

Barkby Road, Queniborough

Landscape & Visual Appraisal

Client: David Wilson Homes East Midlands

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This landscape and visual appraisal has been carried out by Golby + Luck Landscape Architects following instruction by David Wilson Homes East Midlands to consider the land to the west of Barkby Road, Queniborough (the site), and assess its suitability in landscape and visual terms for the purposes of residential development.
- 1.2 The following appraisal has been carried out taking into consideration the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition (2013), published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (GLVIA). An assessment methodology is set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.3 This appraisal identifies a number of key views that have been taken from publicly accessible locations including the public highway, public rights of way, and public access land. Site work was carried out during January 2018 providing winter views with limited leaf cover.
- 1.4 In the production of this appraisal reference has been made to the following documents and information:
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF);
 - Charnwood Local Plan 2011 to 2028 Core Strategy (2015);
 - Borough of Charnwood Local Plan – Saved Policies (2004)
 - Natural England – National Character Area Profiles: data for local decision making (2014);
 - The Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (2012);
 - Charnwood Borough Council Green Wedges, Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones and Areas of Local Separation – Methodology and Assessment Findings Report (2016)
 - DEFRA Magic online environmental database;
 - Historic England – The National Heritage List for England
 - Ordnance Survey information Explorer 1:20,000 and Street Plus 1:10,000; and
 - Google Earth aerial photography.



2 SITE CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Site Context

- 2.1 The site adjoins the southern edge of Queniborough, set within a framework of commercial development to the west, modern housing to the north, and an emerging modern housing site to the east beyond Barky Road; see **GL0673 01** and **02**. Queniborough is a medium sized village situated just beyond the north-east fringes of Leicester City. The settlement of Syston is located to the south-west, and East Goscote to the north beyond Queniborough Brook and its associated meadows. Further to the north is the smaller village of Rearsby, and to the south the villages of Barky and Barkby Thorpe. The tract of land set between Syston, Barkby/Barky Thorpe, and Thurmaston is the location of the Thurmaston Urban Extension, comprising approximately 6000 houses, commercial development, schools, and associated infrastructure.
- 2.2 In terms of highway infrastructure, the A607 passes to the north of the settlement following the low-lying valley setting of Queniborough Brook. The Melton Road defines the western edge of the settlement with only a small extension of residential development beyond the highway at New Zealand Lane. This residential extension was historically known as New Road, and subsequently New Queniborough, comprising a number of small land holdings that have existed since the late 19th Century. The road was renamed New Zealand Lane in the mid-20th Century when further infill development led to the characteristic single street pattern that is seen today. Melton Road continues to the north of the A607 passing through East Goscote and Rearsby. Rearsby Road extends south from the A607 into Queniborough, turning into Barkby Road south of the junction with Syston Road and Queniborough Road. Barkby Road defines the eastern boundary of the site and continues south into the open countryside passing the eastern fringes of Syston.
- 2.3 In terms of land use, the wider landscape setting beyond the main settlements is generally maintained as farmland with a mixture of larger geometric shaped arable fields and smaller more irregular shaped pasture fields often associated with lower lying land and watercourses. In the local context of the site the land use becomes more varied with the presence of commercial nurseries, paddocks; and sports grounds. The site and adjoining fields were up until recently (in part) used as a commercial tree nursery. They have since been converted to grass.
- 2.4 In terms of vegetation cover, the wider farmland is generally defined by low cut native boundary hedgerows and intermittent tree cover often comprising Oak and Ash. In the



local context of the site the influence of the commercial nurseries becomes more prominent with fields planted with tree and shrub stock. Tree cover also increases in the context of the local highways and at the urban edge, this is particularly apparent towards the historic core of Queniborough and associated strip field pastures to the east of the site.

- 2.5 In terms of landform, the site sits at just below 60m above ordnance datum (AOD), falling from a high-point of approximately 60m AOD at the eastern boundary of the site with Barkby Road; see **GL0673 04**. To the north-west the landform continues to fall towards the Wreake Valley and further to the west into the Soar Valley. To the east the landform rises quickly towards the rolling High Leicestershire landscape where Ridgemere Lane follows the ridgeline towards the plantation woodland at Barkby Holt.
- 2.6 In terms of water features, the wider landscape to the north and west are characterised by the low-lying floodplains of the Wreake and Soar Valleys with associated fishing lakes. Queniborough Brook flows to the north of the village past Queniborough Hall after which it flows along the southern edge of East Goscote before discharging into the River Wreake. Barkby Brook flows through the centre of Syston after which the watercourse follows Meadow Lane where it discharges into the River Wreake at the A46.
- 2.7 In terms of access, there are a number of public footpaths and bridleways that provide access from the settlements into the surrounding countryside. The most relevant footpath is 184 that crosses between Avenue Road at Queniborough and Millstone Lane at Syston, passing through the site; see **GL0673 02**.
- 2.8 In terms of planning designations, the site is not covered by any specific landscape designation that would suggest an increase value, or sensitivity to change. The site is set beyond the defined limits to development in the open countryside and is designated as an Area of Local Separation (ALS) that extends between Syston and Queniborough; see **GL0673 03**. The ALS is a functional planning designation that seeks to maintain in this location the separate character and identities of Queniborough and Syston.

Site Description

- 2.9 The site comprises two fields that extend to approximately 5.84 hectares of land. The western field is generally square in shape and maintained as pasture with native hedgerow boundaries to all but the southern section of the western boundary that is open to a small linear field that extends west between the Queniborough Industrial Estate and Homestead Farm. The eastern field is rectangular and until recently has been used as a commercial



- tree nursery. The nursery has since been cleared and the land restored to grass. This field is also bound by native hedgerows.
- 2.10 Beyond the immediate boundaries is the Queniborough Industrial Estate and Homestead Farm to the west, the modern residential setting of Chestnut Close and Avenue Road to the north, and an emerging housing estate to the east beyond Barkby Road. The southern boundary is open to the adjoining fields.
- 2.11 In terms of landform, the site is relatively flat with a slight fall from the eastern boundary with Barkby Road where the land form rises to approximately 60m AOD.
- 2.12 In terms of vegetation cover, the site is defined by its native hedgerows that bound the site and separate it into two fields. Tree cover is restricted to the northern boundary where garden trees have matured, and the mature treed setting of the eastern boundary of Barkby Road. A number of specimen trees from the former nursery have been relocated at the southern boundary of the site to secure a maturing buffer.
- 2.13 The site does not have any notable internal landscape features beyond the native hedgerows that separates the two fields.
- 2.14 The site is maintained as private farmland and does not provide any access or recreation function, beyond allowing access along the public footpath 184 that crosses between Avenue Road to the north and the recent housing development at Millstone Lane to the south.
- 2.15 The site is remote from the settlement Conservation Area and does not contained or adjoin any Listed Buildings. The site is not covered any wildlife, or nature conservation designation. There are no statutory, or non-statutory designations covering the site that would prohibit its development for residential purposes.



3 LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONTEXT

3.1 The site is located within the jurisdiction of Charnwood Borough Council (the Local Authority), with the relevant landscape planning policies set out in the Charnwood Local Plan 2011-2028 Core Strategy Adopted in November 2015, and the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan (2004) – Saved Policies; see **GL0673 03**.

National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)

3.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government issued the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012. The Framework states at paragraph 14:

*'At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in **favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.*

*For **plan-making** this means that:*

- *Local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs for their area;*
- *Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:*
 - *Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - *Specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted*

*For **decision-taking** this means:*

- *Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
 - *Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - *Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.'*



3.3 The 12 core planning principles are set out at Paragraph 17, those relevant to landscape issues include:

- *'Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of the land and buildings;*
- *Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*
- *Contribute to the conserving and enhancing of the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework;*
- *Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage, or food production);*
- *Conserve heritage assets in as manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.'*

3.4 At Section 7 'Requiring good design' the Framework states in paragraph 58 that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- *'Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- *Establish a strong sense of place, using streetscape and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;*
- *Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and*



other public spaces as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;

- *Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local and surrounding materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;*
- *Create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.'*

3.5 At Section 8 'Promoting healthy communities' the Framework states in paragraph 69 that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve places that promote:

- *'Opportunities for meeting between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages which bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity;*
- *Safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *Safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public spaces, which encourage the active and continued use of public areas.'*

3.6 In relation to Public Rights of Way paragraph 75 states

'planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.'



3.7 At Section 11 *'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment'* the Framework in paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *'Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
- *Recognise the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*
- *Minimise impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline of biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- *Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and*
- *Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.'*

3.8 The Framework states at paragraph 110 that:

'In preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in the Framework.'

3.9 Paragraph 115 specifically references landscape categories for which great weight should be attached to their protection, the NPPF states:

'Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all



these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads.'

- 3.10 Paragraph 117 also addresses minimising impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, and in relation to landscape issues states that planning policy should:

'plan for biodiversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries.'

- 3.11 Paragraph 118 addresses the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and states that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying a number of principles, one of which states:

'planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss.'

- 3.12 At Section 12 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' the Framework in paragraph 126 states that local planning authorities should take into account:

- *'The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *'Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.'*

Charnwood Local Plan 2011-2028 Core Strategy (2015)

- 3.13 Policy CS11 of the adopted Core Strategy deals with the issue of landscape and the countryside. The policy states:

We will support and protect the character of our landscape and countryside by:



- *requiring new developments to protect landscape character and to reinforce sense of place and local distinctiveness by taking account of relevant local Landscape Character Assessments;*
- *requiring new development to take into account and mitigate its impact on tranquillity;*
- *requiring new development to maintain the separate identities of our towns and villages;*
- *supporting rural economic development, or residential development which has a strong relationship with the operational requirements of agriculture, horticulture, forestry and other land based industries and contributes to a low carbon economy, in accordance with Policy CS10;*
- *supporting the provision of community services and facilities that meet proven local needs as identified by a Neighbourhood Plan or other community-led plan; and*
- *supporting rural communities by allowing housing development for local needs in accordance with Policy CS3.*

We will protect the predominantly open and undeveloped character of Areas of Local Separation unless new development clearly maintains the separation between the built-up areas of these settlements."

3.14 The site is located within a designated Area of Local Separation (ALS). The policy and supporting text is clear that the retention of ALS will be balanced against the need to provide new development that includes new homes in the most sustainable locations.

Borough of Charnwood Local Plan 1991-2006

3.15 A number of policies have been saved from the old Local Plan. Saved Policies CT/1 and CT/2 deal with more strategic countryside issues. Saved policy CT/4 more deals specifically with ALOS.

3.16 Policy CT/1 states:

"Land lying outside the defined Limits to Development is variously identified on the Proposals Map as Countryside, Green Wedge and Areas of Local Separation



Development within these areas of generally open land will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will be granted for the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for uses suitable in scale and nature, and small-scale new built development, where there would not be a significant adverse environmental impact and the proposal would:

- i. be essential for the efficient long-term operation of agriculture, horticulture or*
- ii. forestry; or*
- iii. facilitate the diversification of the rural economy; or*
- iv. improve facilities for recreation, or leisure uses; or*
- v. implement strategically important schemes for mineral related uses, transport*
- vi. infrastructure, and for public services or utilities.*

In all cases it should be demonstrated that the proposed development could not reasonably be located within or adjacent to an existing settlement."

