of the settlement character area apply equally to that of the surrounding landscape character area, namely the continuous sprawl of ribbon development along the main roads (principally the A584 Lytham Road) comprising industrial estates/business parks, garages, caravan parks etc. Specific land uses adjacent to the site include the Land Registry offices, Warton Aerodrome, a poultry farm and golf superstore/driving range.

The area to the south of the A584 falls within the adjacent character type Ribble Marshes (Open Coastal Marsh) which comprises an extensive area of unenclosed coastal marsh in the sheltered tidal estuary of the River Ribble, most of which is protected and managed as a National Nature Reserve and is a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest. This area is characterised by a fine green sward stretching out to sea. Urban buildings are never far away and provide a backdrop to views. Included within this description are the Land Registry offices and Warton Aerodrome. The Lancashire Coastal Way is the only footpath within the study area that would potentially be affected by views of the site (and will be assessed within the Visual Appraisal). This public footpath runs parallel with and to the south of the A584, along a sea dyke which defines the northern edge of the marshlands. At its closest point, this public right of way joins the Lytham Road immediately to the south of the Site entrance where it crosses a tidal inlet before moving south towards the marshland.

There are no landscape designations within or in the immediate vicinity of the site. The site falls within Green Belt, in a pocket located between Lytham to the west and Warton to the east. This is not a landscape policy as such but is relevant in terms of the purposes of Green Belt itself. The NPPF sets out the purposes of Green Belt in paragraph 80. None of those purposes is directly relevant to the Site, which is already partly developed for uses that would not normally be located within that designation. One of the main objectives of Green Belt is to maintain 'openness'.

The landscape quality has been assessed as ordinary as it falls within a landscape with some features worthy of conservation (in particular the SSSI status of the Ribble Marshes; represent an important wildlife habitat). There are however some detracting features associated with the surrounding human activity and infrastructure, including the man-made influence on the landscape of the road networks and harsh edge of settlement created by recent residential development and sprawling urbanisation.

The landscape value has been assessed as moderate as it is a landscape used by the local community for walking, with a footpath network and has a sense of place recognisable and associated with the local area.

Landscape sensitivity has been assessed as low.



Ribble estuary marshlands



Large fields with hawthorn hedgerow boundaries

5.2 SITE CHARACTER AREA DESCRIPTION

The open farmland to the north and west of the site has the characteristics of the County Assessment, and the woodland within the site is also an identified feature. The site itself has no affinity with the Lancashire Assessment however, though caravan sites as a land use are a common feature within the coastal zone of the Fylde. The Site is strongly influenced by its history as a war time camp with extensive areas of former roads and hard standings, it is more urban than rural in character.

Due to the presence of adjacent commercial/industrial uses, the golf driving range immediately to the west and the presence of the large Land Registry offices located a short distance away to the south east we would assess the character of the site as being urban fringe. This is reinforced by the scale of the A 584 Lytham Road which runs adjacent to the southern boundary which is highly engineered and illuminated.

The site is a former military camp dating back to the Second World War and is currently used as a caravan and camping site with ancillary facilities such as entertainment facility and equestrian centre. In recent years a number of permanent single storey timber lodges have been introduced. The topography of the site is generally flat with levels ranging from approximately 8.0m in the south to 10.0m AOD at the northern boundary. The structure of the site is distinctive, based on a formal grid pattern of concrete road ways and the remaining bases of former wartime accommodation units. The bases are used for caravan parking. The open parts of the site are comprised of semi-improved grassland. Surfacing around the buildings is concrete, with consolidated stone access tracks and hardstandings.

The site can be described in a series of distinct zones as follows (description courtesy of Appleton's Landscape Appraisal document, June 2016):

Zone A - Frontage Area

The entrance to the site leads directly off the A584 Lytham Road and is framed by brick flanking walls. Screening is provided by hedge and tree planting. A paddock area and pond are located immediately north west of the entrance and a children's play area with synthetic turf to the north.

Zone B - Reception and Stables

A domestic dwelling with garden areas and parking which serves as a reception building is located to the north of zone A, a stable block and yard to the north east.

Zone C - Central Area

Two large grassed areas form this zone. Both contain ponds, the one to the west is partially occluded with reed, both appear eutrophicated possibly due to intensive use by water fowl.

Zone D - Birch Wood

This is from where the site name is derived. It is a mature woodland with species including oak, ash, birch and sycamore with hawthorn and willow Understorey. A detailed assessment is contained within the separate tree survey report. Many of the oaks are in decline, possibly due to changes in water table.

Zone E - 'San Antone'

This zone is dominated by permanent structures including a large two story building that serves as an entertainment centre with bars and restaurants. The building is constructed from a variety of materials including rustic timberwork intended to convey a 'wild west' theme. Another timber building provides holiday accommodation. Most of the area to the east of this zone consists of caravan parking.

Zone F Northern Sector

Just outside the northern area of the site is a single storey building of brick construction which functions as a rifle range. To the east, located on concrete bases area series of timber lodges.

The neglected nature of the site has resulted in it becoming degraded in terms of landscape character. There are no landscape designations within or in the immediate vicinity of the site. The Site is located within Green Belt. This is not a landscape policy as such but is relevant in terms of the purposes of Green Belt itself. The NPPF sets out the purposes of Green Belt in paragraph 80. None of those purposes is directly relevant to the Site, which is already partly developed for uses

that would not normally be located within that designation. One of the main objectives of Green Belt is to maintain 'openness'.

The landscape quality has been assessed as poor. Generally the site lacks openness as a result of historic development, comprising only of a weak landscape structure, with the dominant characteristic being patterns of development and its associated infrastructure. A lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation. There are frequent detracting features; it is a landscape identified as being degraded or requiring improvement. The site itself is self-contained with no public access and limited visual openness, due to filtering of views by the surrounding mature woodland and bunding. The landscape character has to some extent become degraded with loss of field pattern and fragmented hedgerows. Features of potential ecological value, such as the existing ponds have been identified; these are assessed by others in the ecological appraisal.

The landscape value has been assessed as low as it does not add to the overall context of the area. It is a landscape which is not used by the local community and visibility of the site from adjacent footpaths is negligible.

Landscape sensitivity has been assessed as low.



Neglected site infrastructure



Steep-sided pond



Some of the buildings and structures currently on site



Poorly managed woodland



Bunding to site perimeter

5.3 MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE

The magnitude of change is determined by its impact on the quality and value of the landscape character areas as described above.

The application is for outline development for redevelopment of the site for a residential scheme, including means of access off Lytham Road.

The existing roadways and concrete bases would be removed together with buildings and other ancillary facilities. Proposed development would comprise two storey residential buildings arranged in clusters with planting belts and recreational amenity spaces between. The existing woodland would be enhanced and positively managed with footpath access providing recreational value for the site and the surrounding area as part of a looped walk from the site entrance off Lytham Road. Dead and dying trees would be removed and replacement planting would be introduced. The ponds would be retained and upgraded to provide biodiversity enhancement. Existing boundary planting would be strengthened with new tree and hedgerow planting.

The site is contained physically and visually on its western and northern boundaries by woodland vegetation. In addition the northern and eastern edges of the site are physically contained by a large man-made earth bund. This provides visual separation and reduces the impact on neighbouring receptors. It is not out of character with the surrounding landscape; it is similar in form and appearance to the dykes which manage flooding within the coastal plain and marsh areas. Improved boundary treatments can be achieved through the implementation of landscape planting buffers which would screen and filter views of the site from the wider landscape. Native species hedgerows would be proposed on all boundaries and through the site, providing connectivity and establishing wildlife corridors.

The proposed development would have a direct physical change over the proposal site itself, particularly on the character of the built form. Currently the site is characterised by a sense of disjointedness, disrepair and neglect. The replacement of existing hardstandings, buildings, structures, signage etc would significantly enhance the appearance of the site. The proposals to construct two storey units within a landscape framework would help to integrate the development with the character of the surrounding area.

The site has capacity to accommodate change and this change would have only a minor impact on the surrounding areas; the changes would be indirect with changes only to the visual amenity of the immediate areas around the site. This change would be positive, providing an opportunity to reinstate degraded character and to improve landscape elements such as the woodland, hedgerows etc.

5.3.1 SETTLEMENT

The magnitude of change for the character areas described as “Settlement” has been assessed as negligible as it will represent a positive change which is not uncharacteristic and maintains the quality and value of the landscape. The character of the settlements of Lytham and Warton will remain unaffected by the proposals. The site is viewed in the context of sprawling development along the A584 Lytham Road. The site frontage is narrow and is located between the adjacent golf driving range to the west and the unoccupied poultry farm to the east; both of these neighbours have a greater visual impact than the site itself. The proposals are set back from Lytham Road, creating a green buffer on this boundary which will enhance the unkempt and neglected appearance of the site, resulting in a tidier streetscene.

