



THE
ENVIRONMENT
PARTNERSHIP



LAND AT STOCKING LANE/RATTLECOMBE ROAD SHENINGTON LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT JANUARY 2022

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Document Title	Landscape and Visual Assessment
Prepared for	Elan Homes
Prepared by	TEP - Market Harborough
Document Ref	8938.01.001

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Date	January 2022
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Amendment History					
Version	Date	Modified by	Check / Approved by	Reason(s) issue	Status
1.0	17.08.21	LF	IJG	Draft for client comment	Draft
2.0	14.01.21	LF	IJG	Final issue	Final

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides a landscape and visual assessment (LVA) to accompany a full planning application for the erection of 49 dwellings with associated garages, parking and refuse storage, private gardens and communal open space / play space, hard and soft landscaping (including SUDs feature and means of enclosure) (the 'Proposed Development') on land to the west of Rattlecombe Road and south of Stocking Lane, Shenington (the 'Site'). The Site boundary and location are shown on **Figure 1**.
- 1.2 This LVA assesses the potential effects of the proposed development on landscape character and landscape features and effects on visual amenity. The assessment is based on the proposals illustrated on the Planning Layout (Drawing SHN-PL-001) and Landscaping Layout (Drawings SHN-LL-001 and SHN-LL-002) prepared by Elan Homes.
- 1.3 This report includes a review of published landscape documentation relevant to the Site; a description of the baseline conditions on the Site and the surrounding area; a description of existing visual amenity and views towards the Site; a description of the proposed development including embedded mitigation measures; and an assessment of the effects on both the landscape and visual amenity.
- 1.4 This report includes the following sections:
- Section 2.0 - Method, Scope and Context;
 - Section 3.0 - Legislation and Policy Context;
 - Section 4.0 - Landscape Baseline;
 - Section 5.0 - Visual Baseline;
 - Section 6.0 - The Proposed Development;
 - Section 7.0 - Assessment of Landscape Effects;
 - Section 8.0 - Assessment of Visual Effects; and
 - Section 9.0 - Summary.
- 1.5 This LVA is supported by a series of Figures (**Figures 1 to 6**) provided at the end of this report. Figures show relevant local planning policy, topography, and published landscape character assessment data; identify visual receptors; and show viewpoint locations. Photographs from selected viewpoints are presented at **Figures 6.1 to 6.14**.
- 1.6 As above, **Appendix A** provides the LVA method, discussed in **Section 2.0** below.

2.0 Method, Scope and Context

Method

- 2.1 This LVA has assessed the potential effects on landscape and on views of the Proposed Development as shown on the Planning Layout and Landscaping Layout prepared by Elan Homes.
- 2.2 The method for this LVA is provided at **Appendix A** and is based on guidance contained in the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition', (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) (GLVIA3).
- 2.3 Duration and reversibility of landscape effects has been assessed with the following considerations:
- Short term: 0-5 years during the construction period and completion;
 - Medium term: 5-15 years, which represents the establishment phase of planting proposed; and
 - Long term: 15 years onwards for the life of the Proposed Development.
- 2.4 The LVA is based on field work undertaken in July 2021 when deciduous trees and hedges were in leaf. Seasonal differences in effects arising due to varying degrees of screening and filtering from vegetation in summer to winter have been considered.
- 2.5 The LVA involved the following key stages:
- Desk based assessment involving a review of relevant information, guidance and planning policy relating to the type of development proposed and to landscape and visual amenity;
 - Site survey and assessment to augment the baseline assessment, assess the landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development and undertake photography at selected viewpoint locations;
 - Baseline reporting and preliminary assessment to inform the design of the Proposed Development;
 - Preparation of baseline landscape and visual drawings to inform the assessment; and
 - Assessment and reporting of effects using criteria for sensitivity of receptor, magnitude of effect and overall effect.

Scope and Context

- 2.6 The scope of this LVA has been informed by desk study and field assessment. Landform and screening by vegetation and built form at the Site and in the surrounding landscape has been considered.
- 2.7 This report reviews information regarding the Site and its surrounding area to identify potential landscape and visual characteristics and opportunities and to develop a landscape-led strategy to inform mitigation proposals.
- 2.8 The aims and objectives of this appraisal are:

- To identify, describe and evaluate the current landscape character of the Site and its surroundings, along with any notable individual landscape elements, to determine the sensitivity of the landscape to the type of development proposed;
- To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to see the development) and evaluate their sensitivity to the type of changes proposed; and
- To identify and describe any impacts of the development in so far as they affect the existing landscape and/or views and to evaluate the magnitude of effect and the overall effect.

2.9 The assessment of landscape assists in understanding what key elements define landscape character and contribute to visual amenity so that:

- Elements which make an essential contribution to landscape character are maintained, enhanced and managed;
- Changes can be accommodated within the existing landscape and visual context; and
- Improvements and enhancements can be made where uncharacteristic features detract from the character and visual amenity of the area.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 2.10 Site work and photography was undertaken in summer months when deciduous vegetation was in full leaf and seasonal differences have been considered (see 2.4 above).
- 2.11 As an full application, this landscape and visual impact assessment is based on the Planning Layout and Landscaping Layout which sets out the key principles of the scheme including the location of access, development, open space and drainage.
- 2.12 For the purposes of this assessment it has been assumed that residential dwellings would be no greater than 2 storeys in height.
- 2.13 The assessment assumes that the proposed development will be constructed over a period of 2-3 years. Although parts of the development will be completed and occupied within this time, this represents the construction phase. Operational effects commence on the full completion of the proposed development (Year 1).
- 2.14 In assessing both landscape and visual effects the influence of time, particularly the growth of new vegetation can be substantial. The post completion effects have been assessed at two stages (Year 1 and Year 15). The time that new planting takes to establish is dependent on species, stock size, the nature of the growing conditions and other factors such as maintenance and vandalism. It is assumed that planting will be implemented in Year 1 with an average growth rate of 300-400mm/year.
- 2.15 The assessment has assumed that the design will be graded into the surrounding levels and that finished floor levels subsequently will not alter the surrounding levels.

Consultation

- 2.16 Prior to fieldwork contact was made with Cherwell District Council and the Chilterns AONB to agree the scope and proposed viewpoint locations for inclusion within the LVA. Cherwell District Council was unable to comment, but John Mills, Planning and Landscape Lead at the Cotswolds National Landscape, provided recommendations on selection of viewpoints for assessments.
- 2.17 It was agreed that from a Cotswold National Landscape perspective, the then Viewpoints 7 and 9 (now Viewpoints 5 and 8) would be appropriate. It was also suggested that, depending on the ZTV, the following locations should also be considered (starting with their grid references):
- SP36364101 (road / bridleway junction near Epwell Grounds Farm);
 - SP36014150 (junction of road, D'Arcy Dalton Way and Macmillan Way);
 - SP35844124 (footpath between Epwell Hill and Yarn Hill);
 - SP357144403 (junction of road with bridleway to Sugarswell Business Park); and
 - SP37464660 (footpath at south end of Upton House Registered Park & Garden, near Temple Pool).
- 2.18 Further commentary in relation to the suggested viewpoints is provided in **Section 5.0**.
- 2.19 John Mills highlighted that the then viewpoints 7, 9 and Grid Reference SP357144403 are in the High Wold (Landscape Character Type (LCT) 7) and that the 'expansive long distance views' are one of this LCT's key features. The High Wold and the associated long distance views are also one of the 'special qualities' of the Cotswold National Landscape (as listed in Chapter 2 of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023). Further description of Landscape Character is provided in Section 4.0.
- 2.20 It was also highlighted that Grid References SP36364101, SP36014150 and SP37464660 are in the Ironstone Hills and Valleys (Landscape Character Type (LCT) 6). The 'dramatic sweeping views' are one of this LCT's key features.
- 2.21 It was recommended that consideration should also be given to views from the east side of the proposed development (e.g. along Stocking Lane) looking westwards towards the Cotswold National Landscape, having regard to potential impacts on views to Shenlow Hill, Rough Hill, Epwell Hill and Yarn Hill.

3.0 Legislation and Policy Context

- 3.1 This section provides an overview of planning policy as relevant to landscape and visual matters.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy (NPPF) (July 2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England, how these are expected to be applied at a local level in development plans and how developers should address them. The Framework places great emphasis on plans and developments contributing to sustainable development.
- 3.3 The sub-topics beneath the goal of Delivering Sustainable Development that are most relevant to townscape, landscape and views within the assessment study area are:
- Section 12: Achieving well-designed places; and
 - Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

NPPF Section 12: Achieving well-designed places

- 3.4 Section 12 recognises the importance of good design as “the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve”.
- 3.5 Paragraph 126 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.
- 3.6 Under paragraph 130, planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

NPPF Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 3.7 Paragraph 174 of Section 15 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan). Paragraph 175 indicates that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in the Framework.
- 3.8 Paragraph 176 of the NPPF notes that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. Development within the setting of these designations should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

- 3.9 Paragraph 185 of Section 15 states that planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity.

National Planning Practice Guidance

Natural Environment

- 3.10 The NPPF is accompanied by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) available online. Those elements of PPG addressing matters in the scope of this Landscape and Visual Assessment and relevant to the proposed development are detailed below, and the guidance has been taken into account when designing and assessing the proposed development.
- 3.11 PPG notes that there is no government circular on Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) although Natural England has published information on these areas. Guidance references Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988 and section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 which require that '*in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land*' in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, relevant authorities '*shall have regard*' to the purposes for which these areas are designated.
- 3.12 PPG states that this duty is particularly important to the delivery of the statutory purposes of protected areas, applies to all local planning authorities and is relevant in considering development proposals that are situated outside AONB boundaries, but which might have an impact on their setting or protection. AONB Management plans do not form part of the statutory development plan but help to set out the strategic context for development. PPG references what is now paragraph 174 of the NPPF and the protection afforded to AONBs. It advises that land within the setting of AONBs often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty, and where poorly located or designed development can do significant harm. This is especially the case where long views from or to the designated landscape are identified as important, or where the landscape character of land within and adjoining the designated area is complementary. Guidance advises that development within the settings of these areas will need sensitive handling that takes these potential impacts into account.
- 3.13 PPG reinforces the NPPF's commitment to recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supports the use of landscape character assessment as a tool for understanding local distinctiveness and the use of Natural England's guidance on landscape character assessment.

Local Planning Policy and Guidance

Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Part 1)

- 3.14 The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) contains strategic planning policies for development and the use of land. It forms part of the statutory Development Plan for Cherwell to which regard must be given in the determination of planning applications. The Plan was adopted by the Council on 20 July 2015.
- 3.15 Policies of relevance to landscape and visual matters are outlined below.

Policy ESD 12: Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 3.16 Policy ESD 12 states that *'high priority will be given to the protection and enhancement of the Cotswolds AONB and the Council will seek to protect the AONB and its setting from potentially damaging and inappropriate development'*. The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan will be used as supplementary guidance in decision making relevant to the AONB.

Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement

- 3.17 Opportunities will be sought to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape through the restoration, management or enhancement of existing landscapes, features or habitats and where appropriate the creation of new ones, including the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows. Development will be expected to respect and enhance local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided.
- 3.18 Proposals will be refused 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 judged 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.
- 3.19 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 ESD 15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment

- 3.20 Policy ESD 15 highlights that good design is founded on an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design.
- 3.21 New development proposals 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.

Policy ESD 17: Green Infrastructure

- 3.22 The District's green infrastructure network will be maintained and enhanced. Green infrastructure network considerations should be integral to the planning of new development. Proposals should maximise the opportunity to maintain and extend green infrastructure links to form a multi-functional network of open space, providing opportunities for walking and cycling

Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996

- 3.23 Saved policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 remain part of the statutory Development Plan to which regard must be given in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.24 None of the saved policies are of relevance to landscape and visual matters.

Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Part 1) Partial Review - Oxford's Unmet Housing Need

- 3.25 The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review - Oxford's Unmet Housing Need was adopted as part of the statutory Development Plan by the Council on 7 September 2020. The Plan provides the strategic planning framework and sets out strategic site allocations to provide Cherwell District's share of the unmet housing needs of Oxford to 2031.
- 3.26 The Site is not allocated for development within the plan.

Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011

- 3.27 The Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 was intended to review and update the Local Plan adopted in 1996. Due to changes to the planning system introduced by the Government, work on this plan was discontinued prior to adoption.
- 3.28 The Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 is not part of the statutory development plan but was approved as interim planning policy for development control purposes in December 2004. The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) includes policies that supersede some of those within the Non-Statutory Local Plan.

- 3.29 A schedule of policies that supersede those within the Non-Statutory Local Plan was unavailable at the time of writing. For the purposes of this assessment the following policies have been considered as guidance:

Policy E1

- 3.30 In determining planning applications the council will take into account the likely impact of a proposal on the natural and built environment and will seek to enhance the environment whenever possible. Development which would have an unacceptable environmental impact will not be permitted

Policy E34

- 3.31 The council will seek to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the landscape through the control of development. 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;
- Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features; or
- Harm the historic value of the landscape.

Policy EN35

Policy EN35 states that 'the council will seek to retain woodlands, trees, hedges, ponds, walls and any other features which are important to the character or appearance of the local landscape as a result of their ecological, historic or amenity value. Proposals which would result in the loss of such features will not be permitted unless their loss can be justified by appropriate mitigation and/or compensatory measures to the satisfaction of the council'.

Policy D3

- 3.32 Policy D3 states that '*Proposals for development that reflects or interprets the locally distinctive character of the site and its context, will be permitted provided that they:*

- (i) respect the site's landform and natural features*
- (ii) are well integrated into the landscape setting*
- (iii) reflect the traditional pattern of the arrangement of street blocks, plots and their buildings and spaces*
- (iv) include the retention and enhancement of existing open spaces and undeveloped gaps of local importance that contribute positively in visual terms to the public realm although in private ownership*
- (v) relate well to the local palette of building and surfacing materials,*
- (vi) relate well to the local architectural styles and the local palette of elements of construction, elevational detailing, windows and doors*
- (vii) respect the scale, proportion, massing and height of adjoining buildings and the streetscene*
- (viii) do not interfere with valued views, vistas and landmarks'*

Supplementary Planning Documents

Cherwell Residential Design Guide

- 3.33 The Cherwell Residential Design Guide was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in July 2018.
- 3.34 The Design Guide is intended to support all residential developments, regardless of scale and provides clarity and certainty in relation to design standards.
- 3.35 Shenington lies within the Ironstone Downs geographic character area. Key characteristics of this area are provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Characteristics of the Ironstone Downs

Characteristic	Comments
Landscape	<p>An upland plateau-like landscape of mixed farmland, incised by very steep and often narrow valleys in the north. The land rises to the west forming an upland ridge with extensive views. The south has steeply sided, convoluted valleys with narrow valley floors and rolling, rounded hill lines.</p> <p>The Ironstone Downs consists of marlstone rock beds overlying middle and lower lias clays.</p>
Settlement	<p>Numerous small, closely spaced settlements of agricultural origin, with larger villages to the south.</p> <p>Villages are positioned in valley locations either on the valley sides, at the head of the valley or on the brow of the hill. Villages are generally only visually prominent where the valleys are open and wide.</p> <p>Villages have linear or nucleated forms or enclose areas of open land.</p>
Buildings	<p>Mainly two storey terraced and detached houses, the majority of which face the street. Roof pitches are steep with brick stacks on the ridge line.</p> <p>Buildings are often located at the back of pavement or set back behind ironstone walls. Trees and hedgerows are important features of the street scene.</p>
Materials	<p>Ironstone walling except at Duns Tew where limestone predominates. Early nineteenth century brick buildings in villages close to Banbury. Thatch and stone slate roofs, often replaced with plain dark grey slates, tiles and Welsh slate</p>

- 3.36 In relation to landscape, the Design Guide highlights that existing features of the landscape (e.g. hedgerows, tree belts, single large trees, watercourses and ponds, topographical features and habitat areas), should be used to create a structuring framework for the masterplan and will bring a sense of maturity to the development from day one.
- 3.37 Further specific guidance is provided in relation to design, including street character, open spaces, parking and materiality.

Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018 - 2023

- 3.38 The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan is the statutory plan which sets out the vision, outcomes and policies for the management of the Cotswolds AONB for the period 2018-2023. The Management Plan has two primary purposes:
- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds AONB.
 - To increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB.
- 3.39 The special qualities of an AONB are those aspects of the area's natural beauty which make the area distinctive and which are valuable, especially at a national scale. They are the key attributes on which the priorities for its conservation, enhancement and management should be based.
- 3.40 The special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB are:
- *'the unifying character of the limestone geology – its visible presence in the landscape and use as a building material;*
 - *the Cotswold escarpment, including views from and to the AONB;*
 - *the high wolds – a large open, elevated predominately arable landscape with commons, 'big' skies and long-distance views;*
 - *river valleys, the majority forming the headwaters of the Thames, with high-quality water;*
 - *distinctive dry stone walls;*
 - *internationally important flower-rich grasslands, particularly limestone grasslands;*
 - *internationally important ancient broadleaved woodland, particularly along the crest of the escarpment;*
 - *variations in the colour of the stone from one part of the AONB to another which add a vital element of local distinctiveness;*
 - *the tranquillity of the area, away from major sources of inappropriate noise, development, visual clutter and pollution;*
 - *extensive dark sky areas;*
 - *distinctive settlements, developed in the Cotswold vernacular, high architectural quality and integrity;*
 - *an accessible landscape for quiet recreation for both rural and urban users, with numerous walking and riding routes, including the Cotswolds Way National Trail;*
 - *significant archaeological, prehistoric and historic associations dating back 6,000 years, including Neolithic stone monuments, ancient drove roads,*

Iron Age forts, Roman villas, ridge and furrow fields, medieval wool churches and country estates and parks;

- *a vibrant heritage of cultural associations, including the Arts and Crafts movement of the 19th and 20th centuries, famous composers and authors and traditional events such as the Cotswolds Olympicks, cheese rolling and woolsack races'.*

- 3.41 The AONB Management Plan sets out policies which provide the principles for how the AONB should be managed. Policies of relevance to this assessment are outlined below.

Policy CE1: Landscape

- 3.42 Proposals that are likely to impact on, or create change in, the landscape of the Cotswolds AONB, should have regard to, be compatible with and reinforce the landscape character of the location.
- 3.43 Proposals that are likely to impact on, or create change in, the landscape of the Cotswolds AONB, should have regard to the scenic quality of the location and its setting and ensure that views – including those into and out of the AONB – and visual amenity are conserved and enhanced.

Policy CE3: Local Distinctiveness

- 3.44 Proposals that are likely to impact on the local distinctiveness of the Cotswolds AONB should have regard to, be compatible with and reinforce this local distinctiveness. This should include consideration of published landscape character assessment and related guidelines; being designed and, where relevant, landscaped to respect local settlement patterns, building styles, scale and materials; and using an appropriate colour of limestone to reflect local distinctiveness. Innovative designs – which are informed by local distinctiveness, character and scale – should be welcomed.

Emerging Planning Policy and Guidance

Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040

- 3.45 Cherwell District Council is currently in the process of updating the Local Plan. Once the plan has been adopted, it will replace the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2015 and 'saved' policies in the Cherwell Local Plan (1996).
- 3.46 A Community Involvement Paper was published for comment in July 2020. The first consultation draft is expected in autumn 2021.

The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 (JSSP)

- 3.47 As part of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal agreement with the Government, the six Oxfordshire authorities comprising Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council have committed to producing a joint statutory spatial plan (JSSP), known as the Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

- 3.48 The Oxfordshire Plan will provide an integrated strategic planning framework and evidence base to support sustainable growth across the county to 2050, including the planned delivery of new homes and economic development, and the anticipated supporting infrastructure needed.
- 3.49 Public consultation on the first draft Oxfordshire Plan is expected to be held in spring 2022.

4.0 Landscape Baseline

- 4.1 This chapter considers the relevant designations present within the study area, summarises characteristics of the landscape described in published landscape character assessments and provides a description of the Site within this context. The relevant information is presented on **Figure 2** - Landscape and Environmental Designations.
- 4.2 A wide study area has been used to set the Site in a context where a range of designations relating to environmental quality can be identified. **Figures 2 and 3** show this study area extending up to 4km from the Site in all directions. The nature of the Proposed Development and the Site means that effects on landscape and views are likely to be contained within a slightly smaller area as shown at **Figure 4**.

Landscape and Environmental Designations

- 4.3 Figure 2 shows statutory and non-statutory heritage, ecological and landscape designations within the Study Area, including:
- The Cotswolds AONB;
 - Listed Buildings;
 - Conservation Areas;
 - Ancient Woodland;
 - Registered Park and Gardens; and
 - Scheduled Monuments.
- 4.4 The Site was formerly part of an Area of High Landscape Value (AHLV) designated in the 1996 Cherwell Local Plan, but this non-statutory designation has been removed in favour of a character-led approach in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 4.5 In accordance with GLVIA3, relevant designations are considered as part of determining the value of the landscape potentially affected by the Proposed Development. The LVA does not however consider effects on each asset's conservation interest or its appreciation and understanding.

The Cotswolds AONB

- 4.6 The Site lies approximately 930m to the east of the Cotswolds AONB at its closest point. AONBs are recognised as being exceptional landscapes of distinctive character and natural beauty.

Listed Buildings

- 4.7 There are no Listed Buildings in the Site. The Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area to the immediate east of the Site has a high concentration of Listed Buildings. The closest to the Site is Top Farmhouse (Grade II Listed), approximately 50m to the east. There is limited intervisibility between the Site and Top Farmhouse as a result of intervening vegetation and built form.

Conservation Areas

- 4.8 The Site lies to the immediate west of the Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area. Shenington and Alkerton are good examples of the villages of the Ironstone belt that runs through north Oxfordshire into Northamptonshire. The area is particularly known for its rich coloured Ironstone Hornton Stone which is the traditional and still predominant building material in the area.

Ancient Woodland

- 4.9 There is no ancient woodland on or immediately adjacent to the Site. There are some small areas of ancient woodland within the wider study area. The closest is Shutford Clump, approximately 2.5km to the south

Registered Park and Garden

- 4.10 Upton House, approximately 1.7km to the north of the Site is a Grade II* Listed Park and Garden. The house, which was built in 1695, is now a National Trust property and renowned for its art collection.
- 4.11 The C17 and C18 formal gardens were remodelled in the early C20 by Kitty Lloyd Jones and Percy Morley Horder, set in an C18 park developed with the advice of Sanderson Miller.

Scheduled Monuments

- 4.12 There are scattered Scheduled Monuments throughout the study area. The closest is the lynched ridge and furrow north of Shenington, approximately 100m to the north of the Site at its closest point.

Review of Published Landscape Character Assessments

- 4.13 This section of the LVA summarises key characteristics of the landscape described in published landscape character assessments, followed by an analysis of the local landscape based on fieldwork undertaken by a qualified Landscape Architect.

