

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Land east of Colchester Road, Wellwick  
On behalf of City and Country

December 2023

Revised April 2024

---

Prepared by:	Felicity Churchyard
Position:	Senior and Chartered Landscape Architect
Qualifications:	CMLI, MALA BSc (Hons)

---

File name:	2745 LVIA Revised April 2024
Date Issued:	05.04.24
Revision:	FINAL

---

## CONTENTS

---

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	METHODOLOGY	2
3	EXISTING SITUATION	3
3.1	Context	3
3.2	Published Landscape Character Assessments	4
3.3	Statutory Designations	11
3.4	Landscape Resource and Contribution of the Site to Landscape Character	13
3.5	Visual Resource	14
4	THE PROPOSALS	17
4.1	Proposed Development	17
4.2	General Principles	17
5	ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS	19
5.1	Identifying the Landscape Effects	19
5.2	Sensitivity and Susceptibility	19
5.3	Significance of Landscape Effects	20
6	ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS	21
6.1	Identifying the Visual Effects	21
6.2	Significance of Visual Effects	21
6.3	Identification of Visual Effects	22
7	CONCLUSION	30

---

APPENDIX A FIGURES 1-9

APPENDIX B PUBLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENTS

---

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 Liz Lake Associates has been commissioned by City and County Properties Ltd. to prepare a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for land to the east of Colchester Road, Wellwick, to be referred to hereafter as 'the Site'. The report is in consideration of an outline planning application for 37 new residential dwellings with associated infrastructure, landscaping and public open space. Access will be taken from Colchester Road, B1027, utilising the access within the consented scheme to the immediate south of the Site (ref: 20/01124/OUT).
- 1.1.2 This report has been prepared on the benefit of the Client and the contents should not be relied upon by others without the express written authority of Liz Lake Associates. If any unauthorised third party makes use of this report they do so at their own risk and Liz Lake Associates owe them no duty of care or skill.
- 1.1.3 The report considers the existing baseline conditions and seeks to identify the relevant landscape and visual issues applicable to the Site. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken to assess the likely effects upon the landscape resource, specific views and visual amenity.
- 1.1.4 A Site visit was undertaken in November 2023 to appraise the character and condition of the Site and the landscape context, and to identify the key visual receptors. The weather was bright and sunny with a few clouds, visibility was very good for the duration of the visit. Once the scheme had been sufficiently developed, the assessment was undertaken by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect.
- 1.1.5 All photographs were taken with a digital camera, a Canon EOS 6D (a Full Frame Sensor camera) with a 50mm Focal Length prime lens in accordance with the guidance contained within LI Technical Guidance Note 06/19.
- 1.1.6 Liz Lake Associates is a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy with over 30 years' experience of master planning, landscape, ecology, urban design, heritage and environmental impact assessment. The company is a registered practice of the Landscape Institute.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 An LVIA of the Site and the development proposals has been prepared encompassing the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA), 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013), and 'Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland' (published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish National Heritage 2002, and the updated 'Approach to Landscape Character Assessment' (published by Natural England, 2014). In summary, the approach combines information and desktop reviews with on-site surveys and appraisal.
- 2.1.2 The Site based assessment involves the recording of both objective description and subjective impressions of the landscape, as well as details of the existing landscape condition. It includes an assessment of the extent and nature of views to and from the Site and they type of receptors that experience these views.
- 2.1.3 The following relevant studies and documents have been considered as part of the desk-based review and subsequent assessment:
- Natural England –National Character Areas (2013)
  - East of England Landscape Framework –Landscape East (2010)
  - Essex Landscape Character Assessment (2003)
  - Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment (2001) –Vol 1 and Vol 2.
- 2.1.4 The LVIA of the proposed development has been based upon the proposals illustrated on drawings prepared by City & Country.

### 3 EXISTING SITUATION

---

#### 3.1 Context

3.1.1 The Site lies within the jurisdiction of the Tendring District. For ease of description the Site has been subdivided into two areas. Area A - the main body of the Site and Area B - the access road.

3.1.2 The Site is located to the east of Colchester Road (B1027), immediately to the north of the consented scheme for 190 residential dwellings under planning reference 18/01476/DETAIL. Due to previous mineral extraction activities, the consented scheme to the south is set approximately 3-4m lower than the existing ground plane of the Site. At present, the Site is being lowered in height to match the levels of the consented scheme to the south. The Site currently occupies the northern end of a larger, broadly triangular, restored grassland field and extends to 3.87ha in size. Structural vegetation is confined to the eastern boundary and a small part of the southern edge, surrounding the small pond immediately to the south of the Site. Structural vegetation on the northern boundary is associated with Oaklands Holiday Park. The western boundaries and the remained of the southern edge of the Site is void of structural vegetation.

3.1.3 To the immediate north of the Site is Oaklands Holiday Park which comprises a series of static homes, incremental green spaces and a large lake. To the east and north east of the Site is the Wellwick Farm complex which includes, farmhouse, light industrial units and a couple of holiday lodges overlooking the Site and the consented scheme. The extent of the Site is shown on Figure 1: Site Location in Appendix A.

3.1.4 There are a number of small settlements scattered throughout the wider agricultural landscape to the north and east of the Site, along with the occasional woodland block. The A133 forms a key transport route connecting Clacton to the A120 and Colchester. The settlement edge of Colchester is located c.9.9km north west of the Site.