3.17 Policy CT/2 of the Local Plan states:

"In areas defined as Countryside, development(s) acceptable in principle will be permitted where it would not harm the character and appearance of the countryside and provided it could safeguard its historic, nature conservation, amenity, and other local interest."

3.18 Policy CT/4 of the Local Plan states:

"In areas of local separation development acceptable in principle will only be permitted where the location, scale and design of development would ensure that:

- i. the predominantly open and undeveloped character of the area is retained;
and*
- ii. the already narrow gap between settlements is not reduced."*



3.19 The policy then continues to list the thirteen ALS that includes the land between Queniborough and Syston.



4 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL BASELINE

4.1 The following section of this appraisal considers the baseline landscape setting of the site covering issues relating to character and appearance. When considering character published landscape character documents have been referenced alongside a more detailed consideration of the site and its local setting.

4.2 When considering the appearance of the site and wider landscape setting a number of representative views have been identified that provide an accurate representation of the visual setting of the site. Views have been taken from publicly accessible locations, and for each the likely receptors have been identified.

Landscape Character

4.3 At a National level Natural England has divided England into 159 character areas. The site and its local setting are located at the western edge of National Character Area (NCA) 93 High Leicestershire. To the west is NCA 69 Trent Valley Washlands, and to the north NCA 74 Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds. The key characteristics of NCA 93 are:

- *“A varied landform of geology and soils, predominantly a succession of Lias Group mudstones, largely cloaked by glacial tills and dissected to form a rolling landscape of ridges and valleys.*
- *High central plateau radiating streams south, east and west along wide and narrow valleys. There are also many associated waterbodies including rivers, reservoirs and field ponds.*
- *Mixed farming regime, with arable mainly on the ridgetops and the wide valley bottoms. Intact and well-managed hedgerow networks.*
- *Sense of many trees being present in the landscape arising from surviving concentrations of ancient woodland, abundant wide hedgerows, hedgerow trees, copses, spinneys and small woodlands, the last often sited on ridges.*
- *Ancient oak and ash woodlands and unimproved grassland provide important habitats for key species such as otter, barn owl, yellow wagtail, skylark, lapwing, grey partridge and tree sparrow.*
- *Sparse settlement of small villages with little modern development. Ironstone and limestone churches and vernacular buildings but also abundant red brick with some survival of timber frame and thatch.*



- *A rich historic landscape hosting iron-age hill forts, frequent and very prominent ridge and furrow, ancient woodland and veteran trees, fine landscape parkland and attractive country houses often associated with evidence of many deserted or shrunken medieval settlements.*
- *Network of quiet green lanes linking rural communities and a remote, sometimes empty character."*

4.4 This character area is broad, and the study is clearly focussed on the wider landscape setting beyond the main urban areas. Whilst in broad terms the site shares some of the identified characteristics such as arable farmland, boundary hedgerows and tree cover, it is located at the urban fringe and therefore built development and the urbanising effects of associated infrastructure and commercial development all play a role in the character of the landscape associated with the site. A review of the characteristics attributed to the bordering NCA 69 Trent Valley Washlands identifies more of the common characteristics of the landscape associated with the site that includes:

- *"Settlement pattern heavily influenced by flood risk, confining villages to the gravel river terraces and to rising ground at the edges of the flood plains. Traditional buildings are characteristically of red brick and clay plain tile with earlier timber frame and grander dwellings and churches typically built from sandstone. Red brick and Welsh slate of 19th- and early 20th-century urban expansion prominent in larger settlements along with modern housing and development.*
- *A landscape heavily used as transport and communication corridors along the rivers and canals, for major roads and railways, and for power lines."*

4.5 At a District level Charnwood Borough Council has completed the Borough of Charnwood Landscape Character Assessment (2012). In this assessment the site and surrounding settlements are identified as being in the Wreake Valley landscape character area (LCA); see **GL0673 05**.

4.6 The key characteristics of the Wreake Valley LCA are identified in this study as:

- *"River Wreake meanders in a flat bottomed river valley with gently sloping sides. The valley experiences flooding*
- *Rural character to the east of Broome Lane, East Goscote*



- *Leicester City and Syston have urbanising influences in the west*
- *Limited valley crossing, with the A46 and A607 roads on engineered embankments*
- *Area of mixed arable and pasture farming*
- *Restored mineral workings*
- *Settlements are on the valley slopes, with churches marking villages*
- *Main settlements are Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Thrussington, Rearsby, East Goscote, Queniborough and Syston."*

4.7 This assessment acknowledges the two distinct and contrasting landscapes to the east and west of this LCA. The assessment acknowledges the dominant presence of villages and settlement to the western half of this LCA that includes Syston, East Goscote and Queniborough. To the east of the LCA the assessment identifies a more rural character. This assessment identifies the Wreake Valley LCA as being of moderate character and moderate condition. This is however an assessment of the overall LCA that includes the rural landscapes to the east that are more remote from the site, and the urbanising influences of Leicester City and Syston.

4.8 This assessment also includes a landscape capacity and sensitivity study for the areas of land adjoining the urban edges of Leicester, Loughborough and Shepshed. This study includes the land at the settlement edge considered to have potential for development. Wider land at the edges of these settlements excluded from this study are clearly not considered to have development potential.

4.9 In the capacity and sensitivity study the site is included in Zone Number 21; see **GL0673 05**. This assessment ranks each zone within a scoring system that has five categories ranging from low landscape capacity to high landscape capacity. Zone number 21 is identified as having a medium high capacity to accommodate development, this being the second highest category in the scoring threshold. The supporting commentary that states:

- *"This zone is located to the north of Syston in the Wreake Valley landscape character area. It is situated on the lower valley slopes of the River Wreake between the urban edge of Syston and Queniborough.*
- *The land on either side of the Melton Road (A213) is almost entirely used for horticulture which has created a distinctive feature.*



- *However, this is not an attractive landscape typical of the character of the area as it is devoid of trees and hedgerows."*

4.10 The assessment contains further commentary on development capacity and mitigation measures:

"It is considered to have high medium capacity to accommodate development. This is due to the degraded condition of the appearance of the landscape and its low degree of tranquillity. However, development is likely to have a significant impact on the coalescence of Syston and Queniborough. Development could be suitable subject to mitigation measures."

4.11 The Local Authorities published landscape character, sensitivity, and capacity studies provide a useful context to the landscape baseline setting of the site, but it is important as part of the baseline assessment to understand the value attributed to the site, its features, and the local setting. The factors set out under Box 5.1 of the GLVIA provide a basis for determining landscape value. These include:

- Landscape quality;
- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation interests;
- Recreational value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations

4.12 In terms of quality, the site and its adjoining fields have been used for many years as a commercial tree nursery site, and more recently returned to grassland. The site is relatively featureless beyond its boundary hedgerows and shares an immediate relationship with the modern settlement edge, and adjoining commercial development that imparts a suburban quality on the site. The site is considered to be of medium to low quality.

4.13 In terms of scenic quality, the sites immediate relationship with the modern urban setting of both Queniborough and Syston diminishes its scenic quality. The general condition of the site and its adjoining fields, some of which have been subdivided into horse paddock,



further impacts on its visual setting. The site is considered to be of medium to low scenic quality.

- 4.14 In terms of rarity, the features of the site are not rare. They are in fact common and well represented in the immediate landscape setting and can be easily replaced and/or replicated.
- 4.15 In terms of representativeness, the features of the site are not considered to be particularly important or make a valuable contribution to the defining characteristics of the Wreake Valley LCA.
- 4.16 In terms of conservation interest, the site does not contain, or adjoin any designated heritage or nature conservation assets. The site itself is of limited ecological value, with any value restricted to its boundary hedgerows.
- 4.17 In terms of recreational value, the site is maintained as privately owned farmland. Access is restricted to the single public footpath (I84) that cross diagonally between Avenue Road to the north and Millstone Lane to the south. This footpath will be of local value.
- 4.18 In terms of perceptual aspects, the site shares a close relationship with the modern settlement, lit highways, and commercial development, and is not considered to be a landscape notable for its tranquillity, or remote qualities.
- 4.19 In terms of associations, there are no known cultural associations with the site and local landscape setting that have been recorded in notable pieces of art or literature.
- 4.20 In overall terms the site and its local setting are considered to be at best medium landscape value.

Visual Setting

- 4.21 As part of the baseline assessment a number of representative views towards the site and settlement have been identified in the surrounding landscape. The following section summaries these views making a judgement of value.
- 4.22 Views of an increased value are those within designated landscapes or from scenic routes; advertised on signs or highlighted on guides and maps; views recognised or protected in relation to designated landscapes and/or historic assets. Views of a lower value are those



from undesignated landscapes that are not advertised or formally recognised on guides or maps; not concerned with designated landscape and/or historic assets.

4.23 Each view has been recorded as part of this appraisal; see **GL0673 06 to 11**, with the view locations identified on the Site Context and Site Location plans; see **GL0673 01** and **02**.

4.24 The zone of visual influence associated with the site is reflected by the number and location of views recorded. The receptors groups identified can be summarised as:

- Private views from the residential properties adjoining the site to the north;
- Views afforded by people at work to the west from Queniborough Industrial Estate;
- Public highway views from Barkby Road to the east;
- Private residential views from the emerging residential development to the east of Barkby Road;
- Public recreation views from footpath I84 crossing the site;
- Public and residential views from the new housing estate at Millstone Lane, and the adjoining cemetery that is yet to be built;
- Private residential views from Ridgemere Close and public views from the adjoining highway;
- Public views from the Syston Rugby Football Club to the south-east of the site; and
- Public recreation views from footpath I81 and bridleway I81A on the ridgeline to the south-east of the site.

4.25 Views 1 and 2 are both taken from Barkby Road looking west towards the site. View 1 is taken from the eastern boundary of the site close to the southern edge of Queniborough. From this location there is a filtered view across the boundary hedgerow with the modern settlement edge of the north, open farmland to the south, and more distant views of Syston to the south-west. View 2 is taken from the highway approximately 70m from the site looking north-west across the site towards the modern settlement edge. The southern boundary of the site is in view, as are the recently planted trees set within a buffer just inside the boundary of the site. To the west the Queniborough Industrial Estate and Homestead Farm are visible, and further to the south there is a view toward the recent housing development at Millstone Lane. Both views are considered to be of medium to medium value.

4.26 Views 3 and 4 are both taken from Chestnut Close at the northern boundary of the site. There are filtered views of the site beyond the boundary hedgerow. More open views will



be afforded across the site towards Syston from the upper floor windows of the adjoining properties. Views from this location are considered to be of medium value.