5.3.2 SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

The magnitude of change for the character areas described as “Surrounding Landscape” has been assessed as low. The site is largely contained within the wider landscape by surrounding woodland vegetation and earth banks. The surrounding landscape has become degraded by unplanned and sprawling development. The existing site, although part of this sprawl and degradation is physically contained and does not encroach beyond its boundaries into the landscape. These boundaries, and the landscape features within the site will be enhanced so that any detrimental impact is mitigated and that any change will be positive and relatively minor. Although located within the Green Belt, the development is situated on brown field land which is predominantly hard landscape or built form and is not considered to have a significant impact on the purposes of the Green Belt.

5.3.3 THE SITE

For the proposed site itself, there will be a change in character from neglected open space, hardstandings, buildings, and structures, to residential development with associated access, driveways and landscaping. Existing ecological and wildlife habitats such as the area of woodland and ponds will be reinforced and enhanced. Native species trees and hedgerow planting around the site boundary will be introduced. Although the condition and quality of the site will be materially improved, the extent and scale of development on site will be similar to that of the existing footprint of built form and hardstanding areas. Therefore the magnitude of change has been assessed as low.

5.4 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

(Refer to matrix in Methodology - Appendix I)

Below is a table which summarises the landscape effects as considered in the landscape appraisal;

LANDSCAPE RECEPTOR	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	EFFECTS PRE-MITIGATION
Settlement	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Surrounding Landscape	Low	Low	Slight
Site	Low	Low	Slight

The landscape effects of the proposed development on 'Settlement' are assessed as negligible, as the site is separated physically and visually from the adjacent settlements by site boundary treatments and woodland vegetation. The quality and character of the landscape will remain unchanged.

The landscape effects on 'Surrounding Landscape' are assessed as slight, as it would present a slight change, which is not uncharacteristic of the surrounding area. It is considered that the proposed development represents a positive change. It will to some degree be physically and visually contained by vegetation and boundary treatments so the quality and value of these landscapes would still be maintained.

The landscape effects on the site are assessed as slight as there will be a change in land use on the site and a positive change in its material condition. The potential for the introduction of hedgerows and screen planting further increases the positive nature of this change.

5.5 IMPACT ON THE GREEN BELT

Currently, the proposed development site and the study area/surrounding landscape lie within Green Belt. The Green Belt covers large parts of the West Lancashire open countryside, and small pockets of the Fylde.

The Green Belt boundaries perform the strategic roles of helping:

- 1 to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
- 2 to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another
- 3 to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- 4 to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns, and
- 5 to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

It is considered that the openness of the site will not experience any effect as a result of the proposed development. This is due to the proposed development replacing areas of existing built form and areas of neglected hard surfacing and is therefore not representing a significant change to the scale and mass of development. The openness aspect of the Green Belt is therefore unaffected as the proposals represent brown field development.

Opportunity exists to enhance and strengthen the role of the Green Belt by reinstating and managing existing woodland, reinforcing site boundaries with tree and hedgerow planting and through the implementation of a comprehensive landscape scheme providing visual and ecological mitigation and recreational value for the wider area through footpath links from Lytham Road which is currently not provided by the site in its current state.

6.0 VISUAL APPRAISAL

Viewpoints and potential receptors have been selected from various locations identified through desk top study and site visits. Views for the visual appraisal have been chosen to provide a representation of the range of receptors (within the study area) that have views towards the site. Viewpoints have also been selected to provide a baseline for the visual amenity of the local area. Selected views may be representative of more than one receptor type (e.g. public footpath and residential property).

All of the viewpoints are located around the immediate area because wider views towards the site were found to be screened by surrounding built form and vegetation. Potential receptors which clearly had no views towards the site (confirmed during the site visits) have not been represented. Refer to Figure 9 for viewpoint locations.

The sensitivity of each receptor is considered as part of the appraisal. Any residential properties with elevated views across the landscape, public rights of way or panoramic views over the landscape (where the site forms a prominent part of the experience) would be described as having high sensitivity. Residential properties with restricted views, people engaged in outdoor recreation facilities (where enjoyment of the view is not the main interest) and for people travelling through the landscape (where the focus is not the view) would be described as having medium sensitivity. Low sensitivity receptors are typically people at their place of work, people travelling through the landscape in vehicles at such a speed that the nature of the views involved are short lived and have no special significance.

The visual quality has been described for each view as being either poor, moderate or high, depending on the extent of the view and its importance. The magnitude of change has then been assessed for each view and a description provided to help demonstrate the potential changes to the view.

In summary the proposed development has been considered from 7 representative viewpoint locations;

1. View from A584 Lytham Road looking east towards the site
2. View northeast towards the site from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP8
3. View northwest towards the site from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP9
4. Representative view from Brook Farm and residential properties on West End Lane
5. View from West End Lane/Lodge Lane looking south towards the site
6. Representative view from Little Carr Side Farm looking southwest towards the site
7. Representative view from Wrea Brook Farm and Great Carr Side Farm looking south towards the site

Methodology for the Preparation of Photographs

At each of the viewpoints, the following details are recorded:

- The grid reference (of the viewpoint)
- The viewer height (measured to the lens of the camera)
- The date (of survey)
- The distance to the development (from the viewpoint)

The photographs have been taken using a digital SLR camera with zoom lens set to 50mm focal length (unless otherwise stated).

Note:

- All views from residential receptors are representative as access to the properties was not possible during the site survey. The photo viewpoints were selected as representing the closest location to the receptor as possible.
- Viewpoint 1 is representative of views of the site from A584 Lytham Road. Additional views (1a and 1b) from the road are shown as supplementary photographs.
- Viewpoint 2 is representative of views along Public Right of Way 5-3-FP8. It illustrates the view along this route where the site is most prominent. Additional views (2a and 2b) along the footpath are shown as supplementary photographs.
- Viewpoint 5 is representative of views along West End Lane/Lodge Lane. Additional views (5a and 5b) along the road are shown as supplementary photographs.



FIGURE 9 - VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

1 RECEPTOR LOCATIONS



FIGURE 10 - PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY MAP

PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

6.1 VIEW I

View from A584 Lytham Road looking east towards the site



SP1 (View 1a) View of site entrance from A584 Lytham Road



SP2 (View 1b) View from A584 Lytham Road looking west towards site

Grid Reference (of the viewpoint): X: 339466 Y: 427970

Viewer Height (measured to lens of camera): 1.7m

Date of Survey: 04/10/2021

Distance to Development (from the viewpoint): 120m

6.1 VIEW I

This photograph illustrates the view from the A584 Lytham Road, looking towards the site, from approximately 120m to the west, opposite the entrance to the neighbouring Lytham Golf Academy. It represents the view experienced by people travelling along the road in vehicles and by pedestrians walking along the pavements. The existing view is dominated by the main road which is flanked by wide grass verges and pavements. Hedgerows line either side of the road behind the verges and are approximately 1.5-1.8m in height. The site is visually contained by hedgerow trees and woodland on the west side of the site (Great Birch Wood). Views of buildings, caravans etc are filtered by this vegetation. Larger buildings of the adjacent poultry farm and the Land Registry offices beyond are visible and establish a backdrop of built form. Vertical elements of street lighting, telegraph poles and signage reinforce the suburbanised character of the main road.

Photo SP1 (View 1a) demonstrates the view of the site from directly opposite the site entrance, which is generally only a glimpsed view experienced by passing traffic and a briefly experienced view for pedestrians. The site is marked by low brick flanking walls, hedgerow and trees; very little site activity is visible due to it being set back and screened by vegetation.

Photo SP2 (View 1b) demonstrates the view of the site experienced when approaching along the A584 from the east. The site has very little presence from this direction, being largely screened by the neighbouring poultry farm, industrial estate and vegetation. Only the brick wall and signage of the site entrance are noticeable.

The existing vegetation on the southern boundary of the site and around the site entrance will be retained and strengthened with new planting to enclose the site and form a strong vegetated boundary. The existing woodland area to the western site boundary (Great Birch Wood), which is in an unmanaged state of decline, will be strengthened through the introduction of a native species woodland mix, infilling areas of dieback and reinforcing the existing tree belt. Proposed built form will be set back from the site boundary so that the landscape buffer mitigates visual impact of the proposed development (the buildings within this part of the site will be single storey).

