



**ES LANDSCAPE
PLANNING**

Part of the ES Group

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT,
BRICK KILN ROAD,
RAUNDS

Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

1.1.1. ES Landscape Planning Ltd was instructed by ABDS Ltd to assess the landscape and visual implications arising from the proposed residential development at Brick Kiln Road, Raunds, Northamptonshire. The site location is illustrated on Plan 11231L.SLP.005.

1.2. Approach

1.2.1. The purpose of this assessment is to objectively assess the proposed development in the context of the existing landscape character, visual environment and landscape related policy environment.

1.2.2. This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will take the following format:

- Review of the site's context in terms of landscape related policy, existing landscape character and the receiving visual environment;
- Introduction of the proposed development, including the proposed landscape strategy;
- Assessment of landscape and visual effects upon the existing receptors / resource and in relation to landscape related planning policy; and
- The conclusions of the assessment will be set out.

1.2.3. The assessment has been prepared in accordance with the methodology that is included in Appendix 1. The methodology has been developed in line with guidance within Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3), prepared by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and the Landscape Institute (LI) in 2013.

2. BASELINE ASSESSMENT

2.1. The Site

2.1.1. The site lies on the northern edge of Raunds, a small, nucleated settlement, located approximately 3.5km northeast of Wellingborough. The site is located to the north of Brick Kiln Road, on the northern fringes of the town, between the recent developments at West End and Northdale Park. It is noted that the land immediately to the east of the site is subject to a separate application for commercial development. The site is illustrated on the Site Location Plan (SLP.001) which accompanies this LVIA.

2.1.2. The site currently comprises two paddocks which lie on the northern edge of the settlement, positioned between the recent residential estate at West End (to the west) and Northdale Park (to the east), which is still under construction. The New Barn Farm Industrial Estate lies immediately to the east of the site, comprising a number of medium scale industrial units. This neighbouring parcel of land is subject to a separate planning application for an extension to the existing commercial development. The site does not extend as far north as the development at West End or the Industrial Estate. Brick Kiln Road defines the southern boundary, providing vehicular links between many of the residential areas which define the northern part of Raunds and the A45 to the west. The site boundaries are defined by established hedgerows with scattered hedgerow trees. This mature vegetation provides a degree of physical enclosure and containment, separating the site from the wider arable landscape to the north. The site is shown within its immediate setting on the Site Context Plan (SCP.002) which accompanies this LVIA.

2.2. The Site's Setting

2.2.1. As noted above, the site lies on the northern fringes of the existing settlement of Raunds. Established residential estates lie to the east, south and west of the site, as well as a number of commercial developments which lie along Brick Kiln Road and towards the north western side of Raunds, towards the A45. The settlement has a nucleated character, with mid to late 20th century residential estates characterising the northern extent of the town, between the site and the town's core.

2.2.2. Residential development at Northdale Park, just to the east of the site, is currently under construction, comprising more than 200 new homes and associated open space. The development at West End, immediately adjacent to the western boundary

of the site, was constructed in the early 21st century and has a contemporary character with an area of allotments and areas of public open space, the latter of which is located to the north of the estate. A small commercial parcel to the south west of the site, known as Hillside, was granted outline planning consent in 2022 for 21 residential dwellings, (ref: 20/00347/OUT). The consented scheme will replace the existing commercial buildings with new residential development immediately adjacent to the site which are accessed off Brick Kiln Road.

- 2.2.3. To the north of the site lies a medium to larger scale, arable landscape that characterises much of the Northamptonshire countryside. There is a good network of public rights of way that extend across the adjacent landscape, providing connections northwards towards Ringstead and Thrapston, and eastwards towards Keyston. The arable fields to the north are characterised by their regular shape and vegetated field boundaries, comprising mature hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees, interspersed with occasional fragmented pockets of woodland. There are very few internal landscape features associated with the arable landscape, giving rise to a sense of openness, although the established vegetation structure creates a sense of compartmentalisation and, together with the gently rolling topography, limits longer distance views. The A45 extends across this landscape, running broadly north east – south west creating a link between the M1 and A14, as well as linking many of the settlements associated with the Nene Valley.
- 2.2.4. **Vegetation Cover** – The site lies within a landscaped setting on the northern fringes of Raunds, characterised by mature boundary vegetation along Brick Kiln Road and the site’s interface with the adjacent arable landscape. Vegetation within the site is limited to grazed, species-poor grassland and a length of hedgerow between the two paddocks. As noted above, the wider landscape to the north comprises a series of regularly shaped, medium - large scale arable fields defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees.
- 2.2.5. **Topography** – The site falls gently from north west to south east, located lower down in the landscape than the adjacent residential development at West End. The site sits between 70m AOD at its north western corner, and 60m AOD in its south eastern corner by Brick Kiln Road. The wider arable landscape to the north is gently undulating, creating small, localised ridges that help to contain views from the immediate footpath routes to the north and north east. In the wider landscape to the north west and east, the topography rises sharply, giving rise to a perception of the town sitting in a localised ‘bowl’. This, together with the occasional fragmented

woodland blocks and strong network of field boundary and roadside hedgerows, creates a degree of enclosure within the landscape.

- 2.2.6. **Public Rights of Way (PRoW)** – The site is not publicly accessible and is separated from footpaths UG1 and UG2 by the existing commercial development to the north east, and established vegetation structure which characterises the sites immediate setting. Within the wider context, the PRoW network extends around the edges of the town and out into the adjacent arable landscape, as illustrated on the Site Location Plan.

2.3. **Landscape Related Policy Background**

- 2.3.1. The site is covered by the saved policies of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011 - 2031 (adopted July 2016) and the Raunds Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted November 2017).
- 2.3.2. The site and its setting are not covered by any qualitative landscape designations.
- 2.3.3. It is considered that the following landscape related policies are of relevance:

North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy

Policy 3: Landscape Character

Raunds Neighbourhood Plan

Policy R17: Greening The Town

- 2.3.4. The aims and objectives of the NPPF and policies of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and Raunds Neighbourhood Plan have informed the design development of the proposals. Section 4 of this LVIA will assess the proposals in line with the landscape related policy.

2.4. **Landscape Character**

- 2.4.1. The European Landscape Convention (ELC) defines landscape as “...an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and / or human factors”.

- 2.4.2. As set out within “An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment” (Christine Tudor, Natural England; October 2014) **“landscape character may be defined as a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements, or characteristics, in the landscape that make one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse. Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is the process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features (characteristics) that make landscapes distinctive.”**
- 2.4.3. As part of the baseline assessment, published landscape character assessments have been identified and reviewed and these form the basis of the assessment of the landscape character of the site.

National Landscape Character Assessment

- 2.4.4. Natural England have prepared the Character Map of England which provides a broad assessment of landscape character at a national level. The site lies within the “Northamptonshire Vales” national character area (NCA89). An extract of the assessment is included within Appendix 2. It is noted that the assessment identifies a number of key characteristics associated with this NCA, including:
- **“An open landscape of gently undulating clay ridges and valleys with occasional steep scarp slopes. There is an overall visual uniformity to the landscape and settlement pattern.**
 - **Diverse levels of tranquillity, from busy urban areas to some deeply rural parts.**
 - **Mixed agricultural regime of arable and pasture, with arable land tending to be on the broader, flat river terraces and smaller pastures on the slopes of many minor valleys and on more undulating ground.**
 - **Relatively little woodland cover but with a timbered character derived largely from spinneys and copses on the ridges and more undulating land, and from waterside and hedgerow trees and hedgerows, though the density, height and pattern of hedgerows are varied throughout.**
 - **A strong field pattern of predominantly 19th century and – less frequently – Tudor enclosure.**
 - **Distinctive river valleys of the Welland and Nene, with flat flood plains and gravel terraces together with their tributaries (including the Ise). Riverside meadows and waterside trees and shrubs are common, along with flooded gravel pits, open areas of winter flooded grassland, and wetland mosaics supporting large numbers of wetland birds and wildfowl.**

- **Frequent large settlements that dominate the open character of the landscape, such as Northampton and Wellingborough, and associated infrastructure, including major roads, often visually dominant.**
- **Frequent small towns and large villages often characterised by red brick buildings and attractive stone buildings in older village centres and eastern towns and villages. Frequent imposing spired churches are also characteristic, together with fine examples of individual historic buildings.**
- **Relatively frequent, prominent historic parklands and country houses towards the outer edges and close to more wooded areas. Other characteristics include ridge and furrow and nationally important townships such as Sutton Bassett and Clipston.**
- **Localised high concentrations of threshing barns and high status timber - framed farm buildings from the 18th century or earlier.”**

2.4.5. The regional assessment is useful in introducing the wider landscape character context in which the site is set.

Local Landscape Character Assessment

2.4.6. At a more local level, Northamptonshire County Council have undertaken the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment (2003). The published assessment identifies that the site is located within the “Farmed Claylands” landscape character area (LCT 9) and the “Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands” landscape character area (LCA 9A). An extract from the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment is included within Appendix 3. This assessment identifies the following key characteristics associated with the LCT and LCA:

- **“Extensive drift deposits of Boulder Clay mask the underlying solid geology.**
- **Expansive, flat or gently undulating landscape where plateau areas are divided by broad shallow valleys.**
- **Wide views give the landscape an expansive and sometimes exposed character.**
- **Open and intensively farmed arable landscape with large scale fields bounded by open ditches or sparse, closely trimmed hedges.**
- **Limited woodland cover and hedgerow removal contributes to open character.**
- **Thinly settled landscape, feeling remote in some particularly sparsely settled areas.**
- **Often direct rural roads and tracks, frequently bordered by ditches, cross the landscape in a consistent orientation, giving it a distinctive grain.**

- **Farms and isolated houses at end of tracks.**
- **Diversity of building materials including brick and limestone.”**

2.4.7. The assessment identifies that the LCA is in good condition, but in some areas displays an under-managed, sometimes derelict and man-made character.

ESLP Landscape Character Assessment

2.4.8. ESLP has also undertaken an assessment of the localised landscape character, and this has been informed by the published assessments prepared by Natural England and Northamptonshire County Council.

2.4.9. The site comprises two heavily grazed paddocks bound by established hedgerows and hedgerow trees located on the northern fringes of Raunds. Existing residential development lies immediately to the south and west of the site, with the development at Northdale Park, located just to the east. Residential land uses are prevalent within this immediate landscape context. The construction of the development at Hillside, immediately adjacent to the south western edge of the site, will reinforce this character. The settlement is a well-established feature within the local landscape, forming a backdrop to the site in views from the east, west and south. The settlement has a nucleated character that radiates out from its core, with the spire of the Church of St Peter forming a prominent, elevated feature within the landscape. The site clearly forms part of the settlement edge landscape of Raunds and this will be reinforced neighbouring residential and commercial developments come forward. This part of Raunds has a varied character comprising a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced properties of varying ages which incorporate buff and red brick, white render with grey and red roof tiles.

2.4.10. As part of the landscape character assessment, there is a need to assess the susceptibility, value and overall sensitivity of the landscape resource. These assessments will inform the objective assessment of effects within Section 4.2 and ensure that a transparent and objective approach to the assessment is achieved. GLVIA3 defines landscape susceptibility, landscape value and landscape sensitivity, as follows:

“Susceptibility: the ability of a defined landscape to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences;

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

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

Landscape Susceptibility

- 2.4.11. In terms of the susceptibility of the localised landscape receptor, it is considered that the adjacent settlement edge and developments of West End and Northdale Park, as well as the consented development at Hillside, all strongly influence the ability of the landscape to accommodate the type of development proposed. Raunds is an established town and a local centre of growth, with the recent residential developments to the east and west of the site demonstrating the natural growth of the settlement to the north as well as the ability of the settlement's setting to accommodate well-designed change. The site is not publicly accessible and the existing species-poor, grazed pasture grassland is not considered to be of high value from a landscape or ecological perspective. It is considered that the habitat could be enhanced as part of a comprehensive scheme of landscaping. There are few internal features of note, with the more notable vegetation comprising the hedgerows and hedgerow trees associated with the sites boundaries.
- 2.4.12. The influence of the adjacent settlement edge, the new residential developments and existing commercial buildings within the immediate context of the site, ensures that that it is more closely related to the adjoining settlement than the wider, arable landscape setting which extends to the north. It is concluded that the susceptibility of the landscape, in which the site is set, to the type of change proposed is Low.

Landscape Value

- 2.4.13. In terms of value, Box 5.1 within GLVIA3 identifies a series of eight criteria which are generally accepted as being appropriate indicators of landscape value. Table 1, below, assesses the value of the landscape in which the site is set against each of the eight criteria set out in Box 5.1.

Table 1: Baseline Analysis of Landscape Value

Value Criteria	Assessment
<i>Landscape Quality (Condition)</i>	<p>Low – The setting of Raunds and the site are characterised by a medium / large scale largely arable landscape, defined by established native hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Vegetation along Brick Kiln Road tends to be taller, creating a degree of enclosure along sections of the road.</p> <p>The recent development to the north of the town, to the east and west of the site, has changed the character of the site’s localised setting, leading to a loss of the historic field pattern and extending the perceived presence of the settlement further north. Given the existing uses associated with the sites immediate setting, its character differs from the wider, medium / large scale arable landscape which characterises the wider countryside, with the existing uses more closely related to a settlement fringe location.</p>
<i>Scenic Quality</i>	<p>Medium / Low – The presence of heavily grazed grassland within the site, together with its settlement edge location and new residential built form to the east and west, reduce the scenic quality. Away from the site, the presence of main transport corridors, including the A45, and the large scale commercial built form that characterises the western edge of the town, characterise any longer distance views from the north and west, further reducing the scenic quality of the surrounding landscape. However, in some locations to the east of the site, the localised undulating landform prevents views towards the built form and road infrastructure, providing a more scenic, countryside landscape.</p>
<i>Rarity</i>	<p>Low – There are no elements or features associated with the site or its landscape setting that do not exist elsewhere within the wider landscape context. The site is characterised by heavily grazed grassland with limited internal vegetation of value.</p>
<i>Representativeness</i>	<p>Negligible – There are no characteristics or features associated with the site or its setting that are considered particularly important examples. The species-poor grassland is characteristic of the wider landscape character area but is not considered to be of any notable value and differs from the arable uses which characterise the immediate setting of the site and wider settlement.</p>

<i>Conservation Interests</i>	Medium / Low – The site has limited ecological or heritage value and is not subject to any ecology or historic designations. The key landscape features of interest are the mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees associated with the boundaries. There is no Conservation Area in Raunds, however the spire of the Church of St Peter is a visually prominent landmark within the local landscape and from the elevated landscape that surrounds the town, located approximately 400m south east of the site.
<i>Recreation Value</i>	None – The site is not publicly accessible and there is a sense of physical separation between the site and the wider public right of way network as a result of the mature boundary vegetation and new built form on the northern edge of Raunds.
<i>Perceptual Aspects</i>	Low – The presence of the commercial development to the east as well as the newer residential developments to the east and west of the site and the wider settlement edge of Raunds itself, reduce the perceived tranquility of the localised landscape setting of the site. Tranquility away from the site and town increases to the east and south, where the elevated ridgelines and rolling arable landscape reduces the intervisibility with the settlement. However, to the north and west, the presence of the A45 and large scale commercial buildings on the western edge of the town ensure that the sense of tranquility and remoteness within the landscape remains low.
<i>Associations</i>	None – There are no known associations with the site or its immediate setting.

