

COTEFIELD BUSINESS PARK, BODICOTE

Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Cotefield Business Park,
Bodicote
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REPORT

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1 INTRODUCTION

General

- 1.1 RPS has been commissioned by Cotefield Holdings Limited to carry out a Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment of the proposed food store development of a site at Cotefield Business Park, Bodicote near Banbury. (See Figure 1.1). The site falls within the administrative area of Cherwell District Council. The site is approximately 0.9 hectares.
- 1.2 This report provides a consideration of the site within the context of Cotefield Business Park, the settlement of Bodicote and the surrounding rural landscape. It outlines the existing baseline conditions in terms of:
- Topography;
 - vegetation cover and land uses;
 - published landscape and townscape character studies;
 - landscape, townscape and other relevant designations; and,
 - the current visibility of the site.
- 1.3 The likely landscape, townscape and visual effects of the project are assessed against the existing baseline scenario and the future baseline scenario when the consented residential development at Blossom Field Road is complete.
- 1.4 Planning policy of relevance to the application insofar as it relates to landscape and townscape matters is also considered in this document.

Assessment Methodology

- 1.5 This assessment reviews the existing situation, and then considers the likely effects of the project in relation to the baseline conditions during the construction and operational phases. The level of the landscape, townscape and visual effects are assessed through consideration of the sensitivity or susceptibility of the receptor and the magnitude of change. The following table outlines the broad approach adopted to assess the level of effect, together with professional judgement. The detailed methodology used for this assessment is set out at Appendix 1.

Table 2: Level of Effect

Landscape, Townscape and Visual Sensitivity or Susceptibility	Magnitude of Change			
	Large	Medium	Small	Negligible
High	Substantial	Major or Moderate	Moderate	Minor or Negligible
Medium	Major or Moderate	Moderate	Minor or Negligible	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

1.6 The effect of relevant aspects of the project on the landscape and townscape has been described and evaluated against the following criteria, defined as:

- Substantial adverse: Where the proposed changes cannot be mitigated; would be completely uncharacteristic and would substantially damage the integrity of a valued and important landscape or townscape.
- Major adverse: Where the proposed changes cannot be fully mitigated; would be uncharacteristic and would damage a valued aspect of the landscape or townscape.
- Moderate adverse: Where some elements of the proposed changes would be out of scale or uncharacteristic of an area.
- Minor adverse: Where the proposed changes would be at slight variance with the character of an area.
- Negligible adverse: Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the landscape/townscape.
- Neutral: Where the proposals would be in keeping with the character of the area and/or would maintain the existing quality or where on balance the proposals would maintain quality (e.g. where on balance the adverse effects of the proposals are off-set by beneficial effects).
- Negligible beneficial: Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the landscape/townscape.
- Minor beneficial: Where the proposed changes would reflect the existing character and would slightly improve the character and quality of the landscape or townscape.
- Moderate beneficial: Where the proposed changes would not only fit in well with the existing character of the surrounding landscape or townscape but, would improve the quality of the resource through the removal of detracting features.
- Major beneficial: Where the proposed changes would substantially improve character and quality through the removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far reaching enhancements.

- 1.7 The effect of relevant aspects of the project on views has been described and evaluated as follows:
- Substantial adverse: Where the proposed changes would form the dominant feature or, would be completely uncharacteristic and substantially change the scene in highly valued views.
 - Major adverse: Where the proposed changes would form a major part of the view, or would be uncharacteristic, and would alter valued views.
 - Moderate adverse: Where the proposed changes to views would be out of scale or uncharacteristic with the existing view.
 - Minor adverse: Where the proposed changes to views would be at slight variance with the existing view.
 - Negligible adverse: Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the existing view.
 - Neutral: Where the project would be imperceptible or would be in keeping with and would maintain the existing views or, where on balance, the proposals would maintain the quality of the views (which may include adverse effects of the proposals which are off-set by beneficial effects for the same receptor).
 - Negligible beneficial: Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the existing view.
 - Minor beneficial: Where the proposed changes to the existing view would be in keeping with and would improve the quality of the existing view.
 - Moderate beneficial: Where the proposed changes to the existing view would not only be in keeping with but, would greatly improve the quality of the scene through the removal of visually detracting features.
 - Major beneficial: Where the proposed changes to existing views would substantially improve the character and quality through the removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far reaching enhancements.
- 1.8 In the assessment those levels of effect indicated as being ‘substantial’ or ‘major’ may be regarded as significant effects. An accumulation of individual ‘moderate’ effects, for instance experienced during a journey, may also be regarded as significant.

Relevant Guidance

- 1.9 As a matter of best practice, the assessment has been undertaken based on the relevant guidance on landscape and visual assessment. This includes:
- Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) ‘*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*’ (GLVIA) 3rd Edition.
 - The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) ‘*Landscape Character and Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland*’ (LCA).
 - Natural England (2014) ‘*An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*’

Study Area

- 1.10 The study area has been defined for the assessment based on a visual analysis undertaken during the site survey which has informed the identification of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) for the project, as defined in GLVIA3. The ZTV is the area from which any part of the proposed development is likely to be visible (See Figure 1.2).

Baseline Methodology

- 1.11 A desktop review of published data, such as landscape character assessments, OS maps and aerial photography was carried out. This identified potential landscape, townscape and visual receptors that could be affected by the project. A field survey was carried out on 3rd October 2018 to confirm the initial findings of the desktop review and to assess the likely effects on landscape, townscape and visual receptors.

Assessment Criteria and Assignment of Significance

- 1.12 Landscape, townscape and visual effects have been determined, taking into account the receptor sensitivity and the predicted magnitude of the change arising from the project. Appendix 1 sets out the indicative criteria used to guide the assessment of significance. It should be emphasised that, while the criteria are set out to ensure that the methodology is robust and transparent, professional judgement has been used to determine the significance of each effect. The assessment has been undertaken by and reviewed by members of a team with relevant qualifications and extensive experience in preparing landscape and visual impact assessments. Professional affiliations include Licentiate and Chartered Members of the Landscape Institute, each with over 25 years' experience.
- 1.13 This assessment of visual effects is based on views from publicly accessible locations, and where effects on residential and other private views (e.g. commercial occupiers) is noted this has, necessarily, been estimated based on the nearest publicly available viewpoint and professional judgement.
- 1.14 The viewpoints identified in this assessment are illustrative of the likely effect from a representative range of receptors, including occupiers of commercial and residential properties, users of rights of way, public open space and occupiers of vehicles on the road network.

2 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy

- 2.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2018. The document sets out broad aims to achieve sustainable development in Section 2, including an environmental objective *'to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment'* at paragraph 8.
- 2.2 Strategic policies regarding Plan-making at Section 3 include, at paragraph 20, the sufficient provision for *'conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure'*.
- 2.3 Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy recognises, at paragraph 84, that sites to meet local business and community needs may be located adjacent to or beyond existing settlements and in these circumstances, it is *'important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings'*.
- 2.4 Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities encourages the inclusion of high-quality open space and adequate footpath and cycleway provision.
- 2.5 Section 11: Making effective use of land recognises the need to safeguard and improve the environment when meeting the needs for development. Paragraph 118 promotes new habitat creation or the improvement of public access to the countryside. Paragraph 122 recognises the *'desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting... or of promoting regeneration and change'* and *'the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places'*.
- 2.6 Section 12: Achieving well-designed places. There are general policies about achieving high quality and inclusive design for all development (Paragraph 127). This is to ensure that developments will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, establish a strong sense of place and create an attractive and comfortable place to live, work and visit. Proposals should optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development. Developments should respond to the local character and history and reflect the identity of the surrounding built environment and landscape setting whilst not discouraging appropriate innovative design. The development should create safe and accessible environments that are visually attractive with appropriate and effective landscaping.
- 2.7 Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment. Paragraph 170 states that *'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by; protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality)'* and by *'recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside'* including the benefits of trees and woodland. Paragraph 171 states that *'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing 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 these issues'*. Paragraph 180 requires that new development is appropriate to its location, ensuring relatively undisturbed areas retain tranquillity and amenity value, and that the impact of light pollution from artificial light is limited within intrinsically dark landscapes.

Local Policy

Cherwell District Local Plan 2011 to 2031

- 2.8 The proposed development falls within Cherwell District Council which adopted the Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 in July 2015. The policies that are considered to be relevant to this assessment are set out below;

Strategic Objectives for Building Sustainable Communities

Policy SO6

'To accommodate new development so that it maintains or enhances the local identity of Cherwell's settlements and the functions they perform'.

Strategic Objectives for Ensuring Sustainable Development

Policy SO12

'To focus development in Cherwell's sustainable locations, making efficient and effective use of land, conserving and enhancing the countryside and landscape and the setting of its towns and villages'.

Policy SO14

'To create more sustainable communities by providing high quality locally distinctive and well designed environments which increase the attractiveness of Cherwell's towns and villages as places to live and work and which contribute to the well-being of residents'.

Policy SLE1: Employment Development

- 2.9 New employment proposals in rural areas need to ensure that;
- *They will be designed to very high standards using sustainable construction, and be of an appropriate scale and respect the character of villages and surroundings'.*
 - *'The proposal and any associated activities can be carried out without undue detriment to residential amenity, the highway network, village character and its setting, the appearance and character of the landscape and the environment generally including any designated buildings or features (or any non-designated buildings or features of local importance)'.*

Policy ESD: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement

'Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations, through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscape features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerow'.

‘Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted if they would:

- *Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside;*
- *Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography;*
- *Be inconsistent with local character;*
- *Impact on areas judges to have a high level of tranquillity;*
- *Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or*
- *Harm the historic value of the landscape.*

Development proposals should have regard to the information and advice contained in the Council’s Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance, and the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS), and be accompanied by a landscape assessment where appropriate’.

Policy ESD15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment

2.10 All new developments will be expected to meet high design standards and should:

- *‘Contribute positively to an area’s character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views in particular within designated landscapes, within the Cherwell Valley and within conservation areas and their setting;*
- *Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation;*
- *Integrate and enhance green infrastructure and incorporate biodiversity enhancement features where possible. Well designed landscape schemes should be an integral part of development proposals to support improvements to biodiversity, the micro-climate, and air pollution and provide attractive places that improve people’s health and vitality’.*

Supplementary Planning Guidance

2.11 There are also a number of adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) which include:

- **Countryside Design Summary, 1998:** This SPG provides an assessment of landscape character within Cherwell and advice *‘to guide development in rural area so that the distinctive character of the district’s countryside and the settlements and buildings within it are maintained and enhanced’.* The SPG has been used to assess the landscape character baseline within this assessment.

Summary of Planning Policy

- 2.12 The NPPF sets out overarching aims to ensure development is appropriately located, well designed and sustainable. In summary, the policies set out to improve the overall quality of an area, establish a strong sense of place and create an attractive and comfortable location, responding to the local character. National policies seek to conserve, protect and enhance valued landscapes and provide protection of scenic areas within nationally designated areas such as AONBs.
- 2.13 The Cherwell District Local Plan and SPG incorporate strategies to conserve, reinforce and enhance (where possible) the important features, elements and characteristics of the rural landscape, the visual setting of settlements, avoid visually intrusive development and promote good quality design that contributes to an areas distinctive character.