National: National Landscape Character Areas

- 4.14 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCAs defined across England. The NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics.
- 4.15 At the national level the Site lies in the south-western corner of the Northamptonshire Uplands National Character Area (NCA ID 95). The Northamptonshire Uplands NCA is an area of gently rolling, limestone hills and valleys with many long, low ridgelines. Extensive areas of open field systems with ridge and furrow and the earthworks of deserted settlements occur throughout the NCA. Other features include a Parliamentary enclosure pattern, strong hedgerow boundaries; country houses; nucleated settlements; narrow lanes; and scattered woodland. There are wide, long-distance views across the ridge tops throughout the area.
- 4.16 Key characteristics of the Northamptonshire Uplands NCA are:

- *'Gently rolling rounded hills and valleys with many long, low ridgelines and great variety of landform. Wide, far-reaching views from the edges and across the ridgetops.*
- *Dominant Jurassic scarp slope of limestone and Lias clay hills capped locally with ironstone-bearing Marlstone and Northampton Sands. Glacial boulder clay covers the northern and eastern areas, with sands and gravels along river valleys.*
- *The Upper Nene Valley divides the gently undulating Northamptonshire Heights to the north from the hillier Cherwell/Ouse plateau (the 'Ironstone Wolds') to the south and has been exploited for sand and gravel.*
- *Rivers rise and flow outwards in all directions, including the rivers Cherwell, Avon, Welland, Tove, Ouse, Nene and Ise, and the area forms the main watershed of Middle England.*
- *Sparse woodland cover, but with scattered, visually prominent, small, broadleaved woods, copses and coverts, particularly on higher ground.*
- *Mixed farming dominates with open arable contrasting with permanent pasture.*
- *Typical 'planned countryside' with largely rectangular, enclosed field patterns surrounded by distinctive, high, often A-shaped hedgerows of predominantly hawthorn and blackthorn, with many mature hedgerow trees, mostly ash and oak. Some ironstone and limestone walls in places and some localised areas of early irregular enclosure.*
- *Small pockets of semi-natural vegetation with many small scattered broadleaved woodlands, some ancient and often on hill tops, with mires, areas of lowland meadow, calcareous grassland and lowland dry acid grassland in the river valleys. Bluebell woods occur in places.*
- *Nationally rare, locally abundant and prominent ridge and furrow, with frequent deserted and shrunken settlements. Several large historic country estates such as Cottesbrooke Hall and Althorp and many small country estates, with extensive parkland containing a great many mature, veteran and ancient trees.*
- *Nucleated villages often on hill tops or at valley heads with low densities of dispersed settlement. Cob, ironstone and limestone in older buildings with some remaining thatch, but mostly pantile and slate roofs. Brick buildings in some villages. Extensive new developments in villages along main transport corridors and in the two main towns.*
- *A dense network of narrow lanes with wide grassy verges, often following ridges, crossed by many strategic road and rail corridors, including the M1, M40, A14, West Coast Main Line railway, Great Western Railway line and the Oxford and Grand Union canals.*
- *The many historic houses, parks and gardens open to the public, the reservoirs, long-distance paths (such as the Knightley Way, Jurassic Way and Brampton Valley Way) and the Grand Union and Oxford canals provide well-used recreation assets'.*

4.17 Relevant Statements of Environmental Opportunity include:

- *'SEO 1: Protect, manage and promote the historic and archaeological features, designed landscapes and field patterns – including the parkland,*

battlefield sites, canals, ridge and furrow and settlement sites, and distinctive high hedgerows with their many trees – to ensure that these key features for sense of place and history are conserved, people's enjoyment and understanding is increased, and recreation opportunities are enhanced.

- *SEO 4: Conserve, maintain and promote local building styles and materials and plan strategic growth, infrastructure development and mineral extraction to ensure they protect remaining areas of high tranquillity, strengthen local sense of place and biodiversity, and increase adaptation for climate change through multifunctional green infrastructure networks, building on existing resources such as canals, rivers and access routes, creating strong ecological and recreation networks'.*

4.18 To the west of Shenington lies the Cotswolds NCA (ID 107). The dominant pattern of the Cotswold landscape is of a steep scarp crowned by a high, open wold; the beginning of a long and rolling dip slope cut by a series of increasingly wooded valleys. Small towns and villages nestle at the scarp foot, in the valley bottoms and on the gentler valley sides at spring lines. Scattered hamlets and isolated farmsteads are found on the higher ground. The limestone has been quarried and used locally in buildings and walls, bringing a distinctive harmony to the area.

4.19 Key characteristics of the Cotswolds NCA include:

- A dramatic limestone scarp rising above adjacent lowlands with steep combs.
- Open and expansive scarp and high wold dipping gently to the southeast, dissected by river valleys.
- Arable farming, which dominates the high wold and dip slope with permanent pasture on the steep slopes of the scarp and river valleys.
- Drystone walls define the pattern of fields of the high wold and dip slope. On the deeper soils and river valleys, hedgerows form the main field boundaries.
- Ancient beech hangers line stretches of the upper slopes of the scarp, while oak/ash woodlands are characteristic of the river valleys. Regular blocks of coniferous and mixed plantations are scattered across the open high wold and dip slope.
- Rich history from Neolithic barrows, iron-age hill forts and Roman roads and villas to deserted medieval villages, grand country houses, cloth mills and Second World War airfields. The field patterns largely reflect both the medieval open field system, with fossilised areas of ridge and furrow, and later planned enclosures.
- Locally quarried limestone brings a harmony to the built environment of scattered villages and drystone walls, giving the area a strong sense of unity for which the Cotswolds are renowned.

4.20 The Dunsmore and Feldon NCA (ID 96) lies to the north. This is a predominantly a rural, agricultural landscape, crossed by numerous small rivers and tributaries and varying between a more open character in the Feldon area and a wooded character in Dunsmore.

4.21 Key characteristics include:

- The sense of a predominantly quiet, rural landscape.
- The predominant land use is mixed farming, with some intensive arable land to the east supporting grazed pasture.
- Generally low woodland cover across the area, although there are areas of wooded character and ancient woodlands, especially in the north.
- Remnants of the formerly extensive Dunsmore Heath, preserving characteristic heathland archaeology, can still be found in woodland clearings. Natural regeneration on sand and gravel soils also occurs along roadside verges, although bracken is often abundant.
- Narrow, meandering river valleys with pollarded willows, streamside alders and patches of scrub supporting dipper, kingfisher, otter and Atlantic stream crayfish.
- Canals, which provide important riparian habitats and a well-used recreational resource.
- Large fields, with regular or rectilinear shapes. Numerous areas of remnant ridge-and-furrow and earthwork remains of medieval settlements.
- A nucleated settlement pattern with a low density of isolated farmsteads. Many villages have recently expanded but the traditional buildings, constructed of red brick or Lias limestone, still retain their blue brick or ironstone details.
- The busy roads and large industrial units on the outskirts of the main settlements of Leamington Spa, Coventry and Rugby exert an urban influence on the surrounding area.

4.22 Natural England's NCA descriptions provide a very broad assessment, covering a significant area. They do not provide details directly relevant to the Site or its immediate surroundings, other than to establish the underlying characteristics of the wider landscape. A more detailed and Site relevant landscape character assessment is provided below.

County: Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study

4.23 The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (2004) is the current landscape character assessment for Oxfordshire; and advises that it should be used in conjunction with landscape character assessments available at a district level.

4.24 The Site lies within the Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Type (LCT). This LCT covers the plateau across the elevated northern part of the county, extending across the landscape between Chipping Norton and Banbury.

4.25 This landscape type is characterised by a high limestone plateau with a distinctive elevated and exposed character, broad skies and long-distant views. Large-scale arable fields dominate the landscape, with some medium-sized plantations partially obscuring the otherwise open views. Key characteristics include:

- Level or gently rolling open ridges dissected by narrow valleys and broader vales.

- Large, regular arable fields enclosed by low thorn hedges and limestone walls. Some smaller, semi-improved grass fields are used for horse and sheep grazing.
 - Rectilinear plantations and shelterbelts.
 - Sparsely settled landscape with a few nucleated settlements.
 - Long, straight roads running along the ridge summits.
 - Hedgerow trees, which are mainly ash, sycamore, field maple and sometimes oak, are sparsely scattered throughout and do not detract from the openness of the landscape.
- 4.26 Characteristic features dominating the skyline include the small to medium-sized regular plantations and long, wide shelterbelts bordering roads and field boundaries. They are particularly prominent when associated with large estates, and are mostly mixed and deciduous plantations with ash, field maple, beech and occasionally oak.
- 4.27 The exposed high plateau has not favoured settlement, and it is characterised by sparsely scattered farmsteads and a few nucleated villages. The use of local limestone for building materials gives a very distinctive character to the village settlements.
- 4.28 The open plateau landscapes are described as being visually exposed and in some areas the use of building materials in new residential development has not always been appropriate.
- 4.29 The overall landscape strategy for the Farmland Plateau LCT is to '*Conserve the open and remote character of the landscape, and maintain the large-scale field pattern*'.
- 4.30 Relevant guidelines include:
- Locate new planting in the dips and folds of the landscape and establish tree belts around airfields, quarries and other large structures to reduce their visual impact using locally characteristic native tree and shrub species such as ash, oak and beech.
 - Strengthen the field pattern by planting up gappy hedges using locally characteristic species such as hawthorn and blackthorn.
 - Promote environmentally-sensitive maintenance of hedgerows, including coppicing and layering when necessary, to maintain a height and width appropriate to the landscape type.
 - Protect stone walls from deterioration.
 - Maintain the sparsely settled rural character of the landscape by concentrating new development in and around existing settlements. The exposed character of the plateau is particularly sensitive to visually intrusive development, large buildings and communication masts.
 - Promote the use of local building materials, such as limestone and ironstone, and a scale of development appropriate to landscape type.
- 4.31 Parts of Shenington lie within the Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes LCT. This LCT includes pastoral and wooded landscapes associated with the steep slopes and valleys of small streams and main rivers.

4.32 Key characteristics include:

- Steep sided valleys and slopes.
- Large, interlocking blocks of ancient and plantation woodland.
- Small pasture fields with localised unimproved grassland, often bounded by woodland and hedges. Arable farming is restricted to the gentler, upper slopes.
- Tall, thick hedges and densely scattered hedgerow trees.
- Small intact villages and hamlets.
- Tree-lined watercourses along the valley bottoms, which emphasises the river corridor and provides an intimate, pastoral character to the valley bottoms.
- Small villages and hamlets with a strong vernacular character, with a very low density of farmsteads.

4.33 Ash, oak, field maple and hazel are the main tree and shrub species associated with the ancient woodland of the Cotswolds and the semi-natural woodland of the Ironstone area. The extensive woodland cover provides a strong sense of enclosure, shelter and coherence and contrasts sharply with the open character of the adjacent plateaux and vales that the small valleys dissect.

4.34 The LCT can be broken down into a number of Local Character Areas. The Shenington Character Area is characterised by small-sized fields, mostly semi-improved grassland often interspersed with scattered scrub, and some marshy grassland along the valley bottom. Fields are enclosed by overgrown and gappy hawthorn hedges which, in some places, have been replaced by fences. A key feature is the dense corridor of white and goat willow, alder and hawthorn bordering the valley bottom watercourse. There are also stands of semi-natural wet woodland along the valley bottom and small blocks of mostly mixed plantations scattered throughout the northern part of the valley.

4.35 The overall landscape strategy for the LCT is to '*conserve the characteristic mosaic of woodland and grassland along the valley sides and bottoms, as well as the unspoilt vernacular character of the villages*'.

4.36 Management guidelines include:

- '*Strengthen the field pattern by planting up gappy hedges using locally characteristic species such as hawthorn, field maple and hazel, and hedgerow trees such as oak and ash.*
- '*Promote environmentally-sensitive maintenance of hedgerows, including coppicing and layering when necessary, to maintain a height and width appropriate to the landscape type.*
- '*Protect stone walls from deterioration.*
- '*Minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses at the fringes of towns and villages with the judicious planting of tree and shrub species characteristic of the area. This will help to screen any development and integrate it more successfully with its surrounding countryside.*
- '*Promote the use of building materials and a scale of development and that is appropriate to this landscape type. This ranges from ironstone and slate*

in the Northamptonshire Uplands, the limestone and stone tiles of the Cotswolds, through to brick and flint, red and blue bricks and clay tiles in the Chilterns'.

District: Cherwell Landscape Assessment

- 4.37 The 1995 Cherwell Landscape Assessment provides a detailed overview of the Cherwell landscape.
- 4.38 The Site lies in the Ironstone Incised Plateau LCA. This is a simple landscape of ridges and valleys which are divided by streams. The upland landscape is very open, with long views down the valleys, with the steep slopes predominantly used for rough grazing. Parts of the plateau are under arable cultivation. Hedgerow structure is generally weak and in many places has been replaced with fencing. The area is known for its warm coloured Hornton Stone.
- 4.39 Shenington is noted in particular as being a good example of medieval ridge and furrow field patterns, where the steep slopes have been terraced to maximise cultivation.