2.4.14. As an overview, it is considered that the overall value of the site, and the landscape in which it is set, is Low. It is considered that the landscape in which the site is set does not represent a “valued landscape” in the context of para 174a of the NPPF.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 2.4.15. Overall, in terms of sensitivity, when the judgements of susceptibility and value are considered, it is concluded that the sensitivity of the landscape in which the site is set is **Low**.

2.5. The Visual Environment

- 2.5.1. As part of the initial desk study and the subsequent site visit, a number of key views have been identified which are taken from publicly accessible locations showing the site in its localised and wider landscape context. The viewpoints seek to reflect the views of the site by more sensitive receptors, such as walkers on the local PRow network, however, the viewpoints are considered representative and not exhaustive.
- 2.5.2. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been modelled digitally to identify those areas of the landscape from which the proposed development would *theoretically* be visible. The ZTV plan (11231L.ZTV.003) illustrates potential areas of visibility as a result of the localised topography. The model is primarily a bare earth analysis and while larger areas of woodland and built form are taken into account smaller areas of structure planting and mature field boundaries are not considered. The model therefore represents a worst-case scenario in terms of the potential visibility of the proposals. The ZTV is a useful tool in providing a baseline which has informed the field survey work and identification of key views which accompany this LVIA.
- 2.5.3. The viewpoints are illustrated on the Viewpoint Location Plan (11231L.VLP.004) within Appendix 4. The photographs were taken in July 2023. The day was clear with good visibility at longer distances.
- 2.5.4. The photographs were taken with a Canon 35mm equivalent digital SLR. The camera is a full frame model so, in line with Landscape Institute TGN 06/19 – Visual Representation of Development Proposals, the photographs were taken at 50mm with a fixed focal length lens. The photographs are presented in Appendix 4 at a scale whereby they can be viewed at a distance of 260mm to represent the view from the particular location. The extent of the site is indicated on the photographs to assist the viewer's understanding of where the site sits within the context of the view. It must be noted that the photographs are illustrative and do not replace visiting the viewpoints in person.

2.5.5. As part of the baseline visual assessment, key receptors have been identified and this has informed the overall assessment of sensitivity of the view. Table 2, below, identifies the locations, receptors and sensitivities of the key viewpoints.

Table 2: Baseline Visual Assessment

Viewpoint	Location	Key Receptors	Receptor Sensitivity
1	Brick Kiln Road, adjacent to southern site boundary	Motorists	Low
2	Brick Kiln Road, approximately 40m south of site	Motorists	Low
3	Brick Kiln Road, approximately 10m south of site	Motorists	Low
4	Brick Kiln Road, approximately 20m south of site	Motorists	Low
5	Brick Kiln Road, approximately 70m west of site	Motorists	Low
6	Kelmarsh Avenue, approximately 90m west of site	Motorists	Low
7	Boughton Lane, approximately 130m west of site	Residents (oblique)	Medium
8	Cottesbrook Way, approximately 50m north west of site	Residents (oblique)	Medium
9	Border Park play area, approximately 110m north of site	Users of recreation / play area	Medium
10	Footpath UG1, approximately 20m north of site	Walkers	High
11	Footpath UG2, approximately 170m east of site	Walkers	High
12	Footpath UG2, approximately 145m east of site	Walkers	High
13	Footpath UG1 (diverted route), approximately 100m east of site	Walkers	High
14	Junction of Brick Kiln Road, Braun Drive and footpath UG2, approximately 125m south east of site	Walkers Motorists	High Low

15	Midland Road and footpath UG8, approximately 570m south east of site	Walkers Motorists	High Low
16	Brick Kiln Road, approximately 530m west of site	Motorists	Low
17	London Road, approximately 570m south west of site	Motorists Visitors to cemetery	Low Medium
18	Raunds Road, approximately 870m north west of site	Motorists	Low
19	Footpath UG1, approximately 440m north of site	Walkers	High
20	Footpath UG2, approximately 350m north east of site	Walkers	High
21	B663 and footpath UG12, approximately 1.1km south east of site	Walkers Motorists	High Medium / Low
22	B663, approximately 1.4km south east of site	Motorists	Medium / Low
23	Footpath UG9, approximately 1.6km south east of site	Walkers	High
24	Footpath UG8, approximately 1.8km south east of site	Walkers	High
25	Footpath UG13, approximately 1.5km south east of site	Walkers	High
26	Shelton Road, approximately 2km south east of site	Motorists	Medium / Low
27	Unnamed lane off Shelton Road, approximately 3km south east of site	Motorists	Medium / Low
28	Footpath PH1, approximately 2.5km south of site	Walkers	High
29	Bridleway UG34, approximately 2km south west of site	Walkers	High
30	Bridleway UG34, approximately 1.9km south west of site	Walkers	High
31	Nene Way promoted route, approximately 3.6km west of site	Walkers	High

- 2.5.6. As illustrated by the Photographic Record, despite the theoretical visibility suggested on the ZTV plan, views of the site are highly localised as a result of the topography, built environment and vegetation cover that characterises the immediate setting of the site. The site represents a visually well-enclosed parcel of land immediately adjacent to the established settlement edge of Raunds. Section 4.3 of this LVIA assesses the potential effects of the proposals upon these views.

3. THE PROPOSALS

- 3.1. The proposals are for a residential scheme of up to 87 dwellings with associated access, parking, open space and landscaping. This is an outline application with all matters except access reserved. . The illustrative layout, prepared by ABDS Ltd, is included in Appendix 5. This indicates one way in which the site could be developed to deliver the proposed number of dwellings and provide an understanding of how the proposals would relate to the existing and consented adjoining developments.
- 3.2. The proposals seek to deliver a landscape-led scheme, retaining the key onsite landscape assets including the established field boundary hedgerow and hedgerow trees. The proposed development would be set back from these features to create new green corridors to accommodate biodiversity enhancements, new structural tree planting, future vegetation growth and to help visually integrate the proposals into their landscape setting. The proposed approach to landscaping is illustrated on the Landscape Strategy Plan (11231L.LSP.005) which accompanies this LVIA.
- 3.3. The proposals would be located immediately adjacent to the recent residential estate at West End and the consented Hillside development. The proposals adopt a sensitive layout, responding to the adjacent properties to ensure that privacy is maintained as well as respecting the retained landscape features within the site to ensure that the proposals are introduced into an established landscaped context. The proposals also adopt a landscaped route through the residential development, with landscaped swales reinforcing the landscaped presence through the proposed built environment.
- 3.4. The proposals would be in keeping with the scale and style of the existing neighbouring developments and would be integrated into their landscape setting using new structural tree and shrub planting to assist their integration. The area to the south east of the main development would be enhanced to create a species-rich meadow with new native tree and understorey planting, contributing towards achieving a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as well as providing a new area of public open space and integrating the proposed built form into the localised landscape.
- 3.5. A new attenuation basin is proposed in this area as part of the site-wide SUDS strategy. This feature would be naturalised with areas of permanent standing water and native marginal and submerged planting, which would not only create a more attractive element within the wider public open space but also contribute positively to BNG.

- 3.6. There would be some loss of species-poor improved grassland and internal planting, however, the proposed enhancements to the on site green infrastructure would compensate for this loss. It is considered that the proposals would not affect any existing trees or hedgerows of note.

4. ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE & VISUAL EFFECTS

4.1. Background

- 4.1.1. In line with the guidance in GLVIA3, it is appropriate to assess the effect of the proposed development upon the baseline landscape character and visual environment as identified in Section 2 of the LVA.

4.2. Effect upon Landscape Character

National Landscape Character Assessment

- 4.2.1. With regard to the effect of the proposals upon the “Northamptonshire Vales” national character area (NCA 89), it is noted that this published assessment does not provide an assessment of sensitivity. Raunds is an existing, established settlement, located within this undulating landscape. Given the sites location immediately adjacent to the established settlement edge of Raunds, which is characterised by recent residential development, and the enclosure provided by the existing boundary vegetation and recent development to the east and west, the proposals would not introduce any new or alien features into this landscape setting. The proposals would not compromise the perception of the undulating landscape or adversely affect any of the existing positive characteristics or features which define the “Northamptonshire Vales” NCA, nor would the proposals compromise any of the Statements of Environmental Opportunity associated with this NCA.
- 4.2.2. It is considered that the proposals could be integrated into the “Northamptonshire Vales” NCA and would give rise to an effect of None significance.

Local Landscape Character Assessment

- 4.2.3. As noted within Section 2, the site is located within the “Farmed Claylands” LCT and the “Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands” LCA, as identified within the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment. The published assessment identifies a number of key characteristics associated with the LCT and LCA and it is considered appropriate to assess the likely effect of the proposals against each of these to assess the overall effect upon the character area, refer Table 3 below.

Table 3: Effect on the “Farmed Claylands” LCT and “Chelveston to Caldecott Claylands” LCA.

Key Characteristics associated with the “Farmed Claylands” LCT and Chelveston to Caldecott Claylands” LCA	Effect of the Proposals
<i>Extensive drift deposits of Boulder Clay mask the underlying solid geology</i>	No Change – The proposals would not require any significant ground remodeling and would not affect the prevailing geology of the site or its localised setting.
<i>Expansive, flat or gently undulating landscape where plateau areas are divided by broad shallow valleys</i>	No Change – The proposals would not require any significant ground remodeling and would not affect the perceived topography or the expansive undulating landscape of the site or its localised setting. Nor would the proposals affect an appreciation of the surrounding undulating landform when viewed from the wider setting.
<i>Wide views give the landscape an expansive and sometimes exposed character</i>	No Change – The sites location immediately adjacent to the settlement edge, together with the existing vegetation and built form associated with the site and its setting, creates a degree of enclosure and visual containment, limiting views of the wider expansive and exposed landscape. There are longer distance views from higher up areas within the surrounding landscape, mainly from localised plateaus and ridgelines, however, the proposals are located away from these areas and would be contained within lower lying area within which Raunds is located. Furthermore, residential development is an existing component within the immediate context of the site in longer distance, more elevated views. The proposals would blend in with the surrounding built form, resulting in only a limited, very localised change to this characteristic.
<i>Open and intensively farmed arable landscape with large scale fields bounded by open ditches or sparse, closely trimmed hedges</i>	No Change – The proposals would result in the loss of a small area of species-poor grazed pastoral grassland, immediately adjacent to the settlement edge, separated from the characteristic arable landscape by mature boundary vegetation and existing built form. The proposals present an opportunity to establish areas of species-rich meadow, native

	<p>scrub and tree planting that would mitigate the loss of the improved grassland and make a positive contribution to local biodiversity and public open space provision. Furthermore, there are no open ditches or closely trimmed hedges associated with the site or its localised setting that would be affected by the proposals.</p>
<p><i>Limited woodland cover and hedgerow removal contributes to open character</i></p>	<p>Negligible Adverse / No change – The proposals would retain the majority of existing onsite trees and hedgerows but would result in the loss of a short length of internal hedgerow between the two paddocks. The remaining vegetation would be retained within new green infrastructure corridors, with opportunities to enhance them with new areas of native shrub and tree planting. Any vegetation loss would be limited to the site itself and would not affect the wider woodland or hedgerow network within the LCT and LCA.</p>
<p><i>Thinly settled landscape, feeling remote in some particularly sparsely settled areas</i></p>	<p>No Change – The sites location adjacent to the settlement edge of Raunds is not considered to be a remote or thinly settled location, being influenced by a variety of development types that characterise the site and its immediate setting. Away from the site, the sense of remoteness increases slightly, where intervening landform and topography limits intervisibility between the public realm and the established settlement. However, a number of visible urbanising features such as rooflines of existing residential and commercial buildings, and the A45 road limit the sense of remoteness. It is considered that the proposals could be integrated into the established settlement and would not affect this characteristic of the LCT and LCA.</p>
<p><i>Often direct rural roads and tracks, frequently bordered by ditches, cross the landscape in a consistent orientation, giving it a distinctive grain</i></p>	<p>No Change – There are no rural roads or that would be affected by the proposals. Brick Kiln Road has a distinctly urban character within the context of the site, with residential development defining the southern and much of the northern side of the streetscene. It is not a rural road. As noted above, there are no ditches within the site or its setting that would be affected by the proposals.</p>

<p><i>Farms and isolated houses at end of tracks</i></p>	<p>No Change – There are no farms or isolated houses at the end of tracks associated with the site or its localised setting. The northern edge of Raunds is characterised by mixed use development that, over the past 20 years, has removed isolated farms and houses on the edge of the settlement in favour of new residential and commercial built form. It is considered that the proposals would not affect this landscape characteristic.</p>
<p><i>Diversity of building materials including brick and limestone</i></p>	<p>No Change –The character, materials and style of proposals would incorporate a sympathetic and positive palette that responds to the local vernacular and maintains the diversity of building materials of the town. The proposed development would not appear at odds with the surrounding settlement edge which is characterised by more contemporary development and commercial built form.</p>

4.2.4. As set out above, it is considered that the proposals would not affect the key characteristics associated with the “Farmed Claylands” LCT and the “Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands” LCA as identified within the published assessment.

4.2.5. It is considered that the proposals could be integrated without detriment to the character of the “Farmed Claylands” LCT and “Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands” LCA and would be compatible with the receiving landscape character. It is concluded that while the proposals would represent some localised change within the context of the site itself, overall the proposals would represent no change in terms of magnitude and, as such, would give rise to an effect of **None** upon the receiving LCT and LCA.

ESLP Landscape Character Assessment

4.2.6. As set out within Section 2 of this LVIA, ESLP have also undertaken an assessment of the localised landscape character, and this has been informed by the published assessments prepared by Natural England and Northamptonshire County Council. The assessment within Section 2 concludes that the overall sensitivity of the landscape receptor in which the site is set is Low.

- 4.2.7. As identified in the baseline assessment, the site comprises two paddocks which lie immediately adjacent to the settlement edge. The site is set within a mature landscape context, with a good degree of visual containment provided by the combination of boundary vegetation, and residential and commercial developments which lie to the immediate east and west of the site, as well as from the wider settlement of Raunds to the south.
- 4.2.8. The proposals would remove the two paddocks from agricultural use, however, the species-poor grassland is considered to be of low landscape and ecological value and the site does not read as being part of the wider courtryside setting, rather it appears as a remaining parcel of land between residential and commercial developments which have emerged as the settlement has grown. The site is considered to be more closely related to the settlement edge rather than the agricultural landscape that lies to the north. The proposals would not extend as far north as the existing developments to the east or west and would not give rise to the perception of Raunds extending out into the wider countryside beyond the established settlement envelope.
- 4.2.9. There would be some minor vegetation loss, the majority of which would comprise the low value grassland, as well as some minor hedgerow removal to accommodate the proposals. However, this would be limited to the site itself and the proposals present significant opportunities for new planting as illustrated on the Landscape Strategy Plan, which would not only mitigate for the loss but also enhance the perceived vegetated character of the settlement edge, integrating the proposed built form.
- 4.2.10. The landscape-led layout includes generous offsets to the retained hedgerows and hedgerow trees, creating new green infrastructure corridors, as well as opportunities for new areas of species-rich meadows, native scrub and tree planting in the south eastern part of the site. The sensitive layout and comprehensive landscape proposals would ensure that the proposals do not encroach on the agricultural landscape to the north, creating a sympathetic interface between the development and the surrounding arable landscape.
- 4.2.11. The proposals have been informed by the local vernacular to ensure that they complement the receiving townscape. The proposals would effectively create an infill development between the West End and Northdale Park developments. These developments, together with the townscape to the south of Brick Kiln Road, ensure

that residential land uses dominate the immediate setting of the site and the proposals would not introduce any new or alien components into this context... The proposals would reflect the nucleated character of the settlement, located adjacent to more recent additions rather than the more sensitive, historic core.