3 BASELINE ENVIRONMENT

Site Context

- 3.1 The proposal site is located within the complex of commercial buildings and external spaces at Cotefield Business Park on the southern edge of Bodicote. (See Figure 1.1). The site forms a car park adjacent to the A4260 Oxford Road which is currently being used as a site compound during the construction phase of the neighbouring Cala Homes development. A landscaped fringe surrounds the central area of gravel. A mature native hedgerow with sporadic trees lies to the north-east separating the site from the A4260. A belt of young woodland lies to the south-west of the site with a row of young trees within grassland south of this. Sporadic trees within grassland or ornamental shrubs lie along the north-west and south-east boundaries. Landscaped open spaces associated with the Cotefield Nurseries lies to the west, with further open land at Cotefield Business Park to the south-west. A clump of mature trees and large warehouse style buildings at Cotefield Business Park lie to the south. The residential districts of Bodicote lie approximately 100m to the west and 70m to the north-west. A woodland belt lies to the north-east, beyond the A4260, which surrounds the pitches at the Banbury Rugby Football Club.

Landform and Drainage Features

- 3.2 The level area of car park is cut into the landform which slopes down from a high point of approximately 114.5m AOD adjacent to the A4260, to a low point on the south-west site boundary of approximately 110m AOD. The land continues to slope down to the south-west into the Sor Brook valley.

Land Use and Land Cover

- 3.3 The land within the site comprises previously developed brownfield land, predominantly hard standing for car parking. The boundary hedgerow on the A4260 comprises predominantly Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and is trimmed to a height of approximately 2m. Several young English Oak (*Quercus robur*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) lie within the hedgerow. A strip of low managed, evergreen honeysuckle (*Lonicera pileata*) has been planted on the low embankment which wraps around the eastern corner of the car park. Young trees of Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Copper Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpureum') and Small Leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*) are planted within this ornamental shrub. A group of mature trees lies to the south-east, beyond a Beech hedge, comprising Copper Beech (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Purpureum'), English Oak (*Quercus robur*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Sycamore (*Acer psuedoplatanus*). The belt of young woodland to the south-west of the site is approximately 10m high and comprises Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) and Cherry (*Prunus avium*). An avenue of young English Oak lies to the south-west either side of the access road. Trees within a grass verge lie to the north-west of the site and comprise English Oak and Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*). A vehicular access track enters the site through timber gates in the south-eastern boundary.

Public Rights of Way

- 3.4 There are no public rights of way either within or adjacent to the site. Pavements are associated with roads to the north, west and south and hardstanding associated with the Business Park lie to the east allowing public access around all sides of the application site.

Designations

- 3.5 The site and its immediate surroundings do not lie within a landscape designated area.

Existing Landscape Character

National Character Area Profile

- 3.6 The National Character Area profile published by Natural England (Natural England 2013) has been reviewed to develop an appreciation of the wider landscape, landscape character and context of the area, although due to its national context and the small scale of the proposed development, will not be relied upon as a basis to assess effects on landscape character within this assessment.
- 3.7 The site and the study area lie within the Northamptonshire Uplands character area 95. This is a large character area which stretches from Banbury to the landscape bordering Market Harborough and Kettering.

Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS)

- 3.8 The OWLS website forms an investigation into the landscape character and biodiversity of Oxfordshire. Landscape character types within the study area are as follows and are illustrated on Figure 3.1;

Upstanding Village Farmlands Landscape Character Type

'This landscape type covers the elevated landscapes in the north of the county to the north and south of Banbury. A hilly landscape with a strong pattern of hedgerows and nucleated villages characteristically built from local ironstone'.

- 3.9 At a local level the site lies within the Bodicote Landscape Character area (NU/16).
- 3.10 Landscape Strategy: *'Conserve and enhance the strong pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and the nucleated settlement pattern and strong vernacular character of the villages'.*

Farmland Slopes and Valleys Landscape Character Type

'This landscape type covers the steep valley sides of the Upper River Cherwell and its tributaries, the valley sides of the rivers Evenlode and Windrush and the Thames Valley to the south of Shiplake. A landscape type with prominent slopes within broader valleys. It is occupied by a mixed pattern of pasture and arable land. Long distance views across the valleys are characteristic'.

- 3.11 At a local level the site lies adjacent to the Adderbury Landscape Character area (NU/15).

- 3.12 Landscape Strategy: *‘Conserve the intimate pastoral character of the small valleys and the rural, unspoilt character of the villages. Strengthen the field pattern where it is weak’.*

Cherwell Landscape Assessment

- 3.13 In November 1995 Cobham Resource Consultants undertook a landscape appraisal of Cherwell District entitled “*Cherwell District Landscape Assessment*”. This study was commissioned by Cherwell District Council.
- 3.14 The study divided the District into eight broad character areas. The large area to the south-west of Banbury and Bodicote in which the site lies is the ‘Ironstone Hills and Valleys’ area (See Figure 3.1). This area is characterised as follows;
- ‘Rolling hills with rich soils are considerable agricultural assets and much of this area is in arable cultivation, the main crops being winter cereals with potatoes and sugar beet. In some areas, medium and large arable fields are still surrounded by hedges and the boundaries marked by hedgerow trees. However, much of the higher land and gentler slopes now have a fairly open arable landscape. Streams in valley bottoms are locally marked with old willows with some pollarding, and with wet pastures. Hedgerows are mostly dense, well grown barriers, although where arable farming prevails they are closely trimmed’.*
- 3.15 The eight character areas were further divided into 17 generic landscape character types. The site lies within character type R3a; ‘Large-scale arable farmland enclosed by woodland belts’. This character type extends along the plateau of high land south of Bodicote to the village of Adderbury and is described as follows.
- ‘A landscape of level or gently rolling arable land with large fields and a weak hedgerow structure. Unlike the other large-scale arable farmland types, views are interrupted and contained by strong belts of trees and woodland which also provide a definite structure to the landscape.’*
- 3.16 The study goes on to address issues of landscape value and sensitivity to changes and to identify conservation and enhancement priorities in relation to the different landscape character types and their individual components. The study identifies four main strategies for landscape intervention; “*conservation, repair, restoration and reconstruction*”. These strategies indicate those areas where intervention is inappropriate and outlines the scope for restoring or creating new landscape.
- 3.17 These strategies for landscape intervention can therefore provide guidance on those areas in the district which need to be protected in terms of the character of the landscape and conversely those areas where certain development, if properly integrated into the landscape framework, might be appropriate.
- 3.18 The study defines the land immediately south of Bodicote as a repair landscape as follows;
- ‘These are areas where landscape character is still reasonably strong and worthy of conservation, but where some or all of the individual features or overall structure are showing noticeable decline. Development in these areas must be sensitively sited, designed and maintained. However, precisely because their structure is so strong, these landscapes should be able to absorb limited areas of sensitive development’.*
- 3.19 Specific enhancement measures are as follows:

- Good management of hedgerows.
- Continued renewal of hedgerow trees.
- Continued management of small woodlands and copses.
- Sensitively sited and designed development.

Cherwell Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 3.20 The SPG states that *'The purpose of the Countryside Design Summary is to guide development in the rural areas so that the distinctive character of the district's countryside and the settlements and buildings within it are maintained and enhanced'*.
- 3.21 The settlement of Bodicote is recognised within the document as one of the larger villages in the 'Ironstone Downs' area and that 20th century development represents more than half of the built form of these larger villages. The document identifies vernacular building style as ironstone with some limestone or brick and thatch or stone slate roofs. Windows are stone mullioned with timber casement or sash. Houses face the street and have ironstone boundary walls. The pre 19th century vernacular is defined as the preferred building style.

Townscape Character

- 3.22 There has been no specific assessment of the townscape character of the parts of the village of Bodicote which lie outside of the conservation area. The historic area of the village follows a linear arrangement along High Street and Church Street on the western side of the settlement. This comprises terraces of predominantly two storey Hornton stone houses.
- 3.23 The remainder of the village comprises predominantly late 20th century residential development of mixed one and two storey semi-detached and some detached properties with moderate sized gardens. This character area, which includes Cotefield Nursery, adjoins the proposal site. The architecture and building materials are typical of many developments of this period which are common place throughout the country and have no specific local characteristics. The residential scheme to the west, which is nearing completion, has extended this townscape character type. This development comprises mainly two-storey, with some three-storey, detached, semi-detached and terrace houses of Hornton stone or red brick construction and a central open space. The development mixes traditional materials with contemporary forms, reflecting the character of the historic core and the late 20th century districts of the village.

The Changing Landscape

- 3.24 Having established the existing baseline character of the area, it should be noted that landscapes are dynamic and are subject to change. The landscape is always changing to accommodate new development. There is a need to accommodate change while maintaining and enhancing the quality of the landscape where possible. New development should respect the environment and its location by way of scale, design and landscape treatment

Future Baseline

- 3.25 The consented residential scheme at Blossom Field Road to the south-west of the site, when completed, will extend the residential edge of Bodicote out to the L shaped woodland belt. The balance of the immediate site context land uses of commercial, residential and agricultural with small parcels of open space will change when the agricultural land is developed for residential use. The modern housing estate character type for Bodicote will increase.

Landscape Value

- 3.26 As part of the baseline description of the study area the value of the landscape or townscape that would be affected has been established. The NPPF states at paragraph 170 states that *'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by; protecting and enhancing valued landscapes'*.
- 3.27 GLVIA3 defines value as *'the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society, bearing in mind that a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons. A review of existing landscape designations is usually the starting point to understanding landscape value, but the value attached to undesignated landscapes also needs to be carefully considered and individual elements of the landscape and individual elements of the landscape may also have value'*.
- 3.28 GLVIA3 includes a list of eight factors within Box 5.1 that have been used to identify landscape/townscape value.

Landscape Quality

- 3.29 Landscape quality, or condition, measures 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.
- 3.30 The hedgerows, trees and grassland surrounding the car park of the proposal site are typical features of the Cotefield Business Park complex and have a medium/low value. A mature Copper Beech tree lies immediately to the south-east of the site within a small copse and is protected by a Tree Preservation Order, recognising its high quality and value. The nearby woodland belts and mature tree groups are, in parts, of medium value.

Scenic Quality

- 3.31 This measures the degree to which the landscape appeals primarily to the visual senses. The visual baseline is analysed in more detail above.
- 3.32 The Cotefield Business Park complex of buildings and external spaces including the proposal site, although appropriately designed, do not have any more than medium/low scenic value and due to the current car park/hardstanding use of the site have a low scenic value in places. The copse of mature trees to the south-east and the L shaped woodland belt are prominent and attractive features in the landscape. The location of the site within an area of typical urban fringe uses prevents the site or land within the study area from being elevated above medium/low value.

Rarity and Representativeness

- 3.33 Rarity is concerned with the presence of rare features and elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare character type and representativeness analyses the features or elements within the site and its surroundings which are considered particularly important examples, which are worthy of retention.
- 3.34 The grassland, trees and hedgerows of the site are designed features associated with the Cotefield Business Park and cannot be defined as rare locally. The vegetation within the site is an ordinary example within the local urban fringe landscape, although it is not particularly fine or important. Adjoining areas of landscaped open space have a similar character.