6.1.1 VISUAL EFFECTS

The proposed development will result in a small change in the view; in terms of character and quality, these are considered potentially to be positive changes. The visual experience will be one of residential buildings set behind a woodland edge and within a wooded setting, which will filter and screen longer views.

The receptor sensitivity has been assessed as low, as it represents views experienced by people travelling through the landscape in vehicles such that the speed and nature of the views involved are short lived and have no special significance.

The quality of the view has been assessed as poor, as it is restricted by existing vegetation and is over a landscape of low value and quality.

The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view but this would not detrimentally affect its character or quality. The development will appear as a small element in the wider landscape which may be missed by the casual observer. The view may be at such a distance as to reduce the appearance of the development. The magnitude of change has been assessed as low.

The visual effects have been assessed as slight. However, any perceptible change in the view is not considered to represent a negative change.

6.1.2 MITIGATION

Implement recommendations of the Arboricultural Implications Assessment and develop a long-term management plan to improve and regenerate tree structure within Great Birch Wood and the western site boundary. Replace entrance infrastructure and signage to establish an attractive and coordinated frontage to the main road.

6.2 VIEW 2

View northeast towards the site from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP 8



SP1 (View 2a) View of the site from further east of View 2



SP2 (View 2b) View of the site from further west of View 2



SP3 View west along PRow 5-3-FP 8 towards viewpoint receptor

6.2 VIEW 2

This photograph represents the view from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP 8, which runs along the sea flood defence dyke in an east-west orientation, parallel with the River Ribble estuary to the south and is approximately 290m from the site. Approximately 240m east of the viewpoint, the footpath returns north along a drainage channel and adjoins the A584 Lytham Road, opposite the site entrance. The viewpoint illustrates the view along this route where the site is most prominent. Additional views 2a (SP1) and 2b (SP2) along the footpath are shown as supplementary photographs.

The view is comprised of flat open fields in the foreground, enclosed by hedgerow, running along the A584 Lytham Road. This hedge partially screens views of traffic on the main road and restricts views of the site beyond, however, the flood defence dyke is approximately 2 metres high and does give views of the site above the hedgerows adjacent to the Lytham Road. Lighting columns along the road emphasise its presence and illuminate it at night.

Some caravans and buildings are visible towards the front of the site. Site vegetation (including the edge of Great Birch Wood) filters views of the larger buildings deeper within the site. The neighbouring poultry farm and adjacent industrial estate buildings are more visible and are of a greater scale than the development within the site.

To the west of the site, the buildings associated with the Lytham golf academy, driving range and superstore are also more visually prominent than the site itself. The mass of Great Birch Wood provides a backdrop to the golf academy, limiting longer views into the landscape, and separating it visually from the development site.

The public footpath 5-3-FP 8 is part of the Lancashire Coastal Way and runs along the northern edge of the SSSI Ribble Marshes; an area popular with bird watchers. Consequently, the focus of attention of walkers along this route is most likely to be in the opposite direction to the site and views towards the site are considered to be less important.

6.2.1 VISUAL EFFECTS

The proposed development will result in a minor change in the view; in terms of character, quality and openness; these are considered to be positive changes. The visual experience is currently one of partially open views of large scale buildings (on neighbouring sites), caravans and buildings. The view of

buildings on the neighbouring sites will be unchanged, however the view of the site will be one of residential buildings set behind a woodland edge and within a wooded setting, which will filter and screen longer views.

The receptor sensitivity has been assessed as high as the view is experienced by people using a public footpath, whose attention may be focused on the landscape (although as stated, it is likely that the attention will be focussed in the opposite direction from the site).

The quality of the view has been assessed as poor, as it is restricted by existing vegetation and is over a landscape of low value and quality.

The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view but this would not detrimentally affect its character or quality. The development will appear as a small element in the wider landscape which may be missed by the casual observer. The view may be at such a distance as to reduce the appearance of the development. The magnitude of change has been assessed as low.

The visual effects have been assessed as moderate. However, any perceptible change in the view is considered to potentially represent a positive change.

6.2.2 MITIGATION

Reinforce boundaries with new tree and hedgerow planting to screen and reduce visual impact of development. Implement landscaping to the property frontages to mitigate impact of road and driveways.

Grid Reference (of the viewpoint): X: 339418 Y: 427827
Viewer Height (measured to lens of camera): 1.7m
Date of Survey: 05/10/2021
Distance to Development (from the viewpoint): 290m

6.3 VIEW 3

View northwest towards the site from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP 9



SP1 View southeast along PRoW 5-3-FP 9



SP2 View of Sea View Caravan Park from PRoW 5-3-FP 9

6.3 VIEW 3

This photograph represents the view from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP 9, which runs approximately 160m in a north-south orientation, from the A584 Lytham Road, before joining the sea flood defence dyke, where it runs in a southeasterly direction, parallel with the River Ribble estuary to the south. The viewpoint illustrates the view along this route where the site is most prominent.

The view is comprised of flat open fields in the foreground, with intermittent vegetation, drainage ditches, hedgerow and fence boundaries. The A584 Lytham Road is obscured by vegetation. The flat, low-lying nature of the land and the presence of blocks of woodland vegetation, means that there are no longer views into the wider landscape.

Views of the site itself are heavily screened and filtered by vegetation. Great Birch Wood contains longer views into the wider landscape. Views of the neighbouring poultry farm and adjacent industrial estate buildings can be glimpsed through the vegetation. To the west of the site, the buildings associated with the Lytham golf academy, driving range and superstore are partially visible. To the east of the view, the Land Registry offices building is clearly visible and is of a significantly greater scale and mass than any other built form in the vicinity. Views to the east (refer to SP2) are dominated by the presence of caravan parks, which reinforce the sense of urban sprawl and a degraded/fragmented landscape.

The public footpath 5-3-FP 9 is part of the Lancashire Coastal Way and runs along the northern edge of the SSSI Ribble Marshes; an area popular with bird watchers. Consequently, the focus of attention of walkers along this route is most likely to be in the opposite direction to the site and views towards the site are considered to be less important.

6.3.1 VISUAL EFFECTS

The proposed development will result in a negligible change in the view. There are currently glimpsed winter views of buildings and structures within the site through dense vegetation. It is predicted that this view of the site will be entirely screened by proposed vegetation as part of the development.

The receptor sensitivity has been assessed as high as the view is experienced by people using a public footpath, whose attention may be focused on the landscape (although as stated, it is likely that the attention will be focussed in the opposite direction from the site).

The quality of the view has been assessed as poor, as it is restricted by existing vegetation and is over a fragmented landscape of low value and quality.

The development would result in a negligible change in the existing view but this would not detrimentally affect its character or quality. The development will appear as a small element in the wider landscape which may be missed by the casual observer. The view may be at such a distance as to reduce the appearance of the development. The magnitude of change has been assessed as negligible.

The visual effects have been assessed as slight. However, any perceptible change in the view is not considered to represent a negative change.

6.2.2 MITIGATION

Reinforce boundaries with new tree and hedgerow planting to screen and reduce visual impact of development.

Grid Reference (of the viewpoint): X: 339775 Y: 427724

Viewer Height (measured to lens of camera): 1.7m

Date of Survey: 09/12/2016

Distance to Development (from the viewpoint): 430m

6.4 VIEW 4

Representative view from Brook Farm and properties on West End Lane



6.4 VIEW 4

This photograph represents the view from Brook Farm, located approximately 320m to the east of the site and residential properties; 17 and 19 West End Lane; located beyond the farm. It was assessed that views towards the site from other properties within the residential development (Woodlands Drive and Meadow Drive) are obscured by farm buildings. The view is representative; access onto the properties was not possible, so the photograph was taken from West End Lane, close to the front of the residential properties.

It has been assessed from a combination of desktop study and site appraisal that there is a filtered view of the site from a single first floor/bedroom window at the front of each of the residential properties (17 and 19 West End Lane) of the eastern edge of the rear part of the site. This view comprises the earth bund and boundary planting which partially screen and filter views into the site of lodges and caravans.

Although closer to the site, Brook Farm has no views from residential windows or garden areas towards the site. The site will be visible from working areas within the curtilage of the farm, however, these are not considered to be a sensitive receptor. In addition, views will be filtered by intervening hedgerows.

6.4.1 VISUAL EFFECTS

The proposed development will result in a negligible change in the view in terms of character, quality and openness as the view of existing development will continue to be of built form of a similar mass and scale. The view is filtered by hedgerow vegetation and planting on the embankment which forms the eastern site

boundary. This vegetation would be managed and reinforced with new planting to the site boundary which will mitigate any potential visual impact. Great Birch Wood on the western edge of the site forms a visual backdrop to the site and screens longer views into the landscape; this will remain unchanged.