- 3.1.5 To the west of the Site is St Osyths Park and Martins Farm Country Park, informal footpaths connect the two. Areas within St Osyths Park and to the west of Martins Farm Country Park are currently being extracted for mineral deposits and features haul roads, mineral stockpiles and large engineered embankments or restored lakes. Further to the west is Howlands Marsh Nature Reserve along the eastern edge of the Brightlingsea Creek.
- 3.1.6 The village of St Osyth is situated to the south of the Site. The large seaside town of Clacton-on-Sea lies c.1.7km south east of the Site. Other small coastal towns of Point Clear, Seawick and Jaywick are located further to the south. The agricultural landscape filters into coastal marshland.

---

### 3.2 Published Landscape Character Assessments

- 3.2.1 A brief summary of the published landscape character assessments in the context of the Site is detailed below.

National: **Character Area Profile**, Natural England, 2014

- 3.2.2 The Site is situated within National Character Area (NCA) Profile 111: Northern Thames Basin. NCA 111 comprises a diverse area which extends from Hertfordshire to the Essex Coastline. The landscape ranges from the wooded Hertfordshire plateaux and river valleys to the open predominantly arable landscape of Essex with areas of urbanisation throughout the landscape, including the northern edge of London.

- 3.2.3 The Key Characteristics of NCA 111 of relevance to the Site and its context are:

*“The pattern of woodlands is varied across the area and includes considerable ancient semi-natural woodland. Essex is more open in character.*

*The field pattern is very varied across the basin reflecting historical activity. In the Essex heathlands 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>- century field enlargement is dominant.*

*Brick-built dwellings are characteristic from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Prior to this dwellings and farm buildings tended to be timber built with weatherboarding,*



*now mainly painted white but traditionally black or tarred, and whitewashed plaster walls.”<sup>1</sup>*

Regional: East of England Landscape Framework (Landscape East), 2010

3.2.4 The East of England Landscape Framework (Landscape East) identifies a series of landscape typologies within the east of England region. The Landscape East Assessment identifies the Site as being situated within the Lowland Settled Farmlands Landscape Type (LT). It describes the area a *“a settled agricultural landscape, often with recurring estate character, associated with fertile rolling lowlands, often around the coastal fringe.”*

3.2.5 The Lowland Settled Farmlands are predominantly in arable land use with damp meadows featuring on lower ground and river valleys. Trees and small plantations after often widespread. There is a high level of tranquillity across the landscape type, however, where areas of mineral extraction occur, the Landscape East Assessment notes that tranquillity is often reduced significantly. The LT has an intimate character enclosed by a mosaic of wooded and tree lined vistas.

County: Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003

3.2.6 The Essex Landscape Character Assessment identifies the Site as lying within Landscape Character Type (LCT) London Clay Landscapes - E. The key characteristics of LCT E are:

*“Mainly gently undulating or flat landform;*

*Heavy clay soils and lighter sandy/loamy soils where sand and gravel deposits overly clay;*

*Regular and straight hedged field boundaries the result of both ancient planned landscape, and late enclosure of former heathlands;*

---

<sup>1</sup> Natural England National Character Area 111 (2013). Pg 8

*Pasture and arable farmland; and*

*Mostly enclosed nature of the landscape.”<sup>2</sup>*

3.2.7 LCT E is subdivided into four Landscape Character Areas. The Site is situated within LCA E3 Tendring Plain. The Tendring Plain is described as a “*low, relatively flat plateau with extensive arable land us on loamy, sandy and clay soils. Typically, the fields are large and regular. Apart from a few localised clusters of woodlands/copses they are very widely dispersed. As a result, the area has a generally open character and there are frequent wide views in which the small settlements, scattered hedgerow trees, occasional lines of poplar punctuate the low horizons..Pylons, high masts and major roads visually interrupt the landscape in parts.*”<sup>3</sup>

3.2.8 They key characteristics to the Tendring Plain (E3) of relevance to the Site are;

*“Large flat farmland plateau, dissected by occasional small narrow valleys;*

*Arable land use dominates, but with some pasture and orchards;*

*Straight and regular field patterns with mainly low trimmed hedgerows;*

*Widely dispersed blocks of woodland/small copses, sparse tree cover in the north;”<sup>4</sup>*

3.2.9 The Essex Landscape Character Assessment includes a character profile for the LCA which includes amongst others;

Woodland / tree cover: “*Some larger blocks of deciduous woodland in the west around Colchester, near Alresford, and north of St Osyth”<sup>5</sup>*

Settlement Pattern: “*Relatively sparse settlement pattern of small villages and hamlets with a mainly linear form. Farmsteads and cottages tend to occur along*

---

<sup>2</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003, Chris Blandford Associates, pg134 and 145-149

<sup>3</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003, Chris Blandford Associates, pg134 and 145-149

<sup>4</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003, Chris Blandford Associates, pg134 and 145-149

<sup>5</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003, Chris Blandford Associates, pg134 and 145-149

*lanes. Typical historical local vernacular includes colour wash plaster, weatherboarding, and brick.”<sup>6</sup>*

Other landscape features: *“St Osyth Priory/park. Sand and gravel pits including areas of open water south of Arlesford and near Brightlingsea.”<sup>7</sup>*