The Cherwell District Landscape Assessment is somewhat out of date, having been carried out over 25 years ago, and is no longer available on Cherwell District Council's website. The Ironstone Incised Plateau LCA refers to similar characteristics as the Farmland Plateau LCT described above. The assessment of effects in Section 7.0 will consider the more recent assessment carried out by the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, as detailed above. The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment

- 4.40 The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment provides a detailed review of the landscape within the AONB boundary.
- 4.41 Most of the north-eastern edge of the AONB landscape lies within LCT 6: Ironstone Hills and Valleys. This is an upland area of rolling hills and valleys, including a number of distinctive rounded isolated hills. In common with the rest of the Cotswolds AONB, the underlying geology has had a profound and unifying effect on character in terms of both topography and local vernacular.
- 4.42 Key characteristics of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys LCT include:
- *'Complex topography of steeply sided convoluted valleys and rolling rounded ridgelines and hills;*
 - *intermittent isolated rounded hills;*
 - *mainly fertile iron-rich red-brown loams interspersed with occasional bands of calcareous soils derived from intermittent outcrops of limestone bedrock;*
 - *distinctive local vernacular with buildings constructed in the 'warm' brown 'Hornton Stone' derived [from] the iron bearing Marlstone Rock Formation;*
 - *settlement pattern of intermittent nucleated hamlets, isolated farmsteads, and individual buildings;*
 - *area principally under arable cultivation, together with some improved and permanent pasture, mainly on the valley slopes and bottoms;*
 - *medium to large scale regular rectilinear fields, mainly enclosed with hedgerows, with frequent hedgerow trees;*

- *limited woodland cover with exception of occasional larger stands of ancient woodland;*
 - *linear network of local roads following ridgelines and dropping down into valleys to connect rural settlements; and*
 - *evidence of long period of occupation of the area'.*
- 4.43 Two LCAs lie on the eastern edge of this LCT: 6A Whichford Hills and Valleys and 6B Ratley Hills and Valleys.
- 4.44 The Whichford Hills Character Area is one of the more sparsely populated sections of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys LCT. Only a few villages are present, although there are numerous isolated farms and dwellings. The landform is a typical succession of valleys and ridges together with occasional but very distinctive isolated hills including Milne Hill and Windmill Hill. Much of the area is arable farmland, although improved pasture also occurs together with some permanent pasture in valley bottoms. The overall character, however, is that of an intensively farmed landscape within a strong rectilinear field pattern, typical of the 'parliamentary enclosures' period. Whichford Wood is a particularly notable feature in view of the generally sparse woodland cover. There are a number of features of historic interest including ancient trackways, part of The Jurassic Way and large Jacobean manor houses.
- 4.45 The Ratley Hills and Valleys LCA is close to the north-eastern tip of the AONB, extending up to the northern projection of the Edge Hill escarpment at an average upper level of 200m AOD. This small character area is in two separate sections, incorporating the slopes below the Edge Hill Ironstone Plateau area of the High Wold. The southern section is strongly convoluted and incorporates formal planned planting and lakes associated with the Upton House Estate. The northern area is focused around the Ironstone village of Ratley, which extends across the upper steep valley slopes. The core of the village is constructed almost entirely in the local ironstone, and includes a medieval Motte and Bailey. The area is dissected by a deeply incised valley within which rises the Sor Brook, a tributary of the River Cherwell.
- 4.46 The AONB Landscape Character Assessment highlights that the description of the LCT is also applicable to the wider area of Ironstone Hills and Valleys Landscape Character Type that extends beyond the AONB.
- 4.47 A small part of the AONB boundary on its north-eastern edge lies within LCT 7: High Wold, which comprises the plateau landscape to the east of the escarpment.
- 4.48 Key characteristics of this LCT are:
- *'Broad, elevated, gently undulating plateau area dissected by a network of dry valleys with distinctive convex profile valley sides;*
 - *expansive long distance views across the open plateau, and to distant hills beyond the Severn Vale;*
 - *elevated areas of plateau surrounded by deeply incised valleys;*
 - *predominantly arable land use with some improved pasture/grass leys, and very limited permanent pasture mainly confined to valley bottoms;*
 - *large scale, regular fields mainly enclosed by dry stone walls, together with hedgerows with very occasional hedgerow trees, and post and wire fencing;*

- *small to moderate size geometric farm woodlands, many comprising small coniferous and broadleaved plantations and shelterbelts, and plantations bordering roads;*
- *settlement limited to small stone built villages and hamlets, generally within valleys, and isolated farmsteads and individual dwellings;*
- *network of mainly linear roads following ridge tops, and linking settlements;*
- *evidence of long period of occupation of the land;*
- *seasonal rotation of arable cropping patterns and improved grassland interrupts otherwise homogenous and simple land cover;*
- *remnants of once more extensive commons survive on the fringes of the escarpment;*
- *occasional active and disused limestone quarries located across the High Wold; and*
- *use of locally quarried stone for both walls and houses, frequently constructed in distinctive local vernacular'.*

- 4.49 LCA 7G: Edge Hill Ironstone Plateau lies on the eastern edge of the LCT. In contrast to other areas of High Wold, the Edge Hill Ironstone Plateau extends across the Marlstone Rock Formation, forming a narrow but distinct plateau area above the Edge Hill escarpment. The land is very flat at a height of 215m AOD. The iron rich fertile soils on the plateau support mainly arable farming although areas of pasture also occur. Fields are rectangular and defined by mainly clipped and well-managed hedges with intermittent hedgerow trees. The mature woodland associated with Upton House influences local landscape character and provides a sense of enclosure within an otherwise open landscape.

The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines

- 4.50 The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines documents builds on the LCTs identified in the AONB Landscape Character Assessment by providing an overview of the forces for change that are influencing the landscape and identifying landscape strategies and guidelines to help direct change in a positive and sustainable way.
- 4.51 Development and expansion of settlements is identified as a key force for change in both the Ironstone Hills and Valleys and High Wold LCTs. New development should be limited to existing settlements and should be located in areas which would not be visually intrusive.
- 4.52 Landscape strategies and guidelines for the Ironstone Hills and Valleys include:
- *'Avoid development that may restrict or obscure views to or from the Ironstone Hills and Valleys*
 - *Ensure new development is proportionate and does not overwhelm the existing settlement.*
 - *Ensure that new development does not adversely affect settlement character and form*
 - *Avoid cramming development right up boundaries resulting in hard suburban style edge to settlement*

- *Promote the use of local stone and building styles in the construction of new buildings and extensions to existing dwellings*
- *Ensure new development is integrated into its surroundings. Break up harsh edges of new development with appropriate and adequate tree planting ideally in advance of the development taking place.*
- *Ensure the density of new development reflects its location relative to the 'core' of the settlement and its proximity to the surrounding rural landscape.*
- *Avoid disconnecting the historic core of settlements from its rural surroundings particularly where there are village Conservation Areas'.*

4.53 Landscape strategies and guidelines for the High Wolds LCT include:

- *'Ensure that new development does not adversely affect settlement character and form or impact on views of key features such as church towers.*
- *Avoid developments incorporating standardised development layout, suburban style lighting, construction details and materials that cumulatively can lead to the erosion of peaceful rural landscape character.*
- *Layout of development should respect local built character and avoid cramming up to boundaries resulting in hard suburban style edge to the settlement*
- *Promote the use of local stone and building styles in the construction of new buildings and extensions to existing dwellings. (New buildings should, at least, respect local vernacular style).*
- *Ensure new built development is visually integrated with the rural landscape setting and does not interrupt the setting of existing villages or views.*
- *Retain existing trees, hedges etc. as part of the scheme.*
- *Ensure new development is integrated into its surroundings. Break up harsh edges of new development with appropriate and adequate tree planting ideally in advance of the development taking place.*
- *Ensure the density of new development reflects its location relative to the 'core' of the settlement and its proximity to the surrounding rural landscape'.*

Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines

- 4.54 The Warwickshire Landscapes Guidelines map and describe the special characteristics of the county's seven landscape character areas and provide strategies for managing and enhancing these landscapes. The boundaries of the identified landscape character areas extend into parts of Oxfordshire.
- 4.55 Shenington lies within the Cotswolds Regional Character Area. This is a sparsely populated region of limestone and ironstone uplands characterised by open wolds, large walled fields and distinctive stone villages.

- 4.56 The Site lies within the Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill Landscape Type. This Landscape Type is characterised by an almost flat marlstone table and, incised by steep sided valleys. A special feature of this landscape is the steep slopes around the edges of the marlstone escarpment, particularly Edge Hill which rises steeply from the flat clay vale below. The settlement pattern is strongly nucleated with few dwellings or farmsteads in the surrounding open countryside, stone villages are highly characteristic.
- 4.57 Key characteristics of the Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill Landscape Type include:
- *'Flat tableland deeply incised by steep sided river valleys*
 - *Steep wooded slopes associated with the edge of the marlstone escarpment*
 - *Large arable fields with red soils*
 - *Small nucleated villages built in the local orange coloured ironstone*
 - *Unimproved grassland and scrub on steep valley sides'*
- 4.58 The Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines provide general development guidelines, applicable to all developments in Warwickshire, these include:
- *'Conserve the character of rural settlements by retaining existing features and local patterns in all development schemes*
 - *Protect and enhance the internal open space and irregular outline of village settlements*
 - *Conserve the historic nucleated settlement pattern by avoiding new development in open countryside'*
- 4.59 With the Cotswolds the overarching strategy is to conserve the distinctive identity and remote rural character of the region. Guidelines include:
- *'Conserve the distinctive local character of Cotswold villages*
 - *Any new development should reinforce the existing settlement pattern of small rural towns and villages*
 - *Conserve and enhance tree cover within and around rural settlements'*
- 4.60 The overall management strategy for the Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill Landscape Type is to enhance the unity of the landscape by restoring traditional land use patterns. For example by conserving and restoring primary hedge lines and managing them more positively as landscape features.

The Cotswolds AONB/Cotswolds National Landscape

- 4.61 The Cotswolds was designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1966 in recognition of its rich, diverse and high quality landscape. The Cotswolds stretches from Bath and Wiltshire in the south through Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire to Warwickshire and Worcestershire in the north. The Cotswolds' central feature is the Cotswolds Hills which rise gently from the broad, green meadows of the upper Thames to crest in a dramatic escarpment above the Severn Valley and Evesham Vale.

- 4.62 The terms Cotswolds National Landscape and Cotswolds AONB can be used interchangeably and this reflects the findings of the 2019 Glover Review which proposed that National Parks and AONBs should be brought together as '*one family of national landscapes*'.
- 4.63 AONBs are of national importance and receive special protection from the Government. Consideration of effects on the AONB are important given the Site's proximity to the AONB boundary and the potential for intervisibility. An AONB would be anticipated to be a 'valued landscape' referenced in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 174 a). AONBs do not have their settings defined on a map when they are designated and these generally are considered on a case-by-case basis as developments are proposed that may be seen from them or which may appear in views of the AONB.

Position Statements

- 4.64 The Cotswolds AONB Board have published position statements on a number of topics in relation to landscape and visual matters. The primary purpose of these position statements is to expand on relevant policies in the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023. Relevant policy statements are outlined below.

Housing

- 4.65 The AONB Position Statement acknowledges that the Cotswolds is a living and working landscape in which the social and economic well-being of communities are important considerations. Providing housing that meets the needs of local communities plays an important role in ensuring the long-term future of the AONB.
- 4.66 The position statement advocates two over-arching principles for housing development within the Cotswolds National Landscape and its setting:
- Housing development within the Cotswolds National Landscape and, where relevant, in its setting, should be 'landscape-led'.
 - Housing development within the Cotswolds National Landscape should be based on robust evidence of local need arising within the National Landscape.
- 4.67 A key consideration in locating new development is to avoid development on sites that have been identified as having high or medium-high landscape sensitivity to the type and scale of development being proposed. Shenington is not subject to any published landscape and sensitivity studies. The sensitivity of the Site is considered further in Section 7.0.
- 4.68 Several of the 'special qualities' of the Cotswolds National Landscape relate directly to the design of housing, including:
- The unifying character of the limestone geology – its visible presence in the landscape and use as a building material.
 - Variations in the colour of the stone from one part of the AONB to another which add a vital element of local distinctiveness.
 - Distinctive settlements, developed in the Cotswold vernacular, high architectural quality and integrity.

- 4.69 New housing developments within the Cotswolds National Landscape should:
- respect the locally distinctive characteristics of the existing settlement;⁴²
 - respect the relevant 'special qualities' of the Cotswolds National Landscape;
 - be consistent with relevant policies of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan;
 - be consistent with the guidelines in 'Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines';
 - be consistent with the guidelines in 'Cotswolds AONB Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change';

Landscape-led Development

- 4.70 A landscape-led approach to development is described as '*one in which development within the Cotswolds National Landscape and its setting is compatible with and, ideally, makes a positive contribution to the statutory purpose of AONB designation, which is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area*'.
- 4.71 The Position Statement suggests that Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVAs) should be undertaken for development within the Cotswolds National Landscape and its setting that have the potential to cause adverse landscape and visual impacts.
- 4.72 The Cotswolds National Landscape should be accorded the highest 'value' in the assessment, albeit with some consideration being given to the degree to which the criteria and factors used to support the case for AONB designation are represented in the specific study area.
- 4.73 The area of landscape that needs to be covered in assessing landscape effects should include the site itself and the full extent of the wider landscape around it which the proposed development may influence in a significant manner.
- 4.74 Great weight should be given to landscape and scenic beauty, in line with paragraph 174 of the NPPF.