4.2.12. It is considered that the proposals would give rise to a Medium magnitude of change to the site, resulting in an effect of **Moderate / Minor Adverse at Year One**. As the proposed landscaping matures, this would reinforce the landscaped setting of the site, softening the presence of the proposals within the context of Brick Kiln Road, as well as positively contributing towards local biodiversity. GLVIA3 considers it appropriate to assess likely effects at different timeframes and, as such, when the maturing of the proposed landscaping is taken into account, it is considered that the perceived effects of the proposals would reduce to **Negligible Adverse / None by Year Fifteen**.

4.2.13. Beyond the boundaries of the site, the proposals would be perceived within the context of the established residential and commercial uses which characterise the northern edge of the settlement. This part of Raunds has experienced a degree of growth in the recent past, separated from the more historic core of the settlement. The proposals would not extend the settlement any further north than the recent residential developments to the east and west of the site which define the current settlement edge. The proposals would not give rise to the perception of development extending out into the wider countryside setting or the loss of arable land. As such, it is considered that the significance of the effect upon the wider landscape character would be **Negligible Adverse / None from Year One** and could be integrated without any notable adverse effects upon the landscape setting of Raunds.

4.2.14. It is concluded that the proposed development could be integrated in this location without any notable adverse effects upon the special features and characteristics that define NCA 89 "Northamptonshire Vales", the "Farmed Claylands" LCT, the "Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands" LCA or the more localised landscape setting of the site.

4.3. Effect upon the Visual Environment

4.3.1. Table 4, below, assesses the effect of the proposed development upon the identified key views which are included within Appendix 4.

Table 4: Assessment of Visual Effects

Viewpoint(s)	Location	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Significance
1-5	Sequential views along Brick Kiln Road	Low	Low - Negligible	Minor Adverse at Year One
				Negligible at Year Fifteen
<p><i>Assessment:</i> At Viewpoint 1, receptors would experience open views towards the proposed biodiversity area located in the south eastern part of the site, with partially filtered glimpses towards the proposed residential development to the west. Views from the road would be fleeting due to the nature of the receptor moving through the landscape and the proposals being at right angles to the receptor's direction of travel, set back behind a new, generous landscape buffer with areas of new tree and native scrub planting within the public open space forming a robust buffer between this part of the streetscene and the proposed built form. At Year One, the newly planted vegetation would not yet be mature enough to provide a robust screen to the proposals but would provide a degree of softening to the new development. Furthermore, the proposals would be seen in the context of the existing commercial development at New Barn Farm Industrial Estate, immediately to the right of the view and would also be set back from the streetscene, ensuring that they do not appear prominent or overbearing. The wider context of the view must also be considered with residential and commercial development defining the southern side of the streetscene as well as the landscape to the east which the receptor would just have passed. By Year Fifteen, once the proposed landscaping has established, the proposals would be heavily filtered by the now maturing vegetation softening the perceived built edge within the context of this view.</p> <p>As the receptor moves westwards along Brick Kiln Road, the majority of the site is afforded a degree of screening by the intervening roadside vegetation and existing built form on the northern edge of the road. From this location, these features would screen the proposals, with any winter views being heavily filtered and seen in the context of the existing development which characterises the setting of the site. Built form already characterises the immediate setting of the site, and once the consented scheme at Hillside is completed, further residential built form would characterise the northern side of Brick Kiln Road.</p>				
6	Kelmarsh Avenue, approximately 90m west of site	Low	Low	Minor Adverse at Year One
				Negligible Adverse at Year Fifteen

<p><i>Assessment:</i> From this location, the proposals would be screened by the consented residential built form at Hillside, adjacent to the site's western boundary, which would replace the existing commercial buildings present within the view. The proposed development would sit lower down in the landscape than the new properties at Hillside, ensuring that the proposed commercial built form would not extend above the consented development. Where glimpsed, the proposals would be seen in the context of the surrounding development which characterises the northern edge of Raunds and would not introduce any new or alien components into the context of this view.</p>				
7	Boughton Lane, approximately 130m west of site	Low	No Change	None
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From this location, views towards the proposed development would be screened by the combination of existing built form along Kelmarsh Avenue and the consented development at Hillside. Where glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape are possible they would be seen in the context the existing development and would not introduce any new or alien components into the view.</p>				
8	Cottesbrook Way, approximately 50m north west of site	Medium	Negligible	Moderate / Minor at Year One Minor / Negligible at Year Fifteen
<p><i>Assessment:</i> For residential receptors at Viewpoint 8, the proposals would be heavily filtered by the combination of intervening built form, mature vegetation along the sites northern boundary. Where glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape are possible they would be seen in the context the existing development and would not introduce any new or alien components into the view. . It is acknowledged that intervisibility would increase during the winter, however, the proposals would be set well back from this viewpoint and, where glimpsed, would be seen in the context of the existing on site commercial buildings and new development at Northdale Park. By Year Fifteen, the landscape proposals would have matured to provide a good degree of softening and screening to the perceived elevations of the new built form, helping to integrate the proposed development into its landscape setting.</p>				
9	Border Park play area, approximately 110m north of site	Medium	No Change	None

<p>Assessment: From this location, the proposals would be screened by the mature vegetation along the arable field boundaries to the north of the site. Where glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape are possible during the winter, they would be seen in the context the existing development and would not introduce any new or alien components into the view. The proposals would sit lower down in the landscape compared to the receptors, location ensuring that they do not appear prominent or overbearing. It is considered that there would be no perceived change upon the view as a result of the proposed development.</p>				
10	Footpath UG1, approximately 20m north of site	High	Negligible / No Change	None
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From this location, the proposals would be screened from view due to the intervening field boundary vegetation, even during the winter. The proposals would be set back from this viewpoint ensuring that they do not break the vegetated skyline. The proposals would not affect views towards the spire of the Church of St Peter from along the footpath.</p>				
11	Footpath UG2, approximately 170m east of site	High	No Change	None
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From this location, the proposals would be screened from view by the combination of undulating landform, mature vegetation and existing commercial built form that characterises the setting of Footpath UG2, to the north east of the site. It is considered that there would be no perceived change on this view as a result of the proposed development.</p>				
12 & 13	Footpath UG2, approximately 145m east of site Footpath UG1 (diverted route), approximately 100m east of site	High	Negligible	None

Assessment: From these locations, the proposals would be screened by the combination of existing commercial built form and the new development on the northern edge of Northdale Park. Where glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape are possible they would be seen in the context the existing development and would not introduce any new or alien components into the view. The proposals would be located beyond the existing residential and commercial developments and would not affect the setting of these routes. The receptor is already aware of the approaching settlement edge and it is considered that the proposals would not change this perception. The proposals would not break the perceived built skyline or appear any more prominent.

14	Junction of Brick Kiln Road, Braun Drive and footpath UG2, approximately 125m south east of site	High / Low	Negligible	None
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Assessment: From Viewpoint 14, the proposals would be screened by the development at Northdale Park, once completed. As shown on the Landscape Strategy Plan, the plot in the centre of the view, between the receptor and the site, will be built out comprising a large footprint building. This building will not only change the immediate setting of the viewpoint but also screen views of the proposals. Within the context of the current view, the proposals would be set well back from the receptor and would not appear prominent or overbearing. They would be seen in the context of the existing settlement edge and would not affect the character or qualities of this view.

15	Midland Road and footpath UG8, approximately 570m south east of site	High	No Change	None
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Assessment: From this location, intervening built form and vegetation cover would contain views of the proposed commercial built form. There would be no perceived change to the character of this townscape view.

16 & 17	Brick Kiln Road, approximately 530m west of site & London Road, approximately 570m south west of site	Low Medium / Low	No Change	None
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<p><i>Assessment:</i> From these locations, the proposals would be screened by the mature roadside vegetation that characterises the northern edge of Brick Kiln Road and the setting of Raunds cemetery, even during the winter. It is considered that there would be no perceived change on this view as a result of the proposed development.</p>				
18	Raunds Road, approximately 870m north west of site	Low	No Change	None
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From this location, the proposals would be entirely screened by the combination of mature vegetation that characterises the A45 and the northern site boundary, and the existing residential development at West End already screens the existing commercial buildings (to the east) and wider settlement. It is considered that there would be no perceived change on this view as a result of the proposed development.</p>				
19	Footpath UG1, approximately 440m north of site	High	Low	Moderate / Minor at Year One
				Minor / Negligible at Year Fifteen
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From this location, receptors would experience longer distance, filtered views towards the proposed development, seen in the context of the existing settlement edge and the neighbouring commercial buildings. The low-lying character of Raunds is evident in the view, recessed into the well vegetated landscape, with the spire of the Church of St Peter forming a prominent feature in the landscape. The proposals would introduce new residential built form to the right of the existing buildings associated with New Barn Farm Industrial Estate, set back behind the retained boundary vegetation, as well as new areas of tree and native shrub planting that would wrap around the western and northern edge of the site. The existing settlement edge is an established component within the view, reducing the perception of tranquillity within the local landscape setting. Tranquillity is further reduced by the A45, located immediately north west of the receptor's location, providing a notable acoustic detractor within the context of the view. The retained boundary vegetation and the proposals being set back from the site's edge ensures that the proposed buildings would appear no more prominent in the view than the existing settlement edge and would not break the skyline. It is considered that, as the proposed vegetation matures this would provide a higher degree of visual containment to the perceived settlement edge, creating an enhanced interface between Raunds and the wider arable landscape.</p>				

20	Footpath UG2, approximately 350m north east of site	High	No Change	None
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From this location, the proposals would be screened by the combination of mature vegetation and the existing commercial buildings to the east of the site. The proposals would not extend into the arable landscape to the north, remaining tucked behind the built form and vegetation that characterises the New Barn Farm Industrial Estate. Where glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape are possible they would be seen in the context the existing development and would not introduce any new or alien components into the view. The receptor is already aware of the approaching settlement and the proposals would not change, or increase, this perception. It is considered that there would be no perceived change on this view as a result of the proposed development.</p>				
21 & 22	B663 and footpath UG12, approximately 1.1km – 1.4km south east of site	High - Low	Negligible	None
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From these locations, receptors would experience elevated, longer distance views towards the site, which is seen in the context of the existing northern edge of Raunds, defined by the developments at West End and Northdale Park, as well as the existing commercial built form at New Barn Farm Industrial Estate. The proposals would be glimpsed from these locations, but would be seen in the context of the existing settlement edge and would not extend development out into the wider arable landscape, beyond the established envelope of Raunds. The proposed built form would reflect the scale of the surrounding developments and would not break the skyline or appear any more prominent. As the proposed landscaping matures it would reinforce the vegetated setting of the site and wider settlement and assist in breaking up the perceived townscape as one approaches from the south east.</p>				
23 & 24	Footpath UG9, approximately 1.6km south east of site & Footpath UG8, approximately 1.8km south east of site	High	Negligible / No Change	None
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From these locations, the intervening built form associated with the eastern edge of Raunds and the mature vegetation along field boundaries would contain views of the proposals. Some</p>				

glimpsed views of the proposed roofscape may be possible, but given the intervening distance, this would not be readily perceived and would be seen in the context of the wider settlement edge. The proposals would be no more prominent than the surrounding built environment and would not give rise to the perception of development extending out into the wider arable landscape. The proposals would not affect the qualities or amenities of these views.

25 - 27	Footpath UG13, approximately 1.5km south east of site & Shelton Road, approximately 2km south east of site & Unnamed lane off Shelton Road, approximately 3km south east of site	High Medium / Low Medium / Low	No Change	None
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Assessment: From these locations, the proposed development would be screened as a result of the well vegetated landscape that characterises the agrarian landscape to the south east of Raunds, as well as the undulating landform and intervening built form of the wider town. There are no discernible views towards the adjacent residential development at Northdale Park, and even during winter, the dense nature of the canopies and intervening distance would ensure that there would be no perceived change upon these views as a result of the proposed development.

28 - 30	Footpath PH1, approximately 2.5km south of site & Bridleway UG34, approximately 2km south west of site & Bridleway UG34, approximately 1.9km south west of site	High	No Change	None
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Assessment: From these locations, views towards the site would be screened by the combination of intervening vegetation and built form within Raunds that characterises the landscape to the south of the site. These features contain views of the residential development to the west of the site and the

proposals would not project above the established skyline. It is considered that there would be no perceived change upon these views as a result of the proposed development.				
31	Bridge along unnamed lane over A45, approximately 1.9km north of site	High	No Change	None
<p><i>Assessment:</i> From this location, views towards the site would be screened by the combination of intervening vegetation and the existing built form to the west of the site, which already screens views of the existing neighbouring commercial buildings associated with New Barn Farm Industrial Estate. The proposals would not project above this established skyline. It is considered that there would be no perceived change upon the view as a result of the proposed development.</p>				

4.3.2. As set out in Table 4, it is considered that the proposals could be integrated into this location without any long term, notable adverse visual effects. It is acknowledged that the proposals would be visible from some localised viewpoints, however, they would be seen in the context of the existing built form associated with the settlement edge of Raunds, which includes significant new development to the east and west of the site. The proposed scale and appearance of the built form would ensure that the proposals would not appear prominent or at odds with their surroundings, effectively forming an infill between the West End and Northdale Park developments.

4.3.3. Some residential receptors within the West End and Northdale Park developments, together with motorists on Brick Kiln Road would experience change as a result of the proposed development. However, the proposals have been carefully designed so as to minimise adverse effects upon these receptors, ensuring that the proposed built form is set back from the road corridor and the residential developments, retaining the mature vegetated site boundaries and introducing new landscape features to soften views of the built form as well as assisting their integration into this setting. Over time, as the landscape proposals mature, views towards the proposals would be softened further, reducing any long term adverse visual effects from these receptors. The proposed built form would be of a similar scale to the existing residential development to the east, south and west, ensuring that the proposals are perceived as a natural addition to the already established settlement edge.

4.3.4. While the proposals would be visible from some middle distance viewpoints, they would not harm the overall visual qualities and amenities of the area and would not

affect the public's enjoyment of the public right of way network which extends to the north and into the wider undulating landscape that surrounds Raunds. Residential built form already characterises the site and the proposals would not introduce any new or alien components into this context. Nor would they give rise to an increased perception of the existing settlement edge. The proposals would not extend out beyond the established envelope of Raunds and would not give rise to the perception of the settlement extending out into the adjacent undulating arable landscape.

- 4.3.5. It is concluded that the proposed residential development could be integrated into the site without giving rise to any notable adverse visual effects.

4.4. Effect upon Landscape Related Policy

- 4.4.1. In terms of the effect upon national and local landscape related policy, the site and its setting are not covered by any qualitative landscape designations. As set out in Section 2, it is considered that the site and its setting do not represent a "valued landscape" in the context of Para 174a of the NPPF.

- 4.4.2. With reference to "*Policy 3: Landscape Character*" of the adopted Joint Core Strategy, the policy states that:

"Development should be located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its landscape setting, retaining and, where possible, enhancing the distinctive qualities of the landscape character area which it would affect".