The receptor sensitivity has been assessed as medium, as the view represents that experienced by occupiers of residential properties with restricted views.

The quality of the view has been assessed as poor, as it is restricted (by existing farm buildings and vegetation).

The magnitude of change has been assessed as negligible, as only a small part of the development will be discernible and this may be for only part of the year. The quality and character of the view will remain unchanged.

The visual effects have been assessed as slight. However, any perceptible change in the view is not considered to represent a negative change.

6.4.2 MITIGATION

Establish a landscape buffer to the eastern site boundary and set back built development to reduce the impact of any perceptible change in the existing view.



SPI View back towards the photo viewpoint

Grid Reference (of the viewpoint): X: 339969 Y: 428438
 Viewer Height (measured to lens of camera): 1.7m
 Date of Survey: 05/10/2021
 Distance to Development (from the viewpoint): 370m

6.5 VIEW 5

View from West End Lane/Lodge Lane looking south towards the site



SP1 (View 5a) View from West End Lane looking southwest towards site



SP2 (View 5b) View from Lodge Lane looking southeast towards site



SP3 View towards photo viewpoint on Lodge Lane/West End Lane

6.5 VIEW 5

This photograph illustrates the view from West End Lane/Lodge Lane, looking towards the site, from approximately 220m to the north. It represents the view experienced by people travelling along the road in vehicles. The road is lined by grass verge and drainage ditch with low hedgerow beyond. The view over the hedgerow is comprised of flat open fields in the foreground, contained by hedgerows. Vegetation on the site boundary contains and filters views of the site; low level buildings and structures are partially visible. The mass of Great Birch Wood forms a backdrop and contains longer views into the landscape.

The viewpoint illustrates the view along this route where the site is most prominent. Additional views 5a (SP1) from West End Lane looking southwest towards site and 5b (SP2) from Lodge Lane looking southeast towards site are shown as supplementary photographs. These views demonstrate that the site is visually well contained and views of it are screened and filtered by existing trees and vegetation.

The existing vegetation on the northern boundary of the site will be retained and strengthened with new planting to enclose the site and form a strong vegetated boundary. The existing woodland area to the western site boundary (Great Birch Wood), which is in an unmanaged state of decline, will be strengthened through the introduction of a native species woodland mix, infilling areas of dieback and reinforcing the existing tree belt. Proposed built form will be set back from the site boundary so that the landscape buffer mitigates visual impact of the proposed development (the buildings within this part of the site will be single storey).

6.5.1 VISUAL EFFECTS

The proposed development will result in a negligible change in the view in terms of character, quality and openness as the view of the site will continue to be heavily filtered by vegetation with glimpsed built form of a similar mass and scale. This vegetation would be managed and reinforced with new planting to the site boundary which will mitigate any potential visual impact. Great Birch Wood on the western edge of the site forms a visual backdrop to the site and screens longer views into the landscape; this will remain unchanged.

The receptor sensitivity has been assessed as low, as it represents views experienced by people travelling through the landscape in vehicles and the nature of views are short lived and have no special significance.

The quality of the view has been assessed as poor, as it is restricted by existing vegetation and is over a landscape of low value and quality.

The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view but this would not detrimentally affect its character or quality. The development will appear as a small element in the wider landscape which may be missed by the casual observer. The magnitude of change has been assessed as low.

The visual effects have been assessed as slight. However, any perceptible change in the view is not considered to represent a negative change.

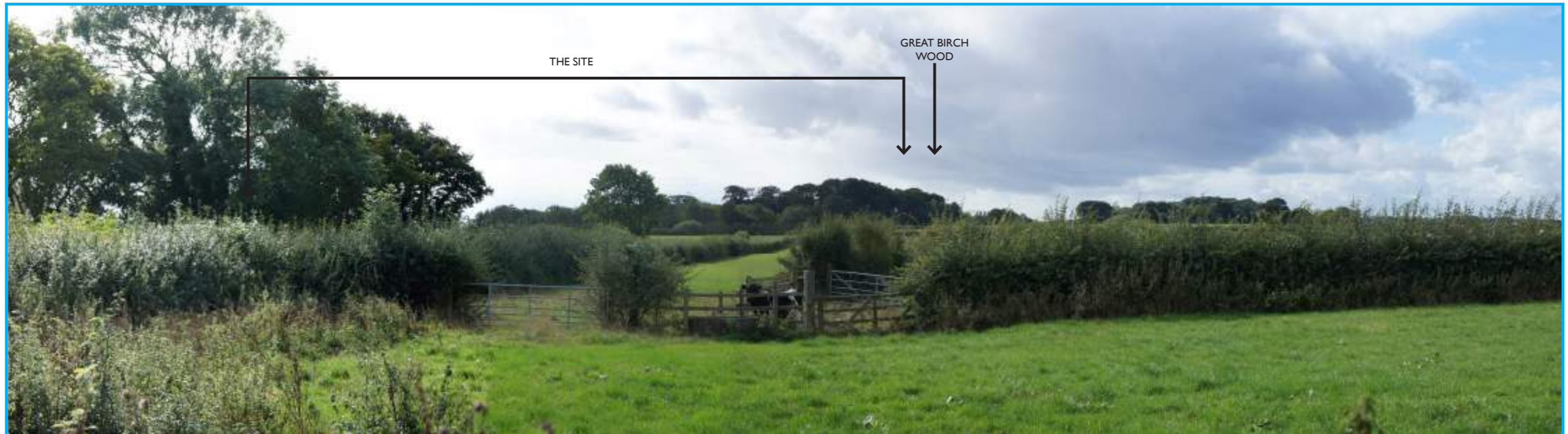
6.5.2 MITIGATION

Establish a landscape buffer to the northern site boundary.

Grid Reference (of the viewpoint): X: 339446 Y: 428665
Viewer Height (measured to lens of camera): 1.7m
Date of Survey: 05/10/2021
Distance to Development (from the viewpoint): 220m

6.6 VIEW 6

Representative view from Little Carr Side Farm looking southwest towards the site



6.6 VIEW 6

This photograph represents the view from Little Carr Side Farm, located approximately 470m to the northeast of the site. The view is representative; access onto the property was not possible, so the photograph was taken from the driveway of the property off Carr Lane. It has been assessed that there is a filtered view of the site from two first floor windows and one second floor window on the south-facing gable end of the property.

The view is comprised of flat open fields in the foreground, contained by hedgerows. Vegetation on the site boundary contains and filters views of the site; low level buildings and structures are partially visible. The mass of Great Birch Wood (as well as other blocks of woodland on the skyline) forms a backdrop and contains longer views into the landscape.

The existing vegetation on the northern boundary of the site will be retained and strengthened with new planting to enclose the site and form a strong vegetated boundary. The existing woodland area to the western site boundary (Great Birch Wood), which is in an unmanaged state of decline, will be strengthened through the introduction of a native species woodland mix, infilling areas of dieback and reinforcing the existing tree belt. Proposed built form will be set back from the site boundary so that the landscape buffer mitigates visual impact of the proposed development (the buildings within this part of the site will be single storey).

6.6.1 VISUAL EFFECTS

The proposed development will result in a negligible change in the view in terms of character, quality and openness as the view of the site will continue to be heavily filtered by vegetation with glimpsed built form of a similar mass and scale. This vegetation would be managed and reinforced with new planting to the site

boundary which will mitigate any potential visual impact. Great Birch Wood on the western edge of the site forms a visual backdrop to the site and screens longer views into the landscape; this will remain unchanged.

The receptor sensitivity has been assessed as medium, as the view represents that experienced by occupiers of residential properties with restricted views.

The quality of the view has been assessed as poor, as it is restricted (by existing farm buildings, fencing and vegetation).

The magnitude of change has been assessed as negligible, as only a small part of the development will be discernible and this may be for only part of the year. The quality and character of the view will remain unchanged.

The visual effects have been assessed as slight. However, any perceptible change in the view is not considered to represent a negative change.

6.6.2 MITIGATION

Establish a landscape buffer to the northern site boundary. Ensure that built development is contained within the existing building footprint to reduce the impact of any change in the existing view.