Tranquillity

- 4.75 Tranquillity is one of the 'special qualities' of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 4.76 Tranquillity is defined within the Position Statement as a '*state of calm and quietude associated with peace, experienced in places with mainly natural features and / or historic character, free from man-made noise and other aural and visual disturbance*'.
- 4.77 The Cotswolds AONB has relatively high levels of tranquillity, especially when compared with the surrounding urban areas. However, there is a serious risk that the tranquillity of the AONB could decline as a result of increasing levels of development, infrastructure, traffic and visitor numbers. Whilst some level of noise and other aural and visual disturbance from development is inevitable, especially during construction phases, adverse impacts on tranquillity should be avoided and minimised as far as possible and, ideally, reduced.
- 4.78 The Board recommends that:

- *'proposals that are likely to impact on the tranquillity of the Cotswolds AONB should have regard to – and be compatible with – the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment and the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines;*
- *where a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment identifies adverse landscape and visual impacts, it should be acknowledged that the tranquillity of the AONB will also be adversely affected'.*

Development in the setting of the Cotswolds AONB

- 4.79 The Board's 'Development in the Setting of the Cotswolds AONB' Position Statement defines the setting of the AONB as *'the area within which development and land management proposals, by virtue of their nature, size, scale, siting materials or design can be considered to have an impact, positive or negative, on the landscape, scenic beauty and special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB'*. Relevant considerations include potential impacts of development outside the AONB on: views from and to the AONB; the dark skies of the AONB (e.g. light pollution); and the tranquillity of the AONB (e.g. noise and traffic levels).
- 4.80 The Board supports the following:
- *'measures to consider impact on the setting of development of the AONB (including where required through Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments);*
 - *accordingly avoiding development that fails to conserve and enhance the setting of the Cotswolds AONB and cannot be made acceptable;*
 - *if development can be made acceptable then ensuring care over orientation, site layout, height and scale of structures and buildings;*
 - *consideration not just of the site but also the landscape, land uses, topography and heritage assets around and beyond it;*
 - *careful use of external colours, materials and non-reflective surfaces;*
 - *careful use of existing native landscaping and provision of new additional native landscaping (where suitable) to help screen views of development;*
 - *where new landscaping is proposed ensuring it is of sufficient quantity, quality, species and has a suitable agreed management plan to ensure long term effectiveness;*
 - *consideration of the potential impacts of light, noise and other forms of pollution spreading from outside the Cotswolds AONB into the AONB (either from individual sites or through cumulative effects of several sites) and ensuring suitable design and mitigation measures;*
 - *generally avoiding external lighting or street lighting; or ensuring if external lighting is required it is of a "dark night skies" compliant design, with full cut off or shielding to prevent light pollution and "night glow". Use of lighting time switches to ensure lighting is only used when actually needed'.*

Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change

- 4.81 The 'Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change' report was commissioned by the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership in 2002. Its aim is to assist in understanding what it is that makes the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty different from other parts of the country, with particular reference to the built environment.
- 4.82 Settlement form is identified as an element at risk with the desire for new houses already compromising the internal and external form of many settlements. Erosion of the special character of the edges of settlements is a particular problem, as towns and villages have become 'suburbanised' by development that is entirely inappropriate in its density (generally too low) and formal relationship with the surrounding landscape. Internal form has also been eroded by the proliferation of 'infill', the uniformity of streetscape resulting from the loss of the distinctive gaps between buildings being anathema to the ordered yet varied character of settlements within the AONB.
- 4.83 The document recommends that Village Design Statements or Conservation Area Appraisals are prepared and used as a tool to assist development control.

Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area Appraisal

- 4.84 The 2009 Conservation Area Appraisal identifies distinct Character Areas within the Shenington and Alkerton Conservation Area. The Site lies to the immediate west of the Village Fringes Character Area. This area comprises former farm buildings, now converted into dwellings, and some later properties to the west. It is principally residential, although there is a small area of allotments to the north.
- 4.85 The description of the Village Fringes describes the fields to the north of Rattlecombe Road as stretching into the distance and makes reference to views across Top Farm fields towards the airfield, which is said to be an important open space bounded by stone walls and hedgerows. It is assumed that this refers to the Site.
- 4.86 Positive vistas from Rattlecombe Road towards the village centre are also identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 4.87 Part of the ironstone wall along the Site's southern boundary has been demolished and the Conservation Area Appraisal identifies its restoration as being desirable.
- 4.88 Identified threats to the Conservation Area include:
- The loss of ironstone boundary walls; and
 - The introduction of alterations, incremental changes and modern materials to the street scene.

Landscape Character of the Site and its Immediate Surroundings

- 4.89 A site survey was undertaken to assess the landscape character of the application site and its immediate surroundings and to consider the extent to which this is consistent with the findings of the desktop assessment. The site survey was undertaken on 28th July 2021 on a day with good visibility.

Context

- 4.90 The Site comprises approximately 2.8ha of greenfield land, part of which is used for horse grazing. It is accessed via an existing agricultural access point off Stocking Lane to the east.
- 4.91 The Site is bound to the north by Stocking Lane and the back garden curtilage of residential properties along Stocking Lane, to the east by Rattlecombe Road, to the south by agricultural land and to the west by further agricultural land with the Shenington C of E Primary School beyond.
- 4.92 The wider landscape to the north, south and west is largely agricultural and dominated by arable cropping, interspersed with woodland and nucleated settlements. Fields are generally rectilinear although they become more organic in shape on the steeper valley sides.
- 4.93 Shenington Airfield lies to the west and is sparsely vegetated with few trees or hedgerows occurring although native hedgerows have been established either side of one of the former runways which is now used as a go-kart track. One of the former taxiways is also vegetated to both sides and is currently used as caravan storage.
- 4.94 To the north of the study area lies the landscaped parkland and gardens of Upton House, with frequent parkland trees, and designed, mature woodland, copses and shelter belts.
- 4.95 To the immediate east of the Site is the Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area.
- 4.96 The Conservation Area Appraisal highlights that the character of the lanes around Shenington, with their winding orientation, buildings tight to the road and resultant short deflected views, contrasts with the straight routes, generous proportions and wide verges of Rattlecombe Road and Stocking Lane, which reflect the open and flat plateau top topography.

Topography

- 4.97 The Site slopes very gently from north-west to south-east, falling from approximately 180m AOD in the north-western corner of the Site, adjacent to the existing agricultural access point, to approximately 177m AOD in the south-eastern corner. The ground level of the Site is elevated above Rattlecombe Road by approximately 1m.
- 4.98 Shenington lies on the edge of the Cotswolds escarpment with the majority of the village between 170 and 180m AOD. The valley floor lies at less than 150m AOD.

Land Use, Land Cover and Vegetation

- 4.99 The Site comprises agricultural land, part of which is periodically grazed by horses. There is currently no built development on the Site.
- 4.100 The northern and western site boundaries are defined by mixed-species native hedges, approximately 2m high, including species such as hawthorn and blackthorn. The northern boundary hedgerow is gappy in places, but the western hedgerow is in good condition, with a gap to provide agricultural access to the adjacent horse grazing fields.
- 4.101 The southern site boundary is bound by a line of existing Ash trees which create a sense of enclosure.
- 4.102 The eastern site boundary is defined in part by a mixed-species native hedgerow, with areas of scrub on the boundary opposite The Level and behind the ironstone wall.

Settlement

- 4.103 Shenington is a nucleated hill top settlement, with the village green dominating its historic core. The village enjoys expansive views in most directions, but particularly east across the Sor Valley.
- 4.104 The village has historically developed in a linear fashion along the main arterial routes, although The Level (post 1960s) is 'estate style' development. More recent development at Long Acre (circa 2007) is of a high standard, creating a successful and appealing development which sits comfortably in the village. Conversions have generally respected the use of local materials, with uPVC windows being the main visual detractor.
- 4.105 Ironstone is predominant in the historic core of the village, but is also present in fringe areas where it is used for both boundary walls and elevations. There are examples on Rattlecombe Road of both ironstone rubble and mud construction and also of finer coursed ironstone. Many of the chimney stacks have been replaced in brick, and these range in colour from black to red.
- 4.106 Stone walls and hedging predominate the area and stone walls in particular help define the entrances into the village.
- 4.107 Rattlecombe Road exhibits a range of architectural styles including early squatters' cottages, Victorian terraces and post-war development.
- 4.108 Stocking Lane and Rattlecombe Road are two of the main carriageways out of the village. All roads have tarmac surfacing and are pock-marked with highways repairs. There are few routes with concrete kerbstones, emphasising the semi-rural nature of the village.

Landscape Value

- 4.109 The method of assessment described in **Appendix A** explains the factors used to inform judgements about landscape value which are derived from GLVIA3 and the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02/21 (LI-TGN 02/21). This section provides a summary of pertinent information for each factor and concludes with an overall judgement on the value of the landscape within the study area. Assessments of value in relation to other identified landscape receptors are described in Section 7.0.

Natural Heritage

- 4.110 The Site comprises approximately 2.8ha of agricultural land. The Site is predominantly made up of improved grassland, part of which is periodically grazed by horses.
- 4.111 The Site boundaries are defined by existing hedgerows with occasional trees which provide both ecological and visual interest.
- 4.112 There are no Tree Preservation Orders or Ancient Woodland on Site, nor are there any ecological designations. There are two Tree Preservation Orders within the grounds of Garters, on Stocking Lane to the north of the Site.
- 4.113 Whilst there are some ecological designations within the study area, these designations do not relate to landscape and do not look different to areas of the same character that do not have the designation. Their value is because of nature conservation interests that do not manifest particularly in the landscape.

Cultural Heritage

- 4.114 There are no archaeological or cultural heritage interests at the Site and there are no listed buildings and scheduled monuments in the wider area that contribute to the landscape character of the Site and its immediate surroundings.
- 4.115 Analysis of historic maps indicates that the Site has been subject to field amalgamation post 1978.

Landscape Condition

- 4.116 The Site comprises level farmland to the west of Shenington. The Site's northern, and western boundaries are defined by existing hedgerows with a partial hedgerow along the eastern site boundary and a group of Ash trees to the south. Vegetation is largely limited to the site boundaries. Field boundaries in the immediate context of the Site are largely intact, although there is some evidence of field amalgamation.
- 4.117 The Site is devoid of any notable landscape features and is relatively well contained within the wider landscape by existing vegetation and built form. The majority of existing vegetation along the site boundaries is assumed to be of moderate arboricultural and landscape value.

Associations

- 4.118 The landscape of the Site and its immediate surroundings has no known associations with renowned artists or writers.

Distinctiveness

- 4.119 The Site and its context demonstrate a number of the characteristics described in published landscape assessments at the National and County level. There is no indication from published information on landscape character that the Site and its environs are of a particular character or contain features or elements which are considered particularly important examples.

Recreational Value

- 4.120 The Site is not subject to public access and offers no recreational value. Whilst not a formal PRoW, Stocking Lane to the north provides an informal footpath route, linking to Shenington Airfield.
- 4.121 Publicised long-distance footpath routes within the wider study area include the Macmillan Way and the d'Arcy Dalton Way. Other local footpath routes from part of the 'Shenington Round' walk from Upton House, promoted by the National Trust.

Perceptual (Scenic) Quality

- 4.122 In terms of scenic quality, the Site is likely to be appreciated at a community level as an area of greenfield land. The northern, western and parts of the eastern site boundaries are defined by existing hedgerows which creates a sense of enclosure which is not generally appreciable from locations outside of the Site's boundaries. Part of the eastern site boundary is defined by an attractive ironstone wall; apart from this the Site is rather ordinary in terms of its scenic quality but this feature is the most visible characteristic in the local context.
- 4.123 The combination of rolling topography, hedges, trees, patches of woodland and varied field sizes within the wider landscape gives diversity to the composition of views. There are panoramic long distance views from ridges and short distance views from small tributary valleys.
- 4.124 The Site lies to the immediate west of the Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area where scenic quality is good as a result of the consistent material palette and use of traditional ironstone.