Conservation Interests

- 3.35 This considers the presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add value to a landscape.
- 3.36 There are no ecological designations on the site and no archaeological or cultural heritage features of interest and therefore it has no more than medium/low value.

Recreational Value

- 3.37 This considers any evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.
- 3.38 There is no public access to the proposal site therefore it has no recreational value. Green space lies to the north-west, west and south-west and provides a frontage to neighbouring commercial and residential developments and provides links to the wider landscape where informal footpaths are located.

Perceptual Aspects

- 3.39 A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquillity.
- 3.40 The landscape of the site and Cotefield Business Park is commercial and urban fringe in character and is not wild. The trees, hedgerows and grassland do not have wild qualities. The presence of the urban edge of Bodicote and the associated urban fringe land uses diminish the perceptual value of the site and surrounding landscape, which should not be elevated above medium.

Associations

- 3.41 The historic core of Bodicote is located on the western side of the settlement with no direct relationship with the proposal site or surrounding study area. There are no known cultural or historic associations at the site of study area.

Summary of Landscape Value

- 3.42 The value of the landscape of the site and surroundings is considered to range from medium to low. The elements of grassland, hedgerows and trees and hardstanding of the car park which comprise the site are not valued within the Bodicote character area and are not important examples. The site has no recreational value and is only partly visible from public areas. The site and immediate surroundings are not part of a wild or tranquil landscape due to its urban fringe location. Therefore, the features of the proposal site are not considered sufficient to elevate it to a level that is highly valued. The adjacent townscape of the urban fringe has a similar level of townscape value. The wider agricultural landscape offers some elements of greater landscape value, although these form a separate landscape compartment.
- 3.43 The NPPF requires landscapes that are not statutorily designated to have attributes of a sufficiently high quality to ensure protection and enhancement as a valued landscape. The landscape of the proposal site does not have any special qualities. Any contribution that the proposal site makes to the urban fringe of Bodicote or the wider rural landscape is limited.

Visual Baseline

- 3.44 A visual assessment has been conducted to verify the desk study findings and confirm the extent of visual influence of the proposal site. A site visit was conducted on 3rd October 2018 during warm and bright weather.
- 3.45 Principal viewpoints, sensitive visual receptors and the approximate visibility of the land within the proposal site have been recorded from representative publicly accessible viewpoints. Photographs have been taken using a digital camera from the representative viewpoints as a record of the view and have been taken with a fixed 50mm lens on a 35mm digital camera in landscape format at eye level, approximately 1.6m above ground level from public viewpoints. No access to private properties was obtained, and where impact to residential and other private views is noted, this has necessarily been estimated by using the nearest possible publicly accessible location.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 3.46 The ZTV for the existing site is the area from which any existing feature is visible. This extends over a series of green spaces and external areas within the Cotefield Business Park, the fringes of the residential edge of Bodicote and previously farmed land that is consented for development to the south-west of the site. The ZTV is compact and contained by either built development of woodland belts (See Figure 1.2).

Visual Receptors

- 3.47 Thirteen specific public viewpoints have been identified as key locations which represent the majority of visual receptors within the study area. Photography has been undertaken at these locations. These are described below, together with further receptor locations which are not publicly accessible or available for photography. See Figure 1.2 and photographs at Figures 3.2 to 3.8.

Residential Properties

- 3.48 The two storey, semi-detached property at 2 Cotefield Cottage is the closest residential property to the site, located 70m to the north-west. Residents are able to gain relatively open views over garden hedges and open space of the site, against a backdrop of built development and trees at the Cotefield Business Park.
- 3.49 A row of seven, two-storey detached and semi-detached properties on Blackwood Place form the south-eastern residential edge of Bodicote approximately 100m to the north-west of the site. The rear elevations face towards the site. Garden vegetation and fences obscure views from ground floor windows and gardens. Views from second floor windows would be more open, enabling residents to gain near, framed views over gardens, the nursery and open space into the site and beyond to warehouse style buildings and trees within the Cotefield Business Park.

Viewpoint Descriptions

- 3.50 Thirteen viewpoints at publicly accessible locations have been identified and photography has been undertaken. These viewpoints are all from locations near to the site where the scheme would be visible. See Figure 1.2 and photographs at Figures 3.2 to 3.8.

Viewpoint 1: Cotefield Business Park car park

- 3.51 This is a near, open view from the south-east boundary of the site looking north-east across the sunken site area towards the residential edge of Bodicote. Vehicles are parked on the hardstanding in the foreground with the temporary construction compound for the Cala Homes development behind. Hedgerows, shrubs, woodland belts and trees surround the site, providing enclosure and screening. Residential properties at Blackwood Place and 2 Cotefield Cottage are partly visible through gaps in the vegetation, beyond an area of open space. Lighting columns are visible on the A4260 and Blossom Field Road.

Viewpoint 2: Cotefield Business Park Cotefield Drive

- 3.52 This is a near, restricted view from the north-east boundary of the site on the access road into the business park. Hedgerows, woodland belts and trees surrounding the site screen views into the majority of the site area. Hoarding around the temporary construction compound for the Cala Homes development is partly visible through trees. An avenue of oak trees lines the access road into the business park on the right side of the view with open space and woodland planting in front of the main buildings. The mature woodland belt within the Rugby Club site screens views beyond on the left side of the view.

Viewpoint 3: Cotefield Business Park access road

- 3.53 This is a near, restricted view from the south-east boundary of the site on the access road into the business park. Woodland belts and trees surrounding the site screen views into the majority of the site area. Warehouse style buildings within the business park are visible on the right side of the view with the copse of mature trees visible south of the site boundary. Hedgerows and trees either side of the A4260 corridor form a backdrop to the view. Residential properties at Blackwood Place, on the edge of Bodicote, are visible through the gap in the avenue trees on the left of the view.

Viewpoint 4: Junction of A4260 and Cotefield Drive

- 3.54 This is a near, partly restricted view from north of the site available to pedestrians using roadside footways and occupiers of vehicles entering Blossom Field Road. The mature roadside hedgerow and trees surrounding the site screen views into the majority of the site area. Hoarding around the temporary construction compound for the Cala Homes development is partly visible through trees. The top of a warehouse at the business park is partly visible above the boundary hedgerow and surrounded by clusters of mature trees. More distant views extend along the A4260 framed by mature woodland belts and trees and south over open space to the L shaped trees belt adjacent to the Cala Homes development. Signage within the road corridor is prominent in the foreground, together with lighting columns.

Viewpoint 5: A4260 north of site

- 3.55 This is a mid-distance, framed view looking south-east along the A4260 corridor gained as people exit the village. Residential properties lie to the right of the views. Vegetation in front gardens and the roadside hedgerow obscure views into the site area. Clumps of mature trees at the Cotefield House and Cotefield Business Park site form a backdrop to the view and obscure buildings south of the site. The woodland belt at the rugby club contains the view to the left. Lighting columns and signage are visible both sides of the road.

Viewpoint 6: A4260 east of site

- 3.56 This is a near, framed view looking north-west along the A4260 corridor gained by people approaching Cotefield Business Park. The mature hedgerow and young trees which surround the site frame the view to the left and prevent views into the site area. The property at 2 Cotefield Cottage forms the only visible residential property within a tree lined road corridor. Lighting columns and signage are visible both sides of the road.

Viewpoint 7: A4260 south-east of site

- 3.57 This is a mid-distance, narrow framed view looking north-west along the A4260 gained by people arriving at Bodicote. The hedgerow and trees which lie along the north-east boundary of the site are partly visible beyond mature trees at Cotefield House in the foreground. The woodland belt at the rugby club contains the view to the right. Number 2 Cotefield Cottage is visible set within vegetation in a tree lined road corridor. Lighting columns and signage are visible both sides of the road.

Viewpoint 8: Cotefield Business Park open space

- 3.58 This is a near, restricted view from the open space south-west of the site. Woodland belts and trees surrounding the site screen views into the majority of the site area. Hoarding around the temporary construction compound for the Cala Homes development is partly visible through the gated road access into the site. An avenue of oak trees lines the access road into the business park and woodland belts and specimen trees further obscure views into the site and of the large buildings at the business park. The roof of 2 Cotefield Cottage is visible above a parked lorry and beyond the car park to Cotefield Nursery.

Viewpoint 9: Blossom Field Road Cala Homes development

- 3.59 This is a mid-distance open view looking east from the front of recently completed residential properties on Blossom Field Road. Timber close board fencing around the Cotefield Nursery site defines the left side of the view. Trees on the north-west boundary of the site and along the A4260 corridor are visible above the fence. Woodland belts on the south-west side of the site prevent views into the site area. Specimen trees and woodland planting surround an area of open space and screen views of buildings at Cotefield Business Park beyond. Infrastructure associated with the ongoing construction activities lies in the foreground. Lighting columns are visible either side of Cotefield Drive and the A4260.

Viewpoint 10: Cala Homes development

- 3.60 This is a mid-distance, framed view looking south-east, dominated by built development on the edge of Bodicote. Timber close board fencing and the tops of glass houses and poly tunnels within the Cotefield Nursery site define the left side of the view. The Hornton stone buildings and wall within the recently completed Cala Homes development frame the view to the right. These natural building materials reference the traditional buildings within the village. Woodland belts on the south-west side of the site prevent views into the site area. Specimen trees and woodland planting surround an area of open space and screen most views of buildings at Cotefield Business Park beyond. Clumps of mature trees around Cotefield House are prominent on the skyline.

Viewpoint 11: Cala Homes development open space

- 3.61 This is a mid-distance open view looking north-east from the front of recently completed residential properties on Blossom Field Road. Residential properties facing on to land which will become public open space frame the left side of the view. Woodland belts and specimen trees within open space obscure views of the site. Further woodland planting and mature clumps of trees partially screen warehouse style buildings and the historic house at Cotefield Business Park. The foreground is occupied by the undulating landform and ruderal weeds of land that will be developed either for open space or further residential development within the Blossom Fields residential scheme.

Viewpoint 12: Public right of way near Bloxham Grove

- 3.62 This is a mid-distance open view looking north-east from a public right of way east of Bloxham Grove. The elevated location enables views to extend over the Sor Brook valley to land at Cotefield Business Park and Bodicote beyond. Horse paddocks and arable farmland in the foreground slopes down to mature trees which line the Sor Brook. The undulating farmland rises up to the sinuous L shaped woodland belt which defines the edge of Bodicote, in front of the Cotefield Business Park and proposal site. The rooftop of one warehouse building and the historic Cotefield House are visible above tree tops. The exposed residential edge of mid-20th century residential properties is prominent through gaps in mature vegetation on the left side of the view.