SP1 View back towards residential receptor - Carr Side Farm



SP2 View from site back towards Carr Side Farm

Grid Reference (of the viewpoint): X: 339863 Y: 428823
 Viewer Height (measured to lens of camera): 1.7m
 Date of Survey: 05/10/2021
 Distance to Development (from the viewpoint): 470m

6.7 VIEW 7

Representative view from Wrea Brook Farm and Great Carr Side Farm looking south towards the site



6.7 VIEW 7

This photograph represents the view from Wrea Brook Farm and Great Carr Side Farm, located approximately 760m to the northwest of the site. The view is representative; access onto the properties was not possible, so the photograph was taken from the edge of the farmyard of Wrea Brook Farm. It has been assessed that there is a filtered view of the site from two ground floor windows on the south-facing gable end of the single-storey property at Wrea Brook Farm. There is also likely filtered views from the rear elevations of the southern group of farm buildings at Great Carr Side Farm which have been converted into a small cluster of single-storey and two-storey individual residential properties.

The view is comprised of flat open fields in the foreground, segmented and contained by hedgerows. Hedgerow vegetation and woodland on the site boundary contains and filters views of the site; low level buildings and structures are partially visible. The mass of Great Birch Wood and North Shoot Wood form a backdrop and contain longer views into the landscape.

The existing vegetation on the northern boundary of the site will be retained and strengthened with new planting to enclose the site and form a strong vegetated boundary. The existing woodland area to the western site boundary (Great Birch Wood), which is in an unmanaged state of decline, will be strengthened through the introduction of a native species woodland mix, infilling areas of dieback and reinforcing the existing tree belt. Proposed built form will be set back from the site boundary so that the landscape buffer mitigates visual impact of the proposed development (the buildings within this part of the site will be single storey).

6.7.1 VISUAL EFFECTS

The proposed development will result in a negligible change in the view in terms of character, quality and openness as the view of the site will continue to be heavily filtered by vegetation with glimpsed built form of a similar mass and scale. This vegetation would be managed and reinforced with new planting to the site boundary which will mitigate any potential visual impact. Great Birch Wood on the western edge of the site

forms a visual backdrop to the site and screens longer views into the landscape; this will remain unchanged.

The receptor sensitivity has been assessed as medium, as the view represents that experienced by occupiers of residential properties with restricted views.

The quality of the view has been assessed as poor, as it is restricted (by existing farm buildings, fencing and vegetation).

The magnitude of change has been assessed as negligible, as only a small part of the development will be discernible and this may be for only part of the year. The quality and character of the view will remain unchanged.

The visual effects have been assessed as slight. However, any perceptible change in the view is not considered to represent a negative change.

6.7.2 MITIGATION

Establish a landscape buffer to the northern site boundary.



SP1 View of residential receptor at Great Carr Side Farm



SP2 Wrea Brook Farm buildings

Grid Reference (of the viewpoint): X: 339230 Y: 429139
 Viewer Height (measured to lens of camera): 1.7m
 Date of Survey: 05/10/2021
 Distance to Development (from the viewpoint): 760m

6.13 VISUAL EFFECTS

Below is a table which summaries the visual effects as considered in the visual appraisal for view points and receptors;

VIEW	RECEPTOR	SENSITIVITY	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	EFFECTS PRE-MITIGATION
1	View from A584 Lytham Road looking east towards the site	Low	Low	Slight
2	View northeast towards the site from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP8	High	Low	Moderate (positive)
3	View northwest towards the site from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP9	High	Negligible	Slight
4	Representative view from Brook Farm and residential properties on West End Lane	Medium	Negligible	Slight
5	View from West End Lane/Lodge Lane looking south towards the site	Low	Low	Slight
6	Representative view from Little Carr Side Farm looking southwest towards the site	Medium	Negligible	Slight
7	Representative view from Wrea Brook Farm and Great Carr Side Farm looking southeast towards the site	Medium	Negligible	Slight

The proposed development has been considered from 7 representative viewpoint locations. Of these, only one receptor has been assessed as potentially experiencing moderate effects at completion. This is due to the sensitivity of the receptor and visibility of the site from this location. These effects are considered to be positive due to the untidy appearance of the site which would be improved with development set back behind a landscape buffer along the site frontage. All other receptors have been assessed as potentially experiencing slight effects at completion, due to the sensitivity of the receptors; none of these changes are considered negative.

This minimal change is due largely to the low-lying, relatively flat topography and the substantial amount of screening and filtering of views by existing vegetation around the site, and the fact that the development would be within the areas of existing built form so that the character of the view would be unchanged. The topography, surrounding built form and vegetation prevents the development from having any visual impact on the wider landscape and restricts views to those closest to the site.

Long term effects (after a period of 15 years) are assessed in the summary (section 8). There will inevitably be greater impacts during the construction process, however these will be short-lived and dependant on the construction programme. Although not described or assessed in detail, they include;

- The effect of plant and site fencing/scaffolding within the landscape during the construction phase;
- The effect of site vehicles and construction traffic both within the site and surrounding areas;
- Other components typical of construction including stockpiles of material and area lighting.

7.0 MITIGATION

7.1 LANDSCAPE MITIGATION

The retention of key landscape features and proposed landscaping and management techniques can be used to assist with reducing the potential effects of proposed development on the site and wider landscape.

The retention and enhancement of existing physical features that help reinforce Green Belt boundaries can be used to assist with reducing the potential effects of proposed development on Green Belt. There is almost no tree coverage on the site, therefore planting should be proposed to mitigate the impact of the development. New development will also be expected to respect any existing ecological constraints on site and where necessary, provide appropriate mitigation. In addition, the openness of the Green Belt can be maintained by establishing a low-density housing layout within a landscaped setting.

The list below has been compiled taking into consideration local planning policies, key characteristics of the landscape (from the published character assessments) and the site specific character appraisal. By following the mitigation measures below, it will help ensure that important features are retained. This in turn will help to reduce landscape effects and potential impact on the Green Belt;

- Establish landscape buffers on the edge of the development to reinforce woodland character and maintain separation from adjacent areas.
- Improve species diversity across the site to ensure that they complement and take into consideration the character and biodiversity of the local area.
- Development to have regard (and relate) to the layout and character of the immediate surrounding area.
- Soften the built form of the proposed development through the carefully considered layout and composition of buildings and building heights and through the use of vegetation to soften the built form.
- Provide recreational value for new and existing residents of the local area with public footpath links from Lytham Road taken into the development to access existing areas of valued woodland and wildlife ponds.

7.2 VISUAL MITIGATION

A combination of proposed landscaping and management techniques will be used to reduce the potential visual effects of the proposed development. The list below has been compiled taking into consideration the local landscape character as identified in the landscape appraisal and the individual mitigation recommendations as identified in the viewpoint appraisals;

- Maintain and protect the existing trees and woodland around the site boundary to conserve and enhance the characteristic features of the site and carry out appropriate arboricultural management of the existing trees to promote longevity.
- Establish landscape buffers to the site boundaries and set-back built development to reduce visual impact and provide additional landscaping to improve the quality of the landscape around the site boundaries.
- Plant trees and shrubs to provide additional screening to filter views and introduce evergreen species to reduce the extent of filtered views in the winter months.
- Development to have regard (and relate) to the layout and character of the immediate surrounding area.
- Soften the built form of the proposed development through the carefully considered layout and composition of buildings and building heights and through the use of vegetation to soften the built form.
- Use sustainable building materials and techniques that are sympathetic to the landscape.
- The proposals should be broadly compatible with the Lancashire Landscape Strategy and the Lancashire Biodiversity Action Plan.

7.3 INDICATIVE LANDSCAPE LAYOUT

The arrangement of the site will be determined by the Indicative Landscape Layout (see figure 11 below) which accommodates landscape and visual mitigation measures identified in the appraisals. It indicates proposed development access point, site layout and circulation, the general extent of the proposed residential developable footprint and zoning of areas/usage, proposed landscape buffers, indicative area of public open space/amenity areas, the existing trees to be retained and managed, ecology/biodiversity enhancement areas etc. This Indicative Landscape Layout will form an integral part of the planning application for the proposed development.