- 3.2.10 The Landscape Condition of the Tendring Plain notes that *“Hedgerows are in moderate condition. Some are very fragmented. Settlements are in moderate condition. Out of character suburban infill particularly from the 1960’s and 1970’s occurs in some.”<sup>8</sup>*
- 3.2.11 The Sensitivity Evaluation of the Tendring Plain for Small urban extensions identifies a low landscape sensitivity level noting that there is *“moderate to high intervisibility”<sup>9</sup>*
- District: Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment, 2002 (Volumes 1 & 2)
- 3.2.12 The Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment is separated into two volumes. Volume 1 outlines the baseline information for each character area whilst Volume 2 represents guidance for built development based upon the Landscape Character Areas within Volume 1. Volume 1 of the Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment identifies the Site as being within Landscape Type (LT) 7 – Heathland Plateaux and within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 7B St Osyth / Great Bently Heaths.
- 3.2.13 The Heathland Plateaux LT is described as a flat, large scale agricultural plateau, covering a large part of the western half of the Tendring District. The area is identified as a heathy in character. Settlement across the Heathland Plateaus is characterised

---

<sup>6</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003, Chris Blandford Associates, pg134 and 145-149

<sup>7</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003, Chris Blandford Associates, pg134 and 145-149

<sup>8</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003, Chris Blandford Associates, pg134 and 145-149

<sup>9</sup> Essex Landscape Character Assessment, 2003, Chris Blandford Associates, pg134 and 145-149

by scattered halls/churches, rural farms and villages. Agricultural barns are distinctive features in the landscape and often form landmarks.

3.2.14 The Site is identified as being within LCA 7B St Osyth / Great Bently Heaths. It is described as a flat open plateau which is dominated by large scale, geometrically shaped fields. The fields are divided by low, gappy hedgerows with the occasional hedgerow oak tree. There is limited woodland cover in the landscape, although a few ancient woodlands break up the large scale agricultural landscape.

3.2.15 The key characteristics of LCA 7B of relevance to the Site include:

*“Highly productive open plateau of arable fields divided by low, gappy hedgerows with occasional hedgerow oaks;*

*Ancient woodlands form backdrop to views and are typically sweet chestnut coppice with oak standards;*

*The underlying sandy/acidic soils result in characteristic vegetation –now largely restricted to the hedgerows and roadside verges which often contain gorse and bracken;*

*Ancient settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, hamlets and villages, the villages traditionally focussed around a village green, heath or common; and*

*Network of narrow lanes connects the scattered farms and villages, some with important roadside trees or verges.”<sup>10</sup>*

3.2.16 The Tending District LCA evaluates the character of LCA 7B as: *“..distinctive character field patterns, settlement character and vegetation types. However, the loss of landscape features such as heaths and commons, unimproved pastures, village greens, hedgerows and ancient woodlands as a result of agricultural*

---

<sup>10</sup> Tending District Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 1, November 2001 pg 135-139

*intensification, development and Dutch elm disease means that landscape character of this area has been eroded. Overall, character is considered to be moderate.”<sup>11</sup>*

- 3.2.17 The Condition of LCA 7B is states as: “ *This agricultural plateau landscape is intensively cultivated and well maintained, although the condition of the hedgerows and woodland has been declining though the loss of elm, reduction in need of stock proof field boundaries and lack of management of hedgerows and woodland. Landscape condition is therefore in decline.”<sup>12</sup>*
- 3.2.18 The Sensitivity of LCA 7B is described as “ *..visually sensitive as a result of its open and rural character and long views..hedgerow oaks are particularly sensitive landscape features.”<sup>13</sup>*
- 3.2.19 The Tendring District LCA combines the condition and character of LCA 7B to result in an overall strategy of conserve and enhance. This is described as conserving the rural character and historic elements of the landscape and to enhance woodland cover, hedgerow condition and heathland character. The landscape management strategy includes the following guidance, amongst others:
- “Enhance the wooded character of the landscape by promoting the planting of new woodlands or extending existing woodlands;*
- Promote management of hedgerows as coppice..;*
- Conserve the historic dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets and scattered farmsteads, and the identity of individual settlements. Concrete kerbs, bright upward lighting and ornamental landscape planting all have an urbanising impact on the rural landscape;*

---

<sup>11</sup> Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 1, November 2001 pg 135-139

<sup>12</sup> Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 1, November 2001 pg 135-139

<sup>13</sup> Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 1, November 2001 pg 135-139

*Service facilities, factories or employment sites that use local materials and informal native planting area likely to have less impact on landscape character;*

*Ensure expansion of built development does not intrude onto the highly sensitive crests of slopes where development would be conspicuous on the skyline or restrict important views;*

*Particular care should be taken in the siting of communication masts or other vertical elements – these have the potential to be highly visible in this open landscape. This also applies for large scale rural buildings e.g. for agriculture;*

*Opportunities exist for creation of some innovative landscapes and architecture provided they fit with the scale of the landscape, utilise local materials and planting species and maintain the scattered rural settlement pattern;*

*Use of full cut-off lights and sensitively designed lighting schemes that can reduce the impact of light pollution on the rural environment and night skies; and*

*Conserve/maintain views to important landmarks such as manorial halls and church towers and conserve the setting of these features.”<sup>14</sup>*

3.2.20 A series of general guidance points are included within the Tendring District LCA for 7B, which include, amongst others;

*“The large scale open landscape means that particular care must be taken in the siting and design. Any new development, even of single farm buildings has the potential to be highly visible over long distances;*

*Maintain the historic dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets, scattered farmsteads and distinct rural villages;*

*New buildings should be constructed in such as way that they blend with the landscape in scale, colour and design. In this area the presence of large blocks of*

---

<sup>14</sup> Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 1, November 2001 pg 135-139

*native woodland suggests that new woodland creation may be appropriate to help integrate buildings into the landscape;*

*New employment sites must be well located in relation to existing settlements; and*

*Opportunities exist for innovative architecture provided it fits with the scale of the landscape, responds to local landform and utilises local materials.”<sup>15</sup>*