Viewpoint 13: Public right of way south of site

- 3.63 This is a mid-distance open view looking north from a public right of way on elevated land. Arable farmland occupies the foreground of the view which extends up to the L shaped woodland belt which has been planted at Cotefield Farm. The woodland screens most views of Bodicote beyond, allowing a narrow sliver of rooftops within the new Cala Homes development to be seen. A warehouse style building at Cotefield Business Park is visible to the right of trees. Mid-20th century residential properties within the village form a visually prominent residential edge on the left side of the view.

4 DESIGN PROPOSALS

Scheme Description

- 4.1 The proposal comprises a retail scheme of a single food store with parking for up to 84 vehicles on the southern edge of Bodicote (as illustrated in the Design and Access Statement). The scheme would also include road access and landscape planting. The store would be up to approximately 54.5 m long, 33m wide and 10.5m high, and would incorporate a loading bay with HGV access to the rear. The store would be of single storey construction with a pitched roof. The high-quality design and architectural treatment respond to the local vernacular of agricultural buildings within the Ironstone Hills area of Cherwell. Materials would include panels of Hornton stone, vertical timber slats and glazed windows on the front and south side elevations and predominantly Hornton stone on the rear and north elevations. The pitched roof would comprise natural slate. The entrance space would be defined by glazing and timber panels with a pitched timber roof. The loading bay entrance would have a steel roller door.
- 4.2 The building would be carefully located on the eastern side of the site adjacent to the existing buildings and mature copse of trees at the business park to maintain some degree of openness when accessing the site from Oxford Road through areas of open green space and car park. This location and building orientation also ensure minimal influence over the character of the road corridor when travelling to and from Bodicote.
- 4.3 The proposals would retain the hedgerow on the northern boundary adjoining Oxford Road, the avenue of young Oak trees to the south and the mature Copper Beech to the east. Incidental trees and shrubs on the western and eastern boundaries and the strip of young woodland on the southern boundary would be removed to accommodate development. The retained hedgerow would form a robust barrier to Oxford Road, retaining the character of this corridor on the edge of Bodicote. The retained planting would be supplemented by additional planting including specimen trees and native and ornamental shrubs and perennials. A sinuous footpath link would pass through a broad band of landscape planting on the southern edge of the site, incorporating the avenue of existing Oak trees. The proposed planting would include native and ornamental shrub, perennial and bulb species appropriate to a semi-shaded environment. A native hedgerow mix and trees would be established on the north-western boundary as a continuation of the existing hedgerow, to provide a logical green infrastructure that integrates with its surroundings. These existing and proposed features would combine to provide an appropriate landscape framework for development and to reinforce the character of the landscape of the urban fringe at Bodicote.
- 4.4 The landscape design focuses on reflecting the existing pattern of green infrastructure on the settlement edge whilst minimising effects on the road corridor and wider local landscape. These proposals include the following features:
- Tree, shrub, hedgerow and groundcover planting to enhance the site, provide integration with the landscape and compliment the adjacent residential and commercial development, green spaces and wider rural landscape of Cherwell.
 - Retention of the site boundary hedgerow and some trees to partially retain the character and scale of the land parcel on the urban fringe.

- A mix of native and ornamental planting to provide a scheme of landscape and ecological value appropriate to this location within Cherwell.

Typical Planting Schedule

Trees

Individual trees to be planted in cultivated locations 600mm diameter and 300mm deep, backfilled with 80% clean topsoil well mixed with 20% tree planting compost and 100g granular fertiliser. Backfill material well firmed to avoid settlement. Trees supported with a single timber stake 1.5m long driven 600mm into ground at a 30 degree angle. Tree attached to stake with flexible hessian tie nailed to stake. Trees protected with 600mm high plastic spiral rabbit guard.

Latin Name	Common Name	Form	Height (m)	Root
<i>Crataegus prunifolia</i>	Cockspur Thorn	Light Standard	3-4m	RB
<i>Malus 'Evereste'</i>	Flowering Crab Apple	Light Standard	3-4m	RB

Native Hedgerow Mix

Plants are to be planted at 1 plant per metre square in groups of 3 to 5 of the same species, to form a dense matrix.

Latin Name	Common Name	Form	% Mix
<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood	TB 300-450mm	10
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn	TB 300-450mm	65
<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Spindle	TB 300-450mm	10
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly	TB 300-450mm	5
<i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Guelder Rose	TB 300-450mm	10

Specimen Shrubs

Individual shrubs to be planted in cultivated locations 450mm wide and 300mm deep, backfilled with 80% clean topsoil well mixed with 20% planting compost and 100g granular fertiliser. Backfill material well firmed to avoid settlement.

Latin Name	Common Name	Form	Height
<i>Amelanchier lamarckii</i>	Snowy mespillis	5 lt C	600-900mm
<i>Osmanthus x burkwoodii</i>		5 lt C	450-600mm

Ornamental Shrubs

Shrubs are to be planted in single species groups of at least three plants, forming swathes.

Latin Name	Common Name	Form	Height (mm)	Planting Density per m ²
<i>Chaenomeles speciosa Nivalis</i>	Quince	3 lt C	300-450mm	1
<i>Euonymus Darts Blanket</i>	Spindle	0.5 lt C	200-300mm	5
<i>Mahonia Soft Caress</i>	Oregon Grape	3 lt C	200-300mm	3
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	Sacred Bamboo	3 lt C	300-450mm	2
<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>		0.5 lt C	200-300mm	6
<i>Sarcococca confusa</i>	Christmas Box	3 lt C	200-300mm	3
<i>Skimmia Kew Green</i>		3 lt C	200-300mm	2
<i>Vinca major</i>	Periwinkle	1 lt C	300-450mm	5

Herbaceous and Groundcover			
Plants are to be planted in single species groups of at least ten plants, forming swathes.			
Latin Name	Common Name	Pot size (mm)	Planting Density per m ²
<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>	Lady's Mantle	0.5 lt C	6
<i>Anemone hybrida Honourine Jobert</i>	Anemone	0.5 lt C	4
<i>Dryopteris felix mas</i>	Male Fern	0.5 lt C	4
<i>Epimedium x perralchicum</i>	Barrenwort	0.5 lt C	6
<i>Euphorbia amygdaloides robbiae</i>	Wood Spurge	0.5 lt C	6
<i>Geranium phaeum</i>	Cranesbill	0.5 lt C	6
<i>Helleborous hybrida (Purple)</i>	Christmas Rose	0.5 lt C	4
<i>Luzula sylvatica</i>	Wood Rush	0.5 lt C	6
<i>Persicaria affinis Darjeeling Red</i>	Bistort	0.5 lt C	6

Bulbs		
Latin Name	Common Name	Planting Density per m ²
<i>Narcissus February Gold</i>	Daffodil	10

KEY

T = Transplant B = Bare root RB = Root balled C = Container grown

Assessment of the Design

4.5 Land within the site is reasonably well contained within the surrounding landscape and townscape context due to vegetation, low level land form and built form at Cotefield Business Park and residential fringes of Bodicote. The surrounding roadside pavements, residential properties, commercial premises and the extent of adjacent open green space provide the opportunity for views from all directions around the site. The location of the scheme within a planted framework and neighbouring Cotefield Business Park on the settlement edge of Bodicote would provide an appropriate context within which the new development would be perceived as an intensification of an established urban fringe pattern. The relatively low level of the proposed retail development and the low density of the built form within a landscaped setting would form a transition from the more densely developed residential districts of the urban townscape of Bodicote and the wider farmland. The well-developed hedgerow boundary and specimen trees within the site would provide a partial screen, behind which the new store and car park would be located. The existing vegetation and proposed tree and shrub planting would, in time, further screen development in heavily filtered views from the surrounding area and help merge the scheme into the townscape of the urban fringe of Bodicote. The detailed design will seek to reflect hedgerows and trees found within the settlement and countryside. These design objectives would ensure that the different features and characteristics of both the designed landscape, urban townscape and more rural landscape of Cherwell are incorporated into the scheme at the character interface and would form an integral part of the proposed development. The design has evolved with reference to key landscape features and qualities found within the site and surrounding landscape and townscape.

Designed-in Landscape Mitigation

4.6 The landscape proposals include the following features:

- Protection of the mature boundary hedgerow and trees within the site as part of an

important landscape framework for the proposals.

- Landscape planting to enhance the site, merge with the retained vegetation on site and to compliment the surrounding landscape and townscape.
- A proportion of native planting to provide a scheme of landscape and ecological value.

4.7 Detailed landscape proposals would need to be agreed in consultation with Cherwell District Council as a condition to planning permission.

5 ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE, TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

Assessment of Operational Effects

Landscape Effects

Local Landscape Character

- 5.1 The Cherwell District Landscape Assessment defines the landscape in which the site is located as the Ironstone Hills and Valleys and more specifically the 'Large scale arable farmland enclosed by woodland belts' character type.
- 5.2 Development of a car park site and the removal of some scattered trees and a length of young woodland planting would result in the minor loss of two typical features of the character area. There would also be a certain degree of loss of openness following development due to the construction of the store however, the reasonably well contained parcel of land is not intervisible with the wider rural landscape that typically defines this character area and type. The development would be more closely associated with the commercial development of Cotefield Business Park and the residential districts of Bodicote within this urban fringe location. The pattern and grain of the landscape would not be changed. The proposed scheme would introduce a relatively small-scale retail development and associated infrastructure into a parcel of land which previously experienced transient numbers of vehicles when the car park was in use.
- 5.3 Although the site lies outside of the settlement boundary of Bodicote the proposed scheme would form a relatively low-key addition in the context of the predominantly urban land uses of the rapidly expanding townscape and established business park. The proposed food store would have a similar footprint and a lower roofline than commercial properties at the neighbouring Cotefield Business Park and would not be significantly taller than residential properties on the settlement edge. The similarity in scale and mass between existing and proposed built development and the architectural references to the vernacular style and use of high-quality traditional building materials would ensure a successful relationship is established in the townscape. This will minimise any adverse influence over existing townscape character or the urban edge in the transition to a rural context and provide a positive contribution to Bodicote. Development of any previously used, urban fringe location on the existing urban edge of a settlement is likely to result in the loss of open land and some localised adverse effects on the character of the landscape. However, the high quality of the design and the reuse of a car park of low visual quality can successfully offset many of these effects. The proposal site benefits from a location on the edge of the landscape character area which has stronger links to the expanding townscape of Bodicote. The location is well contained and concealed from the wider rural landscape of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys. Effects would be highly localised in an urban fringe location which is well contained, is not designated, and does not have special qualities. The development would not result in significant harm to the value of the landscape of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys as there would be no loss of important landscape features, elements and characteristics and minimal influence over the surrounding landscape. The change in character of the site would result from some degree of loss of

openness through the introduction of built form, which would be offset by the improvement in the overall quality of the space through the architectural treatment. The magnitude of change would be medium on a character area of medium sensitivity. On balance, when considering the combination of adverse effects and beneficial effects, the direct effect on the site area would be Negligible adverse during the day. The well contained nature of the proposal site on the western edge of the settlement, within a landscape structure provided by hedgerows and trees, supplemented new landscape planting, would limit the effects on the wider Ironstone Hills and Valleys character area to Negligible adverse in the day as a result of a negligible magnitude of change.