- 4.27 Views 5 and 6 are both taken from public footpath I84. View 5 is taken from a gateway approximately 135m from the site looking north-east, View 6 is taken from the northern boundary of the new housing estate at Millstone Lane approximately 315 from the site looking north-east. From both locations the southern boundary of the site is visible, with the modern settlement edge beyond. Due to the flat nature of the landform the ground plain within the site is not visible. To the west the Queniborough Industrial Estate is visible, and to the east the recent housing development beyond Barkby Road is visible. Both views are considered to be of high value.
- 4.28 View 7 is taken from Ridgemere Close approximately 465m from the site looking north-east. To the west the new development at Millstone Lane is visible, and to the north the site is viewed in the context of Queniborough Industrial Estate, and the backdrop of the modern settlement edge. To the east there is a view of the new residential development beyond Barkby Road, and the spire of St Mary's Church beyond. Views from this section of highway and the adjoining properties are considered to be of medium value.
- 4.29 View 8 is taken from Barkby Road at No.167, approximately 500m from the site looking north-east. From this location there is a glimpsed view of the site set between the roadside hedgerow and the vegetation cover associated with the adjoining property garden. The site is viewed across an existing commercial tree nursery with the backdrop of the modern settlement edge. Views from this section of highway are considered to be of medium value.
- 4.30 Views 9 and 10 are taken from the public and rights of way on the elevated ridgeline to the south-east of the site. View 9 is taken from public footpath I81 approximately 870m from the site looking north-west. View 10 is taken from public bridleway I81A approximately 1.13km from the site looking north-west. From both locations there is an open and wide appreciation of the landscape to the north and west. St Mary's Church and the historic core of Queniborough is visible to the north. To the north-west the site is visible set low in the valley beyond the Syston Rugby Football Club and the modern residential development to the east of Barkby Lane. From both locations the established framework of settlement and commercial development that surrounds the site to the north, east and west is visible. Further to the south the new residential development at Millstone Lane is visible. Both views are considered to be of high value.



4.31 View 11 is taken from Barkby Road (Syston) approximately 1.15km from the site looking north. To the west of this view is the modern residential settlement edge of Syston, with a view towards the properties at Ridgemere Close to the north, and a distant view of the southern settlement edge of Queniborough beyond the site. In the foreground is the open and rolling farmland that defines the western boundary of the High Leicestershire LCA. This view is considered to be of medium value.



5 LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

- 5.1 The baseline assessment has confirmed that the site is not covered by any landscape designation that would suggest it is of increased landscape value, or sensitivity. It has also confirmed that the site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory designation that would prohibit its development for residential purposes. The main constraint within the site is public right of way I84 crossing between Queniborough and Syston.
- 5.2 The accompanying ecological appraisal and arboricultural assessment have confirmed that the landscape features associated with the site are of medium to low value and are not protected. There are no internal landscape features that would prohibit the development. The main interest relates to the boundary hedgerows and associated tree cover all of which can be accommodated within a proposal for development.
- 5.3 The published landscape character assessment has confirmed that the site is located in the Wreake Valley LCA, considered to be of moderate strength of character and moderate condition. The study further acknowledges the distinct and contrasting western and eastern parts of this LCA with the western area (that includes the site) being dominated by the local settlements. This assessment also includes a landscape capacity and sensitivity study that identifies site in Zone 21, an area assessed as having a medium high landscape capacity to accommodate change in the form of development.
- 5.4 The baseline assessment has also confirmed that the visual setting of the site is generally limited to the settlement edge to the north and east, the highway to the east, the settlement edge to the south, and wider views from the elevated public rights of way to the south-east. The baseline assessment has also identified the public right of way crossing the site as one of the main constraints to development.
- 5.5 The landscape constraints of the site can be summarised as:
- The boundary hedgerows and associated tree cover;
 - The public right of way crossing the site;
 - The residential amenity of the surrounding properties to the north and east;
 - The visual amenity of the settlement edge to the south; and



- The visual amenity of users of Barkby Road passing the site, and views of the development afforded by the public using the elevated rights of way to the south-east.

5.6 These constraints have been used to identify a landscape strategy for development within the site that will inform masterplan process. The issue of settlement separation is considered in detail in the following sections of this LVA but is also key to this strategy.

5.7 In response to the identified landscape constraints the development seeks to:

- Retain and reinforce the boundary hedgerows and tree cover. The proposal will also retain the recently planted tree cover at the southern boundary of the site, incorporated within a landscape buffer that will form part of the structural planting to the site softening the existing settlement edge;
- Retain the existing public right of way through the site within a landscaped greenway. The footpath will be an integral element of the greenway providing a landscaped transition between the narrow, fenced section of pathway leading from Avenue Road, and the wider farmland to the south. The open space will be designed to respond to the open space at the Millstone Lane development site to the south comprising a wide area of open space with fronting housing;
- The proposal will be retained within the framework of existing residential and commercial development. The scheme will not bring the settlements of Queniborough and Syston closer than they currently exist;
- The southern edge of the development will be designed to front the wider countryside to the south, creating a positive landscaped edge, and attractive gateway to the settlement along Barkby Road; and
- The proposal will be designed in accordance with the Local Authorities adopted design and residential amenity standards to secure a high-quality extension to the settlement that does not compromise the setting of existing properties.

5.8 In landscape terms, the development proposal secures a scale and form of development in keeping with the established setting of the settlement responding to the landscape constraints of the site. The proposal will not result in the loss of any protected habitats or features and will not affect the setting of a high value landscape. The proposal seeks the development of land that affords an immediate framework of residential and commercial



development that frames its northern, western, and eastern boundaries, set within a landscape identified by the Local Authority as having a medium to high capacity to accommodate development.

- 5.9 The development proposal will however lead to the loss of open land within a designated Area of Local Separation but it will not bring the settlements any closer than they currently exist. The settlements will remain separated by open land and will retain their own separate character and identity. This issue is considered in detail in the following sections of this appraisal.



6 APPRAISAL OF LIKELY LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

- 6.1 The following paragraphs consider the susceptibility of the receiving landscape to the proposed changes taking into consideration its individual elements and overall appearance and condition. Judgements of susceptibility are then combined with value as identified in the baseline assessment to identify an overall sensitivity.
- 6.2 A judgement is then made as to the likely magnitude of effect. This includes the consideration of the features and elements of the site to be affected; the size or scale of those effects; the geographic extent of the effects; and the duration and reversibility of the effect.
- 6.3 The sensitivity of the receiving landscape is then considered against the likely magnitude of effect to make an overall judgement of significance.
- 6.4 The baseline assessment has identified the landscapes associated with the site as being of medium value.
- 6.5 In terms of the susceptibility of this landscape to accommodate the proposed change, this is clearly a landscape that is heavily influenced by its immediate setting of modern settlement. The landscape of the site is of moderate strength of character and moderate condition, a finding that is entirely consistent with the Local Authorities assessment of the Wreake Valley LCA that covers the site. The site is considered to be of medium susceptibility to the proposed change, and in overall terms medium landscape sensitivity. This is again a finding consistent with the Local Authorities assessment of the site, forming part of a wider zone with a medium to high capacity to accommodate development.
- 6.6 The development of the site will result in the permanent loss of the existing agricultural land use that will be transformed into housing with associated highways, public open space, water attenuation, and structural landscaping. This change in landscape terms will be of significance to the planning decision making process.
- 6.7 In terms of the wider landscape setting that includes the farmland extending between Queniborough and Syston (Zone 21), the development proposal will result in the loss of an existing field that contributes to the open setting of farmland at the settlement edge. However, the site is set within the immediate settlement edge, contained to the north and east by modern residential development, and to the west by commercial development. The loss of farmland will result in an adverse effect to the character of this landscape



setting but due to the location of the site and its immediate relationship with the settlement the proposal is likely to result in a medium magnitude of change, leading to a short-term adverse landscape effect of moderate significance. In the long-term, the structural landscaping measures will have matured to soften to the settlement edge, and likewise the landscaping within the site and its associated open spaces will have matured limited any likely adverse landscape effect to moderate/minor significance.

- 6.8 The following paragraphs consider the susceptibility of the receptors common to each of the views identified in the baseline assessment to the changes proposed through the development. Whilst certain receptors are considered to be more susceptible to change by virtue of the nature of activity they are engaged in, this has to be considered alongside the specific nature of the proposal and how it is like to affect each receptor. Judgements of susceptibility are then combined with value identified in the baseline assessment to gauge overall sensitivity.
- 6.9 A judgement is then made as to the likely magnitude of effect. This includes the consideration of the features and elements of the site to be affected; the size or scale of those effects; the geographic extent of the effects; and the duration and reversibility of the effect.
- 6.10 The sensitivity of the visual receptor is then considered against the likely magnitude of effect to make an overall judgement of significance.
- 6.11 Views 1 and 2 are both taken from Barkby Road with receptors that will include pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, and care users. There will also be filtered views afforded by the residential properties on the east side of Barkby Road. These receptor groups are considered to be of medium susceptibility to the proposed change, and in overall terms medium visual sensitivity. In View 1 the proposal will be dominant and cause a complete change to the view, resulting in a high magnitude of change, leading to a short-term major/moderate visual effects. As the structural planting measures at this boundary of the site mature views of the development will become softened and filtered. However, due to the proximity of receptors the degree of change is likely to remain the same.
- 6.12 In View 2 the development will be clearly noticeable but its will be viewed in the immediate context of the existing settlement edge. The built-form will become more prominent, and there will be a foreshortening of the settlement edge but this will not extend into the fields that define the foreground of this view. In the short-term this is likely to result in a medium magnitude of change, leading to an adverse effect of moderate



significance. Over time the new planting measures at the southern boundary of the site will have matured that will in turn soften the appearance of the development and existing settlement edge, reducing any adverse visual effect to moderate and minor significance respectively.

- 6.13 Views 3 and 4 are taken from Chestnut Close at the boundary of the site looking south. Receptors local to these views include users of the highways and residential views that are considered to be of medium and high susceptibility to the proposed change, and in overall terms medium visual sensitivity. The development will be dominant at this boundary mainly due to the proximity of receptors, resulting in a high magnitude of change, leading to an adverse visual effect of major-moderate significance. In the long-term boundary planting will assist in softening and filtering views of the development but is unlikely to reduce the overall visual effect. This level of effect will be restricted to relatively few properties and is a consequence common to most residential development to seek to extend the existing urban area. Of key consideration is that the proposal accords with the Local Authorities adopted residential amenity standards that are formulated to deal with this specific building relationship.
- 6.14 View 5 and 6 are taken from public footpath 184 looking north-east back towards the site and wider settlement edge. Receptors local to these views include walkers that are considered to be of high susceptibility to the change, and in overall terms high visual sensitivity. From each location the development will be visible within the site but seen in the immediate context of the existing settlement edge. The development will foreshorten views of the settlement, but it will not extend into the open setting of farmland that defines each view, with the new properties set beyond the southern boundary hedgerow that reads as part of the settlement edge. In View 5 the proposal is likely to result in a high magnitude of change, leading to a short-term adverse visual effect of major significance. In View 6 the scheme will read as a smaller part of the overall settlement edge resulting in a medium magnitude of change, leading to a short-term adverse visual effect of major-moderate significance. Over time the structural landscape measures will have matured at the southern boundary of the site, softening and filtering views of the new housing and existing settlement edge. This in turn is likely to reduce any adverse visual effects to moderate significance.
- 6.15 View 7 is taken from Ridgemere Close looking out across the setting of open farmland between Syston and Queniborough. Receptors local to this view include pedestrians, cyclists, car users, and views from the adjoining properties that are considered to be of



medium susceptibility to the proposed change, and in overall terms medium visual sensitivity. In the short-term the development will be visible within the site, set in the immediate context of the existing settlement edge. As in Views 5 and 6 the only part of the site visible is the hedgerow at the southern boundary that reads as part of the settlement edge, this is distinct from the wider open fields that are visible in the foreground. In the short-term development is likely to result in a medium magnitude of change, leading to an adverse visual effect of moderate significance. Over time as the structural planting at the southern boundary of the site matures it will soften and filter views of the housing limiting any likely adverse visual effect to minor significance.