7.3 INDICATIVE LANDSCAPE LAYOUT



KEY
LANDSCAPING

-  Existing Trees to be retained (please refer to Tree Survey).
-  Existing Hedgerow to be retained.
-  Proposed Tree Planting
To be planted: 15-40m girth/height standard with 50% site cover.
-  Proposed Fruit or Small Tree
To be planted: 12-15m girth/height standard.
-  Proposed Small Tree
To be planted: 10m high 50% single stem / multi-stemmed specimen.
-  Proposed Native Hedgerow
To be planted: 10-12m high in a double staggered row with 50% site cover and protection with saplings.
-  Proposed Native Shrub Tree
To be planted: 10-15m high 50% site cover / 50% site cover to provide structural and/or screen.
-  Proposed Ornamental Planting
To be planted: 2-3m high to include wildlife friendly species and flowering plants to provide colour and interest throughout the year.
-  Retained Woodland/Grassland
Existing ground here under the scope of the project and to be retained in its natural state and managed under a long term management plan to increase the ecological value.
-  Proposed Amenity Lawn
Lawn to be established with 1.5m wide grass seed and watering/irrigation network.
-  Proposed Wetland planting
-  Proposed Ecological Feature - (Hedgerow / Logpile / Pond or Water)



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Project:
Illustrative Landscape Layout

Scale:
For Planning

Date:
1:500@A1 AH

Job number: Drawing number: Revision: Date:
4888 01 A 03/12/21

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FIGURE 11 - INDICATIVE LANDSCAPE LAYOUT

8.0 SUMMARY

The landscape and visual impact has been assessed using desktop based research, site visits and in consideration of the most recent published Character Assessment Guidelines.

The Site is located approximately 1 km west of Warton and approximately 1 km east of Lytham St Anne's in the administrative Borough of Fylde. It covers an area of approximately 8.19 hectares and is accessed directly from the A584 Lytham Road. The land to the north, east and west is mainly agricultural in terms of land use. To the south, beyond Lytham Road lie extensive marshlands adjacent to the River Ribble. To the south east is located the large premises of the Land Registry with Warton Aerodrome beyond. Immediately adjacent to the site to the east is a former poultry farm and a small industrial estate and to the west a golf driving range.

The site is a former military camp and more recently was used as a caravan and camping site with ancillary facilities such as an entertainment facility and an equestrian centre. It is being put forward by Savills, on behalf of Fylde Care Village as a planning application to demolish existing buildings on site and deliver a residential development across the site. The application will be submitted in outline with all matters reserved except for means of access.

The Ribble Marshes (located approximately 250m to the south) are managed as a National Nature Reserve and designated SSSI. The site is within open countryside and is designated Green Belt land.

8.1 LANDSCAPE SUMMARY

Published recognised character appraisals were used in the assessment of the landscape character and included the Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment and Natural England National Character Areas. This information together with a site specific appraisal, was used to assess the landscape quality, value and sensitivity of the development and this in turn was used to help determine the landscape effects.

The landscape effects of the proposed development on 'Settlement' are assessed as negligible, as the site is separated physically and visually from the adjacent settlements. The quality and character of the landscape will remain unchanged.

The landscape effects on 'Surrounding Landscape' are assessed as slight, as it would present a slight change, which is not uncharacteristic of the surrounding area. It is considered that the proposed development represents a positive change. It will to some degree be physically and visually contained by the adjacent vegetation so the quality and value of these landscapes would still be maintained.

The landscape effects on the site are assessed as slight as there will be a change in land use on the site due to the built form and residential nature of development. The scale and mass of the proposed development will be largely unchanged and represent a positive change, due to the existing untidy and derelict state of the site. The potential for the introduction of hedgerows and screen planting reduces the magnitude of this change. This change would also not be uncharacteristic of the site's immediate surroundings.

LANDSCAPE RECEPTOR	EFFECTS PRE-MITIGATION	EFFECTS POST-MITIGATION
Settlement	Negligible	None
Surrounding Landscape	Slight	Negligible
Site	Slight	Negligible

The table above summarises the landscape effects as considered in the landscape appraisal. It is expected that post mitigation, as illustrated (after a period of 15 years when the planting has had the opportunity to establish), the site will become an integral part of the landscape.

The landscape effects of the proposed development would be reduced to none for settlement and negligible for surrounding landscape and for the site itself. Once established the development would be viewed in the context of the adjacent landscape, within a well-vegetated setting, and contained by mature woodland.

8.2 VISUAL SUMMARY

Viewpoints and potential receptors were selected from various locations identified through the desktop study and site visit. They have been chosen to provide a representation of the range of receptors that have views towards the site, and to provide a baseline for the visual amenity of the local area.

The proposed development has been considered from 7 representative viewpoint locations. Of these, one receptor has been assessed as potentially experiencing moderate effects at completion. This is due to the sensitivity of the receptor and closeness to the site. However, these are considered positive effects due to the establishment of a landscape buffer on the site frontage and setting back of built development.

The remainder of the receptors identified will have slight effects at completion. This is due largely to the substantial amount of screening and filtering of views by existing vegetation around the site, and the fact that the development will be within the extent of existing built form so that the character of the view would be unchanged. The flat topography, surrounding built form and vegetation prevents the development from having any visual impact on the wider landscape and restricts views to those closest to the site.

The flat topography, vegetation, adjacent built form and other landscape elements reduce the visual impact of the development and contextualise it, restricting moderate visual impact to those closest to the site. The only two-storey development within the site (care home) is strategically located behind the existing mass of the adjacent poultry farm and industrial estate so that the buildings are screened or viewed in context of other larger buildings, mitigating visual impact.

VIEW	RECEPTOR	EFFECTS PRE-MITIGATION	EFFECTS POST-MITIGATION
1	View from A584 Lytham Road looking east towards the site	Slight	Negligible
2	View northeast towards the site from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP8	Moderate (positive)	Slight (positive)
3	View northwest towards the site from Public Right of Way 5-3-FP9	Slight	Negligible
4	Representative view from Brook Farm and residential properties on West End Lane	Slight	Negligible
5	View from West End Lane/Lodge Lane looking south towards the site	Slight	Negligible
6	Representative view from Little Carr Side Farm looking southwest towards the site	Slight	Negligible
7	Representative view from Wrea Brook Farm and Great Carr Side Farm looking southeast towards the site	Slight	Negligible

The table summarises the visual effects as considered in the visual appraisal. It is expected that post mitigation, as illustrated (after a period of 15 years when the planting has established and begun to reinforce the existing screening around the site) the effects of the proposed development would be reduced.

The only receptor which post mitigation, would experience a slight effect, is the public right of way, to the south of the site. This effect is considered a positive change due to the establishment of a landscape buffer on the site frontage and setting back of built development. The design of the buildings and the site arrangements will play an important role in ensuring that the

development is well integrated. Once established the mitigation measures will help to ensure that the development becomes an integrated with its surroundings. In time the visual impact will be further reduced.

8.3 GREEN BELT SUMMARY

A key aspect of Green Belt policy is the landscape openness that it affords and seeks to protect.

Although it is recognised that Green Belt is not a 'Landscape Designation', given the context of the site being located within the Green Belt, it is considered pertinent to assess the potential effects of the development on the Green Belt. As discussed earlier, a key consideration of the Green Belt designation is to preserve the openness of the landscape. The following conclusions were reached:

- No existing physical boundaries will be breached to accommodate the proposed development.
- The extension into Green Belt is minimal as the site could potentially be considered infill and is brown field development, located within the extent of existing built form, with minor changes in scale and mass.
- The development is of similar density and footprint to that of the previously approved site development.
- The site is not covered by landscape designation and is limited in terms of ecological value.
- There will be no impact on setting or character of historic towns or listed buildings.

8.4 CONCLUSION

The features that contribute to the character of the landscape have been identified within the landscape assessment. They have been proposed to be retained where feasible, protected and reinforced to ensure that they continue to contribute to the landscape value and quality of the site and its surroundings.

It has been assessed that, post mitigation, the landscape effects of the proposed development would be negligible for the surrounding landscape and for the site itself. It is considered that there would be no landscape affects on the character area described as settlement. Once established the development would be viewed in the context of the surrounding landscape and would be enhanced by the integration of a comprehensive landscape scheme.

Visual impact of the development will be limited to those closest to the site, due to the flat, low-lying topography, the adjacent built form and the substantial amount of screening and filtering of views by existing vegetation within the local landscape, and the fact that the development will be within the extent of existing buildings so that the character of the view would be largely unchanged. The change in view that will be experienced is considered positive due to the proposed enhancement of the landscape setting.

The design of the buildings and the site arrangements will play an important role in ensuring that the development is well integrated. Once established the mitigation measures will help to ensure that the development becomes an integrated with its surroundings. In time the visual impact will be further reduced.

A landscape-led approach to the site development has resulted in the incorporation of elements to reduce the effects of the development on landscape and visual impacts, leading to the production of the Indicative Landscape Layout Plan.

The proposed development will not have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

The application site in itself has limited landscape and ecological value. The existing landscape features would be retained and improved upon as part of the final layout of the scheme. These matters would be addressed in greater detail through any subsequent reserved matters process and consideration of layout.