---

### 3.3 Statutory Designations

- 3.3.1 Conservation Areas: The Site is not located within any Conservation Area. The St Osyths Conservation Area is located to the immediate west of the B1027 (Colchester Road) west of the main body of the Site (Area A). The St Osyths Conservation Area covers St Osyths Park, St Osyths Priory and extends westwards along Point Clear Road and to the east along Clacton Road. (Refer to Figure 3: Landscape and Heritage Designations with Public Rights of Way).
- 3.3.2 Scheduled Monuments: There are no scheduled monuments within the Site. The closest Scheduled Monument is the ‘Remains of St Osyth’s Priory including the ruinous sections of a mid C-16 mansion’ (List Entry Number: 1002193), located c.1.14km south west of Area A, the main body of the Site. (Refer to Figure 3: Landscape and Heritage Designations with Public Rights of Way).
- 3.3.3 Listed Buildings: There are no Listed Buildings within the Site. The closest Listed Building is ‘Lamb Farmhouse’, Grade II (List Entry Number: 1111478), located c.0.5km south east of the main body of the Site (Area A). There are a number of other Grade I, II\* and II Listed Buildings located to the south of the Site, the majority of which are focused along the western edge of St Osyths and are located within the St Osyths Conservation Area. (Refer to Figure 3: Landscape and Heritage Designations with Public Rights of Way).

---

<sup>15</sup> Tendring District Landscape Character Assessment, Volume 2, November 2001 pg 64-65

- 3.3.4 Registered Parks and Gardens: The Site is not covered by any Registered Park or Garden. St Osyth's Priory Registered Park and Garden, Grade II (List Entry Number: 1000237) is located to the immediate west of the B1027 (Colchester Road) west of the main body of the Site (Area A). (Refer to Figure 3: Landscape and Heritage Designations with Public Rights of Way).
- 3.3.5 RAMSAR: The Site is not covered by a RAMSAR designation. The Colne Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 2) RAMSAR Site is located c. 0.45km west of the main body of the Site (Area A). (Refer Figure 2: Statutory Designations).
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): The Site is not covered by a SSSI. St Osyth Pit SSSI is located immediately to the west of Colchester Road (B1027) west of the Site. It is located to the immediate north of public footpath St Osyth 19. The St Osyth Pit *“comprises an important sequence of Pleistocene deposits related to the diversion of the Thames during the Anglian glacial period.”*<sup>16</sup> The Colne Estuary c. 0.45km to the west of the Site is also designated as a SSSI. The Riddles Wood SSSI is located c. 0.65km north east of the main body of the Site (Area A). (Refer Figure 2: Statutory Designations).
- 3.3.6 Special Protection Area (SPA): The Site is not covered by any SPA. The closest SPA is the Colne Estuary c.0.45km west of the main body of the Site (Area A). (Refer Figure 2: Statutory Designations).
- 3.3.7 Special Areas of Conservation (SAC): The Site is not covered by any SAC. The closest SAC is the Essex Estuaries SAC c. 0.65km to the west of the main body of the Site (Area A). (Refer Figure 2: Statutory Designations).
- 3.3.8 National Nature Reserve (NNR): The Site is not covered by any NNR. The closest NNR is the Colne Estuary NNR c.3.3km south west of the main body of the Site (Area A).

---

<sup>16</sup> <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=s1002161>



- 3.3.9 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS): The Site is not covered by any LWS. The closest LWS is St Osyth Parkland (Te57), immediately to the west of Colchester Road (B1027) and the main body of the Site (Area A). Other LWS within 2km of the Site include; St Osyth's Cemetery (Te63) c.0.75km to the south west of the Site and Howlands Marsh Nature Reserve c.0.7km to the west of the main body of the Site.
- 3.3.10 Environmental Designations: There are no Environmental Designations across the Site. Riddles Wood c. 0.65km to the north east of the Site is designated as Ancient and Semi Natural deciduous woodland and vegetation within St Osyth's Park is designated as Woodpasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat. Woodland blocks are scattered throughout the area, many of which are Ancient Woodland. Habitats within 2km of the Site and focused along the Brightlingsea and Flag Creeks to the west of the Site include, amongst others, Coastal Saltmarsh, Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh, Mudflats, Lowland Fens and Reedbeds.
- 3.3.11 Public Rights of Way: There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) that cross the Site. Public footpath *St Osyth 2* passes to the east of the Site in a broadly north to south direction along Wellwick Farm Lane and across the agricultural landscape terminating the Frowick Lane. Public footpath *St Osyth 19* is located to the west of the Site forming a connection along the western edge of St Osyth's Park and running adjacent to Howlands Marsh Nature Reserve.
- 
- 3.4 Landscape Resource and Contribution of the Site to Landscape Character
- 3.4.1 The Site is not covered by any designations for landscape character or quality. It comprises an irregularly shaped portion of a larger agricultural field restored to grassland. Structural vegetation on the Site is limited to the western Site boundary. Although the northern boundary of the Site is well vegetated, this vegetation is associated with Oaklands Holiday Park. There is no public access to the Site. Public footpath *St Osyth 2* passes to the east of the Site along Wellwick Farm Lane, there are views across the Site and the land to the south of the Site with consent for development.