- 4.4.3. As demonstrated above in Section 4.2, the proposed development would not result in the loss of any characteristic landscape features identified by the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment. Nor would the proposals introduce any land uses or built form which could be considered out of character, or at odds with, the receiving landscape or townscape setting. It is considered that the proposals comply with Policy 3 of the adopted Core Strategy.

- 4.4.4. With reference to "*Policy R17: Greening The Town*", the policy states that:

"Proposals that would lead to the greening of Raunds will be encouraged, including:

- a. Tree planting in appropriate locations and of appropriate species;**
- b. Creation of new, or enhancement of existing wildlife habitats;**

- c. Proposals that protect or increase biodiversity;**
- d. New and improved access to watercourses; and**
- e. Greener cycleways and footways.”**

4.4.5. As illustrated on the Landscape Strategy Plan, the majority of existing vegetation, including hedgerows and trees, would be retained. The proposals would also include new areas of biodiversity focussed landscaping, including new native shrub and tree planting around the new commercial buildings, new species-rich meadow planting with scattered trees and an attenuation basin, located in the south eastern part of the site, with a variety of aquatic, wetland and marginal species, all of which would positively contribute to achieving a Biodiversity Net Gain. The new landscape features would improve biodiversity links around the site and to offsite assets such as the network of hedgerows and fragmented woodland, located within the adjacent arable landscape. It is considered that the proposals comply with Policy R17 of the adopted Neighbourhood Plan.

4.4.6. National and local policy seek to achieve high quality and sustainable development. It is considered that the proposals comply with the aims and objectives set out within the national and local planning policy framework from a landscape and visual perspective.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1. ES Landscape Planning Ltd was instructed by ABDS Ltd to assess the landscape and visual implications arising from the proposed residential development at Brick Kiln Road, Raunds, Northamptonshire.
- 5.2. The site lies on the northern edge of Raunds, a small, nucleated settlement, located approximately 3.5km to the northeast of Rushden and 3.5km north east of Wellingborough. The site is located to the north of Brick Kiln Road on the northern fringes of the town.
- 5.3. The site currently comprises two paddocks which lie on the northern edge of the settlement, positioned between the recent residential estate at West End (to the west) and Northdale Park (to the east), which is still under construction. The New Barn Farm Industrial Estate lies immediately to the east of the site, comprising a number of medium scale industrial units. This neighbouring parcel of land is subject to a separate planning application for an extension to the existing commercial development. The site does not extend as far north as the development at West End or the Industrial Estate. Brick Kiln Road defines the southern boundary, providing vehicular links between many of the residential areas, which define the northern part of Raunds, and the A45 to the west.
- 5.4. The site lies within a landscaped setting on the northern fringes of Raunds, characterised by mature boundary vegetation along Brick Kiln Road and the site's interface with the adjacent arable landscape. Vegetation within the site is limited to grazed, species-poor grassland and a low quality internal hedgerow which lies between the two paddocks.
- 5.5. The site falls gently from north west to south east, between 70m AOD at its north western corner, and 60m AOD in its southeastern corner by Brick Kiln Road.
- 5.6. The site is not subject to any qualitative landscape designations.

Effect upon Landscape Character

- 5.7. It is considered that the proposals could be integrated without any notable adverse effects upon the key landscape features which characterise the site and its immediate setting. It is noted that the proposals would result in a degree of perceived change within the site itself, however, change need not equate to harm, and the contained nature of the residential proposals would ensure that any perception of change, in terms of the landscape character, is highly localised.

- 5.8. It is acknowledged that the proposals would represent a new addition to the settlement and replace an area of improved grassland with residential development, however, the proposals would be located immediately adjacent to an established residential area and would include significant landscape and biodiversity enhancements through the comprehensive scheme of planting.
- 5.9. The settlement edge location of the site, the compartmentalised character of the local landscape and the recent residential developments to the immediate east and west, would ensure that any perceived effects are highly localised. The proposals would not extend out into the wider arable landscape to the north beyond the established settlement envelope and would be entirely compatible with the existing settlement edge and the nucleated character of Raunds.
- 5.10. By Year Fifteen, the proposed landscape treatment would have matured to create a high quality landscaped setting to the development, introducing new areas of native shrub and tree planting, softening the perceived built elevations and enhancing the localised biodiversity. It is considered that by this timeframe, the comprehensive scheme of landscaping would mitigate the loss of grazed pasture immediately adjacent to the settlement edge. Away from the site, the maturing landscape treatment would ensure that the development appears as an established part of the settlement and could be integrated without detriment.
- 5.11. In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed development could be integrated in this location without detriment to any of the key characteristics or features associated with the landscape setting of the site and wider settlement, as identified by the published assessments. It is concluded that the proposals would conserve the character of the “Northamptonshire Vales” NCA, the “Farmed Claylands” LCT, the “Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands” LCA and the more localised landscape setting of the site.

Effect upon the Visual Environment

- 5.12. It is considered that the proposals could be integrated into this location without any long term, notable adverse visual effects. It is acknowledged that the proposals would be visible from some localised viewpoints, however, they would be seen in the context of the existing built form associated with the settlement edge of Raunds, which includes significant new development to the east and west of the site. The proposed scale and appearance of the built form would ensure that the proposals would not appear prominent

or at odds with their surroundings, effectively forming an infill between the West End and Northdale Park developments.

- 5.13. Some residential receptors within the West End and Northdale Park developments, together with motorists on Brick Kiln Road would experience change as a result of the proposed development. However, the proposals have been carefully designed so as to minimise adverse effects upon these receptors, ensuring that the proposed built form is set back from the road corridor and the residential developments, retaining the mature vegetated site boundaries and introducing new landscape features to soften views of the built form as well as assisting their integration into this setting. Over time, as the landscape proposals mature, views towards the proposals would be softened further, reducing any long term adverse visual effects from these receptors. The proposed built form would be of a similar scale to the existing residential development to the east, south and west, ensuring that the proposals are perceived as a natural addition to the already established settlement edge.
- 5.14. While the proposals would be visible from some middle distance viewpoints, they would not harm the overall visual qualities and amenities of the area and would not affect the public's enjoyment of the public right of way network which extends to the north and into the wider undulating landscape that surrounds Raunds. Residential built form already characterises the site and the proposals would not introduce any new or alien components into this context. Nor would they give rise to an increased perception of the existing settlement edge. The proposals would not extend out beyond the established envelope of Raunds and would not give rise to the perception of the settlement extending out into the adjacent undulating arable landscape. It is concluded that the proposed residential development could be integrated into the site without giving rise to any notable adverse visual effects.

Effect upon Landscape Related Policy

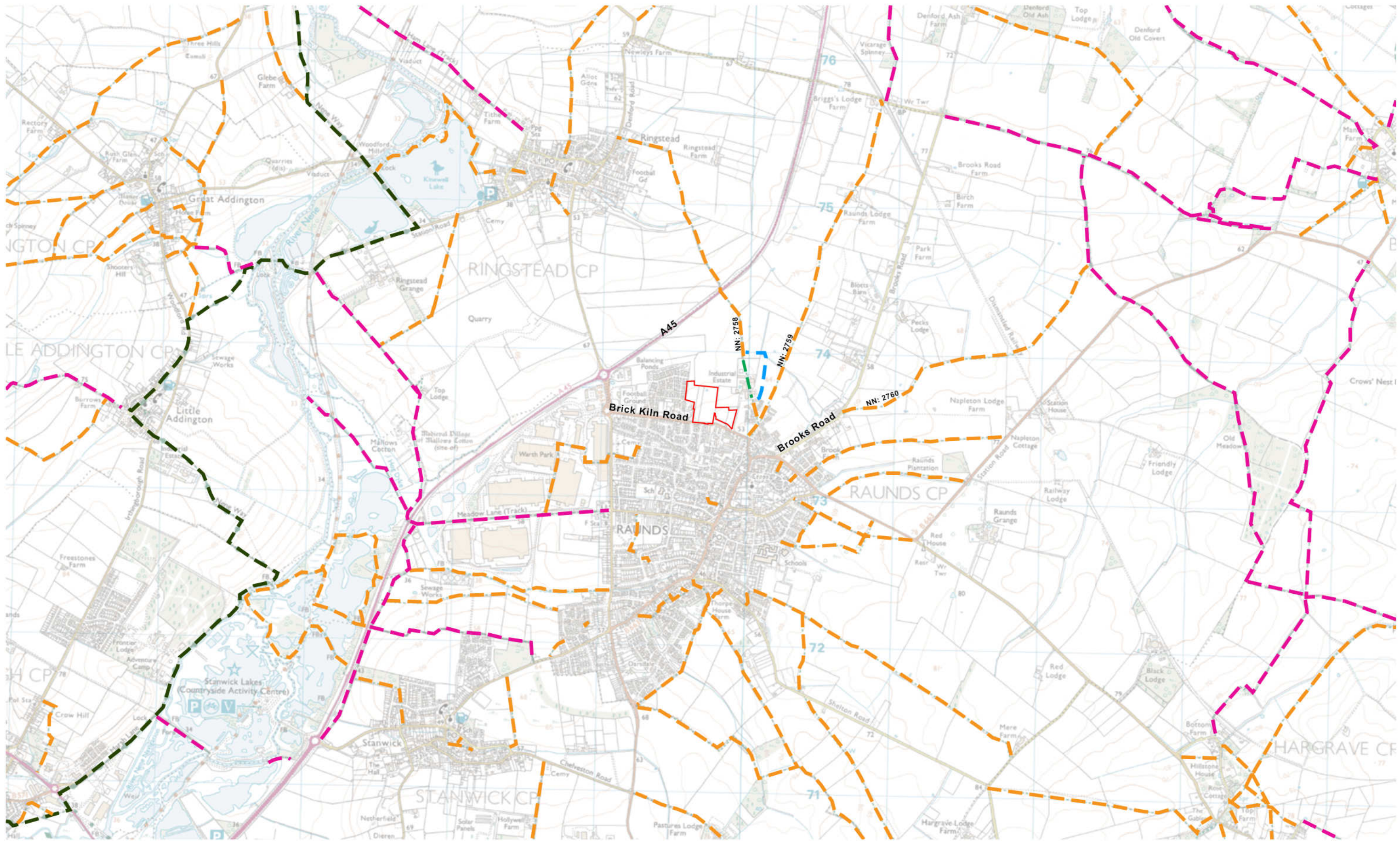
- 5.15. In terms of the effect upon national and local landscape related policy, the site and its setting are not covered by any qualitative landscape designations.
- 5.16. The assessment concludes that the site and its landscape setting do not represent a "valued landscape" in the context of para 174a of the NPPF.
- 5.17. National and local policy seek to achieve high quality and sustainable development. As set out above, it is considered that the proposed scheme would not give rise to any notable

adverse effects from a landscape and visual perspective. It is considered that the proposals comply with the aims and objectives set out within the national and local planning policy framework from a landscape and visual perspective.

Conclusion

- 5.18. It is considered that the proposals could be integrated in this location without long term adverse effects upon the receiving landscape character and visual environment. It is concluded that the proposals are supportable from a landscape and visual perspective.

PLANS



Not to Scale

Key

- Site Boundary
- Public Footpaths
- Public Bridleways
- Promoted Routes
- Extiguished Public Footpath
- Diverted Public Footpath



Brick Kiln Road, Raunds
Site Location Plan

Client: ABDS Ltd

Drawing Ref: 11231L.SLP.001
Date: Aug 2023 Drawn: SA Checked: AM

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Not to Scale

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Public Footpaths
-  Extinguished Footpath
-  Diverted Footpath

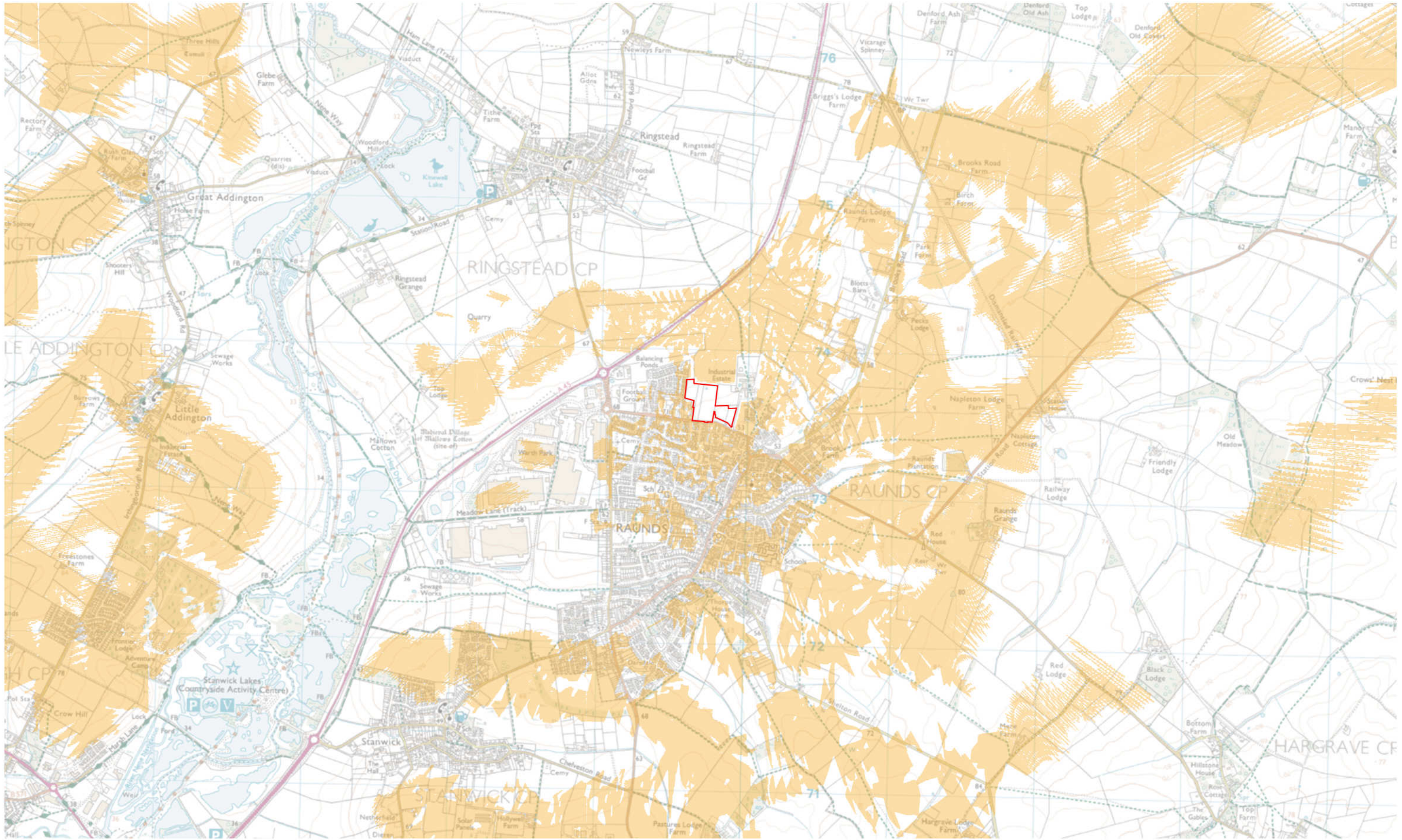


Brick Kiln Road, Raunds
Site Context Plan

Client: ABDS Ltd



Drawing Ref: 11231L.SLP.001
 Date: Aug 2023 Drawn: SA Checked: AM

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Not to Scale

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)



Brick Kiln Road, Raunds
Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

Client: ABDS Ltd

Drawing Ref: 11231L.ZTV.003
Date: Aug 2023 Drawn: SA Checked: AM

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Precedent Images



Suggested Species Palette

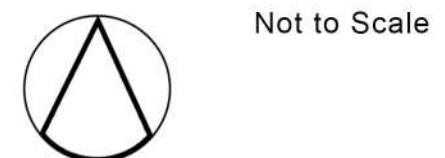
- Native Trees**
- Alder
- English Oak
- Field Maple
- White Willow
- Street Trees**
- Fastigate Hornbeam
- Liquidambar
- Magnolia
- Ornamental Cherry
- Native Scrub Mix**
- Blackthorn
- Dogwood
- Hazel
- Dog Rose
- Flowering Lawn:**
- WFT - Species - Rich - 26
- Meadow Mix**
- Emorsgate Em34
- Diverse Meadow Mix, Sown at 4g/m2
- Wet Meadow Mix**
- Pond Edge Mixture EP1

Built form set back from rural edge, creating a soft edge to the new development










Multi-functional public open space – restoration of grazed grassland to species-rich meadow with scattered trees, which contributes positively to local biodiversity, drainage attenuation and provides visual interest.