APPENDIX 1

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL EFFECTS METHODOLOGY

LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

1.1 CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

Landscape	High	Medium	Low
Landscape designation	A landscape of distinctive character susceptible to relatively small changes. Includes national or regionally designated landscapes e.g. Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), National Scenic Area. Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes on the National Register	A landscape of moderately valued characteristics. Including local landscape designations.	A landscape of relative unimportance, the nature of which is tolerant to substantial change. No landscape designation.
Landscape resource	Important landscape resources or landscapes of particularly distinctive character and therefore likely to be subject to national designation or otherwise with high values to the public. Is vulnerable to minor changes.	Moderately valued characteristics reasonably tolerant of change.	Relatively unimportant/immature or damaged landscapes tolerant of substantial change.
Scale and enclosure	Small intimate landscape.	Medium scale landscape.	Large scale open landscape.
Landform and topography	Mountainous or large dominating hills and valleys. Intimate small scale landscapes defined through easily identifiable elements in the immediate landscape.	Rolling landform with small hills and valleys. Some intimacy and human scale through landscape elements such as hedgerows and woodland copses.	Large scale open landscape. Little intimacy or human scale, few character elements or features.
Settlement	Organic land cover pattern	A gradation between High and Low	Grid like linear land cover pattern
Landmarks and visible built structures	Landscape with symbolic or important features	A gradation between High and Low	Landscape with no recognised individual features or elements
Remoteness and tranquillity	Remote location, little evidence of human activity	A gradation between High and Low	Highly developed countryside areas with continuous evidence of human activity
Landscape Quality and Value	A landscape of exceptional or high quality and/or high value.	A landscape of good or ordinary quality and /or good or moderate value	A landscape of low or poor quality and value

1.2 CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING LANDSCAPE QUALITY

Landscape Quality	Definition	Typical Example
Exceptional	Strong landscape structure, characteristics, patterns, and/or clear urban grain identifiable with a historic period or event; Appropriate management for land use and land cover and/or a well maintained urban environment of distinction; Distinct features worthy of conservation, historic architectural grain; Sense of place exceptional local distinctiveness; No detracting features.	Internationally or nationally recognised. World Heritage Sites, National Parks, National Scenic Area, Special Landscape Area;
High	Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns and/or clear urban grain; Appropriate management for land use and land cover, but potentially scope to improve; Distinct features worthy conservation; Sense of place; Occasional detracting features.	Nationally, regionally recognised e.g. parts of National Scenic Area, Conservation Area or Listed status. Registered Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes
Good	Recognisable landscape structure and/or urban grain Scope to improve management for land use and land cover; Some features worthy of conservation; Sense of place; Some detracting features.	Regionally recognised e.g. localised areas within National Park, National Scenic Area, AGLV.
Ordinary	Distinguishable landscape structure, characteristics, patterns of landform and land cover often masked by land use; Fractured urban grain with patterns of use difficult to distinguish; Scope to improve management of vegetation; Some features worthy of conservation; Some detracting features	Locally recognised landscape without specific designation.
Poor	Weak landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover are missing, little or no recognisable urban grain; Mixed land use evident; Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation; Frequent detracting features.	A landscape without note or one singled out as being degraded or requiring improvement.
Very Poor	Degraded landscape structure, characteristic patterns and/or urban grain missing; Mixed land use or dereliction dominates; Lack of management/ intervention has resulted in degradation; Extensive detracting features.	A Landscape likely to be singled out as needing intervention or regeneration.

LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

1.3 CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING LANDSCAPE VALUE

Landscape Value	Definition	Typical Example
High	An iconic landscape or element(s) held in high regard both nationally, regionally and by the local community; A landscape or element(s) widely used by both the local community and a broader visiting community; Features of particular historical protected significance ; Landscape or space which defines or is closely associated with a community and its life and livelihood.	Nationally, regionally recognised e.g. parts of National Park, National Scenic Area, Special Landscape Area; Conservation or Listed status Registered Historic Garden and Designed Landscape
Good	A landscape or element(s) recognised regionally and locally as important ; A landscape widely used by the local community; Features or elements widely used or visited and held in association with the area or community.	Part of an AGLV
Moderate	A landscape of local importance ; A landscape widely used by the local community; A sense of place recognisable and associated with the local area.	Area of local landscape importance
Low	A landscape without particular noted significance; A landscape or elements infrequently used by the local community; A landscape which is not distinct and does not add to the overall context of the area.	

1.4 MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE (LANDSCAPE)

Magnitude of Change	Examples
High	The development would result in a prominent change to the landscape character (enhance or degrade). Major alteration to significant elements or features or the removal/introduction of substantial elements. The alteration of a landscape to substantially increase/decrease both the landscape value and quality.
Medium	The development would result in a change to the landscape character (enhance or degrade). Alteration to elements or features or partial removal/introduction. The alteration of a landscape to increase/decrease both the landscape value and quality.
Low	The development would result in a slight change to the landscape character (enhance or degrade). Alteration to minor elements or features or the removal/introduction. The alteration of a landscape to increase/decrease both the landscape value and quality.
Negligible	A very minor change which is not uncharacteristic and maintains the quality and value of the landscape.

1.5 SUMMARY TABLE TO DETERMINE LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

		Magnitude of Change			
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Sensitivity	High	substantial	moderate-substantial	moderate	slight
	Medium	moderate-substantial	moderate	slight-moderate	negligible
	Low	moderate	slight-moderate	slight	negligible
	Negligible	slight	negligible	negligible	none

The summary of effects on landscape can be expressed as an adverse or beneficial effect depending on the assessor's view regarding the nature and quality of the existing resource and how this has been changed. In some circumstances the change may be described as a neutral change if the expectation of the viewer or the fundamental nature and characteristics of a landscape appear unaffected.

VISUAL EFFECTS

1.6 CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING VISUAL SENSITIVITY

Receptor Sensitivity	Description
High	Occupiers of residential properties Users of outdoor recreational facilities, including public rights of way, whose attention may be focused on the landscape Elevated panoramic viewpoints Communities where the development results in changes in the landscape setting or valued views enjoyed by the community
Medium	Residential properties with restricted views People engaged in outdoor recreation where enjoyment of the landscape is incidental rather than the main interest People travelling through the landscape where the views involved are transient and sporadic but have a special significance in either the journey or the expression of the landscape or community being visited.
Low	People at their place of work, industrial facilities. People travelling through the landscape in cars, trains or other transport such that the speed and nature of the views involved are short lived and have no special significance

1.7 CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING VISUAL QUALITY

View Quality	Description
High	Iconic views or skylines which are individual character elements in their own right. Protected views through Supplementary Planning Guidance or development framework. View mentioned in the listing for a conservation area, listed building or scheduled monument as being important with regard to its setting. Wide panoramic distant views of a valued landscape(s).
Moderate	Views with strong and distinctive features. Uninterrupted views. Views over a landscape of recognised character and quality
Poor	Restricted views or views over a landscape of low value and quality.

1.8 MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE (VISUAL)

Magnitude of Change	Examples
High	The development would result in a prominent change to the existing view and would change the quality of the view. The development would be easily noticed by the observer. The development may break the skyline or form some other substantial change to the view.
Medium	The development would result in a noticeable change in the existing view that may change the character and quality of the view. The change would be readily noticed by the observer but would not dominate the view.
Low	The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view but this would not affect its character or quality. The development will appear as a small element in the wider landscape which may be missed by the casual observer. The view may be at such a distance as to reduce the appearance of the development.
Negligible	Only a small part of the development will be discernible and this may be for only part of the year or be a filtered view. The view may be at such a distance as to render the change virtually indiscernible without aid or reference. The quality and character of the view will remain unchanged.

1.9 SUMMARY TABLE TO DETERMINE VISUAL EFFECTS

		Magnitude of Change			
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Sensitivity	High	substantial	moderate-substantial	moderate	slight
	Medium	moderate-substantial	moderate	slight-moderate	negligible
	Low	moderate	slight-moderate	slight	negligible
	Negligible	slight	negligible	negligible	none

The summary of effects can be expressed as an adverse or beneficial effect depending on the assessor's view regarding the nature and quality of the existing resource and how this has been changed. In some circumstances the change may be described as a neutral change if the expectation of the viewer or the fundamental nature and characteristics of a view appear unaffected.

APPENDIX 2

FYLDE BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN RELEVANT LANDSCAPE PLANNING POLICY

Building Design and Landscape Character

POLICY GD2 GREEN BELT

The Green Belt within Fylde is shown on the Policies Map. Within that area national policy for development in the Green Belt will be applied.