- 3.4.2 The scale of the arable field in which the Site is located is similar to those present within the surrounding landscape. The restoration of the Site from previous mineral extraction activities sees a steep embankment close to the southern edge of the Site. Both active and inactive mineral extraction activities are prominent in the landscape to the west of the Site which has been heavily engineered. Overall, the Site is considered to contribute in a limited way to the local landscape character, since the land exhibits few attributes that are representative of local landscape character.
- 3.4.3 The Site contains no features or attributes of rarity and there appear to be no associations connecting the Site with notable people, historical events or the art. The Site could not be considered remote or tranquil due to its proximity to Colchester Road (B1027) which has an audible presence over the Site and can be seen glimpsed through vegetation on the western boundary. The Site itself has some landscape value which is overall considered to be low. The Site does not form part of a valued landscape for the purposes of NPPF, taking into account the value attributes of the Site features on the land.

---

3.5 Visual Resource

- 3.5.1 The visual amenity experience by people (visual receptors) in the locality of the Site differs according to many factors. Visual receptors of higher sensitivity with a greater susceptibility to change include residents at home (private viewpoints), people engaged in outdoor recreation (including the use of PRowS), visitors to heritage assets and other attractions, travellers on recognised scenic routes (public viewpoints) and people at their workplace where views are an important contributor to the setting and quality of their working life. Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes are considered less sensitive to changes in visual amenity.
- 3.5.2 A number of specific, representative and illustrative photographs selected for inclusion in the report and to illustrate the visual effects of the proposed scheme range from receptors including, local roads, public rights of way and representative private views are shown on Figure 7: Photo Location Plan - On Site / Close Proximity, Figure 8: Photo Location Plan Middle to Long Distance and photographs are shown at Figure 9: Photographic Sheets. The visual receptors are considered to

illustrate a fair representation of receptor groups with varying sensitivity/susceptibility to change in their visual amenity.

### 3.5.3

Initial consideration of the study area, via desk research, covered a broad sphere of 2-3km; however, this has been refined through field survey to review and appraise the extent of visibility of the Site in the landscape as follows;

Views from the west, towards the Site, are afforded as glimpses through vegetation on the B0127, Colchester Road, (photo locations 7a, 7b and 8). Active and inactive mineral extraction activities within St Osyth's Park and the substantial mature vegetation associated with the restoration of landscapes at St Osyth's Park (west of the Site) and Martins Farm Country Park (north west of the Site) screens views of the Site's ground plane (example photos 10 and 11). Views towards the Site further to the west are screened by existing intervening vegetation (photo locations 9 and 16).

Close proximity views from the north, towards the Site, are afforded from a select number of static caravans within Oaklands Holiday Park, with windows or doors facing south towards the Site (as shown in reciprocal photograph contextual site photos A and F). Middle distance views from the north towards the Site from the north are slightly elevated although, intervening vegetation including woodland blocks, along field boundaries and surrounding the Oaklands Holiday Park screen views towards the Site from Frowick Lane and the northern section of public footpath St Osyth 2 (example photo 6) and Dead Lane and public footpath St Osyth 16 (example photos 15).

Views towards the Site from the east are more open in nature. Immediately to the east of the Site, lodges at Wellwick Farm Leisure Park directly overlook the Site (as shown in reciprocal photograph, contextual site photo B, D and E). Views from public footpath St Osyth 2 look across the land immediately to the south of the Site with consent for development towards the Site at the northern end. Stock piles and initial work to the access road are visible in the foreground of the views (example photos 1 and 2). Further north along public footpath St Osyth 2, the foreground of views are composed of lodges at Wellwick Leisure Park, where the Site is visible

behind the lodges (example photo 3). Oblique views of the Site will be afforded from both first and second floor windows of Wellwick Farm House. Views of the Site, from public footpath St Osyth 2, beyond Wellwick Farm are glimpsed between Wellwick Farm House and other built form at Wellwick Farm (example photo 4). Mature vegetation at Wellwick Farm and surrounding Oaklands Holiday Park, assists with filtering views of the Site (example photo 5). In views further to the east, for example from Clay Lane, looking towards the Site, local changes in the intervening landform screen the ground plane of the Site. Built form at Wellwick Farm and ridgelines of the lodges at Wellwick Farm Leisure Park are visible above the topographical change (example photo 13).

View from the south towards the Site are screened by intervening vegetation on the B1027 Colchester Road and within St Osyth Cemetary (example photo 12). Views to the south east (for example; Park Farm, public footpath St Osyth 11 and Earls Hall Farm) of the Site are screened by changes in landform and intervening vegetation (example photo 14).

---

## 4 THE PROPOSALS

---

### 4.1 Proposed Development

4.1.1 The proposed development consists of the erection of 37 residential dwellings, new landscape planting and access to be taken from the B1027 Colchester Road, utilising the main access road through the consented development (REF: 18/01476/DETAIL) immediately to the south of the Site. The proposed dwellings will be constructed up to three storeys in height with a maximum height of 14m. Proposed built form in the south of the Site will be limited to 2 storeys in height.

4.1.2 The majority of the Site will be lowered to match the ground level of the consented scheme. An embankment will be provided around the northern, eastern and western edges of the Site to assimilate the edges of the Site with the immediately surrounding landform. Dwellings on the southern edge of the Site will be situated at the same level as the access road, sloping down to meet the lowered ground level of the rest of the Site. The proposed development will be finished in a materials palette to reflect the consented scheme to the immediate south of the Site. Vegetation on the Sites boundaries will be retained and protected as part of the proposed development. A number of small trees within the Site will be removed and transplanted elsewhere on the Site (refer: Arboricultural Report) as a result of the lowering of the ground level.

---

### 4.2 General Principles

4.2.1 This section of the report considers the results of the initial baseline work in the context of future residential development at the Site.

4.2.2 The design of the proposed development aims to be well integrated into the surrounding residential development. The proposals of a similar design, density and scale to the consented development to the south of the Site.