- 6.16 View 8 is taken from Barkby Road close to the boundary of No.167. Receptors local to this view include walkers, cyclists, horse riders, car users, and secondary views from properties that are considered to be of medium susceptibility to the proposed change, and in overall terms medium visual sensitivity. In the short-term there will be a glimpsed views of the development roofscape seen in the immediate context of the existing settlement edge. This is likely to result in a low magnitude of change, leading to an adverse visual effect of minor significance. Over time as the structural planting at the southern boundary of the site matures it will soften and filter views of the housing limiting any likely adverse visual effect to minimal significance
- 6.17 Views 9 and 10 are taken from elevated sections of the public rights of way network to the south-east of the site. Receptors local to View 9 includes walkers, and View 10 includes walkers, cyclists and horse riders that are considered to be of high susceptibility to the proposed change, and in overall terms high visual sensitivity. From both locations the development will be visible but set almost entirely within the framework of settlement within the lower valley and forming only a small part of a much wider elevated panoramic view. In the short-term this is likely to result in a low magnitude of change, leading to an adverse visual effect of moderate significance. Over time planting measures at the boundary of the site, and within the open space will have matured to soften views of the development, limiting any likely adverse visual effect to minor significance.
- 6.18 View 11 is taken from Barkby Road to the east of Syston. Receptors local to this section of lane include walkers, cyclists, car users and horse riders considered to be of medium susceptibility to the proposed change, and in overall terms medium visual sensitivity. From this distance, and with such a restricted view of the site and Queniborough any change is only likely to result in a negligible magnitude, leading to an adverse short and long-term visual effect of minimal significance.



7 CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL SEPARATION

- 7.1 The development of the site will lead to the loss of open land that is currently designated as part of the Area of Local Separation (ALS). However, it is important to understand the role of the site within the ALS and whether its development will significantly compromise the function of the ALS in maintaining the separate character and identity of Queniborough and Syston.
- 7.2 The recent Charnwood Borough Council Green Wedges, Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones and Areas of Local Separation – Methodology and Assessment Findings Report (2016) identifies the site located within ALS-J. This ALS extends between the railway to the west and Barkby Road to the east. The ALS wraps around the north-west edge of Queniborough up to the A607 at its northern boundary. To the south the ALS extends to the northern fringe of Syston following to the boundaries to the east between the settlement and Barkby Road.
- 7.3 In this study the ALS is assessed as providing a strong separation function between the settlements of Syston, Queniborough and East Goscote. An area of weakness is identified in the south-west of the ALS, this aligns with the consented residential development at Millstone Lane. An extension area is identified in the north-east at the junction between ALS-I and ALS-J.
- 7.4 The baseline setting of the site within ALS-J has changed since this assessment was completed. The new residential development to the east of Barkby Road has resulted in the extension of the settlement to the south alongside the eastern boundary of the site. The 2016 assessment recommends the retention of ALS-J with minor modifications to remove the consented developments at the edge of Syston and extend the ALS at the edge of East Goscote. However, this is a standalone assessment that has to be read in the context of Policy CS11 of the adopted Core Strategy that allows for development within ALS that clearly maintain the separation between the built-up areas of these settlements.
- 7.5 The site is set within a framework of residential development to the north and east, and commercial development to the west. Whilst the development of the site will result in the loss of open land, it will not result in the creation of a promontory of development extending out from the settlement into the open countryside. This in turn will assist in limiting



any effect on the separation of the settlements, and any impact on their separate character and identity.

- 7.6 The scheme has also considered the physical gap that exists between the settlements, taking the narrowest point between the new residential development at Millstone Lane and the most southerly point of the Queniborough settlement edge. The landscape framework identifies this line as the boundary to development within this site to ensure that the proposal does not reduce the gap between the settlements or bring them any closer than they currently exist.
- 7.7 Public footpath 184 crossing the site provides an immediate appreciation and understanding of the land that separates these settlements. The section of footpath crossing the site will be retained within a generous public open space providing a transition between the settlement and farmland beyond. This space will also act as a landscape gateway to the settlement, marking the point at which you enter/leave the settlement to draw a distinction with the open farmland beyond that separates the settlements. This will secure a clear sense of travelling between settlements, further safeguarding their separate character and identity.
- 7.8 From wider areas, such as Barkby Road and the elevated public rights of way to the south-east, the development will be viewed as an area of 'in-fill' development at the edge of Queniborough. Open land separating the settlements will be clearly appreciable from Barkby Road, and the wider public rights of way network.
- 7.9 In summary, while the development of the site will result in the loss of open land within the ALS this will not lead to the coalescence of the two settlements and nor will it result in the loss of land that is critical to role and function of the ALS. It is considered that the loss of the site to development will not result in significant harm to the perceived separation between the two settlements, or the erosion of their separate character and identity.



8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 In summary this appraisal has set out a clear and transparent assessment of the baseline resource applicable to the site, and an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the development proposals. In addition, this appraisal has considered the role and function of the Area of Local Separation (ALS) between Queniborough and Syston, and the likely effect that the loss of the site to development will have on the separate character and identity of these settlements.
- 8.2 The assessment of landscape effects has confirmed that the site is located at the immediate modern residential edge of Queniborough, within the Wreake Valley landscape character area assessed by the Local Authority as being of moderate strength of character and moderate landscape condition. More specifically the Local Authority has identified the site within a settlement fringe landscape with a medium high capacity to accommodate change in the form of development. The Local Authorities assessment described this settlement fringe as not being an attractive landscape with a degraded condition and low degree of tranquillity.
- 8.3 The site comprises farmland with no internal features that would constrain the development of the site. The boundary hedgerows and trees are not considered to be of high quality and are common features within this LCA. The site and associated features are not covered by any statutory or non-statutory designations that would prohibit its development for residential purposes.
- 8.4 This appraisal has identified the key landscape constraints to development that have been used to inform the preparation of a masterplan for residential development. This assessment has confirmed that beyond the immediate transformation of the site from farmland to residential development, the proposal will not result in adverse effects to the character of the immediate landscape setting, or the setting of the wider Wreake Valley that in landscape terms are considered to be of significance to the planning decision making process.
- 8.5 The assessment of visual effects has confirmed that any adverse effects considered to be of significance in landscape terms to the planning decision making process are likely to be short-term and restricted to the immediate boundaries (or close to the boundaries) of the site. This level of effect is not uncommon for a proposal of this type and scale in this location and is in part due to the proximity of the receptor and the proposed change. This

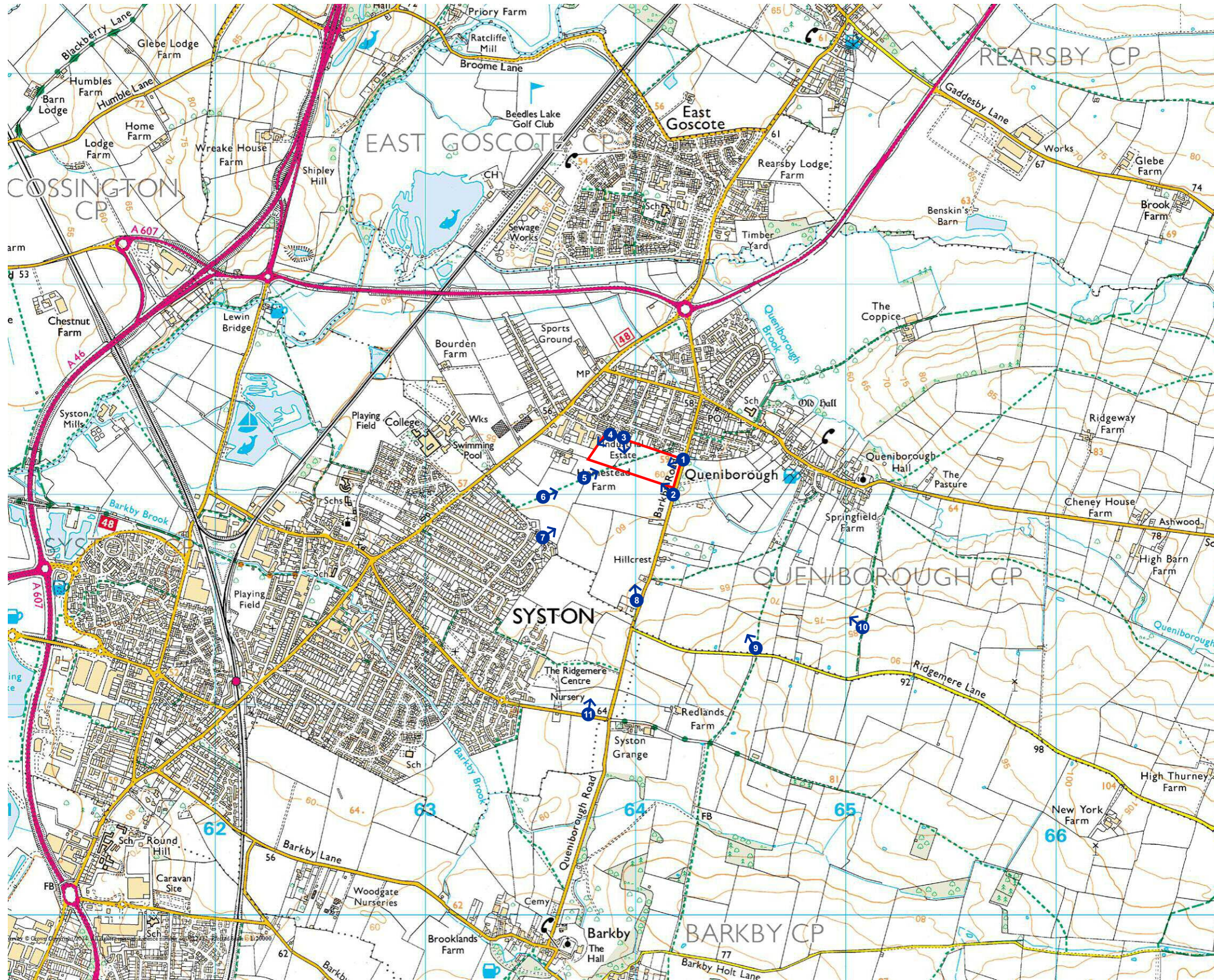


is a common product of the need to locate new development in the most sustainable locations, adjoining existing settlements.