Existing hedgerow retained where possible, to contain views of development

Proposed attenuation basin will effectively manage surface water runoff, as well as creating a seasonally usable space and landscape buffer to existing dwellings



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 Site Boundary	 Proposed Amenity Grass	 Proposed Submerged Planting
 Proposed Self-binding Gravel Footpath	 Proposed Trees	 Proposed Marginal Planting
 Proposed Wildflower Grassland	 Proposed Ornamental / Amenity Shrub	 Proposed SuDS



Brick Kiln Road, Raunds

Landscape Strategy Plan

Client: ABDS Ltd

Drawing Ref: 11231L.LSP.005_R Rev C

Date: July 2023 Drawn: SA Checked: AM

APPENDIX 1

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. This methodology, and the assessment to which it applies, has been prepared in accordance with the following guidance:
 - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition – GLVIA3 (2013) - Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment;
 - Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Technical Guidance Note 06/19), published by the Landscape Institute (2019).
- 1.2. The purpose of this methodology is to set out a clear and transparent approach to the assessment of landscape character and visual effects, in line with guidance set out by GLVIA3.
- 1.3. When assessing character within an urban context, this methodology can be applied to Townscape Assessments and assessing how a proposed development could affect the elements that make up the townscape and its distinctive character.

2. THE LVIA PROCESS

2.1. The main stages of the LVIA process are outlined below. The process comprises:

- the baseline study;
- the description of the proposed development; and
- the assessment of effects.

2.2. This process seeks to provide a clear and transparent method that will assist in identifying the potential effects of a development on the receiving landscape and the visual environment.

Stage 1 - Baseline Study

2.3. The baseline assessment sets out the existing landscape character and visual environment conditions against which any future changes resulting from new development can be measured or predicted and assessed.

Landscape

1. The scope of the assessment is defined.
2. Landscape related planning policy, including any landscape designations, is identified and outlined.
3. The landscape baseline is established through an initial desk study, which includes an assessment of published regional and local Landscape Character Assessments, where available, and subsequently a site visit to identify the value and susceptibility of the landscape resource (receptor) to a change of the type proposed, at community, local, national or international levels, as appropriate.

Visual

1. The scope of the assessment is defined.
2. The visual baseline is identified as the extent of visual receptors within the study area, and establishes the number and sensitivity of the representative viewpoint and/or groups of people (receptors) within the study area whose views may be altered as a result of the proposals. The

use of Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) models can be a useful tool, assisting in identifying the theoretical visual extent of a proposal, where appropriate. However, it must be noted that these are not definitive, and do not replace viewing the site “in the field” as set out in GLVIA3, but can assist in scoping out those areas where topography will contain views of a development. Photographs from the key viewpoints are taken and presented in accordance with best practice guidance, illustrating the baseline situation.

Stage 2 - Description of the Development / Design Proposals

- 2.4. The baseline study will highlight opportunities and constraints for the integration of the proposals into the receiving environment. The various components of the proposals at each phase of the development process, which will potentially give rise to effects on the landscape character and the visual environment, need to be identified. At this time, the proposals can be modified to ensure that further mitigation measures are incorporated into the design in response to the local landscape and visual environment.

Mitigation of landscape and visual effects

- 2.5. Paragraph 4.21 of GLVIA3 states that “*measures proposed to prevent / avoid, reduce and, where possible, offset or remedy (or compensate for) any significant adverse landscape and visual effects, should be described*”. In practice, such mitigation measures are generally considered to fall into three categories:
- Primary measures, developed through the iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded into the project design;
 - Standard construction and operational management practices for avoiding and reducing environmental effects;
 - Secondary measures, designed to address any residual adverse effects remaining after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme.

Stage 3 - Description of Effects

- 2.6. The assessment should then identify the level of effect as a result of the different components of the proposals upon both landscape and visual receptors.

- 2.7. In order to assess the significance of the effect on the receiving environment, it is necessary to consider the **magnitude**, i.e. the degree of change, together with the **sensitivity** of the receptor.
- 2.8. The assessment will identify the type of effect experienced by the receptor, as set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Interpretation of Effects

Type of Effect	Interpretation
Direct	A direct effect will be one where a development will affect the character of a landscape or a view, either beneficially or adversely.
Indirect	An indirect effect will occur as a result of elements associated with a development, i.e. a development may result in an increase of traffic on a particular route.
Short, medium or long term	This relates to the anticipated duration and magnitude of effects associated with a development. Within this assessment, the potential effects are typically assessed during the Construction Phase, then at Years 1 and 15, following completion of the development.
Temporary or Permanent	This relates to whether the resulting effect of a development can be mitigated or not, and whether the result of the mitigation is beneficial or adverse.
Beneficial or Adverse	<p><u>Beneficial effects</u> would typically occur where a development would positively contribute to the landscape character or view.</p> <p><u>Adverse effects</u> would typically occur where there key landscape elements are lost, or the proposal detracts from the quality and / or character of a landscape or view.</p> <p><u>Neutral effects</u> can occur where changes neither add nor detract from the quality and character of a landscape or view.</p>

Assessing cumulative effects

- 2.9. Cumulative effects are additional effects caused by a proposed development in combination with other similar developments. This can be cumulative landscape effects on the physical fabric or character of the landscape, or cumulative visual

effects caused by two or more developments being visible from one viewpoint (in combination) and / or from a route where the viewer has to move to another viewpoint to see the same or a different development (sequentially). The scope of cumulative effects should be agreed at the outset to establish what schemes are relevant to the assessment, and at which planning stage this is appropriate. It is generally considered that existing and consented developments, and those for which planning applications have been submitted but not yet determined, should be included. The assessment of cumulative effects must be considered as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) but does not have to be assessed as part of a non-EIA project.

Stage 4 - Significance of Effects (EIA only)

- 2.10. A final judgement on whether the effect is likely to be significant will be made, as required by the EIA Regulations. These conclusions should draw out the key issues and outline the scope for reducing any negative / adverse effects.

3. ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. The purpose of the LVIA is to provide an objective assessment of the potential effects of the proposals upon the identified landscape and / or visual receptor. GLVIA3 states that *“Assessing the significance of landscape and visual effects is a matter of judgement. It is vital that the basis of such judgements are transparent and understandable, so that the underlying assumptions and reasoning can be examined by others”*.
- 3.2. This section sets out the basis for assessing landscape and visual sensitivity, the magnitude of proposed effects, and the overall assessment of significance.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

- 3.3. The sensitivity of a particular landscape in relation to new development is categorised as very high, high, medium, low or negligible. This takes into account the **susceptibility** of the receptor to the type of development proposed and the **value** attached to different landscapes by society.

Susceptibility of the Landscape Receptor

- 3.4. GLVIA3 defines the **SUSCEPTIBILITY** of a receptor to change as being the ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue negative consequences upon the baseline situation.
- 3.5. A judgement as to the level of susceptibility (High, Medium, Low or Negligible) is made in relation to each criterion, and these judgements contribute to an overall judgement of susceptibility for the landscape receptor.
- 3.6. A landscape deemed to be highly susceptible is likely to be small-scale, with a mosaic of natural habitats and limited human influences, while a less susceptible landscape receptor is likely to be simpler, with noticeable human influences and fewer natural / semi-natural habitats present.

Value of the Landscape Receptor

- 3.7. Following the publication of GLVIA3, it is now generally agreed that the **VALUE** of a landscape receptor can be determined by a range of factors set out within Box 5.1 of GLVIA3. These include:

- Landscape quality (condition);
- Scenic quality;
- Rarity and representativeness;
- Conservation interests;
- Recreation value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations.

3.8. The Box 5.1 criteria are used to determine the value of landscape receptors. The resulting value levels under each factor are recorded, and an overall judgement of the level of value is reached.

3.9. A judgement as to the value of the landscape receptor is made in relation to each factor (High, Medium, Low or Negligible) and these factors contribute to an overall judgement of value.

Overall Judgement of Landscape Sensitivity

3.10. Once judgements of the susceptibility and the value of the landscape receptor have been made, an overall judgement of landscape sensitivity is made. The following table explains each threshold, and the factors that contribute to the degree of sensitivity.

Table 2: Definition of Landscape Sensitivity Thresholds

Sensitivity	Definition
Very High	Landscapes which would have a high susceptibility to change, and which are considered to be of high value. Such landscapes would have a high degree of intimacy, strong landscape structure, and a high sense of intactness, and contain features worthy of protection. Townscapes may include a high proportion of historic assets and be designated as a World Heritage Site. Typical examples may be nationally or internationally designated, e.g., World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Heritage Coasts or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
High	Landscapes where there is a medium - high susceptibility to change, and which are considered to be of high value. Such landscapes may be small scale, have a strong landscape structure, be relatively intact and contain features and / or

	elements worthy of protection. Townscapes may include a number of historic assets. Typical examples may be of local importance or within the immediate setting of National Parks, AONBs, Conservation Areas, etc.
Medium	Landscapes where there is a medium susceptibility to change, and which are considered to be of medium value. Such landscapes will have good landscape structure, with some detracting features or evidence of recent change. Townscapes may include a proportion of historic assets or assets of cultural value locally.
Low	Landscapes where there is a low susceptibility to change, and which are considered to be of low value. Typical landscapes will have some characteristics of interest, but human influences and some detractors will be present.
Negligible	Landscapes where there is little or no susceptibility to change, and which are of low value. Typical landscapes are likely to be characterised by extensive human influences, be of weak landscape structure, with intensive land uses present, and require landscape restoration.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

3.11. As part of the assessment of visual effects, the sensitivity of the visual receptor will be assessed against the magnitude of visual change. Each receptor should be assessed in terms of both their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity, and also the value attached to particular views. The sensitivity of receptors is categorised as very high, high, medium, low and negligible.

Table 3: Visual Sensitivity Thresholds

Sensitivity	Definition
Very High	Viewers on public rights of way, within nationally designated landscapes such as National Parks or AONBs, whose prime focus is on the high quality of the landscape around, and who are very aware of its value.
High	Viewers on public rights of way, whose prime focus is on the landscape around, or residential properties which lie

	immediately adjacent to, and look directly onto the development site. Examples may include users of the public right of way network (e.g., promoted routes, national trails, footpaths or bridleways), or the setting of a listed building.
Medium	Viewers engaged in outdoor recreation with some appreciation of the landscape, occupiers of residential properties with oblique views from which the proposals may be visible, and users of rural lanes and roads, including pedestrians, cyclists or horse riders. Examples may include viewers within moderate quality landscapes and / or local parks or recreation grounds.
Low	Viewers engaged in outdoor sports or recreation, whose prime focus is on their activity rather than their setting, or those passing through the area on main transport routes (A-roads, dual carriageways, motorways or the rail network), whose attention is focused away from an appreciation of the landscape through which they are passing.
Negligible	Viewers whose attention is focused on their work or activity, and who are not susceptible to changes in the surrounding visual environment.

MAGNITUDE OF EFFECT

3.12. The magnitude of change relates to the extent to which a proposed development will affect the characteristics and / or elements that define the landscape character or view. This change is categorised as high, medium, low, or negligible.

Table 4: Magnitude of Change

Magnitude	Effect Definition
High	Change resulting in a high degree of harm or improvement, such as the introduction of prominent new elements that are considered to make a major alteration to a landscape or view.
Medium	Change resulting in a moderate degree of harm or improvement, or when constitutes a perceptible change within a landscape or view.

Low	Change resulting in a low degree of harm or improvement to a landscape or view, or which constitutes only a minor component within a landscape or view.
Negligible	Change resulting in a barely perceptible degree of harm or improvement to a landscape or view.
No Change	It is also possible for a landscape or view to experience no change, due to the proposed development being totally compatible with the receiving environment or not visible due to intervening structures or vegetation.

Significance Threshold

- 3.13. To assess the overall significance of the effect, the magnitude of change is considered against the sensitivity of the landscape or visual receptor.
- 3.14. In formulating the significance of the potential landscape or visual effect, reasoned professional judgement, based on clear and transparent methods, suitable training and experience, and a detached and dispassionate view of the development, is required. The matrix at Table 6 should be used as a guide for consistency rather than a prescriptive tool. Where the final judgement differs from the matrix, this will be supported by a clear explanation.
- 3.15. The significance thresholds are predicted as Substantial, Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible and None, and can be either beneficial or adverse. Where there is no perceptible change in terms of the effect magnitude regardless of the sensitivity of the receptor, the significance of the effect on a landscape or view will be none.
- 3.16. Unless otherwise stated, all effects are predicted in the winter months. The extent of mitigation measures should be clearly stated, and in the case of planting proposals, the contribution to reducing adverse effects over time should be demonstrated at different stages (typically construction stage and operational stages year 1 and year 15).

Table 5: Significance of Effect

Significance	Threshold Definition
Substantial	A very high magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view of national / international importance which has no ability to accommodate change.
Major	A high magnitude of change that materially affects a high sensitivity landscape or view which has some ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a damaged landscape or view.
Moderate	A medium magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view which may have the ability to accommodate the type of development proposed. Positive effects will typically occur in a lower quality landscape or view.
Minor	A low magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view which can integrate the type of development proposed. Positive effects will typically occur in a lower quality landscape or view.
Negligible	A negligible magnitude of change that has little effect on a landscape or view which has the ability to accommodate change.
None	A significance of none occurs where there is no perceptible change, or the proposals are considered compatible with local character or views.

3.17. The significance of the effect is measured on the ability of a landscape or view to accommodate the change. In assessing the significance of effects, the following matrix provides a guide through determining the significance of the effect based on the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change, but it is not a prescriptive tool.

Table 6: Measuring Significance of Effect

		Sensitivity of Receptors				
		Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Change	High	Substantial	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor
	Medium	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor
	Low	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible
	Negligible	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible/ None

3.18. In terms of assessing whether the effects are significant or otherwise, it is noted that para 5.56 of GLVIA3 states that there are no “hard and fast rules” about what makes a significant effect. For the purposes of this methodology, and with regard to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 (updated 2017), “significant” landscape or visual effects are those effects considered to be of Substantial, Major or Major / Moderate significance, as set out within Table 6.