4.2.3 To assist the design process, the following general opportunities have been applied to the emerging proposals. These are based upon Site investigations, published landscape character assessments and visual effects considerations. The proposals

are shown on the plan and drawings prepared by City & Country and comprise the following main elements;

Setting the proposed dwellings back from the edges of the Site to allow existing boundary vegetation to be retained and ground forms assimilated with the immediate context;

Orientating built form to reflect the layout and density of the consented development. Additionally, the majority of built form over-look green spaces;

Building finishes to reflect the adjacent consented scheme to allow for there to be no visual distinction drawn between the consented and proposed developments;

Opportunities for new tree planting on the sides and tops of the embankments providing an increase in canopy cover across the Site. Trees shall be planted at varying sizes and species (of local provenance) to allow for a range in height and diversity in tree stock. Embankments to be seeded with a wildflower grass seed mix to tie in with the development to the south;

Provision of new street trees, connecting to the consented development to the south and increasing the visual amenity of prospective residents; and

Provision of new ornamental hedgerows to plot frontages reflecting the consented scheme.

---

## 5 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

---

This section of the report considers the results of the initial baseline work in the context of future potential development at the Site. The landscape effects are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect, or cumulative.

The following assessment of landscape effect should be read in conjunction with the approach to mitigation (refer Chapter 4).

---

### 5.1 Identifying the Landscape Effects

5.1.1 The effect of the proposed changes to the Site, specifically on the identifies landscape receptors (attributes) has been reviews including consideration of changes to the existing landscape resource, the introduction of new elements within the landscape and changes to local perceptions of the Site.

---

### 5.2 Sensitivity and Susceptibility

5.2.1 An important element in identifying the effects of a proposal is to assess the ability (the susceptibility) of the existing landscape to accommodate the specific proposed changes with regard to the consequences on the local landscape character.

5.2.2 The Site (landscape resource) has been deemed to be of medium to low susceptibility to accommodate the proposed development, since it is an established location with a cluster of existing built forms. Where change of an appropriate nature could be absorbed without loss of key characteristics, individual elements or features and specific aesthetic or perceptual aspects of overall landscape character. Indeed, it is also recognised that this is in the context of a landscape with consent for development, where initial ground works are taking place, to the immediate south of the Site.

5.2.3 Accordingly, the sensitivity of the Site is considered to be medium to low when value (low) and susceptibility (medium) are combined.

- 5.3 Significance of Landscape Effects
- 5.3.1 Effects can be adverse or beneficial. Where the Proposals are judged to cause deterioration to the landscape resource / local landscape character this is described as an adverse effect. Where the Proposals are judged to increase the value of the Site to the landscape resource / local landscape character this is described as a beneficial effect.
- 5.3.2 There will be some direct and permanent changes to the resource of the land in the proposed changes across the Site. It is acknowledged that the proposed development brings new built elements and features into an area of the Site that is undeveloped. There will be an inevitable loss of restored grassland, however, this does not mean that the proposals will be out of character with the local landscape.
- 5.3.3 Overall, the scale and degree of change on the Site would be recognised, but adjacent to features that have already influenced the landscape (Oaklands Holiday Park) and that will influence a change in the existing landscape (consented development), both of which are softened by existing vegetation in the surrounding landscape. In addition, the consented development includes landscape proposals that will tie in with the proposed development to create a cohesive landscape design and will mature and establish. Accordingly, the overall significance of the landscape effect with regard to the proposed scheme is considered to represent a Slight Adverse to Negligible Effect.
- 5.3.4 The landscape resource of the Site itself will be improved and enhanced through planting of new features, including new trees, hedgerows and wildflower meadow grass. These new elements will provide a positive contribution to character and have a beneficial effect on the resource of the Site itself.
- 5.3.5 Once and appropriate landscape management scheme has established, the significance of the landscape effects in the long term will change and is considered to represent a Negligible Effect on landscape character, as the proposed development will be assimilating into its setting in the longer term.



## 6 ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

---

The visual effects are the changes to the Site, quantitative or qualitative, compared with a scenario without the Proposals. Effects can be adverse or beneficial, direct, indirect or cumulative. The assessment involves a systematic identification and description of the visual effects, supported by plans and photographs.

---

### 6.1 Identifying the Visual Effects

6.1.1 The likely value places upon views by people, or the visual amenity if the locality is evaluated to help assess the effects of the proposed development.

6.1.2 The assessment has been carried out to make informed judgements applicable to visual amenity throughout the year, including the winter months as it is recognised that deciduous planting may increase the degree of visibility in some locations.

6.1.3 An important element in identifying the visual effects of a Proposal is to assess the existing visual receptors (people who see the view) and their susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity. The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of:

*“ The occupation of activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and*

*The extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.”<sup>17</sup>*

---

### 6.2 Significance of Visual Effects

Assessment of the significance of visual effects relating to the proposed development is considered with regard to the sensitivity of the visual receptor, the value attached to

---

<sup>17</sup> Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Para 6.32 (2013)

the views or visual amenity and the magnitude of change in view. The magnitude of change in view is considered in light of:

The sensitivity of the visual receptor (the viewer);

The value attached to the views or visual amenity;

The size and scale of the development;

The geographical extent of the area influenced;

Duration; and

Reversibility.

- 6.2.1 For the identified viewpoints the degree of change which the Proposals will engender is described and assessed. The following section identifies the primary viewpoints and people or visual receptors within the area that are likely to be affected by the change in views and visual amenity resulting from the proposed scheme. The significance of the visual effect has been assessed upon completion of the scheme and once established (i.e. 15 years plus), although it is acknowledged that new woodland and tree planting will continue growing to maturity over a longer period of time beyond the establishment period.