- 8.6 This appraisal has demonstrated that beyond the immediate boundaries of the site the visual effects of the proposal are not considered in landscape terms to be of significance to the planning decision making process.
- 8.7 This assessment has also considered the role and function of the site as part of the designated ALS and concluded that its loss to development will not significantly undermine the function of the ALS, or result in the loss of the separate character and identity of Queniborough and Syston.



Figures



Key

-  Site boundary
-  Public footpath
-  Public bridleway
-  Recreational trail
-  Photographic view locations

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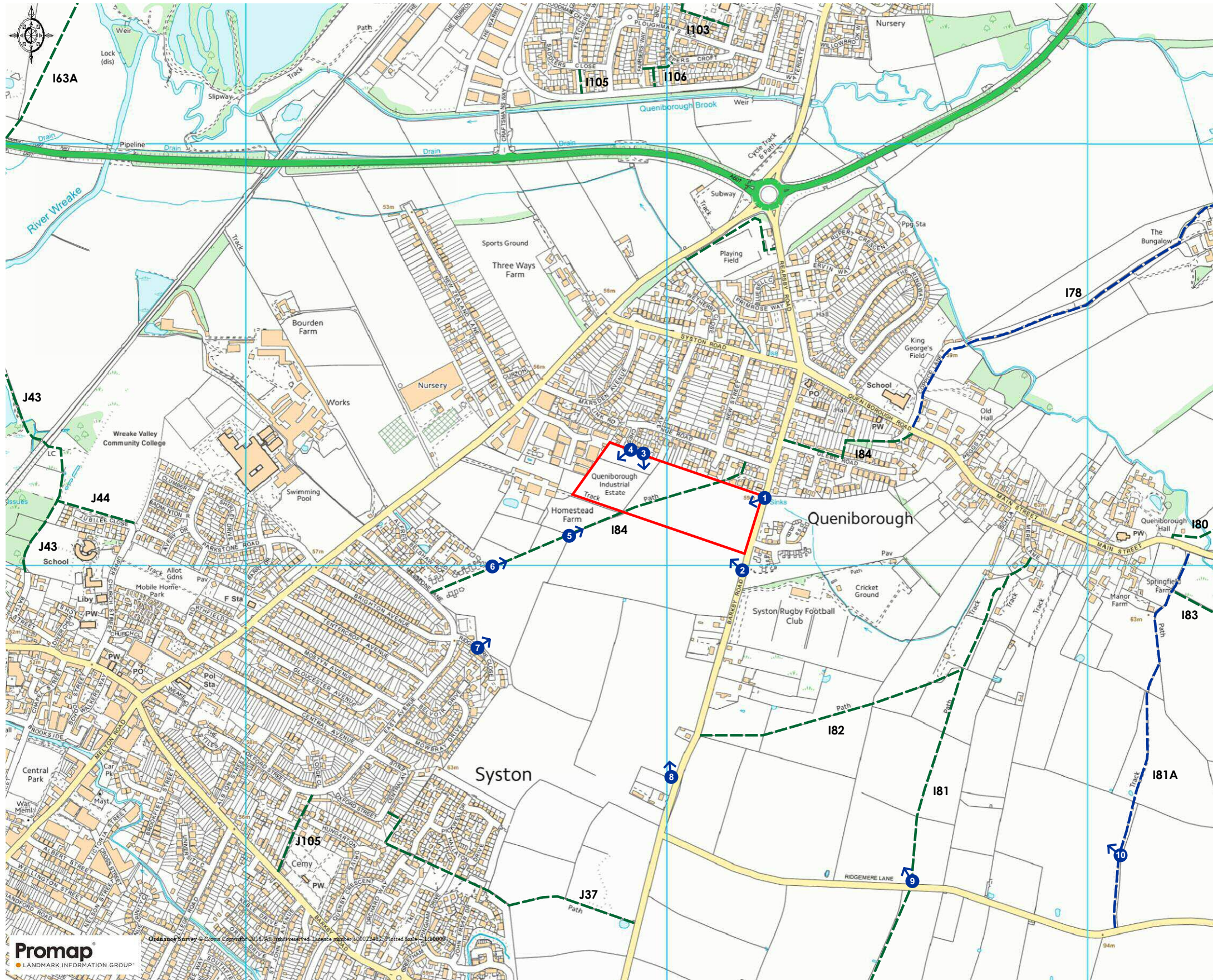
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Site Context
 Client
 David Wilson Homes East Midlands

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



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Key

-  Site boundary
-  Public footpath
-  Public bridleway
-  Photographic view locations

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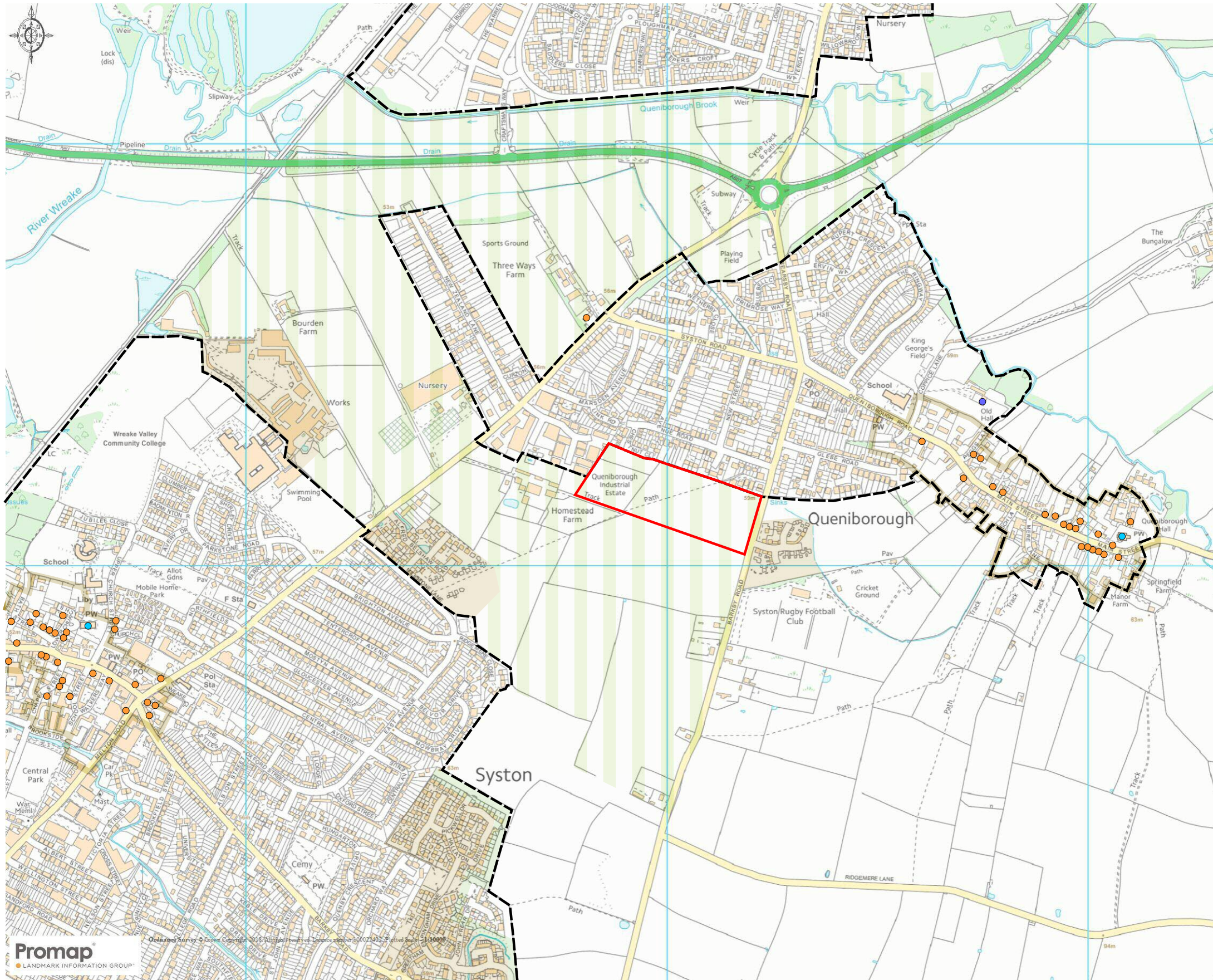
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north







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Key

-  Site boundary
-  Areas of Local Separation (CT/1, CT/4)
-  Conservation Areas
-  Committed/emerging housing sites
-  Limits to Development
-  Grade I Listed Building
-  Grade II* Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building

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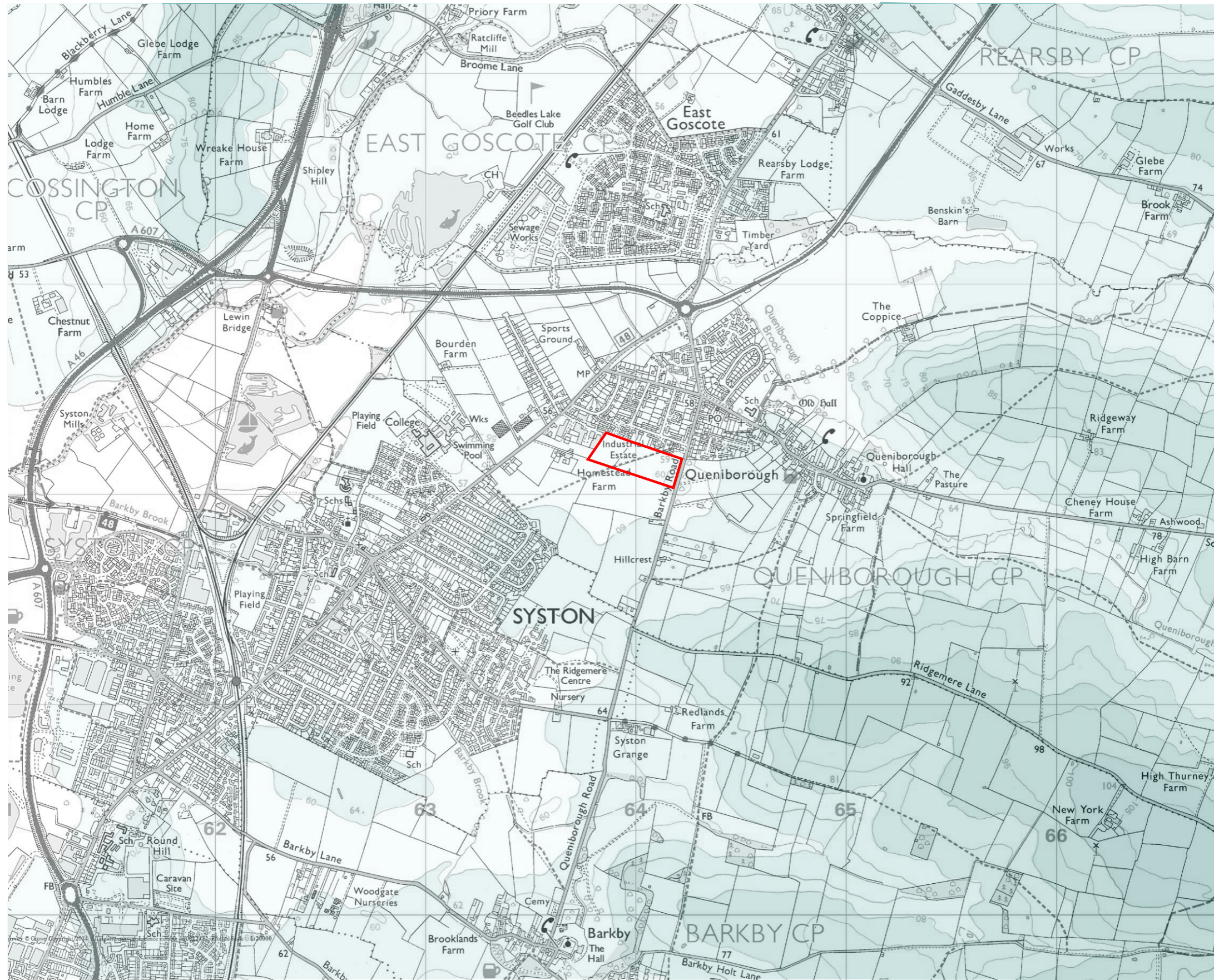
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Drawing title
Planning Context
Client
David Wilson Homes East Midlands