Perceptual (Wildness and tranquillity) Value

- 4.125 The Site is a working agricultural landscape and cannot be perceived as being wild.
- 4.126 The wider study area exhibits a sense of tranquillity away from settlements. The Site exhibits some rural qualities but is influenced by human activity as a result of its proximity to Shenington village and the Shenington Airfield.

Function

- 4.127 The Site comprises agricultural land and does not perform a clearly identifiable and valuable function.
- 4.128 The Site, as part of the wider study area, contributes to the setting of the Cotswolds AONB with the village on a plateau below the escarpment in views from high ground the east.

- 4.129 Whilst outside of the Shenington with Alkerton Conservation Area, the Site is considered to form part of its setting (see Historic Desk-Based Assessment prepared by TEP).

Conclusions

- 4.130 With consideration of the factors described above, the Site and landscape within the immediate study area generally is of local value. This is not a 'valued' landscape with regard to paragraph 174 a) of the NPPF.
- 4.131 It is acknowledged that parts of the wider study area lie within the Cotswolds AONB designation and landscape value in these locations is likely to be higher.

5.0 Visual Baseline

- 5.1 The visual influence of the application site has been determined through a combination of topographic analysis and field evaluation of features affecting visibility, such as built form and trees, hedgerows and woodland that filter and screen views of the development. This analysis work determined the potential visibility of the application site and identified visual receptors.
- 5.2 The study area for views is shown on **Figure 4** and extends approximately 3.5km to the north of the Site, 1km to the east, 2km to the south and 1km to the west. In the far extents of the study area the Site is barely discernible beyond layers of intervening vegetation and built form.
- 5.3 The field survey considered receptors from where views of the application site are considered likely and what the existing views comprise. The selection of viewpoints is not intended to cover every possible view of the application site, but rather they are representative of a range of receptor types at varying distances and orientations. No access has been sought to private properties or land and where assessments are reported they have been made from the nearest publicly accessible viewpoint.
- 5.4 Photographs have recorded summer views when deciduous trees are in full leaf. This represents the best case scenario in terms of visual screening.

Visual Receptors

- 5.5 Visual receptors i.e. those individuals who would see the Site and may experience a change in their view as a result of the proposed development have been identified as follows:
- 5.6 Walkers using the following public footpaths:
- Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/11/20;
 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/1/10;
 - Users of PRow Epwell Bridleway 203/10/10;
 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/2/80;
 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/10/10;
 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/12/40;
 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/8/10;
 - Users of PRow Ratley and Upton Footpath 256/SM177/1; and
 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/16/10.
- 5.7 Motorists, walkers and cyclists along the following roads:
- Rattlecombe Road;
 - Stocking Lane;
 - Sugarswell Lane;
 - Unnamed road to the east of Alkerton;
 - Epwell Road;
 - Mill Lane;
 - The Level; and
 - Kenhill Road.

5.8 Residents living in properties along the following roads:

- Rattlecombe Road; and
- Stocking Lane.

5.9 Visitors to tourist and other destinations:

- Visitors to Shenington Airfield;
- Visitors to Upton House; and
- Visitors to Shenington C of E Primary School.

LVA Viewpoints

5.10 Viewpoint photography assists understanding of the baseline landscape and visual environment at the Site and in its context, and is used to inform the assessment of effects on the visual receptors listed above.

5.11 LVA viewpoints are listed in Table 2 below, and viewpoint locations are shown on **Figure 5. Figures 6.1 to 6.14** provide viewpoint photography showing the existing view in the direction of the Site from viewpoints 1 to 13 below.

Table 2: LVA Viewpoints

Viewpoint Reference and Location		Approximate Easting/Northing	Direction of View and Approximate Distance to Site
1	Rattlecombe Road	437018, 242698	Looking north-west, 5m
2	Stocking Lane	436901, 242909	Looking south-east, 5m
3	PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/11/20 (part of the Macmillan Way)	436608, 243287	Looking south-east, 490m
4	Rattlecombe Road	436377, 242556	Looking east, 475m
5	PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/1/10 (part of the d'Arcy Dalton Way)	436695, 242199	Looking north-east, 535m
6	PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/2/80	438181, 241934	Looking north-west, 1,395m
7	PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/10/10 (part of the Macmillan Way)	436059, 244418	Looking south-east, 1,770m

Viewpoint Reference and Location		Approximate Easting/Northing	Direction of View and Approximate Distance to Site
8	PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/8/10 (part of the d'Arcy Dalton Way)	437791, 243736	Looking south-west, 1,200m
9	PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/8/10 (part of the d'Arcy Dalton Way)	437635, 243517	Looking south-west, 935m
10	PRoW Ratley and Upton Footpath 256/SM177/1	436308, 245467	Looking south, 2,650m
11	PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/12/40	437769, 244319	Looking south-west, 1680m
12	PRoW Epwell Bridleway 203/10/10	436409, 241048	Looking north, 1,720m
13	Users of PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/16/10	437067, 243053	Looking south-west, 230m

Baseline Public Views

- 5.13 The following paragraphs describe existing views towards the Site, experienced by the visual receptors listed above, and with reference to relevant viewpoint photography shown at **Figures 6.1 to 6.14**.

Receptor 1 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/11/20 (Viewpoint 3)

- 5.14 This bridleway runs west from Kenhill Road across Shenington Airfield and connects with PRow 339/11/10 and 339/12/10 just beyond the northern boundary of the airfield. This bridleway is promoted at a local level as part of the 'Shenington Round' from Upton House.
- 5.15 Along Kenhill Road any views towards the Site are restricted to glimpsed views through gaps in the existing built form along Stocking Lane, the ground plane of the Site is not visible from Kenhill Road.
- 5.16 Moving west along the bridleway and into the airfield views towards the Site are heavily filtered by an existing tree belt to the west of Fenny Compton Surgery and the hedge line to the west of the Shenington C of E Primary School.
- 5.17 From Viewpoint 3 there are some glimpsed views towards the hedge line on the western side of Shenington C of E Primary School. The Site is not visible from this point in summer months, but there are likely to be some glimpsed views in winter.

Receptor 2 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/1/10 (part of the d'Arcy Dalton Way) (Viewpoint 5)

- 5.18 PRow Footpath 339/1/10 runs in a south-west direction from Rattlecombe Road to Epwell Footpath 1 at the Epwell Parish boundary east of Rough Hill Farm. This PRow forms part of the d'Arcy Dalton Way, a locally promoted route.
- 5.19 From the northern part of the footpath there are views towards existing residential properties along Rattlecombe Road (see Photograph 1), but the Site is not visible beyond existing vegetation and built form.



Photograph 1: Views towards existing dwellings along Rattlecombe Road from PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/1/10

- 5.20 From Viewpoint 5 there are some glimpsed views towards 2.5 storey residential dwellings along Stocking Lane to the north of the Site.

Receptor 3 - Users of PRow Epwell Bridleway 203/10/10 (Viewpoint 12)

- 5.21 This bridleway extends from the road junction west of Epwell Grounds Farm, leading generally north-east past Field Barn to Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/2/70 at the Shenington with Alkerton Parish boundary.

- 5.22 From Viewpoint 12 there are distant views towards Shenington, particularly towards the existing settlement edge along The Levels. The Site is barely discernible from this point beyond existing built form.

Receptor 4 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/2/80 (Viewpoint 6)

- 5.23 This bridleway extends west from the unnamed road to the east of Alkerton. From the length of this bridleway there are clear views towards Shenington, including a clear view towards the steeple of the Holy Trinity Church. On the left hand side of the frame Epwell Hill is clearly visible in the distance. The Site is barely discernible from this point beyond intervening vegetation and built form.

Receptor 5 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/10/10 (part of the Macmillan Way) (Viewpoint 7)

- 5.24 This footpath extends east from Sugarswell Lane towards Shenington Hirons Covert. This route forms part of the Macmillan Way, a promoted long-distance footpath.

- 5.25 The foreground of this view comprises arable land and sculpted landform as the Cotswold plateau slopes down to a local valley. Sugarswell Business Park occupies the middle distance with commercial buildings set within and behind deciduous tree and shrub cover. A telecommunications tower can be seen towards the right hand of the frame within and above the Business Park. Shenlow Hill forms the distant horizon to the south on the far left hand side of the frame. The Site is barely discernible from this point beyond layers of intervening vegetation.

Receptor 6 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/12/40 (Viewpoint 11)

- 5.26 This bridleway extends west from the Banbury to Stratford road (A422) at Alkerton Oaks, north of the business park.
- 5.27 From Viewpoint 11 there are panoramic views towards the hills just beyond the eastern edge of the Cotswolds AONB. Shenington is clearly visible in the middle distance, including existing residential properties along Kenhill Road and Stocking Lane. There are some glimpsed views towards the Site from this point.

Receptor 7 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/8/10 (Viewpoints 8 and 9)

- 5.28 This footpath extends south-west from the Banbury to Stratford road (A422) at Alkerton Oaks, south of the business park. This PRow forms part of the d'Arcy Dalton Way, a locally promoted route.
- 5.29 From Viewpoint 8 Shenington is clearly visible in the middle distance. There are clear glimpsed views towards existing residential properties along Stocking Lane beyond the allotments off Kenhill Road. The Site is glimpsed through gaps in the existing built from along Stocking Lane.
- 5.30 From Viewpoint 9 Shenington is clearly visible on the rising ground in the distance. There are some glimpsed views towards existing residential properties along Stocking Lane beyond the allotments off Kenhill Road. The Site is glimpsed from this point.

Receptor 8 - Users of PRow Ratley and Upton Footpath 256/SM177/1 (Viewpoint 10)

- 5.31 PRow Ratley and Upton Footpath 256/SM177/1 runs north-east from Sugarswell Lane to Home Farm, close to Upton House. This footpath is promoted at a local level as part of the 'Shenington Round' from Upton House.
- 5.32 The view from the footpath is dominated by the large arable field in the foreground with some glimpsed views towards the avenue of trees at Sugarswell Business Park in the middle distance. The background is formed by Shenlow Hill. The Site is barely discernible from this point beyond layers of intervening vegetation.

Receptor 9 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/16/10 (Viewpoint 13)

- 5.33 This footpath runs broadly north from Kenhill Road, following the valley side. From the southern end of the footpath, close to Kenhill Road, there are clear views towards the Kenhill Road allotments with some glimpsed views towards the upper storeys of residential properties along Stocking Lane. There are some glimpsed views towards the Site through gaps in the existing built form.

Receptor R1 - Users of Rattlecombe Road (Viewpoints 1 and 4)

- 5.34 Approaching Shenington from the east views towards the Site are well screened in summer months. From Viewpoint 4 there is an oblique, glimpsed view towards Shenington C of E Primary School along an existing field access point. It is likely that in winter months there would be glimpsed views towards the Site through gaps in existing vegetation.
- 5.35 From the Conservation Area boundary views to the ground plane of the Site are restricted by the existing roadside hedgerow (see Photograph 2). Views are likely to be more open in winter months when deciduous vegetation is not in leaf.



Photograph 2: View towards the Site from the Conservation Area boundary (note: the agricultural access point shown is not into the Site)

- 5.36 From Rattlecombe Road to the immediate east of the Site there are views into the Site, which sits approximately 1m above the road level. The existing ironstone wall along part of this frontage is an attractive feature and contributes positively to the approach into the village.

Receptor R2 - Users of Stocking Lane (Viewpoint 2)

- 5.37 From Stocking Lane to the north of the Site, the existing boundary hedgerow heavily filters views into the Site. Looking along the existing agricultural access point there are channelled views through the Site towards Rattlecombe Road.
- 5.38 From the Conservation Area boundary, views south are restricted by existing vegetation, with just glimpsed views possible towards the Site (see Photograph 3). Looking south-west, the ground plane of the Site is not visible beyond the existing residential bungalows along Stocking Lane.



Photograph 3: View south from the Conservation Area boundary

Receptor R3 - Users of Sugarswell Lane (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.39 The well-maintained roadside hedgerows constrain views out from Sugarswell Lane and glimpsed views are limited to just a few hedgerow gaps and/or field gates.