---

### 6.3 Identification of Visual Effects

- 6.3.1 The following section identifies a range of typical receptors within the area which are likely to be affected by the change in views and visual amenity resulting from the proposed development.
- 6.3.2 It should be noted that for some views the effects are considered to be short lived, largely because they occur on transient routes –e.g. local roads–in these locations, views are often short lived or periodic glimpses whilst moving along a route.

### Private Receptors

*Views from Wellwick Farm House and complex, north east of the Site (refer example photograph 3) - High Sensitivity*

- 6.3.3 The majority of views of the proposed development will be screened by existing intervening vegetation and built form within the Wellwick Farm complex. Where views of the Site are possible, these are likely to be oblique given the orientation of main building frontages. Where oblique views exist, only the upper portions of the new residential dwellings will be visible due to the ground plane of the Site being lowered to integrate with the consented development to the south of the Site. Once mitigation planting on the sides and top of the embankment has matured and established, this will provide a degree of softening to the upper portions of built form.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Negligible Effect

Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

*Views from Lamb Farm complex and adjacent residential properties to the south of the Site - High Sensitivity*

- 6.3.4 Existing vegetation surrounding the curtilage of Lamb Farm and the adjacent residential properties screens views of the Site and proposals entirely.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

*Views from Frowick Hall Farm, north of the Site - High Sensitivity*

- 6.3.5 Views of the proposals from Frowick Hall Farm are screened by vegetation surrounding the curtilage of the property and by intervening vegetation on field boundaries between the Site and Frowick Hall Farm.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

*Views from Park Farm and Park Farm Cottages to the south east of the Site (refer example photograph 14) - High Sensitivity*

6.3.6 Local topographical changes and intervening vegetation screens views of the Site and proposals from Park Farm and Park Farm Cottages.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

*Views from residential properties on the norther edge of St Osyth (refer example photograph 12) - High Sensitivity*

6.3.7 Existing vegetation along the B1027 screens views of the Site and of the proposals.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

*Views from residential properties on the eastern edge of Brightlingsea (refer example photograph 16) - High Sensitivity*

6.3.8 Views of the Site and the proposals are screened by intervening vegetation and topographical changes due to mineral extraction.

- Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change
- Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

Public Receptors

*Views from within Oaklands Holiday Park, north of the Site (refer reciprocal contextual Site photographs A & F) - High Sensitivity*

6.3.9 Static caravans on the southern edge of Oaklands Holiday Park will be afforded both direct and oblique views (depending on the orientation of static caravan) towards the

Site. Views will look over and through boundary vegetation on the southern edge of Oaklands Holiday Park towards upper portions and roof tops of the proposed development. New tree planting on the embankment, once established, will provide a level of filtering to the proposed development. The proposed development will be seen as a small extension to the consented scheme, bringing the built form slightly closer to receptors within Oaklands Holiday Park.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Moderate Adverse Effect

Established scheme (year 15 summer): Slight Adverse Effect

*Views from lodges at Wellwick Farm Leisure Park, east of the Site (refer reciprocal contextual Site photographs B, D and E) - High Sensitivity*

- 6.3.10 Views from the primary west facing windows will look directly towards upper portions and roof tops of the proposed development. New tree planting on the eastern Site boundary and across the embankment will heavily filter views of the proposed development once established. During the winter months when vegetation is out of leaf, views of the proposed development will be greater.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Moderate Adverse Effect

Established scheme (year 15 summer): Slight Adverse Effect

*Views from public footpath St Osyth 2, east and north east of the Site (refer example photographs 1 - 6) - High Sensitivity*

- 6.3.11 Views from the southern end of public footpath St Osyth 2 will look across the consented development towards the Site. Units at the southern end of the Site will form the foreground of the view (photo location 1), set at the same level as the access road, sloping down along the curve of the road to meet the ground level of the consented scheme. Once established, new tree planting on the south eastern corner of the Site will filter views of the new dwellings, although these will be seen in the context of the consented development.

6.3.12 The remainder of the proposed development will be barely discernible beyond the consented scheme (example photographs 1 and 2). Further north along the footpath, when in line with the Site, views of upper portions and roof tops of the proposed dwellings will be afforded through built form associated with Wellwick Farm and Wellwick Farm Leisure Park. Once vegetation on the eastern boundary of the Site and on the embankment matures and establishes, views of the proposed development (example photograph 3). Views of the proposed development from further north along the footpath, beyond Wellwick Farm, (example photographs 4, 5 & 6) when travelling in a southerly direction, will be screened by intervening vegetation and built form. During winter months, outlines of the built form will be heavily filtered through the intervening vegetation.

Scheme completion (year 1): Moderate Adverse Effect (in line with the Site),  
Negligible Effect (for the remainder of the footpath)

Established scheme (year 15 summer): Slight Adverse Effect (in line with the Site),  
Neutral Effect (for the remainder of the footpath)

*Views from public footpath St Osyth 16 to the north of the Site (refer example photograph 15) - High Sensitivity*

6.3.13 The Site and proposals are screened from view by local topographical changes and intervening vegetation and built form in views from public footpath St Osyth 16.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

*Views from public footpath St Osyth 11 to the south east of the Site (refer example photograph 14) - High Sensitivity*

6.3.14 Local topographical changes and intervening vegetation screens views of the Site and proposals from Park Farm and Park Farm Cottages.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

*Views from public footpath St Osyth 19 to the west and south west of the Site (refer example photographs 8 and 9) - High Sensitivity*