north









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Key

-  Site boundary
-  40 to 50m AOD
-  50 to 60m AOD
-  60 to 70m AOD
-  70 to 80m AOD
-  80 to 90m AOD
-  90 to 100m AOD
-  100 to 110m AOD

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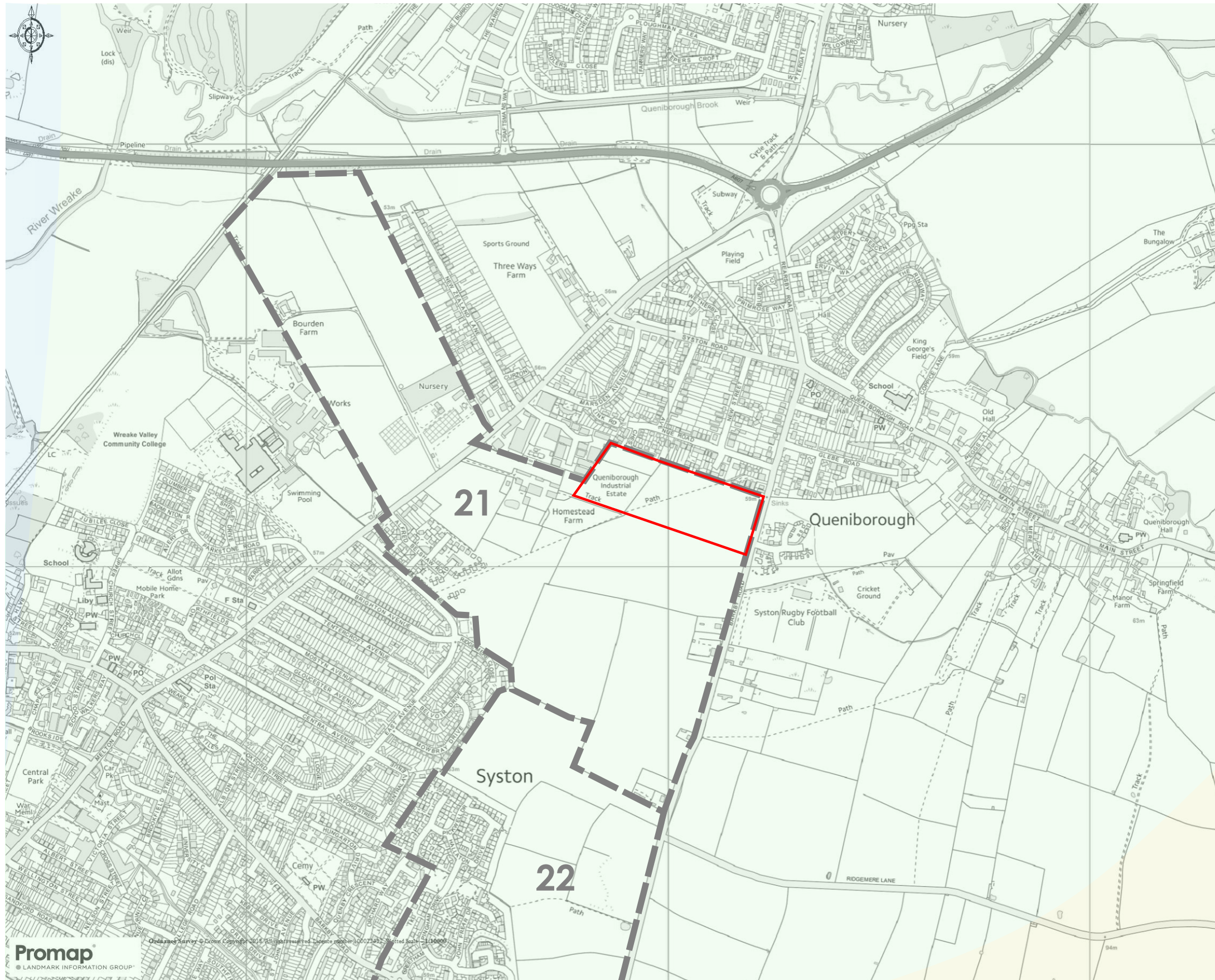
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 David Wilson Homes East Midlands

north

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Key

-  Site boundary
-  Wreake Valley (Strength - Moderate, Condition - Moderate)
-  High Leicestershire (Strength - Strong, Condition - Moderate)
-  Soar Valley (Strength - Moderate, Condition - Moderate)
-  Landscape capacity and sensitivity zone boundaries
-  **21** Medium High capacity to accommodate development
-  **22** Medium High capacity to accommodate development

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north

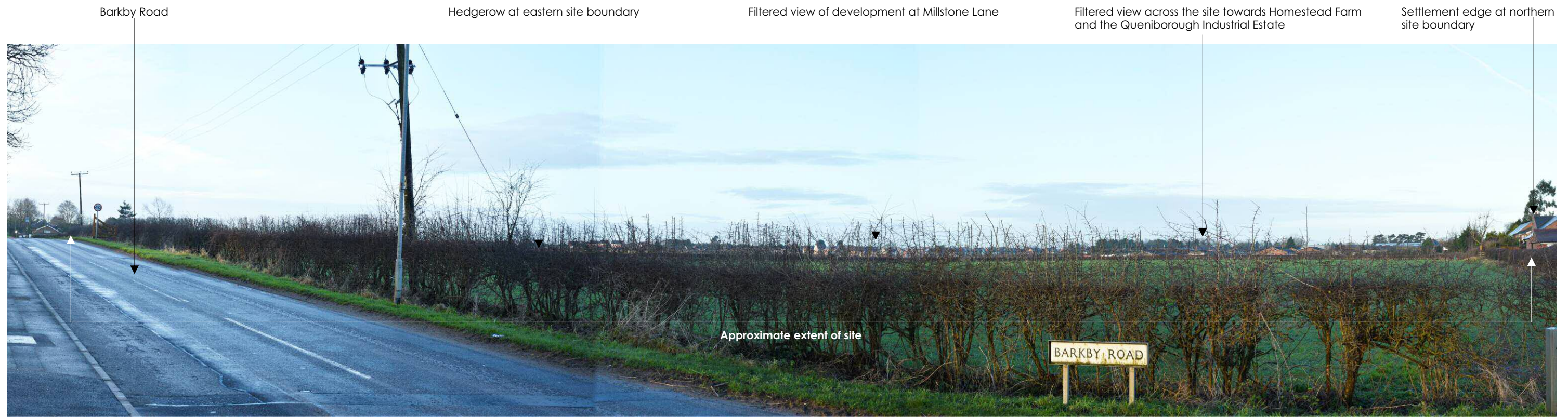
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Project
Land off Barkby Road,
Queniborough
Drawing title
**Landscape Character &
Capacity**
Client
David Wilson Homes East Midlands

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landscape architects



View 1 - From Barkby Road approximately 5m from the eastern site boundary looking south-west



View 2 - From Barkby Road approximately 70m from the site looking north-west

Number/Figure GL0673 06	Project Land off Barkby Road, Queniborough
Scale NTS@A3	Drawing title Photographic Views 1 & 2
Date 19/01/2018	Client David Wilson Homes East Midlands
Checked AL	

Hedgerow at the northern boundary of the site



View 3 - From Chestnut Close at the northern boundary of the site looking south-east

Hedgerow at the northern boundary of the site

Queniborough Industrial Estate

Chestnut Close



View 4 - From Chestnut Close at the northern boundary of the site looking south-west

Number/Figure
GL0673 07
 Scale
 NTS@A3
 Date
 19/01/2018
 Checked
 AL

Project
 Land off Barkby Road,
 Queniborough
 Drawing title
**Photographic Views
 3 & 4**
 Client
 David Wilson Homes East Midlands



View 5 - From public footpath I84 approximately 135m from the site looking north-east

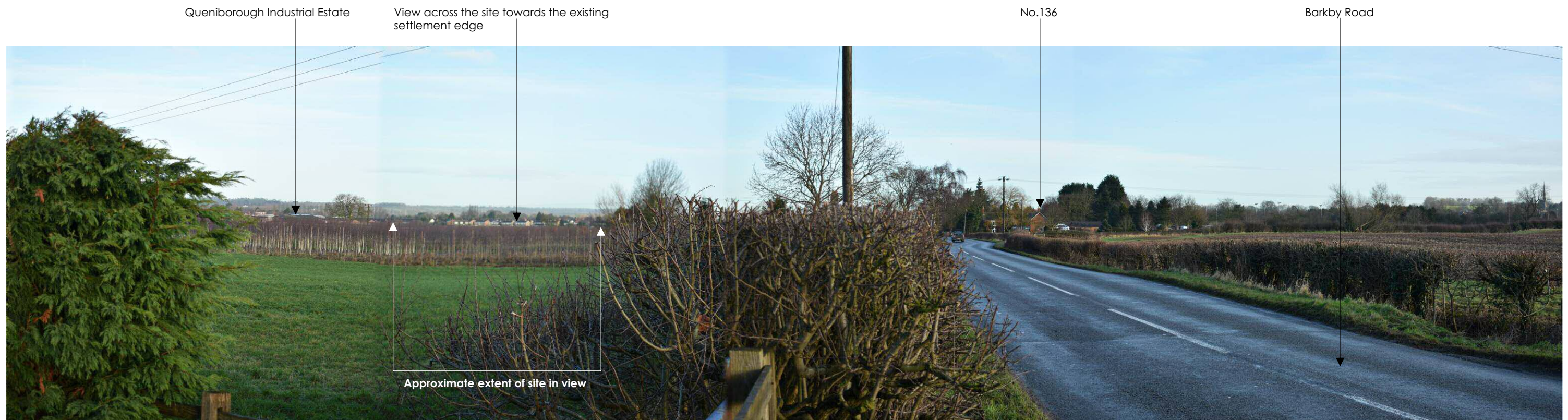


View 6 - From public footpath I84 at the northern edge of the Millstone Lane development approximately 315m from the site looking north-east