Receptor R4 - Users of unnamed road to the east of Alkerton (Viewpoint 6)

- 5.40 From the unnamed road to the east of Alkerton there are panoramic views across the wider landscape. The village of Shenington is seen in the distance, but the Site is barely discernible beyond existing vegetation and built form.

Receptor R5 - Users of Epwell Road (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.41 The well-maintained roadside hedgerows constrain views out from Epwell Road. There are a few locations where glimpsed views towards the Site could be possible in winter months.

Receptor R6 - Users of Mill Lane (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.42 Views towards the Site from Mill Lane are generally prevented by intervening built form along Mill Lane and Rattlecombe Road. From the junction with Rattlecombe Road there are oblique views towards the Site, although this is not the primary focus of the view.

Receptor R7 - Users of The Level (Viewpoint 1)

- 5.43 Views towards the Site from most of The Level are heavily screened by intervening garden vegetation and built form. From the junction with Rattlecombe Road there are direct and near views towards the Site which lies elevated above the existing road level.

Receptor R8 - Users of Kenhill Road

- 5.44 For the most part Kenhill Road is a single track lane with residential properties on both sides. At the northern side of the lane views open up to the east, with the Kenhill Road allotments clearly visible to the west. The ground rises steeply from Kenhill Road and there are some views towards the upper storeys of existing residential properties along Stocking Lane from this point. The Site is glimpsed through gaps in the existing built form.

Receptor A - Residents of Rattlecombe Road (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.45 Residents of properties along Rattlecombe Road have varying views towards the Site depending on distance, angle and levels of intervening vegetation. For most residents views are likely to be oblique, with filtering and screening by garden vegetation. There are direct and near views from properties on the southern side of Rattlecombe Road, opposite the site frontage. The ground level of the Site is elevated approximately 1m above Rattlecombe Road and these views would comprise the existing agricultural land with the Shenington C of E Primary School visible beyond.

Receptor B - Residents of Stocking Lane (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.46 The existing boundary hedgerow screens the Site in views from ground floor windows from properties on the northern side of Stocking Lane, including properties along Long Acre. Residents of these properties would have clear views across the Site from upper storey front windows. On the southern side of Stocking Lane are a number of bungalows; one of these has a post and wire fence back garden boundary which allows clear views across the northern edge of the Site.

Receptor C - Visitors to Shenington Airfield (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.47 Shenington Airfield occupies generally level, open land to the west of the Site. Receptors at the airfield include visitors to the glider club and go-karting track as well as workers and visitors to businesses including a caravan storage area and an agricultural workshop. The receptors would experience the proposed development in the context of the aircraft hangars, sheds and structures and other features of the airfield such as extensive caravan and car parking, and the existing Sugarswell Business Park. There would be some glimpsed views towards the Site from Shenington Airfield in winter months.

Receptor D - Visitors to Sugarswell Business Centre (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.48 Views towards the Site from Sugarswell Business Centre are heavily screened by layers of intervening vegetation, but some glimpsed views may be possible in winter months.

Receptor E - Visitors to Upton House (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.49 Woodland, parkland and ornamental tree and shrub planting shape the rides and gardens within Upton House Registered Park and Garden. Views towards the Site from within the grounds of Upton House are heavily filtered by layers of existing vegetation with the rising topography to the south further preventing views towards the Site.

Receptor F - Visitors to Shenington C of E Primary School (No Viewpoint Available)

- 5.50 Shenington C of E Primary School lies to the west of the Site. From within the Site there are some glimpsed views towards the roofline of the school, with views from ground floor windows prevented by the existing hedgerow along the Site's western boundary. The playground and outdoor playing fields are to the west of the school where there may be some glimpsed views towards the Site above existing hedgerows.

Other Views Considered

- 5.51 Consideration was given to the five viewpoint locations suggested by the Cotswolds National Landscape as follows:

Grid Reference SP36364101

- 5.52 There are distant views towards Shenington from this location and views are considered further within the visual assessment as Viewpoint 12.

Grid Reference SP36014150

- 5.53 Continuous vegetation along the length of the road prevents views towards the Site. Consideration was given to views from PRoW Epwell Footpath 203/1/30, close to the road junction but views were heavily filtered by layers of intervening vegetation (see Photograph 4). Views from this location are not considered further.



Photograph 4: View north-east from PRow Epwell Footpath 203/1/30

Grid Reference SP35844124

- 5.54 An existing tree belt along the western edge of the footpath restricts any views towards the Site (see Photograph 5). Views from this location are not considered further.



Photograph 5: View north-east from PRow Epwell Footpath 203/1/20

Grid Reference SP357144403

- 5.55 Views have been considered from Grid Reference SP357144403 where views towards the Site are heavily filtered by the avenue of trees along the access of Sugarswell Business Park and general vegetation cover within the wider landscape (see Photograph 6).
- 5.56 Views were also considered from PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/11/10 to the south of the Business Park, but views were still heavily filtered. Views from these locations are not considered further.



Photograph 6: View south-east from Sugarswell Road

Grid Reference SP3746 4660

- 5.57 It is assumed that the grid reference above was provided in error, as this is not near to the Temple Pool. Views have been considered from Grid Reference SP37464466, although views towards the Site are entirely screened by the rising topography (see Photograph 7). Views from this location are not considered further.



Photograph 7: View south from PRoW Ratley and Upton Footpath 256/SM169/1

6.0 The Proposed Development

- 6.1 The Planning Layout submitted with the planning application shows the locations of built development and open space. The Design and Access Statement (DAS) provides further detail in relation to housing density, the different housing types, street and plot layouts and cross-sections. For the purposes of this assessment it has been assumed that buildings would be no greater than 2 storeys in height.
- 6.2 A description of the Proposed Development is provided in the DAS. In summary it consists of the following key elements:
- Residential development incorporating 49 dwellings and associated infrastructure on approximately 2 hectares (ha) of land;
 - Landscaping, public open space and other on-site infrastructure approximately 0.8 ha in area; and
 - Vehicular access from Rattlecombe Road.
- 6.3 The DAS describes the Design Principles adopted for the Proposed Development which include the following of relevance to this LVA:
- Retention, where possible, and enhancement of the existing vegetation along the site boundaries;
 - Provision of green infrastructure and public open spaces that create a green setting and buffer to the development edge incorporating opportunities for extensive new landscaping to retain and further add to the existing green infrastructure;
 - The creation of a robust and appropriate development edge which provides a sensitive transition between the Proposed Development and the wider countryside setting;
 - Reinstatement of historic field boundary hedgerow within the Site; and
 - Reinstatement of ironstone wall along the eastern site boundary.
- 6.4 Existing site boundary hedgerows and trees will be retained wherever possible and integrated into the Proposed Development.
- 6.5 The assessment of effects described in Sections 7.0 and 8.0 of this LVA takes into account the embedded mitigation described above and in more detail in the DAS.

7.0 Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 7.1 The assessment of landscape effects considers the sensitivity of the landscape and the magnitude of the potential effect to come to an overall judgement as set out below.
- 7.2 The assessment of landscape effects during construction and after implementation (year 1 and year 15) for each of the identified landscape receptors is summarised in **Table 5**.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 7.3 Landscape sensitivity combines judgements of the landscape's susceptibility to change of the type of development proposed and the value attached to the landscape as defined in the landscape baseline.

Landscape Value

- 7.4 As highlighted in Section 4.0, the landscape of the Site and its immediate surroundings is of community value.
- 7.5 The majority of landscape character areas identified at the national and local level are of local value, with some scenic quality and tourist offer. Areas within the Cotswolds AONB are of national value, the scenic and perceptual qualities of these character areas is consistent with the AONB designation.

Landscape Susceptibility to Change

- 7.6 The susceptibility of a landscape to change is dependent on the characteristics of the receiving landscape and the nature of the proposed development.
- 7.7 Overall, the Site has a medium susceptibility to change as a result of the proposed development because:
- There is similar built development present in the landscape;
 - Some screening is provided by existing vegetation and landform;
 - There are some opportunities for mitigation.
 - There is capacity to accommodate the proposed development without affecting the baseline situation.
- 7.8 The susceptibility of the National Character Areas to the Proposed Development is low. There are already significant areas of built development present within these NCAs and development can generally be accommodated without detrimental effects on character.
- 7.9 All other identified LCAs have a medium susceptibility to change. There is already some built development present within the landscape. The landscape generally is able to accommodate the proposed development without suffering substantial detrimental effects on its character.
- 7.10 The susceptibility of the Cotswolds AONB to change is medium. The Site lies outside of the AONB but is part of its setting.

Landscape Sensitivity

- 7.11 Landscape sensitivity sequentially combines judgements of the landscape's susceptibility to change to the type of development proposed, and the value attached to the landscape. The sensitivity of each of the identified landscape receptors is provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Landscape Receptor Sensitivity

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
Character of the Site and its immediate surroundings	Local	Medium	Medium
NCA 95: Northamptonshire Uplands	Local	Low	Low
NCA 107: Cotswolds	National	Low	Medium
NCA 96: Dunsmore and Feldon	Local	Low	Low
Farmland Plateau LCT	Local	Medium	Medium
Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes LCT and Shenington LCA	Local	Medium	Medium
Cotswolds LCT 6: Ironstone Hills and Valleys, LCA 6A: Whichford Hills and Valleys and LCA 6B: Ratley Hills and Valleys	National	Medium	High
Cotswolds LCT 7: High Wold and LCA 7G: Edge Hill Ironstone Plateau	National	Medium	High
Warwickshire Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill LCT	Local	Medium	Medium

Receptor	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
The Cotswolds AONB and its setting	National	Medium	High

Assessment of Landscape Effects during Construction

- 7.12 Construction of the Proposed Development would involve the use of plant and machinery within the Site boundary. During construction, there would be an increased level of activity within the Site which would have a short-term effect on landscape character at the Site and within its immediate surroundings.
- 7.13 The following activities during construction will give rise to effects on landscape:
- Establishing a construction compound, site offices and laydown areas for materials and components;
 - Soil-stripping and earthworks;
 - Movement of construction vehicles and plant;
 - Construction of properties and internal access roads;
 - Implementation of landscaping proposals; and
 - Temporary security lighting and security fencing.
- 7.14 Construction activities would be visible from the surrounding landscape, particularly from the east, and would have the potential to affect aesthetic and perceptual aspects of landscape character beyond the Site boundary. The separation between the Site and the surrounding countryside to the south and west by mature trees and vegetation would limit construction effects on the wider landscape.
- 7.15 Throughout the Site there will be temporary disturbance of the existing ground levels arising from the removal and storage of topsoil and excavation for roads, foundations, services and drainage.
- 7.16 During construction of the Proposed Development landscape character at the Site would change from agricultural land to a construction site where there would be partially completed houses, in addition there would be permanent loss of agricultural land.
- 7.17 Existing vegetation on the boundaries of the Site is to be retained where possible and protected during construction. Construction of the main site access would require the removal of part of the existing hedgerow along the site frontage to Rattlecombe Road.
- 7.18 The loss of agricultural land within the Site will result in a slight change to the character and appearance of Shenington village, including the Conservation Area.
- 7.19 The construction of the Proposed Development would be undertaken during daylight hours, however there may be periods, particularly during the winter months, where lighting would be required due to the shorter daytime periods. Lighting will be kept to the minimum necessary for safety and security, and where possible, artificial lighting would be designed and located to minimise light spill on the surrounding landscape and to minimise night glow.