3.19. It is reasonable to say that, where development will result in substantial loss of or irreversible adverse effects over an extensive spatial area on features and / or aspects that are key to the aesthetic and perceptual character of nationally valued landscapes, these will be of the greatest significance. By contrast, effects which may be reversible or can be mitigated over a shorter duration, within a more restricted spatial extent, on features that contribute to but may not be key characteristics of a landscape which has some (or even limited) local value, are likely to be of lesser significance, depending on the circumstances. Landscape and visual assessments must make a professional and objective judgement on the significance of the effect, and whether or not these are considered significant, providing reasoned justification as to how the conclusions have been reached.

APPENDIX 2

Extract from Natural England's Character Map of England –NCA 89: Northamptonshire
Vales

Introduction & Summary

Description

Opportunities

Key facts
and data

Landscape
change

Analysis

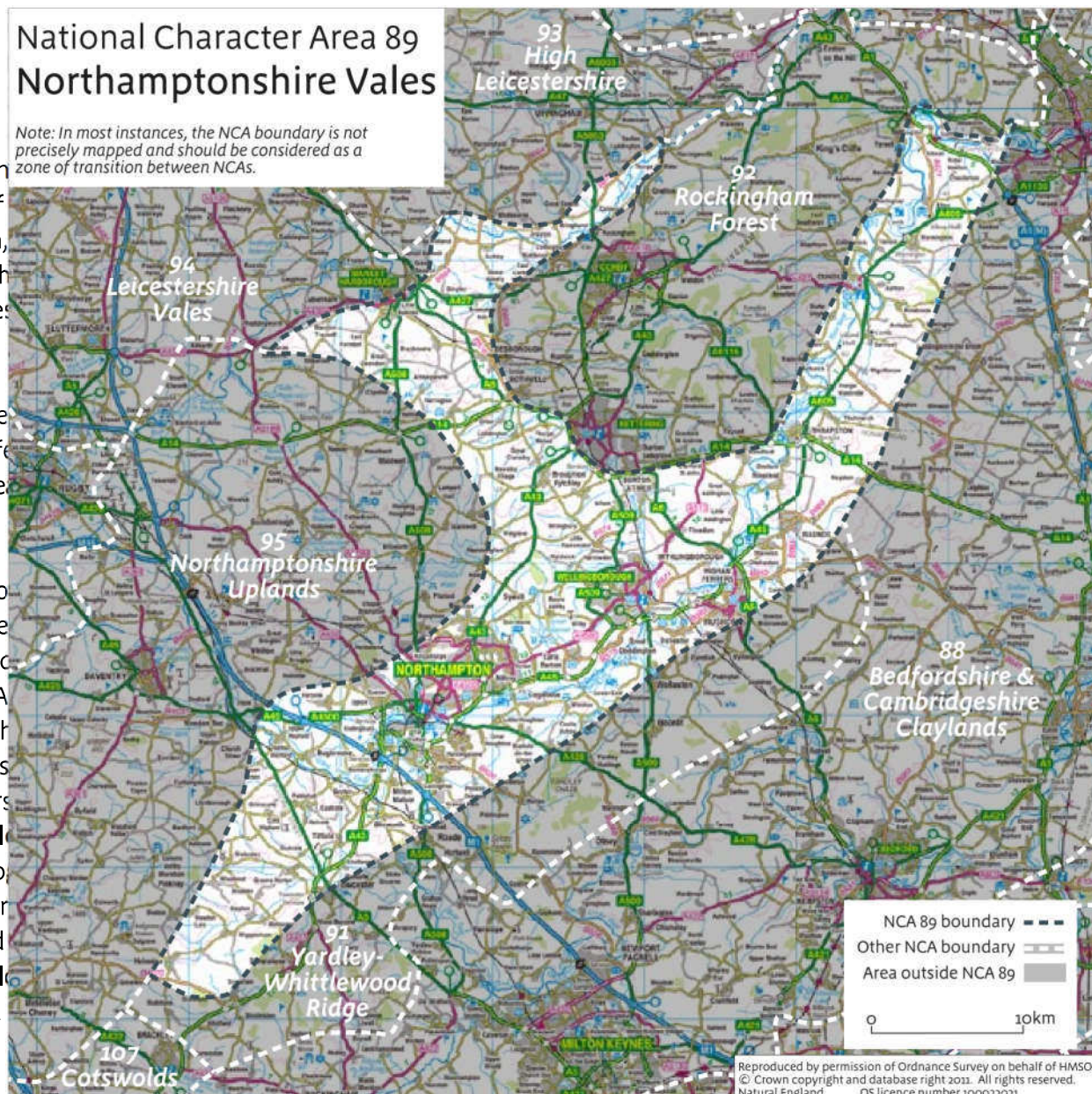


Summary

The Northamptonshire Vales National Character Area (NCA) consists of low-lying clay vales and river valleys, including the valleys of the Great Ouse and Welland and their tributaries. The area is 10 per cent urban, and is often visually dominant. Major road networks that traverse the area include the M1, A45, A6 and A5. This area adjoins the Leicestershire Vales to the north-west and has many similar characteristics.

Despite the predominance of built settlements and related levels of tranquillity, this contrasts strongly with a distinctly more rural feel in the countryside. Levels of tranquillity are particularly high along river corridors and in areas of open and pastoral farmland.

This area is rich in historic character, with country houses, historic villages and towns, and open field patterns, especially in the valleys of the Great Ouse, Welland, Ise and Nene. These river valleys are striking features of the landscape, with their riverside meadows and waterside trees and shrubs. Also notable are the flooded gravel pits and their associated wetlands, which have been the subject of many reclamation schemes. These have given rise to some of the most important freshwater wetlands in the Midlands, supporting large numbers of birds and wildfowl, especially over winter. The Upper Nene Valley and the Great Ouse Valley were designated as a Special Protection Area in 2011 in recognition of their wetland bird assemblage, which includes non-breeding grey-winged godwit and European golden plover. The rivers and associated wetlands provide regional ecosystem services such as regulating water flow and availability, as well as providing extensive recreational and cultural resources for the surrounding urban areas.



Statements of Environmental Opportunity

SEO 1: Appropriately manage the flood plains of the River Nene and River Welland, their tributaries, and the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area, and deliver the most beneficial restoration of sand and gravel extraction sites, to enhance associated habitats and biodiversity and connections with the farmed environment; to regulate water flow, water quality and water availability; to enhance landscape character; and to increase the opportunities for informal recreation.

SEO 2: Sustainably manage the soils, productive farming, woodlands, coverts and spinneys that contribute to the sense of place, maintaining viable long-term food production and protecting historical and cultural assets such as the ridge-and-furrow sites found in the Nene and Welland valleys, the historic parklands and the variety of field patterns.

SEO 3: Plan ongoing strategic growth and development within the area so that it strengthens the sense of place and increases biodiversity, incorporating extended and restored hedgerow networks, open spaces and the conservation, management and promotion of geological features as part of green infrastructure planning.



The River Nene with a flooded gravel pit in the background. The freshwater wetlands in this NCA, are some of the most important in the Midlands, supporting large numbers of wetland birds and wildfowl.

Description

Physical and functional links to other National Character Areas

The Northamptonshire Vales National Character Area (NCA) is shaped like an anchor, with the Yardley Whittlewood Ridge and the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands NCAs sharply defining the southern edge. High Leicestershire and the Leicestershire Vales NCAs are to the north. The Welland Valley extends north-eastwards as part of the area, north of Rockingham Forest NCA. The Northamptonshire Vales NCA sweeps between the Northamptonshire Uplands NCA to the south-west and Rockingham Forest NCA to the north-east, the latter forming the northern boundary of the Nene Valley.

This NCA shares many key characteristics with the Leicestershire Vales NCA, including a shared geology with most of the area. Outcrops of the Great Oolite Group along the Nene Valley have more in common with the Rockingham Forest NCA.

The area is dominated by the major rivers of the Welland and Nene, both of which link several NCAs – such as High Leicestershire and The Fens – and drain into The Wash. The River Nene is an important source of water for public water supply, supplying water to fill and maintain both the Pitsford (located in the Northamptonshire Uplands NCA) and the Rutland (located in the Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds NCA) reservoirs. The Grand Union Canal runs through the area from London to Birmingham with the Northampton Arm linking the canal with the River Nene.

The slightly higher ground around Market Harborough defines the Soar from the Welland catchment. Higher ground on the Northamptonshire Clay Wolds–



The 140 kilometer 'Jurassic Way' long-distance footpath runs through the centre of this area, from Banbury in the south-west to Stamford to the north-east.

Rockingham Forest axis divides the Welland Valley from the Nene Valley, where the extensive northern catchment is fed by large streams and small rivers including the Ise. Expansive views over the vales landscape are afforded from the fringes of the elevated clay wolds. This contrasts with the views along the Nene and Welland, which are much more contained.

The M1 cuts through the western end of this NCA, linking London with the North. The A45, which starts in this NCA at the A14 (Thrapston), runs along the Nene Valley to Northampton and then on through the Northamptonshire Uplands NCA, Dunsmore and Feldon NCA and on into Birmingham, which sits within Arden NCA.

The Northamptonshire Round long-distance footpath links the Northamptonshire Vales NCA with its neighbour the Northamptonshire Uplands. This footpath is approximately 80 km long and circles Northampton. The 140-kilometre Jurassic Way long-distance footpath runs through the centre of the area, from Banbury to the south-west to Stamford to the north-east.

Key characteristics

- An open landscape of gently undulating clay ridges and valleys with occasional steep scarp slopes. There is an overall visual uniformity to the landscape and settlement pattern.
- Diverse levels of tranquillity, from busy urban areas to some deeply rural parts.
- Mixed agricultural regime of arable and pasture, with arable land tending to be on the broader, flat river terraces and smaller pastures on the slopes of many minor valleys and on more undulating ground.
- Relatively little woodland cover but with a timbered character derived largely from spinneys and copses on the ridges and more undulating land, and from waterside and hedgerow trees and hedgerows, though the density, height and pattern of hedgerows are varied throughout.
- A strong field pattern of predominantly 19th-century and – less frequently – Tudor enclosure.
- Distinctive river valleys of the Welland and the Nene, with flat flood plains and gravel terraces together with their tributaries (including the Ise). Riverside meadows and waterside trees and shrubs are common, along with flooded gravel pits, open areas of winter flooded grassland, and wetland mosaics supporting large numbers of wetland birds and wildfowl.
- Frequent large settlements that dominate the open character of the landscape, such as Northampton and Wellingborough, and associated infrastructure, including major roads, often visually dominant.
- Frequent small towns and large villages often characterised by red brick buildings and attractive stone buildings in older village centres and eastern towns and villages. Frequent imposing spired churches are also characteristic, together with fine examples of individual historic buildings.



Oundle is predominately built of limestone and has retained the older character of a market town.

- Relatively frequent, prominent historic parklands and country houses towards the outer edges and close to more wooded areas. Other characteristics include ridge and furrow and nationally important townships such as Sutton Bassett and Clipston.
- Localised high concentrations of threshing barns and high status timber-framed farm buildings from the 18th century or earlier.

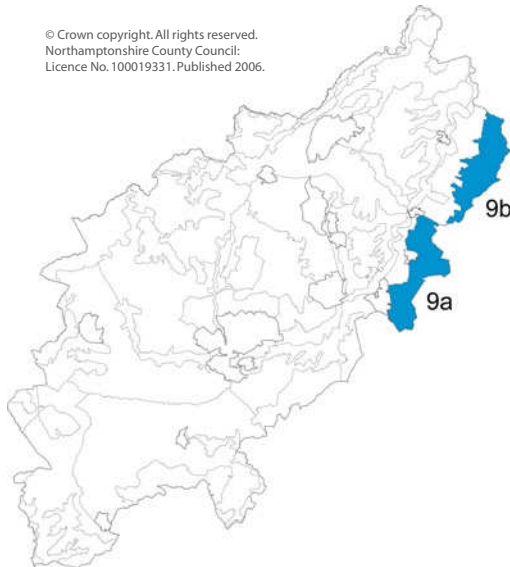
APPENDIX 3

Extract from Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment – LCT 9: Farmed
Claylands & LCA 9A: Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands

9. FARMED CLAYLANDS

CHARACTER AREAS

- 9a Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands
- 9b Polebrook Claylands



Farmed Claylands

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Extensive drift deposits of Boulder Clay mask the underlying solid geology;
- expansive, flat or gently undulating landscape where plateau areas are divided by broad shallow valleys;
- wide views give the landscape an expansive and sometimes exposed character;
- open and intensively farmed arable landscape with large scale fields bounded by open ditches or sparse, closely trimmed hedges;
- limited woodland cover and hedgerow removal contributes to open character;
- thinly settled landscape, feeling remote in some particularly sparsely settled areas;
- often direct rural roads and tracks, frequently bordered by ditches, cross the landscape in a consistent orientation, giving it a distinctive grain;
- farms and isolated houses at end of tracks; and
- diversity of building materials including brick and limestone.

9. FARMED CLAYLANDS

LOCATION AND INTRODUCTION

The Farmed Claylands Character Areas define the northeastern boundary of the county between Rushden and Elton and extend beyond the county into neighbouring Cambridgeshire where they continue eastwards towards the level fenlands and southwards where they meet chalkland landscapes.

Although the landscape only reaches a maximum elevation of 100m ASL, the elevated land represents the watershed between the catchments of the River Nene to the north and River Great Ouse to the south. Watercourses are not a significant feature of the landscape, however, and occupy broad, shallow valleys that are often cleared of bankside vegetation, thus making them difficult to discern in the landscape.

This gently undulating landscape has a strong agricultural character and consists of large-scale arable farmland with open fields, sparse trimmed hedgerows and watercourses flowing through broad shallow valleys, often cleared of bankside vegetation.

Historically the area was sparsely settled up until the medieval period when improved ploughs and population pressure necessitated expansion of settlements onto the heavier claylands, previously cloaked in dense woodland. Woodland is now not a dominant land cover element and comprises small shelter belts and copses although some large ancient woodlands exist in the Polebrook Claylands landscape character area.

Despite the low elevation of the landscape, the effects of limited woodland cover and large, open arable fields allow wide panoramic views over the Farmed Claylands, giving them an expansive character.

Roads passing through the landscape share a consistent orientation, and are often direct routes, thus giving the landscape a distinctive grain and geometric, ordered character that is echoed in the arrangement of fields.

PHYSICAL INFLUENCES

Geology and Soils

The Farmed Claylands are underlain almost entirely by mudstones of the Oxford Clay Formation. Limited areas of Kellaways Sand sandstones and Cornbrash Formation limestones are evident, however, along the western fringes of the landscape where land falls towards the Nene within the Limestone Valley Slopes landscape character type. The solid geology is rarely exposed from beneath the thick mantle of glacial till which extends across the claylands. However, where the action of water at the headwaters of streams draining towards the Nene and Great Ouse has removed the superficial deposits, limited areas of the underlying rock strata come closer to the surface. The mantle of drift geology has generally precluded quarrying of any form, although small former quarry sites have been identified on the western boundary of the landscape character areas that fall within this type. Limited stretches of alluvium form narrow floodplains bordering streams draining the landscape eastwards to the River Great Ouse.