There are four tracts of Green Belt within Fylde:

- a. between Kirkham and Freckleton;
- b. between Lytham and Warton;
- c. between St Annes and Squires Gate; and
- d. between Staining, Blackpool and Poulton-le-Fylde.

No strategic review of the Green Belt within Fylde has been undertaken when preparing the Local Plan.

Inappropriate development in the Green Belt should not be approved unless there are very special circumstances which justify an exception. The Framework sets out the types of development that are considered to be exceptions to inappropriate development and those forms of development that are not inappropriate provided they preserve the openness of, and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within, the Green Belt.

Policy ENV3, Protecting Existing Open Space (Part of the Green Infrastructure network), sets out the positive community benefits the Green Belt can provide in terms of landscape, amenity and open space.

POLICY GD3 AREAS OF SEPARATION

Areas of Separation shown on the Policies Map are designated between:

- Kirkham and Newton; and
- Wrea Green and Kirkham

Development will be assessed in terms of its impact upon the Area(s) of Separation, including any harm to the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements and, in particular, the degree to which the development proposed would compromise the function of the Area(s) of Separation in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements. Development will be limited to:

- a) that needed for purposes of agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or other uses appropriate to a rural area, including uses which would help to diversify the rural economy, of a type and scale which would not harm the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements;
- b) the re-use or rehabilitation of existing permanent and substantial buildings;
- c) extensions to existing dwellings and other buildings in accordance with Policy H7;
- d) development essentially needed for the continuation of an existing enterprise, facility or operation, of a type and scale which would not harm the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements;
- e) isolated new homes in the countryside which meet the criteria set out in Policy H6.
- f) minor infill development, of a scale and use that does not have a material impact on the rural character of the area and does not conflict with the provisions of policy ENV3, providing that it would not result in any harm to the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements or compromise the function of the Area(s) of Separation in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements.

Development that is needed for uses appropriate to a rural area situated within the Area of Separation should be sited carefully to avoid harm to the effectiveness of the gap between the settlements in protecting the identity and distinctiveness of settlements

POLICY GD4 DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Development in the Countryside, shown on the Policies Map including Inset Plans, will be limited to:

- a) that needed for purposes of agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or other uses appropriate to a rural area, including uses which would help to diversify the rural economy, including small-scale tourist accommodation, holiday caravan sites and very exceptionally, larger scale tourism development;
- b) the re-use or rehabilitation of existing permanent and substantial buildings;
- c) extensions to existing dwellings and other buildings in accordance with Policy H7;
- d) development essentially needed for the continuation of an existing enterprise, facility or operation, of a type and scale which would not harm the character of the surrounding countryside;
- e) isolated new homes in the countryside which meet the criteria set out in Policy H6;
- f) minor infill development

POLICY ENVI LANDSCAPE

Development will have regard to its visual impact within its landscape context and the landscape type in which it is situated. Development will be assessed to consider whether it is appropriate to the landscape character, amenity and tranquillity within which it is situated, as identified in the Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment, December 2000 or any subsequent update. Development will also need to have regard to any impact on valued landscapes. In addition:

- a) A landscaped buffer of appropriate depth and species will be provided for development that impacts upon land in or adjacent to the Countryside, and wherever necessary includes advanced planting, in order to limit the visual impact of development;
- b) Development proposals will ensure that existing landscape features will be conserved, maintained, protected and wherever possible enhanced through increased tree and shrub cover including soft edge / transitional areas of planting;
- c) In the event of the loss of landscape features, the impact will be minimised or, where loss is unavoidable, their like-for-like replacements will be provided. Where such features, including trees, woodlands, hedgerows and field ponds, are lost and replaced, measures will be put in place to manage these new features;
- d) Suitable landscape planting of native species, appropriate to its context should be incorporated within or, where appropriate, close to new development. Measures should be put in place for the management of such landscaping. Specific consideration should be given to how landscaping schemes will minimise the rate of surface water run-off;
- e) Details of the ongoing maintenance of all landscaping areas will be presented for approval by the Council.

POLICY ENV2 BIODIVERSITY

Section 1. Nature Conservation Sites and Ecological networks

a) The hierarchy of nature conservation sites The Council is committed to ensuring the protection and enhancement of Fylde's biodiversity and geological assets and interests. In order to do this, the Council will have regard to the following hierarchy of nature conservation sites when making planning decisions, according to their designation:

- i) International Ramsar Sites
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
Special Protection Areas (SPA)
Candidate SACs or SPAs

The strongest possible protection will be given to sites of international importance, predominantly the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA / Ramsar site.

- ii) National Nature Reserves (NNR)
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ)

- iii) Local Geodiversity Sites
County Biological Heritage Sites
Local Nature Conservation Sites
Local Nature Reserves

Development that would directly or indirectly affect any sites of local importance will be permitted only where it is necessary to meet an overriding local public need or where it is in relation to the purposes of the nature conservation site.

b) Development within or affecting nature conservation sites and ecological networks In addition to the provisions of National and European law, and in accordance with national planning policy, proposals for development within or affecting the above nature conservation sites must adhere to all of the following principles:

- i) Development that would directly or indirectly affect any sites of local importance including ancient woodland or ancient and veteran trees will be permitted only where it is necessary to meet an overriding local public need or where it is in relation to the purposes of the nature conservation, or mitigation can avoid affecting site integrity.

ii) Proposals which primarily seek to enhance or conserve biodiversity will be supported in principle, subject to the consideration of other Local Plan policies;

iii) Consideration should be given to the impact of development proposals on the County-wide Lancashire Ecological network and, where possible, opportunities to support the network by incorporating biodiversity in and around the development should be encouraged;

iv) Where development is considered necessary, adequate mitigation measures and compensatory habitat creation will be required through planning conditions and / or obligations, with the aim of providing an overall improvement in the site's biodiversity value. Where compensatory habitat is provided it should be of at least equal area and diversity, if not larger and more diverse, than that which is being replaced. Measures should be put in place for the ongoing management of such features.

Where it has been demonstrated that significant harm cannot be avoided appropriate mitigation or, as a last resort, replacement or other compensation will be required. The location of appropriate mitigation, replacement or other compensation will be targeted, using a sequential approach, as follows:

- Within the development site;
- In the immediate locality;
- Within a Nature Improvement Area within the Borough;
- Within a Nature Improvement Area elsewhere in the Fylde Coast; and lastly,
- Elsewhere.

Where significant harm resulting from development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, replaced or compensated, then planning permission will be refused.

v) the development of recreation will be in areas which are not sensitive to visitor pressures - the protection of biodiversity will be given higher priority than the development of recreation in sensitive areas of internationally important nature conservation sites (as identified in paragraph (1)(a)(i) above), and on all nature conservation sites and ecological networks in situations where there is conflict between the two objectives.

c) Damage to nature conservation sites and ecological networks The following definition of what constitutes damage to nature conservation sites and other ecological assets will be used in assessing developments likely to impact upon them:

- i) loss of the undeveloped open character of a part, parts or the entire nature conservation site or ecological network;
- ii) reducing the width of part of an ecological network or causing direct or indirect severance of any part of the ecological network or of any part of a nature conservation site including the flight path of migratory birds;
- iii) restricting the potential for movement of wildlife within or through an ecological network or nature conservation site;
- iv) causing the degradation of the ecological functions of any part of the ecological network or nature conservation site;
- v). directly or indirectly damaging or severing links between nature conservation sites, green spaces, wildlife corridors and the countryside; and
- vi) impeding links to the wider ecological network and nature conservation sites that are recognised by neighbouring planning authorities.

Section 1 (Nature Conservation Sites and Ecological networks) of this policy applies to all presently designated nature conservation sites, which are identified on the Policies Map including Inset Plans and to any nature conservation sites or ecological networks that may be designated in the future by appropriate agencies. The Fylde Ecological Network, comprising the Grassland Network, the Wetland and Heath Network and the Woodland Network has been identified and mapped by LCC and Lancashire Wildlife Trust, in compliance with the Framework and is accessible on the Planning Policy website.

Section 2. Priority Species Protection

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would have an adverse effect on a priority species or its habitat, unless the benefits of the development outweigh the need to maintain the population of the species in situ. Should development be permitted that might have an adverse effect on a priority species or its habitat, planning conditions or agreements will be used to:

- a) Ensure the survival of the individual species affected; and where this cannot be achieved;
- b) Reduce the disturbance to a minimum;
- c) Provide adequate alternative habitats to enhance the viability of the local population of that species; and
- d) Promote the preservation, restoration and recreation of priority habitats.