- 5.4 The urban fringe site currently contains no lighting. The neighbouring commercial developments include some light sources within buildings and residential developments include street lighting and light sources within properties and gardens which exert an influence over the site area at night. Development of the site would introduce lighting columns within the car park and light sources within the store and signage which would change the night time character of the site, intensifying the concentration of visible lighting within a partly lit urban edge context. The magnitude of change in character would be medium on an area of medium sensitivity. The direct effect on the site area would be Moderate at night, which would not be significant and Minor on the wider character area where the magnitude of impact would be negligible.
- 5.5 Effects on the Bodicote area of the Upstanding Village Farmlands Landscape Character Type identified within the OWLS assessment of Oxfordshire, which covers a similar area of landscape within the study area as the Ironstone Hills and Valleys, would be the same as described in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.4.

Townscape Effects

- 5.6 The proposed development would be located adjacent to Cotefield Nursery and near to the residential edge of Bodicote, which form the urban fringes of the late 20th century residential townscape character area. The new retail scheme would integrate well with this established townscape character, creating a slightly more intensively developed urban fringe environment. The townscape character area would effectively extend over the proposal site, the residential schemes recently completed and currently under construction and the business park. There would be a very limited degree of influence over the character of the settlement. The magnitude of the indirect impacts would be negligible on a character area of medium sensitivity, leading to a Negligible level of effect, during the day and a Minor adverse level of effect at night.

Future Baseline

- 5.7 The consented residential scheme at Blossom Field Road to the south-west of the site is currently under construction. When completed, it will extend the residential edge of Bodicote closer to the application site. The development of a rural field will extend the late 20th century residential townscape character area, changing the immediate context of the proposed retail store. The rural character of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys will no longer exist within the study area of the future baseline. The development of a car park for a retail store with parking would result in lower levels of effect on all landscape and townscape character areas and types within the study area in the future, when compared to the existing baseline situation.

Summary of Operational Landscape and Townscape Effects

- 5.8 Although the retail scheme would change the character of the car park, the relatively low level of the built form and the positive contribution that the high-quality scheme would make to the townscape character, in place of the car park, would limit conflict in terms of the character of development and result in some beneficial impacts. The proposal responds to site specific constraints and opportunities and the local context of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys landscape character area. The development has been designed to take advantage of the existing boundary hedgerow and some specimen trees within the site, the sunken landform and adjacent woodland copse and business park buildings to minimise any influence the building may have over the urban fringe character with high levels of public access. Intervisibility with the wider landscape of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys and influence over the townscape of Bodicote is particularly limited.
- 5.9 The Cherwell District Landscape Assessment defines the landscape in which the site is located as a 'repair' landscape which is able to absorb development if it is sensitively designed and located within a green infrastructure that is retained and supplemented by new hedgerow and tree planting. Rural characteristics of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys would be partly retained following development and the scheme would effectively be absorbed into the Bodicote late 20th century residential townscape character area, without resulting in any significant effects.

Visual Effects

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 5.10 Due to the general nature, extent and relatively small scale of the proposed development, combined with the presence of mature boundary hedgerows and trees and surrounding mature trees, woodland and extensive built development at Bodicote, there would be no change in the extent of the ZTV for the proposed scheme when compared to the existing site. There would be no visibility of the scheme from the Sor Brook valley to the south and countryside to the south-east and north. Filtered views would continue to be confined to limited locations on the urban edge.

Visual Receptors

- 5.11 Visual receptors at locations which are not represented by one of the thirteen individual, photographed public viewpoint locations, are described below.

Residential Properties

- 5.12 Residents at 2 Cotefield Cottages would gain relatively open views over garden hedges and open space of the new car park with the store beyond. The building would be visible against a backdrop of built development and mature trees at the Cotefield Business Park and in the context of the nursery immediately to the right of the view. Whilst the proportion of built development in the view would increase the quality of the architecture would form an improvement to the existing car park use and the nature and character of the urban fringe location would be little changed. Occupiers of residential properties are receptors of high sensitivity and would experience a small magnitude of change. On balance, the combination of adverse and beneficial impacts would lead to a Minor adverse level of effect during the day.

Lighting columns within the car, signage lighting and light sources within the store would be visible at night beyond a foreground that is partly lit. The level of night time effect would be Moderate adverse.

- 5.13 Occupiers within rear elevation, upper storey windows of a row of seven, two storey detached and semi-detached properties on Blackwood Place would gain near, framed views over gardens, the nursery and open space of the new car park and store. The backdrop to the view would be formed by mature trees and warehouse style buildings at Cotefield Business Park. The proposals would form an intensification of commercial development within the townscape of the urban fringe of Bodicote. The architecture of the store would form an improvement in the quality of built form within the view. Removal of a strip of young woodland planting would allow more open views into the site. Occupiers of bedrooms in residential properties are receptors of medium sensitivity as these are not main living spaces and would experience a small magnitude of change. On balance, the combination of adverse and beneficial impacts would lead to a Negligible adverse level of effect during the day. Lighting columns within the car park, signage lighting and light sources within the store would be visible at night beyond a foreground that is partly lit. The level of night time effect would be Minor adverse.

Viewpoint Descriptions

- 5.14 An assessment of the likely effect on views gained by groups of different receptors at the following 13 viewpoint locations are described below. These viewpoints are all from publicly accessible locations where the scheme would be visible. See Figure 1.2 and photographs at Figures 3.2 to 3.8.

Viewpoint 1: Cotefield Business Park car park

- 5.15 Views from this location on the edge of the new development would include the service access road in the foreground, the rear of the store and the loading bay. Due to the close proximity of the receptor to the building, the existing open view over the car park and trees would be obscured and replaced with built form. Employees within the commercial premises at Cotefield Business Park are receptors of low sensitivity and would experience a large magnitude of change in view. The level of effect would be Moderate adverse during the day.
- 5.16 The rear of the building is unlikely to be lit and lighting columns within the car park would not be visible above the building roofline. Night time effects would therefore be Negligible.

Viewpoint 2: Cotefield Business Park Cotefield Drive

- 5.17 Removal of the woodland belt to accommodate the development would open up views across the car park to the new store, although the retention of the avenue of Oak trees would soften the right side of the view. Views beyond to the hedgerow and woodland belt on Oxford Road, the copse of mature trees and warehouse style buildings at Cotefield Business Park would also be revealed. The proposals would form an intensification of commercial development within the townscape of the urban fringe of Bodicote. The broad band of new landscape planting in the foreground would, in time, provide an improvement in the quality of the green infrastructure within this view. Pedestrians using the roadside pavement are receptors of medium sensitivity and would experience a medium magnitude of change in view. The level of day time effect would be Moderate adverse initially, reducing to Neutral in the long term as planting matures.

- 5.18 Night time effects would include new lighting columns in the car park and light sources within the store, seen in the context of lighting in the foreground. The magnitude of change would be medium, leading to a Moderate adverse effect.

Viewpoint 3: Cotefield Business Park access road

- 5.19 Removal of the woodland planting and lime tree within the centre of the view would open up views of the new development. The store would form a prominent new building on the edge of the business park, although the architectural treatment incorporating Hornton stone and panels of timber and glazing, would represent a significant improvement in the quality of existing warehouse style units and would provide a more attractive neighbour for the nearby residential developments at Bodicote. The new car park would be partially visible to the left of the store and the retained avenue of Oak trees would be located in a new band of landscape planting. The proposals would result in an intensification of built form at Bodicote, however the overall nature and character of the urban fringe view would remain the same. Employees within the commercial premises at Cotefield Business Park are receptors of low sensitivity and would experience a medium magnitude of change in view. The level of effect would be Minor adverse during the day.
- 5.20 Night time effects would include new lighting columns in the car park and light sources within the store, seen in the context of lighting in the foreground and on the access road. The magnitude of change would be medium, leading to a Minor adverse effect.

Viewpoint 4: Junction of A4260 and Cotefield Drive

- 5.21 Retention of the roadside hedgerow and trees which wrap around the site boundary would ensure the semi-rural character of the road corridor is generally maintained and the new development would be partially enclosed and screened. The vehicles within the new car park would be visible in the same location as the existing car park. The roof of the store would be visible above the foreground hedgerow, but below the level of the skyline. Store signage would also be visible in the foreground. The tops of mature trees and buildings at the business park would be visible beyond, above the store. Removal of the woodland belt would allow filtered views through the retained Oak tree avenue to the open space and new housing beyond. The proposed scheme would represent a slight intensification of development on the edge of Bodicote. Pedestrians using the roadside pavement are receptors of medium sensitivity and would experience a small magnitude of change in view. The level of day time effect would be Minor adverse initially, reducing to Neutral in the long term as new foreground planting matures to screen the car park.
- 5.22 Night time effects would include new lighting columns in the car park and lighting of the signage, seen in the context of street lighting in the foreground. The magnitude of change would be medium, leading to a Moderate adverse effect.

Viewpoint 5: A4260 north of site

- 5.23 The roof of the new store would be partially visible, filtered through trees that would be retained around the site boundary. The copse of mature trees would continue to form an attractive backdrop beyond. The well-treed character of the road corridor would be retained and there would be minimal perception of the intensification of urban form at Bodicote. The car park

would remain concealed in this view. Pedestrians using the roadside pavement are receptors of medium sensitivity and would experience a negligible magnitude of change in view, leading to a Negligible adverse level of effect in the day.

- 5.24 At night the only light sources that may be visible would be the lighting on the store signage and potentially lighting columns in the car park. The changes would be visible in the well-lit context of street lighting on Oxford Road. The level of effect would be Negligible adverse.

Viewpoint 6: A4260 east of site

- 5.25 Due to the dense hedgerow vegetation and trees on the site boundary the only change in view would be heavily filtered views of the side elevation of the store in winter only, when vegetation is not in leaf and potentially the top of the store sign. The character of the road corridor and the experience of arriving at Bodicote would not change. Pedestrians using the roadside pavement are receptors of medium sensitivity and would experience a negligible magnitude of change in view, leading to a Negligible adverse level of effect in the day.

- 5.26 At night the only light sources that may be visible would be the lighting on the store signage and potentially lighting columns in the car park. The changes would be visible in the well-lit context of street lighting on Oxford Road. The level of effect would be Negligible adverse.

Viewpoint 7: A4260 south-east of site

- 5.27 When approaching Bodicote from the rural landscape to the south-east there would be immediately perceptible change in view. The top of the store sign may potentially be visible above the hedgerow boundary. The character of the road corridor and the experience of arriving at Bodicote would not change. Pedestrians using the roadside pavement are receptors of medium sensitivity and would experience a negligible magnitude of change in view, leading to a Negligible adverse level of effect in the day.

- 5.28 At night the only light source that may be visible would be the lighting on the store signage. The changes would be visible in the well-lit context of street lighting on Oxford Road. The level of effect would be no more than Negligible adverse.