Number/Figure GL0673 08	Project Land off Barkby Road, Queniborough
Scale NTS@A3	Drawing title Photographic Views 5 & 6
Date 19/01/2018	Client David Wilson Homes East Midlands
Checked AL	

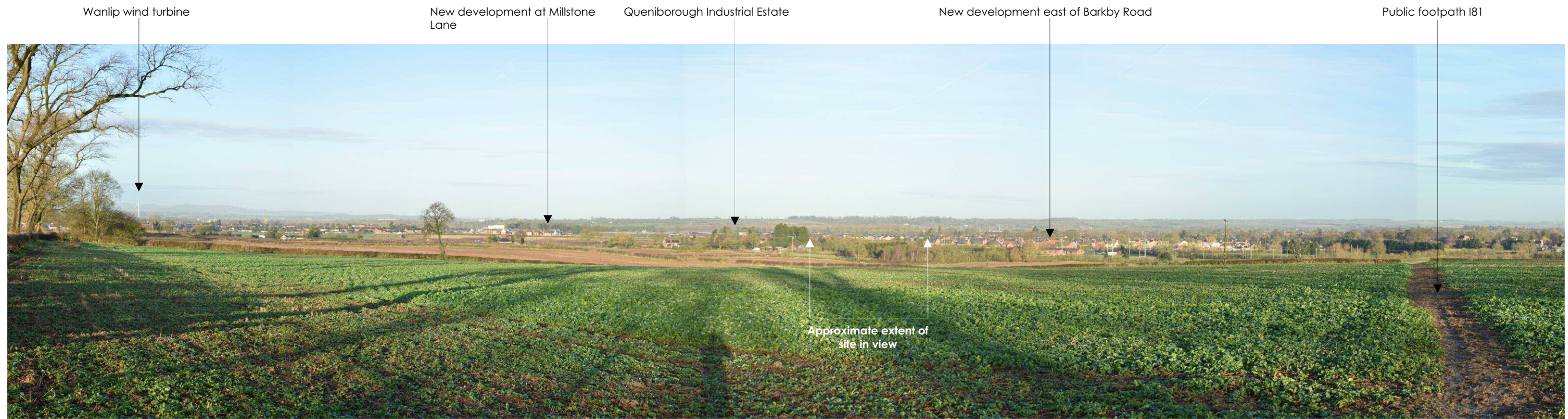


View 7 - From Ridgemere Close approximately 465m from the site looking north-east

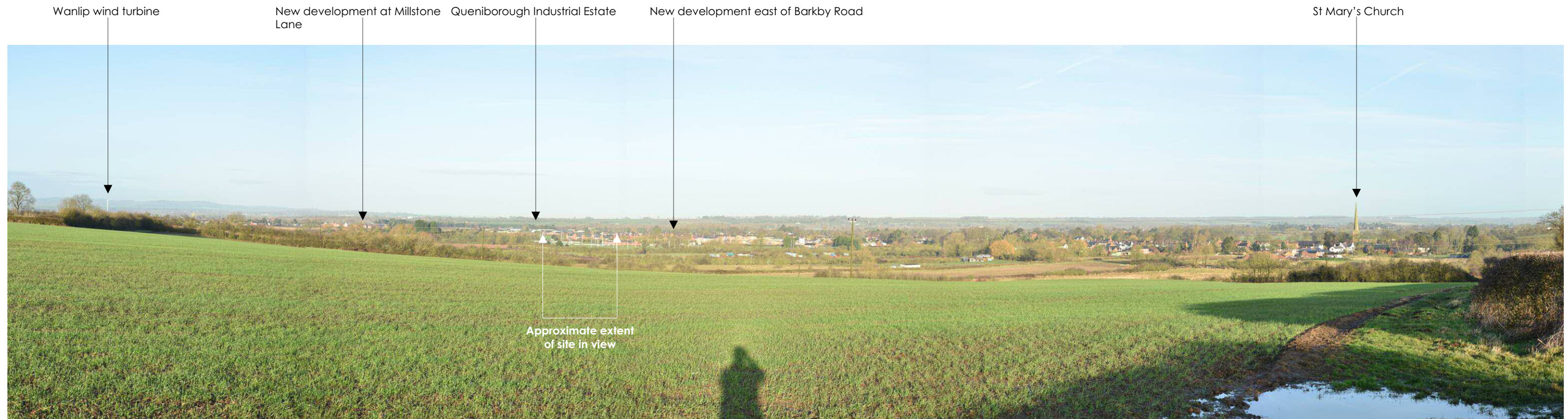


View 8 - From Barkby Road at no.167 approximately 500m from the site looking north-east

Number/Figure	Project
GL0673 09	Land off Barkby Road, Queniborough
Scale	Drawing title
NTS@A3	Photographic Views
Date	7 & 8
19/01/2018	Client
Checked	David Wilson Homes East Midlands
AL	



View 9 - From public footpath I81 approximately 870m from the site looking north-west



View 10 - From public bridleway I81 Approximately 1.13km from the site looking north-west

Number/Figure GL0673 10	Project Land off Barkby Road, Queniborough
Scale NTS@A3	Drawing title Photographic Views 9 & 10
Date 19/01/2018	Client David Wilson Homes East Midlands
Checked AL	



View 11 - From Barkby Road at Syston approximately 1.15km from the site looking north

Number/Figure	Project
GL0673 11	Land off Barkby Road, Queniborough
Scale	Drawing title
NTS@A3	Photographic View
Date	11
19/01/2018	Client
Checked	David Wilson Homes East Midlands
AL	



Key

-  Site boundary
-  Existing settlement
-  New and emerging residential development
-  Public right of way
-  Existing hedgerows within the site
-  Existing settlement separation
-  Possible proposed development
-  Footpath retained within new open space
-  Buffer created at southern boundary within houses fronting
-  Access will require restricted hedgerow removal
-  New hedgerow at western boundary of site

north

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Number/Figure
GL0673 12
Scale
NTS@A3
Date
19/01/2018
Checked
AL

Project
Land off Barkby Road,
Queniborough
Drawing title
**Landscape Framework
Plan**
Client
David Wilson Homes East Midlands

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Appendix 1

Landscape and Visual Appraisal Methodology



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

This appraisal methodology is based on the guidance set out in the:

Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013).

The following terms are used throughout the assessment and are defined in the GLVIA as:

Landscape: An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action an interaction of natural and/or human factors.

Landscape Character: A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different to another, rather than better or worse.

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

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

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

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

Mitigation: Measures designed to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for landscape or visual effects (not taken from GLVIA).

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

Significance: A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic. The use of the word significance in this LVIA is a measure of to the importance to be placed on an identified effect in the planning decision making process. This is distinct from the identification of "significant effects" used in the framework of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).



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

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

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

Landscape Baseline

The landscape baseline seeks to establish the value associated with the site, its local landscape setting, and its associated features. To understand value the assessment considered several factors when describing the site context and location that includes:

- Lane use;
- Vegetation;
- Topography;
- Water features;
- Public access; and
- Local key characteristics

Landscape planning designation and published landscape character studies help to inform this assessment but their relevance will depend on the purpose and geographic extent of the designation, and detail of the study when considered against the nature and extent of the study.

As part of the landscape baseline an assessment of value is made. Box 5.1 in the GLVIA sets out a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscape and therefore inform a judgement as to their sensitivity. These include:

- **Landscape quality:** A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.



- **Scenic quality:** The term used to describe landscapes that appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual sense).
- **Rarity:** The presence of rare elements or features in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type.
- **Representativeness:** Whether the landscape contains a particular character and/or features or elements which are considered particularly important examples.
- **Conservation interests:** The presence of features or wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of the landscape as well as having value in their own right.
- **Recreation value:** Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.
- **Perceptual aspects:** A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquillity.
- **Associations:** Some landscape are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or events in history that contribute to perceptions of the natural beauty of the area.

At varying levels communities and individual will have differing perceptions as to the value of a landscape. However, for the purposes of landscape assessment it is important to set out a reasoned hierarchy of criteria for assessing value. Value is essentially concerned with the importance or rarity of a landscape and its ability to be substituted or replicated. Value can be categorised as follows:

- **Very High Landscape Value** – landscapes of great importance or rarity that would have limited potential for substitution or replication. Such landscapes are often identified by designation such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or World Heritage Sites. This may also include local destinations such as Areas of Great Landscape Value or Special Landscape Areas where the special interest of the designation is strongly represented and would be difficult to replicate. It is not the case that all designated landscapes are of high value, areas where features of special interest are poorly represented may be of a reduced value. Likewise undesignated landscapes with high concentrations of designated features in close proximity (such as heritage assets) where the landscape between



them makes a critical contribution to their setting and interrelationship may be of increased value.

- **High Landscape Value** – landscapes of local value that are of good condition and/or strong strength of character with some potential for substitution or replication. This will include both local designated and undesignated landscapes, and landscapes with high concentrations of designated features in close proximity (such as heritage assets) where the landscape between them makes a valuable contribution to their setting and interrelationship.
- **Medium Landscape Value** – landscapes of moderate value or rarity that have potential for substitution or replication. Such landscapes can be identified through local designation, or may be undesignated but provide an important setting to locally designated landscape or heritage assets such as Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings. There may also be parts of broader national designations where the features of special interest are either weak or poorly represented, and/or detracting features that limit the value attached to that particular part of the wider designation.
- **Low Landscape Value** – landscapes of limited value or rarity that can be substituted or replicated. Such landscapes are unlikely to be designated with a moderate to weak strength of character, and will be made up of features that are both common and widespread, and are of moderate to poor quality (condition).

Visual Baseline

In establishing the visual baseline a series of representative view towards the site covering a range of visual receptors have been identified through field survey work and are identified on plans. The selected viewpoints can typically cover three types of views that are described in the GLVIA as:

- **Representative viewpoints** – selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptor, where large numbers of viewpoints cannot be included individually and where the significant effects are unlikely to differ;
- **Specific viewpoints** – chosen because they are key and sometimes promoted viewpoints within the landscape, including for example specific local visitor attractions, viewpoints in areas of particularly noteworthy visual and/or recreational amenity such as landscape with statutory landscape designations, or viewpoints with particular cultural landscape associations. Specific views include



those from recreational spaces, cemeteries, public footpaths, open access land, and promoted trails.