Soils across the area are predominantly clays, derived from the underlying boulder clay drift deposits. They are heavy and cold, as a consequence of the high clay content, and are slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Some, however, are slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils with a slight risk of water erosion. To the west of the landscape type within land overlying the Kellaways Beds and Cornbrash, soils are lighter forming a mixed loam. Here, the soil is characterised by well drained calcareous clayey and fine loamy soils over limestone, which in places are shallow and brashy and on occasions, deeper and slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils.

Landform

The soft mudstones have been eroded by numerous streams to form a gently undulating landscape in which watercourses occupy broad shallow valleys. This geological structure has been further softened and smoothed by the deposition of glacial deposits.

Land rises in the east to a maximum elevation of 100m ASL and falls gradually eastwards and northwards to 30m ASL where the headwaters of tributaries of the River Great Ouse flow along broad valley formations.

Hydrology

The Farmed Claylands mark the watershed between the Nene and Great Ouse catchments, with streams originating on the claylands flowing westwards to the Nene and eastwards to tributaries of the River Great Ouse.

Watercourses are gently flowing and occupy broad, shallow valleys, and create a gently undulating landform across the claylands.

Land Use and Land Cover

The landscape consists of intensively managed arable farmland with large fields defined by sparse trimmed hedgerows. Modern agricultural practices have had a significant influence on the landscape, with increased mechanisation having led to the removal or decline of hedgerows, and the amalgamation of fields to maximise land in production, and also accommodate large machinery. Permanent pastures and small areas of unimproved calcareous grasslands are also evident, largely in small fields on the fringes of villages.

9. FARMED CLAYLANDS

Woodland and Trees

Woodland is not a significant or characteristic feature of the Farmed Claylands, many areas having been cleared of woodland for intensive arable production. Over much of the landscape woodlands are small deciduous shelterbelts. Elsewhere lines of poplar mark the horizon and offer a degree of shelter. Ancient deciduous woodlands are few in this landscape although significant areas are conspicuous on the Polebrook Claylands to the west of Lutton and north of Clopton. The most significant area of woodland is Ashton Wold to the north of the Polebrook Airfield. Here, woodland is regarded as a good example of the development of ancient secondary woodland into natural woodland. Smaller remnants of ancient woodland are also evident close to moated sites as at Papley and Kingsthorpe Lodge. This indicates that less intensive arable farming has taken place in the vicinity of these monuments.

Hedgerow and field trees, whilst not frequent or a common characteristic, are important locally and often represent the only strong vertical elements in the flat or gently undulating agricultural landscapes.

HUMAN INFLUENCES

Buildings and Settlement

Historically the heavy, cold soils of the claylands precluded widespread settlement. However, population pressure and the improved ploughs of the medieval period stimulated woodland clearance and the establishment of farmland and some permanent settlement. The existing settlement pattern reflects this, with only a small number of villages and hamlets scattered through the landscape interspersed with isolated farmsteads.

Villages and hamlets tend to line the direct roads cutting through the landscape and have a distinctive linear arrangement. The larger villages tend to be more compact, with the village church located at the junction of two or more roads, as at Lutton and Thurning. Other settlements have a much looser arrangement, and where present the church is sometimes some distance from other village buildings, as at Caldecott and Hemington.

Isolated farms often border and abut the main routes through the landscape, although others are located at the end of narrow tracks. Larger farm units have created the need for large storage buildings, which can be a dominant element of the landscape visible from wide areas, particularly if located on more elevated land. In such instances, these buildings are prominent on the skyline although their impact is reduced with adequate tree planting.

Heritage Features

Across the heavy claylands dense woodland and heavy soils deterred prehistoric farming and widespread Roman settlement. However, population pressure and the use of improved ploughs led to increased medieval settlement of the claylands, indicated by remnant areas of ridge and furrow, and moated manors. These still survive across the landscape despite improvement and more intensive arable farming in recent decades.

Moated manor sites are perhaps the most evocative historic features across the landscape. Many of these sites have been designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and are located close to existing villages, hamlets and farms indicating a continuity of settlement from the medieval period. However, none is found in close proximity to surviving areas of ridge and furrow, which is an indication of the widespread ploughing up of these areas in recent decades.

Boundaries and Field Patterns

Sub regular field patterns are most common on the Farmed Claylands, particularly along the eastern fringes where they extend into the Claylands of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. Discontinuous fields are also significant in these areas of intensive arable farming, particularly on lower, flatter areas of the landscape. Large fields are common and reflect intensive arable farming practices, with hedgerow removal and field amalgamation evident in many areas. Despite the predominance of large fields, a more intricate pattern of small regular fields is evident on the fringes of villages and hamlets although this is not always the case.

Field boundaries are often defined by well clipped hedgerows, although in places these have been grubbed out to leave no visible trace or a simple linear grass bank to demarcate separate fields. Where no visible boundary features are evident, contrasting land uses or plough lines mark the extent of individual fields in the landscape.

Communications and Infrastructure

In many areas a rigid geometric framework of minor country lanes reinforces the pattern of the landscape. These tend to follow direct routes across the landscape and lie at right angles to each other, being orientated either southwest to northeast, or southeast to northwest. Sometimes, this framework is echoed in the orientation of geometric field boundaries, although this is not always the case, indicating that perhaps the more organic field boundaries originated prior to formal enclosure, possibly during the medieval period. Indeed some roads also follow a winding course through the landscape. Older villages and hamlets tend to be located on these winding lanes. Farmsteads tend to be located on straighter roads, however, indicating that both the route and farmstead date to the enclosure period.

The most heavily trafficked roads crossing the claylands are the A45 and A14, which converge on Thrapston. Beyond these routes, however, roads tend to be quiet rural lanes.

9. FARMED CLAYLANDS

A disused railway line runs through the landscape between Denford and Hargrave. It is identifiable by the stretches of embankment and scrub vegetation. Perhaps the most prominent infrastructure feature in the landscape is the large telecommunications station to the east of Chelveston. This contains a number of prominent masts, which gain visual prominence in the gently undulating, open agricultural landscape. High voltage transmission lines are also highly conspicuous to the east of Lutton where they form a significant linear landscape feature running across the claylands.

Recreation

There are few recreational opportunities in these highly managed agricultural landscapes. However, footpaths are relatively common and cross through areas of open landscape between villages. A number of footpaths mirror the alignment of roads through the landscape and take a direct course across arable fields. Elsewhere, footpath courses are more sinuous, such as the network of paths to the west of Luddington in the Brook, where they follow a number of watercourses. There are no National Trails or tourist trails in the Farmed Claylands, although the Three Shires Way marks the southern extent of the landscape type, and county boundary, to the southeast of Rushden.



Old hangars on Farmed Claylands

AESTHETIC AND PERCEPTUAL QUALITIES

The landscape is characterised by gently undulating or flat lowland farmland. Intensive farming practices are widely employed, and the effects on the local landscape are considerable and have a major influence on how the landscape is perceived and experienced. The rigid geometry of roads is reinforced by the patterns created by fields although this is breaking down where hedgerows are becoming gappy or have been grubbed out to accommodate large scale farming machinery.

Wide open views are possible across the landscape, particularly in areas where hedgerow removal has been widespread. This gives the landscape an open and exposed character, reinforced by the sparse settlement pattern. The scale of the landscape is emphasised by hedgerow removal and monoculture, leading to a vast sweeping landscape of similar texture and colour, in which it is difficult to determine scale and distances. Where present, vertical elements such as buildings, trees and woodlands provide a means by which to judge landscape scale and act as eye catchers in an otherwise relatively featureless horizontal landscape. Despite wide areas displaying intensive farming practices, buildings, hedgerows, trees and a more intricate pattern of smaller fields combine to give the landscape surrounding settlements a more human and intimate scale.

Large scale agricultural 'sheds' and out buildings are constant reminders of the landscape's function as a highly productive farming area. The vast scale of farm buildings is mirrored in the large stock piles of square hay bails that are located throughout the landscape.

9. FARMED CLAYLANDS

LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS, LANDSCAPE CONDITION AND LANDSCAPE CHANGE

The landscape is intensively farmed with a productive and highly managed character, particularly where hedgerows are low and well clipped. In some areas, however, the landscape displays an under-managed, sometimes derelict character particularly where hedgerows are gappy or overgrown, or they have been removed.

The intensive nature of farming across the landscape has led to the loss of hedgerows and woodland and to the fragmentation of semi-natural habitats. This is very evident in the landscape, which has an overriding modern and man made character. There is also little perception of time depth in these landscapes, as a result of the relative scarcity of visual historic features in the landscape.

Despite these factors, the landscape is generally in good condition, with productive farmland and well-managed small areas of woodland interspersed with rural settlements and farms. The relative absence or perceived absence of features of nature conservation and historic interest make this a relatively indistinctive landscape, however, with only limited visual appeal. Nevertheless it provides a strong contrast to other landscapes in the county and for this reason is notable as a separate landscape character type.

9 FARMED CLAYLANDS



View to Raunds

9a Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands

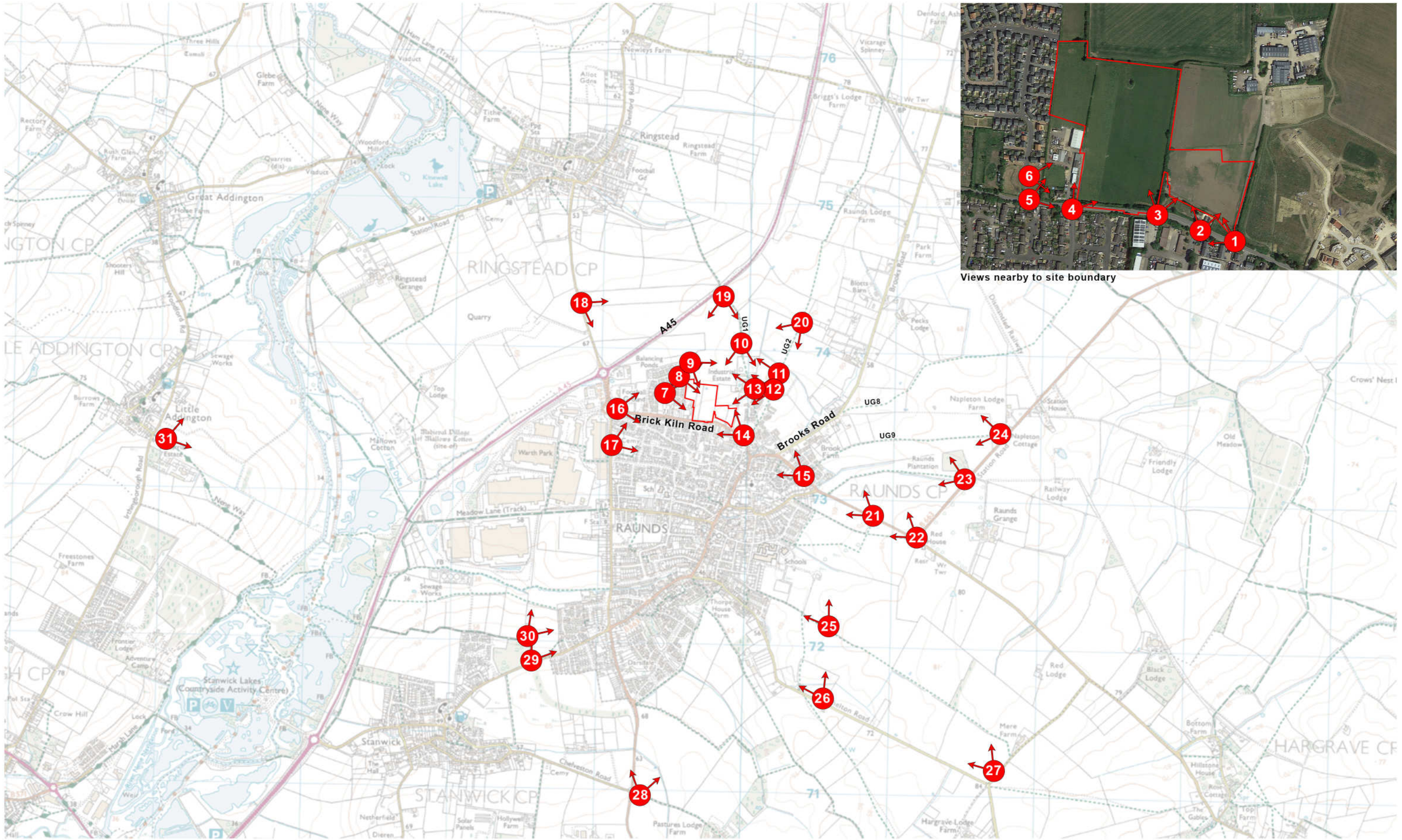
The Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands Character Area is located on the eastern edge of Northamptonshire, bordered by the Limestone Valley Slopes and the urban areas of Rushden, Higham Ferrers and Raunds. The area is characterised by a predominance of arable cereals with fields of arable horticulture and occasional areas of improved pasture and calcareous grassland. Pastoral fields are frequently found around the edge of settlements such as Rushden and Thrapston, though a large concentration is also evident around Brigg's Lodge Farm and Buscott's Lodge. A significant area of calcareous grassland also occurs around Higham Park and Newton Bromswold. Whilst arable fields are, in general, large and medium to large in size and pastoral fields are small to medium, fields in close proximity to settlement and adjacent to the A45(T) are, overall, smaller in size resulting in a more intimate character. Woodland cover is sparse, restricted to occasional broadleaved copses often geometric in shape and a single coniferous plantation north of Hargrave. As a result, an open character prevails across the largely flat and expansive landscape. Scattered hedgerow trees of oak and ash provide the only other tree cover in the area.

The main settlements in the character area are the villages of Hargrave, Caldecott, Newton Bromswold, Higham Park, and the outer edges of Ringstead and Chelveston. Although the majority have a linear form, Chelveston has developed around a number of road junctions and the village of Ringstead is a compact, nucleated settlement. Beyond this lies a rural landscape of scattered farms and dwellings, located both at the end of long straight tracks running at right angles to the road and adjacent to the roadside. The alignment of the network of minor roads that connect settlements and individual dwellings emphasise the natural grain of the landscape. The A45(T) provides the only main road within the area from which there is evidence of localised noise intrusion. Other infrastructure elements, however, have a more significant impact on the landscape. Located on the southeastern boundary of the area, a telecommunications station with several transmitters is prominent on the skyline along with a radio mast at Hare Spinney. To the east of Brigg's Lodge Farm and west of Higham Park, water towers are also evident in the landscape. In this lowland landscape, church spires often provide important focal points and punctuation marks in the landscape, with notable examples at Raunds, Stanwick and Newton Bromswold.

Recreational opportunities are limited in the Chelveston and Caldecott Claylands and although a number of rights of way pass through the landscape, there are no National Trails. Rushden Golf Course, southwest of Chelveston, provides the only recreational feature. Heritage features are also limited, with only scattered fields of ridge and furrow.