Viewpoint 8: Cotefield Business Park open space

- 5.29 Views across this green space would be slightly more open following the removal of the woodland belt to accommodate the store development. However, the retention of the oak tree avenue would maintain a degree of separation and an important element of the green infrastructure at Bodicote. The side elevation of the store and vehicles within the car park would be partially visible, filtered through intervening trees. There would be a slight loss of openness and increase in visible built form however, the quality of the architectural treatment would offset some of these effects and provide a high-quality addition to the urban fringe landscape. People using the open space are receptors of high sensitivity and would experience a small magnitude of change in view. The level of day time effect would be Moderate adverse initially, reducing to Negligible in the long term as new planting matures to partially screen the development.

- 5.30 Night time effects would include new lighting columns in the car park and lighting within the store, seen in the context of street lighting in the background. The magnitude of change would be medium, leading to a Moderate adverse effect.

Viewpoint 9: Blossom Field Road Cala Homes development

- 5.31 Residents within properties on the edge of this development are in a slightly elevated location and would gain views over intervening open space and the nursery of the new car park and store. Removal of a strip of young woodland planting would allow more open views into the site however the retention of the avenue of Oak trees would filter views of the proposals. The backdrop to the view would be formed by mature trees on Oxford Road and warehouse style buildings at Cotefield Business Park. The proposals would form an intensification of commercial development within the townscape of the urban fringe of Bodicote. The architecture of the store would form an improvement in the quality of built form within the view. Occupiers of residential properties are receptors of high sensitivity and would experience a small magnitude of change. On balance, the combination of adverse and beneficial impacts would lead to a Minor adverse level of effect during the day.
- 5.32 Lighting columns within the car park, signage lighting and light sources within the store would be partially visible at night within a context that is partly lit. The level of night time effect would be Minor adverse.

Viewpoint 10: Cala Homes development

- 5.33 The proposed development would be only partially visible within this view from new residential properties. The nursery and neighbouring residential properties would continue to form the most prominent development within the view. The top of the store roof would be visible above the tops of intervening trees and in front of a copse of mature trees beyond. The car park is unlikely to be visible from this location. The overall character of the view would remain unchanged. Occupiers of residential properties are receptors of high sensitivity and would experience a negligible magnitude of change, resulting in a Negligible adverse level of effect during the day.
- 5.34 Lighting columns within the car park are likely to form the only visible light sources at night, visible within a context that is well-lit. The level of night time effect would be Negligible adverse.

Viewpoint 11: Cala Homes development open space

- 5.35 People using the open space within this new housing development would gain slightly elevated views over open space and trees to the new retail development. Removal of the strip of young woodland south of the site would enable views of the roof and side elevation of the store to be gained over the avenue of Oak trees. The roof line would remain below the level of the tree planting beyond. The new building would be smaller and less prominent in the view than the existing blue warehouse style building to the right of the view. The use of Hornton stone for the store would reflect building materials used for the houses on the left of the view. This material would be locally characteristic and provide an improvement in the quality of built form at the Business Park. The car park would be partially visible through intervening vegetation. Receptors would be of high sensitivity to a small magnitude of change, leading to a Minor adverse level of effect, in the day.
- 5.36 Lighting columns within the car park, signage lighting and light sources within the store would be partially visible at night within a context of street lighting and lights within houses. The level of night time effect would be Minor adverse.

Viewpoint 12: Public right of way near Bloxham Grove

- 5.37 The relatively low-level nature of the new store would ensure that no development is visible above intervening woodland planting from this location. There would be no change in view during the day or at night.

Viewpoint 13: Public right of way south of site

- 5.38 The mature woodland belt within the intervening landscape would completely screen the new development, during the day and at night, resulting in no change in view.

Summary of Operational Visual Effects

- 5.39 There would be no significant adverse effects on any visual receptors within the study area. The mature hedgerows and trees around the site and the mature woodland planting within the surrounding landscape and townscape would provide good levels of visual containment in many views and would help to merge the scheme into the landscape of the urban fringe, south of Bodicote. In locations on the expanding residential edge of Bodicote, the existing Cotefield Business Park and the Oxford Road where receptors are able to gain near views into the site there would be a combination of adverse effects due to the loss of openness and introduction of built development and the beneficial effects of the improvement in the character of the car park site and the use of high quality architectural treatments for the store. On balance, the levels of effect would range from Negligible to Moderate adverse. As the proposed tree, shrub, hedge and groundcover planting matures to provide further screening and an attractive setting for the store, the level of effect would reduce to Negligible or Neutral in the long term.
- 5.40 In views from the surrounding rural landscape of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys the proposals would be completely screened by an extensive framework of woodland planting and green infrastructure and would not adversely influence the setting of the settlement of long views over the Sor Brook Valley.

Future Baseline

- 5.41 The consented residential scheme at Blossom Field Road to the south-west of the site is currently under construction. When residential properties within the consented Blossom Field Road scheme are completed residents would be able to gain near, relatively open views across green space to the proposed retail scheme. At approximately 65m from the application boundary, occupiers of properties would be the closest residential receptors to the development. The side elevation, and oblique views of the front elevation of the store, and vehicles within the car park would be partially visible, filtered through intervening trees. There would be a slight loss of openness and increase in visible built form however, the quality of the architectural treatment would offset some of these effects and provide a high-quality addition to the urban fringe landscape. Residents are receptors of high sensitivity and would experience a small magnitude of change in view. The level of day time effect would be Moderate adverse initially, reducing to Negligible in the long term as new planting matures to partially screen the development. Night time effects would include new lighting columns in the car park and lighting within the store, seen in the context of street lighting in the background. The magnitude of change would be medium, leading to a Moderate adverse effect.

- 5.42 Many receptors within the study area would have views of a more developed context following the completion of the Blossom Field Road residential scheme, into which the retail store would be placed. Any change in view experienced by these receptors would be moderated and slightly reduced through the change in the future baseline situation.

Assessment of Construction Effects

- 5.43 Construction activities associated with the proposed retail store would include the following;
- Erection of protective fencing for hedgerows and trees.
 - Stripping and stockpiling of soil materials.
 - Construction of store and reception building.
 - Construction of roads and car park spaces.
 - Site offices and car park.
 - Soft landscape implementation operations.

Landscape and Townscape Effects

- 5.44 The construction site and activities for this caravan park development would result in localised direct effects on the fabric of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys landscape character area and indirect effects on the neighbouring Bodicote late 20th century residential townscape character area. The activities within the urban fringe landscape would temporarily form a discordant addition to a small part of the rural character area, although the scale of the activities and their location adjacent to the much larger ongoing construction work at the residential site would not be completely uncharacteristic of the urban fringe of the settlement. The activities would be well contained within the wider landscape context by vegetation within and around the site and buildings at the business park. The levels of effect previously defined for the operational stage of the development would be the same for the construction phase. Whilst the nature of the construction site and activities is more discordant in the landscape/townscape than the completed scheme, this would be balanced by the short-term nature of effects.

Visual Effects

- 5.45 No visual receptors would experience significant effects. People using roadside pavements in close proximity to the application site and residents and employees at Bodicote would gain views of many elements of the construction site and activities as prominent and temporarily discordant additions to the urban fringe landscape. Walkers using public rights of way and paths within the surrounding landscape may be able to gain glimpsed views of mainly high-level activities at the site, such as cranes, above intervening vegetation that would screen all other construction activities.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The proposed food store scheme south of Bodicote would comprise of a single convenience store with parking for up to 84 vehicles located on a previously developed, brownfield site currently used for parking. The location of the site adjacent to large scale warehouse style units of the Cotefield Business Park, Cotefield Nursery, the established residential edge and currently expanding residential developments which comprise the urban fringe of the settlement and the mature trees and hedgerows on site boundaries offers the opportunity to restrict views of the development from within the study area and completely conceal the proposals from beyond the immediate study area. Landscape proposals include tree, hedge, shrub and groundcover planting focussed around the site perimeter, supplementing existing planting. Landscape proposals have been designed primarily to provide a high-quality setting for the development, an attractive experience for visitors to the store and to integrate the development into the pattern of vegetation within the settlement edge location. The store has been positioned within the site to make use of the neighbouring mature trees and buildings at Cotefield Business Park and the lower site levels. The architectural treatment references the vernacular style of agricultural buildings and uses locally characteristic and distinctive materials such as Hornton stone to ensure that the store is of a high quality and would help to reduce potential adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity outside of the site. The quality of the design and its relatively discrete nature would result in some beneficial effects on local character. The proposal site lies within an urban fringe landscape that has effectively become absorbed into the townscape of Bodicote through ongoing development in the study area. In terms of NPPF paragraph 170 no value, through designation, has been placed on the landscape within the site or surrounding study area, either nationally or locally. The proposal site has a typical urban fringe character and has no more than local value within the context of the settlement. The urban fringe location within the Ironstone Hills and Valleys landscape at Bodicote would be able to absorb limited areas of retail development of this nature.
- 6.2 The retail store scheme would not result in significant harm to the value of the landscape of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys as there would be no loss of important landscape features, elements and characteristics and minimal influence over the surrounding townscape of Bodicote or wider rural landscape of Cherwell. Due to the change in character of the site the effect would be moderate during the day, which would not be significant. The change in character of the site would result from some degree of loss of openness through the introduction of built form, which would be offset by the improvement in the overall quality of the space through the architectural treatment. On balance, when considering the combination of adverse effects and beneficial effects, the direct effect on the site area would be Negligible adverse during the day. The well contained nature of the proposal would prevent effects on the wider Ironstone Hills and Valleys character area.
- 6.3 The assessment concludes that there would be visibility of the proposed development from the publicly accessible locations surrounding the site including residential and commercial developments, pavements, green space and roads within the urban fringe context of Bodicote. There would be no significant adverse effects on any visual receptors within the study area. In many locations where receptors are able to gain near views into the site there would be a combination of adverse effects due to the loss of openness and introduction of built development and the beneficial effects of the improvement in the character of the car park and high-quality architectural treatment. On balance, the levels of effect would range from

Negligible to Moderate adverse in the short term reducing to Neutral to Minor adverse in the long term when landscape proposals have become established. The proposed scheme would not result in significant harm to visual amenity within the study area.

7 REFERENCES

Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013) '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*' (GLVIA) 3rd Edition

The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) '*Landscape Character and Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland*' (LCA)

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Cherwell District Council, *Cherwell District Local Plan 2011 to 2031*, July 2015

Cherwell District Council, *Countryside Design Summary Supplementary Planning Document*, 1998

Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS)

Cobham Resource Consultants, Cherwell District Council, *Cherwell District Landscape Assessment*, November 1995.

Natural England, *National Character Area profile* (2013)

Appendix A

Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology

Assessment Methodology

A1.1 The Landscape, townscape and visual impact assessment considers the potential effects of the development upon:

- Individual landscape or townscape features and elements
- Landscape and townscape character; and
- Visual amenity and the people who view the landscape or townscape.

Distinction between Landscape and Visual Effects

A1.2 In accordance with the '*Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition*' 2013 by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, landscape and visual effects have been assessed separately, although the procedure for assessing each of these is closely linked. A clear distinction has been drawn between landscape and visual effects as described below:

- Landscape effects relate to the effects of the project on the physical and other characteristics of the landscape and its resulting character and quality
- Visual effects relate to the effects on views experienced by visual receptors (e.g. residents, footpath users, tourists etc.) and on the visual amenity experienced by those people

Duration of Landscape and Visual Effects

A1.3 The appraisal assesses the short-term effects of the construction phase and the permanent effects relating to the projects operational phase.