- 6.3.15 There is a heavily filtered, framed view of the Site from public footpath St Osyth 19 where it joins the B1027 Colchester Road (example photo 8). The upper portions of the proposed development would be barely discernible and seen in the context of and as a minor extension to the consented development immediately to the south of the Site. The remainder of the footpath is heavily vegetated and surrounding landform is highly engineered with stockpiles and mineral extraction activities, as a result screening the Site and proposals from view.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Slight Adverse Effect

Established scheme (year 15 summer): Negligible Effect

*Views from within St Osyth's Park to the west of the Site (refer to example photograph 10) - High Sensitivity*

- 6.3.16 Existing vegetation and engineered topographical changes to the local landform screen views of the Site and the proposals.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

*Views from within Martins Farm Country Park to the north west of the Site (refer to example photograph 11) - High Sensitivity*

- 6.3.17 Existing vegetation and engineered topographical changes to the local landform screen views of the Site and the proposals.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

## Transport Receptors

### *Views from B1027 Colchester Road (example photographs 7a and 7b) - Medium Sensitivity*

- 6.3.18 Where there is an existing break in vegetation close to the southern most corner of the Site, where the access track to Wellwick Farm joins the B1027, new residential dwellings in the southern most corner of the Site will be visible in the gap. Views of these dwellings will be fleeting as users of the B1027 will be travelling at speed, with their focus on the direction of travel. Once new planting in the southern corner of the Site has established, views of the dwellings will be filtered.
- 6.3.19 Views of upper portions of the proposed development from the B1027 are fleeting and heavily filtered by existing vegetation along the eastern edge of the B1027. The proposed development will be seen in the context of and as a slight extension to the consented development to the south of the Site. Establishment of new planting within the Site will further filter the glimpsed views of the proposed development.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): Moderate Adverse Effect (where users of the B1027 pass the Wellwick Farm access) Slight Adverse Effect (for the remainder of the B1027)

Established scheme (year 15 summer): Slight Adverse Effect (where users of the B1027 pass the Wellwick Farm access) Negligible Effect (for the remainder of the B1027)

### *Views from Frowick Lane to the north of the Site - Medium Sensitivity*

- 6.3.20 Views of the proposals from Frowick Lane are screened by vegetation surrounding the curtilage of the property and by intervening vegetation on field boundaries between the Site and Frowick Lane.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change



*Views from Dead Lane to the north of the Site - Medium Sensitivity*

- 6.3.21 Views of the proposals from Dead Lane are screened by vegetation surrounding the curtilage of the property and by intervening vegetation on field boundaries between the Site and Dead Lane.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

*Views from Clay Lane to the east of the Site - Medium Sensitivity*

- 6.3.22 Views of the proposals from Clay Lane will be screened by the existing local topographical changes and existing built form at Wellwick Farm.

Scheme completion (year 1 winter): No Change

Established scheme (year 15 summer): No Change

## 7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has reviewed the existing landscape and visual resource of the land to the east of the B1027 Colchester Road, Wellwick, St Osyth (the Site) in consideration for the proposed development of 37 residential dwellings to the immediate north of the consented development (REF: 18/01476/DETAIL).
- 7.1.2 The Site currently occupies the northern end of a larger, broadly triangular, restored grassland field and extends to 3.78ha in size. The Site was historically used for mineral extraction, therefore a portion of the Site and the majority of the larger field in which it sits is c. 3-4m lower than the surrounding landscape. Structural vegetation is confined to the eastern boundary and a small part of the southern edge, surrounding the small pond immediately to the south of the Site, the remainder of the boundaries are void of structural vegetation.
- 7.1.3 The Site is not covered by any designations for landscape character or quality and the Site does not have any public access. Overall, the Site is considered to contribute in a limited way to the local landscape character, since the land exhibits few attributes that are representative of local landscape character. The Site contains no features or attributes of rarity and there appear to be no associations connecting the Site with notable people, historical events or the art. The Site could not be considered remote or tranquil due to its proximity to Colchester Road (B1027) which has an audible presence over the Site and can be seen glimpsed through vegetation on the western boundary and does not form part of a valued landscape within the NPPF.
- 7.1.4 The indicative Site Plan prepared by City and Country shows how the Site can be developed to accommodate 37 new residential dwellings which respects the wider landscape / townscape character, views from the immediate adjacent properties and recreational uses within the landscape.
- 7.1.5 There will be a direct and permanent change to the resource of the land at the Site. The proposed development brings new built elements to an area of the Site, which is

currently restored grassland, inevitable changing the character of the Site. However, the proposed development reflects the density, layout and style of the consented development immediately to the south of the Site, which once built will influence the character of the surroundings locally. The landscape resource of the Site itself will be improved and enhanced through the planting of new features, including new trees, hedgerows and wildflower meadows. These new elements will provide a positive contribution to character and have a beneficial effect on the resource of the Site itself.

- 7.1.6 The visual effects range from generally moderate adverse through to negligible and no change effects, although it is recognised that users closest, public footpath St Osyth 2, Lodges at Wellwick Farm Leisure Park and Oaklands Holiday Park, to the Site will experience the most apparent effects on views and visual amenity; however, these views are in the context of the consented scheme being completed. For most receptors there will be limited visibility of the proposed development due to intervening vegetation and topography and the engineered, active and restored mineral extraction, landscape to the west.
- 7.1.7 In light of the above findings and conclusions, the Site is capable of accommodating development in line with that shown on the Illustrative Site Plan prepared by City & Country which takes on board the proposals set out in this document without causing material harm to the local landscape character or views and visual amenity of the area.
-