APPENDIX 4

Viewpoint Location Plan (VLP.004) and Photographic Record



Views nearby to site boundary



Not to Scale

- Key
-  Site Boundary
 -  Viewpoint Locations

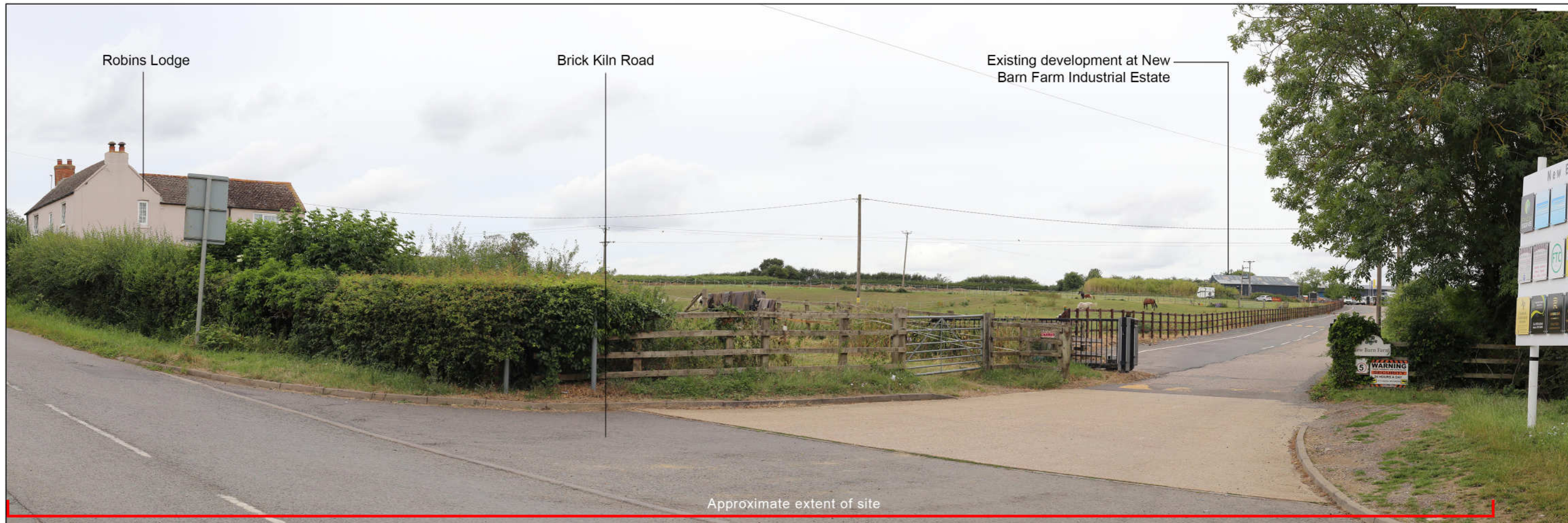


Brick Kiln Road, Raunds
Viewpoint Location Plan

Client: ABDS Ltd

Drawing Ref: 11231L.VLP.004
 Date: Aug 2023 Drawn: SA Checked: AM

Drawing notes: Based on Ordnance Survey data with permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright. Image supplied by Google Maps <https://maps.google.co.uk> Accessed 23rd January 2020
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Viewpoint 1



Viewpoint 2

NOTE: PHOTOGRAPHS ILLUSTRATE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT ONLY AND SHOULD NOT REPLACE VISITING THE VIEWPOINTS IN PERSON TO ENSURE AN OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT. Panoramas are created from multiple photographs which are stitched together in Adobe Photoshop. The photographs are taken using a digital equivalent of a 35mm camera in line with best practice and current guidance. The camera (Canon EOS 6D) is a full sensor DSLR model and, as such, the photographs are taken at a 50mm focal length using a fixed 50mm Canon lens. Images illustrate a horizontal field of view of 68° and, when printed at A3, should be viewed at a distance of 260mm curved through the same radius in order to most closely reflect the existing landscape context.



Brick Kiln Road

Approximate extent of site

Viewpoint 3



St Mary's Gate

Brick Kiln Road

Approximate extent of site

Viewpoint 4

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Viewpoint 5



Viewpoint 6

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Viewpoint 7



Viewpoint 8

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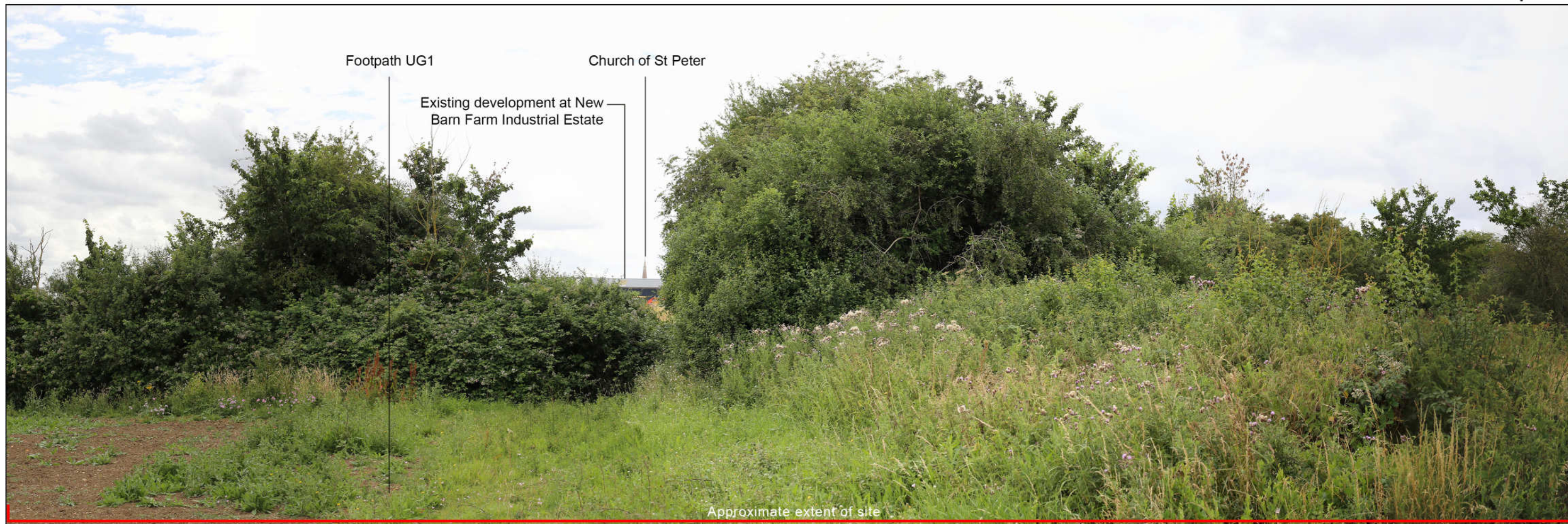


Site behind intervening vegetation

Properties on Deene Close

Approximate extent of site

Viewpoint 9



Footpath UG1

Church of St Peter

Existing development at New Barn Farm Industrial Estate

Approximate extent of site

Viewpoint 10

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Viewpoint 11



Viewpoint 12

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New development on Pentelow Way

Existing development at New Barn Farm Industrial Estate

Approximate extent of site

Viewpoint 13



Brick Kiln Road

New development on Pentelow Way

Approximate extent of site

Viewpoint 14

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Viewpoint 15



Viewpoint 16

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Viewpoint 17

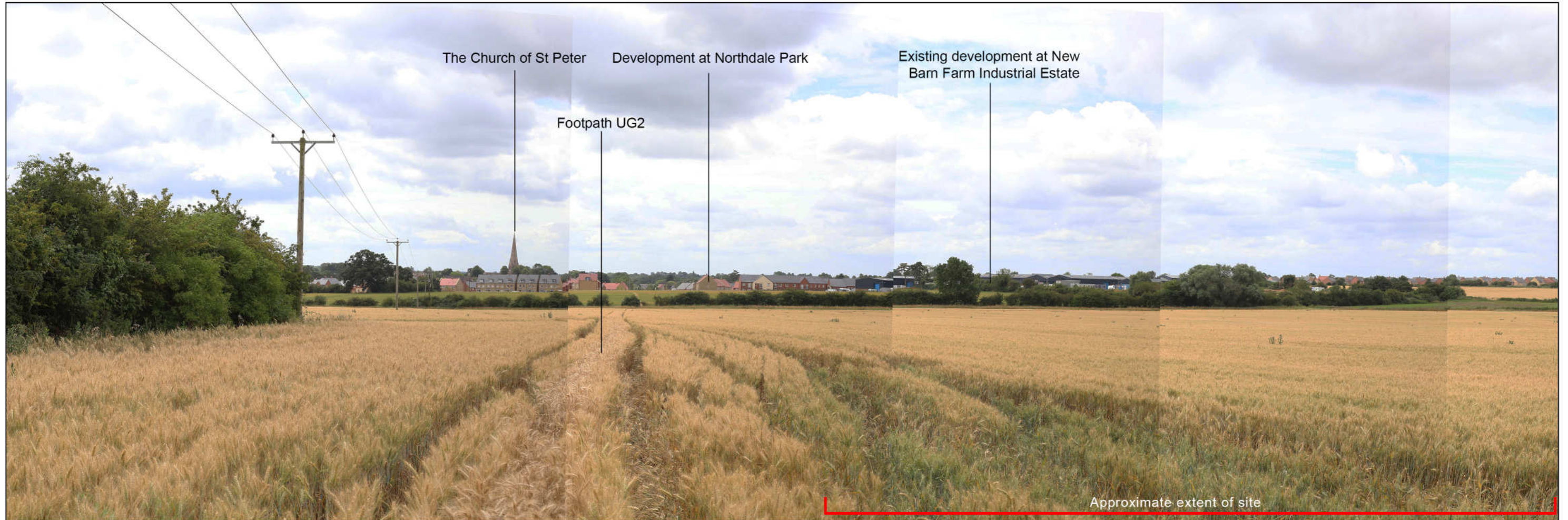


Viewpoint 18

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Viewpoint 19

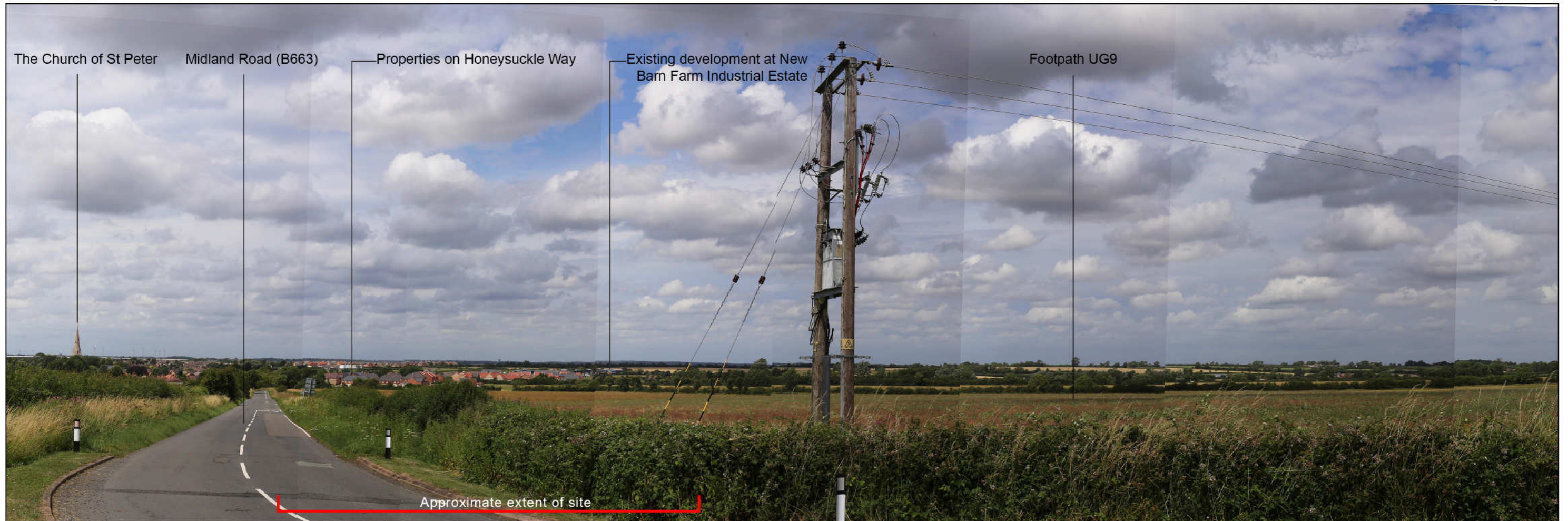


Viewpoint 20

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Viewpoint 21

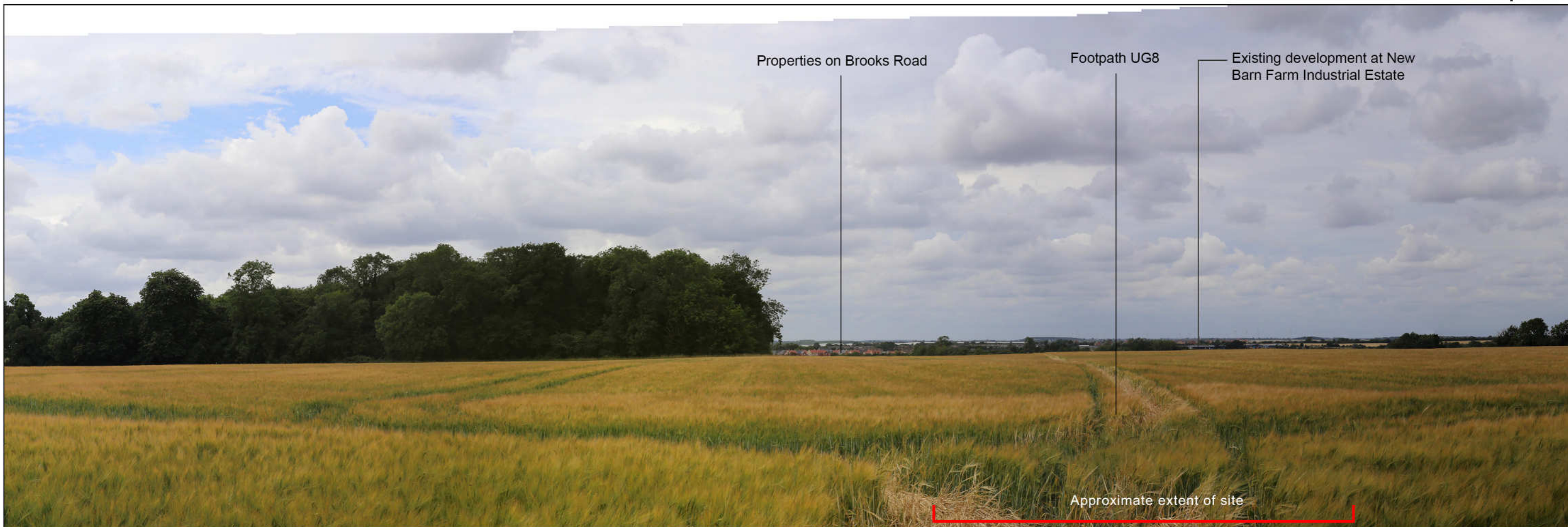


Viewpoint 22

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Viewpoint 23



Viewpoint 24

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Footpath UG13

The Church of St Peter

Approximate extent of site

Viewpoint 25



Shelton Road

The Church of St Peter

Approximate extent of site

Viewpoint 26

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Viewpoint 27



Viewpoint 28

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Viewpoint 29



Viewpoint 30

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Viewpoint 31

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APPENDIX 5

ABDS Proposed Site Plan



**ES LANDSCAPE
PLANNING**
Part of the ES Group

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