A1.4 Consideration has been given to the likely seasonal variations in the visibility of the development in a context including deciduous vegetation.

A1.5 Consideration has been given to changes in the level of effects likely to take place as new planting, proposed as part of the project, and existing planting matures.

Landscape and Visual Assessment Process

A1.6 The assessment of the landscape or townscape effects of the project has followed a recognised process set out below:

- Identify the baseline landscape and townscape resource (e.g. individual elements and character) and its value;
- Identify forces for change in the landscape of the surrounding area;
- Evaluate the sensitivity of the landscape and townscape resource and its susceptibility to change as a result of the type of development proposed;

- Identify potential landscape and townscape effects of the project through review of initial plans;
- Develop measures to avoid, reduce and ameliorate adverse effects and to maximise the positive benefits of the project;
- Identify scale or magnitude of likely impact of the project;
- Assess the level of effects of the project on the landscape and townscape, taking into account the designed in mitigation measures proposed; and
- Report the findings of the assessment.

A1.7 The assessment of visual effects follows a similar recognised process set out below:

- Identify potential visual receptors of the project (i.e. people who will have views of the development);
- Select an appropriate number of representative or sensitive viewpoints to be illustrated through photography and to reflect the full range of different views towards the project;
- Describe the nature of the baseline views towards the project for each representative viewpoint;
- Identify forces for change in the visual amenity of the surrounding area;
- Evaluate the sensitivity of the visual receptors and their susceptibility to change as a result of the project represented by the viewpoints;
- Identify potential visual effects of the project through review of initial plans;
- Develop measures to avoid, reduce and ameliorate adverse effects and to maximise the positive benefits of the project;
- Identify the scale or magnitude of the likely impact of the project;
- Assess the level of effects on the view from representative viewpoints, taking into account the visual context of the development and the measures proposed;
- Assess the level of effects on overall visual amenity; and
- Report the findings of the assessment.

A1.8 The assessment of representative viewpoints has been supplemented by scheduling of specific visual receptors to determine visual effects upon those likely to be affected to the greatest degree.

Assessment Criteria

A1.9 The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate the magnitude of change to landscape, townscape and visual resources to enable the likely key effects of the project to be identified.

A1.10 Published guidance states that the level of effects is ascertained by professional judgement based on consideration of the intrinsic sensitivity of the baseline landscape, townscape or

visual receptor, the receptors susceptibility to the development and the magnitude of change as a result of the project.

Value

- A1.11 Landscape value is defined in the glossary of the GLVIA (2013) at paragraph 5.44 as the “*the value of the Landscape Character Type or Areas that may be affected, based on review of any designations at both national and local levels, and, where there are no designations, judgements based on criteria that can be used to establish landscape value*” and “*the value of individual contributors to landscape character, especially the key characteristics, which may include elements of the landscape, particular landscape features, notable aesthetic, perceptual or experiential qualities, and combinations of these contributors.*”
- A1.12 The value of certain landscapes has been recognised, e.g. the national designations of National Park (NP). Some landscapes are locally designated, e.g. Special Landscape Area (SLA). The aspects/special qualities of the landscape that led to the designations have been noted, as has the degree to which that aspect is present in the particular area under consideration.
- A1.13 Other landscapes are undesignated, but valued locally for specific reasons or specific elements / features. The value of an area of landscape / townscape is expressed both through designation and also other criteria, such as tranquillity, remoteness, wildness, scenic beauty, cultural associations and conservation interests. These aspects have been summarised in the main assessment.
- A1.14 How that value might be affected by a development is classified on a four-point scale (low, medium, high and very high) as set out in Table 1 below. The table can only illustrate general categories, as the effects on an area or element of landscape / townscape is specific to the development proposed and that particular aspect affected.

Table 1: Landscape/Townscape Value (expressed through designation)

Value	Designation	Example
Very High	International/ National	Exceptional scenic quality (and/or special qualities), no or limited potential for substitution. E.g. World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB or key elements features within them well known to the wider public.
High	National/Regional / Local	Very attractive or attractive scenic quality, high or good landscape/townscape quality, limited potential for substitution. E.g. National Park, AONB, SLA or key elements within them
Medium	Regional/Local	Typical and commonplace or in part unusual scenic quality, ordinary landscape/townscape quality, potential for substitution, E.g. Locally designated (SLA) or undesignated, but value expressed through literature and cultural associations or through demonstrable use.
Low	Local	Dull, degraded or damaged scenic quality, poor landscape/townscape quality, can be readily substituted. E.g. Undesignated. Certain individual landscape/townscape elements or features may be worthy of conservation or landscape/townscape identified would benefit from restoration or enhancement.

Condition

- A1.15 The evaluation of condition is based on judgements about the physical state of the landscape or townscape resource. It reflects the state of repair of individual features and elements, as indicated by the categories within Table 2 below, or can be applied to the intactness of the resource as a whole outlined by the corresponding descriptions:

Table 2: Landscape/Townscape Condition

Condition	Example
Very Good	Strong structure; very attractive with distinct features worthy of conservation; strong sense of place; no detracting features.
Good	Recognisable structure; attractive with many features worthy of conservation; occasional detracting features.
Ordinary	Distinguishable structure; common place with limited distinctiveness and features worthy of conservation; some detracting features.
Poor	Weak structure; evidence of degradation; lacks distinctiveness and sense of place; frequent detracting features.
Very Poor	Damaged structure; evidence of severe disturbance or dereliction; no distinctiveness; detracting features dominate.

Sensitivity of Receptor

A1.16 The sensitivity of a landscape or townscape to change varies according to the nature of the existing resource and the nature of the proposed change. Considerations of value, integrity and capacity are all relevant when assessing sensitivity. For the purpose of this assessment, these terms are defined as follows:

- 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. Landscapes can be recognised through national, regional or local designation. Views tend not to be designated, but value can be recognised through a named location shown on a map, or through the creation of a parking lay-by or location of a bench to appreciate a view;
- Integrity: the degree to which the value has been retained, the condition and integrity of the landscape or the view; and
- Capacity: the ability of a landscape, townscape or view to accommodate the proposed change while retaining the essential characteristics which define it.

A1.17 Sensitivity is not readily graded in bands. However, in order to provide both consistency and transparency to the assessment process, Table 3 defines the criteria which have guided the judgement as to the sensitivity of the receptor and the susceptibility to change.

Table 3: Sensitivity of Receptor

	Landscape/Townscape Receptor	Visual Receptor
Low	Landscape/townscape value is low, With no designations; landscape/townscape integrity is low, with a poor condition and a degraded character with the presence of detractors such as dereliction; and the landscape/townscape has the Capacity to potentially accommodate significant change.	May include people at their place of work, or engaged in similar activities, whose attention may be focused on their work or activity and who may therefore be potentially less susceptible to changes in view. Occupiers of vehicles whose attention may be focused on the road.
Medium	Landscape/townscape value is recognised or designated locally; the landscape/townscape is relatively intact, with a distinctive character and few detractors; and is reasonably tolerant of change.	Viewers' attention may be focused on landscape, such as users of secondary or urban footpaths, and people engaged in outdoor sport or recreation. e.g. horse riding or golf. Occupiers of vehicles in scenic areas or on recognised tourist routes.

	Landscape/Townscape Receptor	Visual Receptor
High	<p>Landscape/ townscape value recognised by national designation. Sense of tranquility or remoteness specifically noted in Landscape Character Assessment. High sensitivity to disturbance specifically noted in Landscape Character Assessment.</p> <p>The qualities for which the landscape/townscape is valued are in a good condition, with a clearly apparent distinctive character and absence of detractors. This distinctive character is susceptible to relatively small changes.</p>	<p>Large number or high sensitivity of viewers assumed. Viewers' attention very likely to be focused on landscape.</p> <p>E.g. Residents experiencing views from dwellings; users of strategic recreational footpaths, rural footpaths and cycleways; people experiencing views from important landscape features of physical, cultural or historic interest, beauty spots and picnic areas.</p>

Magnitude of Change

A1.18 The magnitude of change affecting landscape, townscape or visual receptors depends on the nature, scale and duration of the particular change within the landscape/townscape, the location of it and the overall effect on a particular view. This may be very small if the development is at some distance. In a landscape, the magnitude of change will depend on the loss or change in any important feature or characteristic or a change in backdrop to, or outlook from, a landscape/townscape that affects its character. The angle of view, duration of view, distance from the development, degree of contrast with the existing characteristics of the view, prominence of the development and the extent of visibility can all influence the magnitude of the change in view. In addition, the general visibility and combination of effects of elevation and topography on openness and degree of obstruction by trees and buildings affect the magnitude of change.

Table 4: Magnitude of Change

	Landscape/Townscape Impacts	Visual Impacts
Negligible	<p>The effect of change on the perception of the landscape/townscape, the physical features or the character is barely discernible or there is no change.</p>	<p>There is either no view or the character of the view will not be altered by the proposed development. The proposed development is at such a distance as to be barely perceptible, and may only be visible in clear conditions. May go unnoticed.</p>

	Landscape/Townscape Impacts	Visual Impacts
Small	<p>Changes to the physical landscape/townscape, its character and the Perception of the landscape/townscape are slight.</p> <p>Long distance to affected landscape/townscape with views toward the character area/type the key characteristic.</p>	Visible, but not prominent. Minor component and no marked effect on view.
Medium	<p>The proposed development forms a visible and recognisable feature in the landscape/townscape.</p> <p>Proposed development is within or adjacent to affected character area/type.</p> <p>Scale of development fits with existing features.</p>	<p>Prominent.</p> <p>Has an important, but not defining influence on view; is a key element in the view.</p>
Large	<p>Where there are substantial changes affecting the character of the landscape/townscape, or important elements through loss of existing features.</p> <p>Proposed development within or close to affected landscape/townscape.</p> <p>Scale, mass and form of development out of character with existing elements.</p>	<p>Dominant.</p> <p>Has a defining influence on view.</p>

A1.19 The following considerations are relevant when evaluating the magnitude of visual change:

- Distance: the distance between the receptor and the development. Generally, the greater the distance, the lower the magnitude of change;
- Extent: the extent of the proposal which is visible;
- Proportion: the arc of view occupied by the development in proportion to the overall field of view. A panoramic view, where the development takes up a small part of it, will generally be of lower magnitude than a narrow, focussed view, even if the arc of view occupied by the proposal is similar;
- Duration: the duration of the effect. An effect experienced in a single location over an extended period of time is likely to result in a higher magnitude of change than an effect which is of a short duration, such as a view from a road;
- Orientation: the angle of the view in relation to the main receptor orientation, where there is a dominant direction to the vista; and,

- Context: the elements, which in combination provide the setting and context to the proposal.

Level of Effect

A1.20 The level of the landscape, townscape and visual effects are assessed through consideration of the sensitivity or susceptibility of the receptor and the magnitude of change. The following table outlines the broad approach adopted to assess the level of effect, together with professional judgement. This may lead some effects falling between two categories.