- **Illustrative viewpoints** – chosen specifically to demonstrate a particular effect or specific issues, which might, for example, be the restricted visibility at certain locations.

Not all of these types of viewpoints will be present, or need to be considered in all of the assessment. The majority of viewpoints will be representative but not exclusively. All of the viewpoints considered are taken from publicly accessible locations. The likely effect of the development proposal on private locations, such as houses, is made through professional judgement based on views from publicly accessible locations nearby.

The representative views are described as part of the visual baseline assessment and consider the following criteria:

- Location of the viewpoint;
- Type of existing view;
- Distance between the observer and the site; and
- Extent and context of the site and/or likely view of development proposal observed.

With specific regard to distance between the observer and site and the extent of the site/development observed the following descriptions are used:

- Open views – uninterrupted views into the site;
- Filtered views – views partially obstructed by vegetation, landform, built-form or combinations of each; and
- Distant views – views over 2km from the site.

As part of the baseline assessment judgements must be made about the value attached to a view. Value may be attached to views that relate to designated landscapes and heritage assets. Value may also be attached through appearance in guide books, on maps, and through the provision of facilities specific to the enjoyment of a view such as benches or interpretation boards. Value may also be attached to views associated with heritage assets, these are often identified in heritage assessments and conservation area appraisals. Value can be categorised as:



- **Very High Visual Value** – Promoted views identified on maps, or local walks/guides that are highly valued as a destination to appreciate a particular landscape or feature. This may include views towards notable natural features, structures, houses, heritage assets, or exceptional landscapes. These views are considered to be of greater than local value and are likely to be marked by signs, seating, or features that promote the view.
- **High Visual Value** – Views from publicised vantage points, or to a landscape of national importance, or highly popular visitor attractions where the view forms an important part of the experience, or has important cultural associations. This may include particularly noteworthy views from identified trails, designated landscapes, and statutory heritage assets. These views are considered to be of greater than local value and regularly visited. Private views may include notable properties specifically designed to take advantage of a particular view;
- **Medium Visual Value** – Locally known or valued viewpoints. Views from promoted public rights of way or clear evidence of regular use and areas of informal open space. Views from regularly used rooms or living spaces. Panoramic views, vistas, or other noteworthy views from active recreation land, or highways; and
- **Low Visual Value** – Views that are not published and/or where there is limited evidence of regular use. Views from secondary windows not forming the main living or working spaces in properties. Views of little noteworthiness from active recreation land, or highways.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

The initial stage of the assessment of landscape effect is to determine the susceptibility of the receptor to the proposed change, and an overall assessment of landscape sensitivity.

The following criteria are used to establish landscape susceptibility. Whilst these are typical examples it does not always follow that a site within a specific landscape designation will automatically fit with this categorization. Much will depend on the specific site conditions.

- **Very High Susceptibility** – A landscape possessing a strong and defined character of notable scenic quality, in good condition with a very low tolerance to the proposed change.
- **High Landscape Susceptibility** - A landscape possessing a defined character of good scenic quality, in good condition with a low tolerance to the proposed change.



- **Medium Landscape Susceptibility** – A landscape possessing a moderate strength character and scenic quality, in moderate condition with a moderate tolerance to the proposed change
- **Low Landscape Susceptibility** – A landscape possessing a weak and undefined character of limited scenic quality, in poor condition with a high tolerance to the proposed change.

Judgements of value and susceptibility are then combined as an assessment of overall sensitivity:

Table 1 – Matrix of Landscape Sensitivity

		SUSCEPTIBILITY			
		VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
VALUE	VERY HIGH	Very High	Very High	High	Medium
	HIGH	Very High	High	Medium	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Medium	Low	Low

The following stage of the assessment process considers the magnitude of change imposed by the proposed development on each landscape receptors. Issues that inform this judgement include:

- **Size or scale:** The amount of change resulting from the proposal to features, or key characteristics and attributes of the landscape type or area.
- **Geographic extent:** Determines the extent to which the landscape type or area will be affected by the proposed development.
- **Duration and reversibility of the landscape effect:** The timeframe, or duration of the effect by the proposed development, and whether the effect is permanent or temporary.

The likely magnitude of change of the development proposal can be guided by the following criteria:



- **High magnitude of change** – The proposal will result in a total change in the key characteristics of the landscape character, will introduce elements into the landscape that are totally uncharacteristic to the receiving landscape, and/or will result in the substantial loss, or alteration of key elements/features.
- **Medium magnitude of change** – The proposal will result in a change in the key characteristic of the landscape character, will introduce elements uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving landscape, and/or will result in loss, or alteration to key elements/features.
- **Low magnitude of change** – The proposal will result in a partial change to the key characteristics of the landscape character, will introduce elements that are not entirely uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving landscape, and/or will result in the minor loss, or alteration to key elements/features.
- **Negligible magnitude of change** – The proposal will result in a very limited changed to the key characteristics of the landscape character, will introduce elements consistent with the attributes of the receiving landscape, and/or will result in an limited loss, or alteration to key elements/features.

The combined judgements on the nature of the receptor (sensitivity) and the nature of the impact (magnitude) are combined to arrive at a clear and transparent judgement of significance. The significance of landscape effects are described in the assessment text and are guided by the matrix set out below:

Table 2 – Matrix of Landscape Significance

		SENSITIVITY			
		VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	HIGH	Major	Major	Major-Moderate	Moderate
	MEDIUM	Major-Moderate	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	LOW	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Minimal
	NEGLIGIBLE	Minor	Minor	Minimal	Minimal

For the purpose of this assessment, effects that are of major and major-moderate significance (highlighted in blue) are those considered particularly relevant to the planning decision making process.



Assessment of Visual Effects

The initial stage of the assessment of visual effect is to determine the susceptibility of the receptor to the proposed change, and an overall assessment of landscape sensitivity.

GLVIA describes the susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity as a function of:

- the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and
- the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focussed on the views and the visual amenity they experience in particular locations.

The GVLIA goes on to categorise those receptor groups that are likely to be most susceptible to change:

- residents at home;
- people, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including people using public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and on particular views;
- visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;
- communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by the residents in the area.

Whilst this covers a number of potential visual receptors it does not automatically make them all highly susceptible to change. Susceptibility can be categorised as follows:

- **Very High Susceptibility** – Views that provide a key understanding and appreciation of valued landscapes (most notably National Parks and AONB's), notable natural features, or historic structures/properties (such as engineering structures or country houses).
- **High Visual Susceptibility** - Primary views from residential properties; users of public rights of way, informal footpaths, cycleways and public open space where the appreciation of the wider landscape setting is critical to its function and enjoyment; visitors to local attractions and heritage/wildlife assets where views of the wider landscape are important to its setting.



- **Medium Visual Susceptibility** - Secondary/restricted views from residential properties; users of public rights of way, informal footpaths, cycleways, lanes and public open space where the appreciation of the wider landscape setting is moderately important to its function and enjoyment; and visitors to local attractions and heritage/wildlife assets where views of the wider landscape make a contribution to its setting but are not critical to its appreciation and enjoyment.
- **Low Visual Susceptibility** - People engaged in outdoor sport and recreation where the appreciation of views is not critical to their enjoyment; people at their workplace where the setting is not important to the quality of working life, and road or footpath users where views of the wider landscape make a limited contribution to its setting.

In terms of views from residential properties it is important to note that the planning system does not serve to protect private interests. The key issues in considering residential views is not whether an occupier would experience financial or other loss from development but whether such development would unacceptably affect the residential amenity of the property and associated land holding. A number of Local Authorities have adopted residential amenity standards for new development that have been specifically implemented to control the relationship between existing and proposed development. Where such standards exist these will be relied upon and not replicated through further assessment.

Judgements of value and susceptibility are then combined as an assessment of overall sensitivity:

Table 3 – Matrix of Visual Sensitivity

		SUSCEPTIBILITY			
		VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
VALUE	VERY HIGH	Very High	Very High	High	Medium
	HIGH	Very High	High	Medium	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Medium	Low	Low



The following stage of the assessment process considers the magnitude of change imposed by the proposed development on each visual receptors. Issues that inform this judgement include:

- **Size or scale:** This includes the loss of important features to the character and composition of the views, the degree of consistency between the proposals and visual setting of the receiving landscape, and the extent of the view and proportion of that view the proposals in likely to influence or change.
- **Geographic extent:** The extent of the area in which the proposed change will be visible.
- **Duration and reversibility of the visual effect:** The timeframe, or duration of the effect by the proposed development, and whether the effect is permanent or temporary.

The likely magnitude of change of the development proposal can be guided by the following criteria:

- **High magnitude** - The proposal will cause a dominant or complete change or contrast to the view, resulting in the loss or addition of substantial features in the view, at odds with the existing visual character, and substantially altering the appreciation of the view.
- **Medium magnitude** - The proposal will cause a clearly noticeable change or contrast to the view, which will have an effect on composition through the loss or addition of features, noticeably altering the appreciation of the view.
- **Low magnitude** - The proposal will cause a perceptible change or contrast in the view, but which will not materially affect the composition or the appreciation of the view.
- **Negligible magnitude** - The proposal will cause a barely perceptible change or contrast to the view that will not affect the composition or the appreciation of the view.
- **No change** – no part of the scheme or associated works will be discernible in the view.

The combined judgements on the nature of the receptor (sensitivity) and the nature of the impact (magnitude) are combined to arrive at a clear and transparent judgement of



significance. The significance of visual effects are described in the assessment text and are guided by the matrix set out below:

Table 4 – Matrix of Landscape Significance

		SENSITIVITY			
		VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE	HIGH	Major	Major	Major-Moderate	Moderate
	MEDIUM	Major-Moderate	Major-Moderate	Moderate	Minor
	LOW	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Minimal
	NEGLIGIBLE	Minor	Minor	Minimal	Minimal

For the purpose of this assessment, effects that are of major and major-moderate significance (highlighted in blue) are those considered particularly relevant to the planning decision making process.

Criteria of Other Factors Assessed

The assessment also considers the following aspects;

- **Directs and indirect effects** – direct effect effects are those directly attributable to the development. These include changes to features, character, and views. Indirect effects are those resulting indirectly from the development. These affects may result as a consequence of direct effects over distance from the site, or a sequence of change over time or distance;
- **Seasonal variation** – due to the role that vegetation can play in preventing or limiting views, or influencing the character of the landscape, the difference between winter and summer needs to be considered. This is considered by assessing winter views (in the first year following completion) and in summer (after 15 years);
- **Beneficial, neutral, or adverse effects** - adverse effects are those that would be damaging to the quality, integrity, or key characteristics of the landscape and/or visual resource. Beneficial effects are those that would result in an improvement in the quality, integrity, or key characteristics of the landscape and/or visual resource.



Neutral effects are those effect that would maintain, on balance, the existing levels of quality, integrity, or key characteristics of the landscape and/or visual resource.

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