Table 5 – Level of Effect

Landscape, Townscape and Visual Sensitivity or Susceptibility	Magnitude of Change			
	Large	Medium	Small	Negligible
High	Substantial	Major or Moderate	Moderate	Minor or Negligible
Medium	Major or Moderate	Moderate	Minor or Negligible	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor or Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

A1.21 The effect of relevant aspects of the project on the landscape and townscape has been described and evaluated against the following criteria, defined as:

- Substantial adverse: Where the proposed changes cannot be mitigated; would be completely uncharacteristic and would substantially damage the integrity of a valued and important landscape or townscape.
- Major adverse: Where the proposed changes cannot be fully mitigated; would be uncharacteristic and would damage a valued aspect of the landscape or townscape.
- Moderate adverse: Where some elements of the proposed changes would be out of scale or uncharacteristic of an area.
- Minor adverse: Where the proposed changes would be at slight variance with the character of an area.
- Negligible adverse: Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the landscape/townscape.
- Neutral: Where the proposals would be in keeping with the character of the area and/or would maintain the existing quality or where on balance the proposals would maintain quality (e.g. where on balance the adverse effects of the proposals are offset by beneficial effects).
- Negligible beneficial: Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the landscape/townscape.

- Minor beneficial: Where the proposed changes would reflect the existing character and would slightly improve the character and quality of the landscape or townscape.
- Moderate beneficial: Where the proposed changes would not only fit in well with the existing character of the surrounding landscape or townscape, but would improve the quality of the resource through the removal of detracting features.
- Major beneficial: Where the proposed changes would substantially improve character and quality through the removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far reaching enhancements.

A1.22 The effect of relevant aspects of the project on views has been described and evaluated as follows:

- Substantial adverse: Where the proposed changes would form the dominant feature, or would be completely uncharacteristic and substantially change the scene in highly valued views.
- Major adverse: Where the proposed changes would form a major part of the view, or would be uncharacteristic, and would alter valued views.
- Moderate adverse: Where the proposed changes to views would be out of scale or uncharacteristic with the existing view.
- Minor adverse: Where the proposed changes to views would be at slight variance with the existing view.
- Negligible adverse: Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the existing view.
- Neutral: Where the project would be imperceptible or would be in keeping with and would maintain the existing views or, where on balance, the proposals would maintain the quality of the views (which may include adverse effects of the proposals which are off-set by beneficial effects for the same receptor).
- Negligible beneficial: Where the proposed changes would be barely discernible within the existing view.
- Minor beneficial: Where the proposed changes to the existing view would be in keeping with and would improve the quality of the existing view.
- Moderate beneficial: Where the proposed changes to the existing view would not only be in keeping with, but would greatly improve the quality of the scene through the removal of visually detracting features.
- Major beneficial: Where the proposed changes to existing views would substantially improve the character and quality through the removal of large-scale damage and dereliction and provision of far reaching enhancements.

A1.23 The level of effects is described as substantial, major, moderate, minor or negligible. Where negligible adverse and beneficial effects occur within the same view or same landscape/townscape, the effect can be described as neutral on balance. The level of effects

varies according to individual circumstances and the baseline situation, for example the presence of landscape designations and/or visual detractors.

- A1.24 A conclusion regarding the significance of each effect on a landscape, townscape or visual receptor needs to combine separate judgements about the sensitivity of receptors and magnitude of change as a result of the proposed development. The GLVIA (2013) states at paragraph 5.55 that a sequential approach can be taken to assessment of significance; *“susceptibility to change and value can be combined into an assessment of sensitivity for each receptor, and size/scale, geographical extent and duration and reversibility can be combined into an assessment of magnitude for each effect. Magnitude and sensitivity can then be combined to assess overall significance”*.
- A1.25 In the assessment those levels of effect indicated as being ‘substantial’ or ‘major’ may be regarded as significant effects. An accumulation of individual ‘moderate’ effects, for instance experienced as a sequence during a journey, may also be regarded as significant.



Figures



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Notes

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Legend

Site boundary

Rev	Description	By	CB	Date



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Client **Mr R Bratt**

Project **Land at Bodicote**

Title **Site Context**

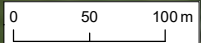
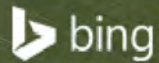
Status **DRAFT** Drawn By **CR** PM/Checked By **PE**

Project Number **JSL2997** Scale @ A3 **1:5,000** Date Created **FEB 2019**

Figure Number **1.1** Rev **-**

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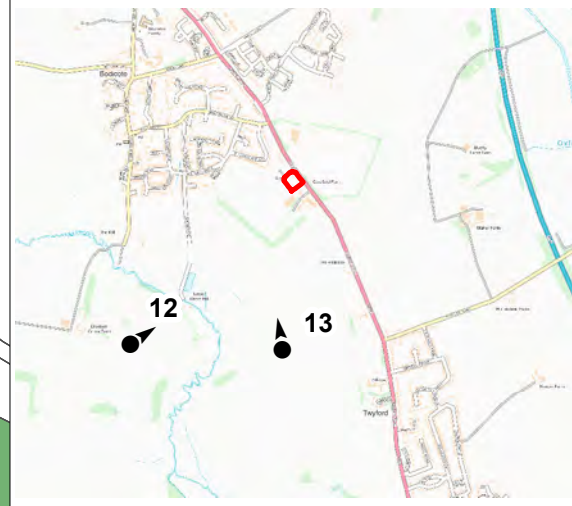
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- Legend**
- Site boundary
 - Significant vegetation
 - Construction area
 - Zone of Theoretical Visibility
 - Viewpoint location



Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

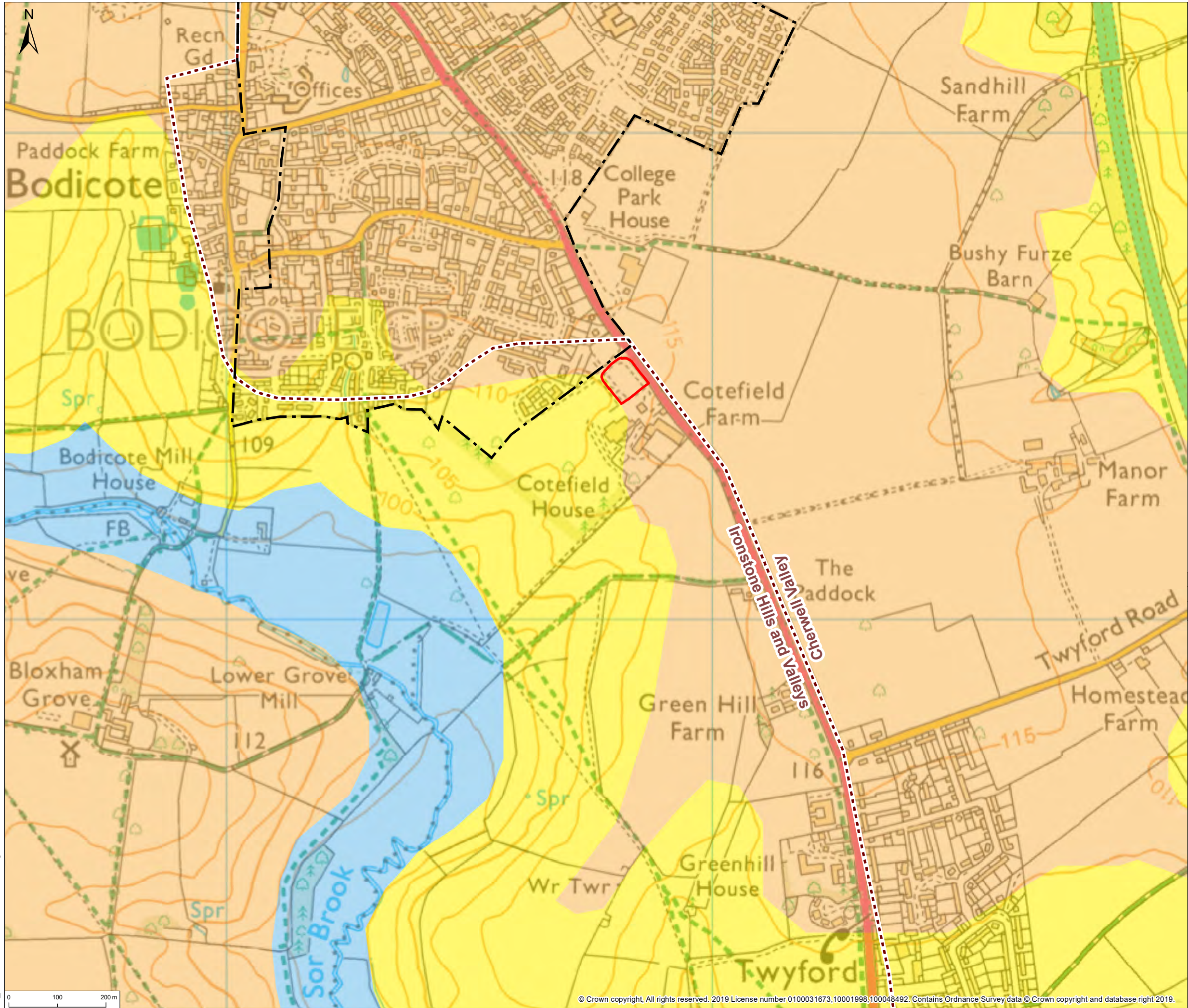
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Client **Mr R Bratt**
 Project **Land at Bodicote**
 Title **ZTV and Viewpoint locations**

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked By
DRAFT	CR	PE
Project Number	Scale @ A3	Date Created
JSL2997	1:1,500	FEB 2019
Figure Number		Rev
1.2		-

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- Legend**
- Site boundary
 - Cherwell Landscape Character Assessment 1995/1996
- Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study. Landscape character type**
- Farmland Slopes and Valley Sides
 - River Meadowlands
 - Upstanding Village Farmlands
- Townscape Character**
- Bodicote Late 20th Century Residential

Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

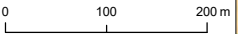
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Client **Mr R Bratt**
 Project **Land at Bodicote**
 Title **Landscape Character Assessment**

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked By
DRAFT	CR	PE
Project Number	Scale @ A3	Date Created
JSL2997	1:7,500	FEB 2019
Figure Number		Rev
3.1		-

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V



Viewpoint 2 - Blossom Field Road

2997-0005-002



Date of photographs: 03/10/2019
Lens type: 50mm

Land at Bodicote
Figure: 3.2



v



Viewpoint 4 - Junction of A4260 and Blossom Field Road

2997-0005-002



Viewpoint 5 - A4260 north of site



Viewpoint 6 - A4260 south of site

2997-0005-002



Viewpoint 7 - A4260 south of site at Bodicote village entrance



v

2997-0005-002



Viewpoint 9 - Cala Homes development



Viewpoint 10 - Cala Homes development

2997-0005-002



Viewpoint 11 - Open space at Cala Homes development



Viewpoint 12 - Public right of way near Bloxham Grove



Viewpoint 13 - Public right of way south of site