- 7.20 Construction effects would be temporary and of short duration and would be visible from the surrounding landscape having the potential to affect aesthetic and perceptual aspects of landscape character beyond the Site boundary. Given these factors the magnitude of effect would moderate negative and the overall effect would be moderate adverse, while effects would be noticeable they would be temporary and occur for a short duration.
- 7.21 Construction activity would introduce some localised disturbance to NCA 95: Northamptonshire Uplands. This will result in a localised low negative magnitude of effect with a localised minor adverse effect. The effect on the NCA as a whole will be negligible as it would not result in the loss of any key landscape characteristics.
- 7.22 The Site lies close to the Cotswolds and Dunsmore and Feldon NCAs. Whilst construction activity will not have a direct impact on these NCAs, the presence of construction activity will result in some localised disturbance to a very small part of these NCAs. Overall, the magnitude of effect on these NCAs will be negligible.
- 7.23 At the County level, the Site lies within the Farmland Plateau LCT. Key characteristics of this LCT include gently rolling open ridges, arable fields enclosed by low thorn hedges, rectilinear field pattern and a nucleated settlement pattern. Construction activity will introduce some disturbance to a very small part of the LCT and would result in the loss of a small area of agricultural land with a moderate negative magnitude of effect and localised moderate adverse effect. The overall magnitude of effect on the LCT as a whole will be low negative, with a minor adverse overall effect.
- 7.24 Parts of Shenington lie within the Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes LCT. This LCT includes pastoral and wooded landscapes associated with the steep slopes and valleys of small streams and main rivers. The Shenington Character Area is characterised by small-sized fields, mostly semi-improved grassland often interspersed with scattered scrub, and some marshy grassland along the valley bottom. Fields are enclosed by overgrown and gappy hawthorn hedges which, in some places, have been replaced by fences. Whilst not within this LCT, the Site and its immediate surroundings exhibits some of its key characteristics. Construction activity would result in short-term disturbance to a small part of the Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes LCT. The magnitude of effect during construction will be low negative in a small area, but negligible for the LCT as a whole. The overall effect will be minor adverse in a small area and negligible for the LCT as a whole.
- 7.25 Construction activity may be visible from part of Cotswolds LCT 6: Ironstone Hills and Cotswolds LCT 7: High Wold at a distance in winter months. The complex topography of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys LCT provides dramatic sweeping views over wide areas of the landscape. Expansive long distance views are also a key characteristic of the High Wold LCT. The visual analysis confirmed that the Site is barely discernible in views from within the AONB and as such construction activity will have a very limited influence on the AONB landscape. The magnitude of effect during construction will be negligible, with an overall negligible effect.

- 7.26 The Site exhibits few of the characteristics of the Warwickshire Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill LCT. Construction activity will introduce some localised disturbance to a very small part of the LCT. Overall, the magnitude of effect on the LCT will be negligible.
- 7.27 The Site lies within the setting of the Cotswolds AONB. Construction activity will introduce uncharacteristic elements to the landscape, which will have a negative impact on tranquillity, however these will be seen in conjunction with characteristics typical of the AONB and its setting. The Site is generally well contained by existing vegetation and built form, reducing the magnitude of potential impacts on the AONB landscape. The magnitude of effect will be localised low negative close to the Site, but negligible for the AONB as a whole. The resulting overall effect will be minor adverse in a localised area and negligible as a whole.

Assessment of Landscape Effects during Operation

- 7.28 The operational effects of the development occur when all construction activities have ceased and the development is in use. The assessment takes account of embedded mitigation i.e. mitigation designed into the Proposed Development.
- 7.29 The Proposed Development would result in the loss of agricultural farmland in the local landscape and introduce features that did not previously exist on the Site including dwellings, internal access roads and landscaping. These features are not dissimilar to the surrounding landscape character and would be more prominent in the immediate locale.
- 7.30 The Proposed Development has been designed to minimise its effects and to integrate the Site into the wider landscape. This will be achieved by the creation of new green spaces on the peripheries of the Site. Structural planting, in conjunction with the layout of streets and buildings, will also ensure an appropriate transition and permeable boundary between Shenington and the surrounding countryside.
- 7.31 There will be a permanent change in land use across the Site to a high quality development including residential dwellings, open space, and strategic landscape.
- 7.32 The design ensures the trees and hedgerows to the periphery of the site are retained wherever possible to aid screening from adjacent residential properties. The retained boundary vegetation will provide a mature landscape setting to the new development. Additionally parts of the ironstone wall along the eastern site boundary will be restored and a historic field boundary within the Site will be reinstated with new hedgerow planting. This will contribute positively to the aspirations set out within the Conservation Area Appraisal.
- 7.33 The Site has a settlement edge character, with existing built form and the proximity to Shenington Airfield reducing its remoteness and tranquillity. Stocking Lane displays built form extending beyond the Site. Clusters of more modern buildings lie to the north and south-east of Site, with dwellings along The Level extending back from the main arterial route of Rattlecombe Road.

- 7.34 The introduction of sensitively designed residential development into the Site will not introduce new or alien features that do not already exist within the localised receiving landscape context. The Site is immediately adjacent to existing settlement edge and the proposals will be seen within this context. A robust landscape strategy will be implemented, ensuring that the proposed built form is successfully integrated into the receiving landscape character.
- 7.35 Existing vegetation on the site boundaries will help to contain the development from the wider landscape. The overall effect on the overall character of the Site and its immediate surroundings will be minor adverse at both Year 1 and Year 15.
- 7.36 The Proposed Development would occupy sloping ground and agricultural land that occurs throughout the Northamptonshire Uplands NCA and contributes to the character of the NCA as a whole. Key characteristics of the NCA recognisable at the Site and in the surrounding landscape include the enclosed field pattern surrounded by hedgerows, nucleated villages, historic houses, and a dense network of narrow lanes. Whilst the Proposed Development would result in the loss of a small area of agricultural land, this would be a very small scale of change in the context of the NCA as a whole. Other notable features including field boundary hedgerows are to be retained wherever possible. The Proposed Development would be visible from a very small part of the NCA and would be seen in the context of the existing settlement edge of Shenington. Given these factors the magnitude of effect on the Northamptonshire Uplands NCA would be low in a limited geographical area adjacent to the Proposed Development and negligible for the NCA as a whole. Overall effects are judged to be minor adverse in a limited geographical area and negligible on landscape character of the NCA as a whole.
- 7.37 The Site is approximately 490m to the north of the Cotswolds NCA. There is some intervisibility between the NCA and the Site. The Proposed Development would have a limited influence on the Cotswolds NCA. The Proposed Development would not result in the alteration or removal of any landscape elements or features of particular importance to landscape character. Given these factors the magnitude of effect on the Cotswolds NCA would be negligible. Overall effects are judged to be negligible on landscape character of the NCA as a whole.
- 7.38 The Dunsmore and Feldon NCA lies approximately 2.6km to the north-west of the Site at its closest point. The Proposed Development would not result in the alteration or removal of any landscape elements or features of particular importance to landscape character. The geographical extent of area influenced by the Proposed Development relative to the NCA will be extremely small, having a negligible magnitude of effect on the key landscape characteristics identified for this NCA. The overall effect on the NCA would be negligible.

- 7.39 The Site lies within the Farmland Plateau LCT as identified in the Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study. Key characteristics of this LCT include gently rolling open ridges, arable fields enclosed by low thorn hedges, rectilinear field pattern and a nucleated settlement pattern. At year 1 post-completion there will be a localised moderate adverse effect on the LCT as a result of the loss of hedgerow along Rattlecombe Road and loss of agricultural land more generally. In the context of the LCT as a whole the magnitude of effect will be low negative, with a minor adverse effect. The landscape management guidelines for the Farmland Plateau LCT include to strengthen the field pattern by planting up gappy hedges using locally characteristic species, protect stone walls from deterioration and maintain the sparsely settled rural character of the landscape by concentrating new development in and around existing settlements. The Proposed Development contributes positively to these objectives with new hedgerow planting, reinstatement of historic field boundaries and reinstatement of the ironstone wall along the eastern site boundary. Overall, the magnitude of effect at year 15 will be negligible with an overall negligible effect.
- 7.40 The neighbouring Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes character type would not be directly affected by the proposed development. However, the OWLS guidelines for the Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes seek landscape planting to strengthen hedgerow patterns; the proposed planting would indirectly contribute to these objectives. Other guidelines include to protect stone walls from deterioration, minimise the visual impact of intrusive land uses at the fringes of towns and villages with the judicious planting of tree and shrub species characteristic of the area and promote the use of building materials and a scale of development and that is appropriate to this landscape type. The Proposed Development contributes positively to these objectives with new hedgerow planting, reinstatement of historic field boundaries and reinstatement of the ironstone wall along the eastern site boundary. Overall, the magnitude of effect at year 15 will be negligible with an overall negligible effect.
- 7.41 The completed development may be visible from part of Cotswolds LCT 6: Ironstone Hills and Cotswolds LCT 7: High Wold at a distance in winter months. Expansive long distance views a key characteristic of these LCTs. Where the Site is visible it would be seen in conjunction with the existing built up area of Shenington and would not result in the loss of any key landscape characteristics. The magnitude of effect during construction will be negligible, with an overall negligible effect.
- 7.42 The Site exhibits few of the characteristics of the Warwickshire Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill LCT. Development guidelines include:
- Conserve the character of rural settlements by retaining existing features and local patterns in all development schemes
 - Protect and enhance the internal open space and irregular outline of village settlements
 - Conserve the historic nucleated settlement pattern by avoiding new development in open countryside
 - Conserve and enhance tree cover within and around rural settlements

- 7.43 The Proposed Development retains existing field boundary vegetation wherever possible and will reinstate a historic field boundary. In terms of settlement pattern, the location of the Site will not result in unrestricted sprawl into the surrounding countryside, and is strongly influenced by existing residential development along Stocking Lane and Rattlecombe Road. Overall, the effect on the Warwickshire Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill LCT is assessed as negligible at both year 1 and year 15.
- 7.44 Existing built form and vegetation limits wider views towards the completed development from within the Cotswolds AONB. Development is offset from the southern and western site boundaries, with additional tree planting proposed within areas of public open space along these boundaries. The proposed landscape mitigation will assist in the successful integration of the proposals into the wider receiving landscape context, with any built form being seen within the context of the wider village setting of Shenington. Built form is already a feature within the Site's immediate context, forming the existing setting to the AONB. The introduction of the proposals will not significantly impact the qualities or key characteristics of the wider Cotswolds AONB designation. The Proposed Development will have a minor adverse impact on the setting of the AONB when viewed from Public Rights of Way to the east, with a localised minor adverse effect. Overall, the impact on the AONB will be negligible. Effects on the special qualities of the AONB are considered further in **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Effects on the special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB

Special quality	Potential effects
The unifying character of the limestone geology – its visible presence in the landscape and use as a building material;	The Site, and the village of Shenington is part of an upland plateau landscape, with occasional views to the Cotswolds escarpment. The use of ironstone is frequent throughout the study area and the Proposed Development proposes to reinstate the ironstone wall along the eastern site boundary.
The Cotswold escarpment, including views from and to the AONB	In views from the east Shenington is visible on the upland plateau below the Cotswold Hills. The Site is barely discernible in these views and is seen in conjunction with existing built development in Shenington. The Proposed Development would not break the skyline in views towards Shenlow Hill, Rough Hill, Epwell Hill and Yarn Hill from areas of high ground to the east and north-east.

Special quality	Potential effects
The high wolds – a large open, elevated predominately arable landscape with commons, 'big' skies and long-distance views;	The Site is barely discernible in views from the High Wolds. In views back towards the High Wolds from areas of higher ground in the east and north-east of the study area the Proposed Development will be barely discernible.
River valleys, the majority forming the headwaters of the Thames, with high-quality water;	The Proposed Development would have no effect on existing watercourses.
Distinctive dry stone walls;	The Proposed Development includes the reinstatement of a length of ironstone wall along the eastern site boundary.
Internationally important flower-rich grasslands, particularly limestone grasslands;	The Site is not subject to any ecological designations. The semi-improved grassland on Site is subject to horse grazing and is not considered to be 'important'.
Internationally important ancient broadleaved woodland, particularly along the crest of the escarpment;	There is no existing woodland on Site. The Proposed Development would not break the skyline.
Variations in the colour of the stone from one part of the AONB to another which add a vital element of local distinctiveness	Ironstone is a key characteristic of Shenington and can be incorporated into the Proposed Development through good design.
The tranquillity of the area, away from major sources of inappropriate noise, development, visual clutter and pollution	The wider study area exhibits a sense of tranquillity away from settlements. The Site exhibits some rural qualities but is influenced by human activity as a result of its proximity to Shenington village and the Shenington Airfield. Construction activity will result in some localised disturbance to tranquillity close to the Site.

Special quality	Potential effects
Extensive dark sky areas	<p>CPRE's dark sky mapping tool indicates that lighting levels within Shenington are between 0.5 - 1 NanoWatts/cm²/sr. This is between 'darkest' and 'brighter'.</p> <p>While lighting is already present in adjoining areas, particular consideration should be given to the location of lighting, light source and the type of luminaires to ensure that the additional effects of light pollution and sky glow are kept to a minimum.</p>
Distinctive settlements, developed in the Cotswold vernacular, high architectural quality and integrity	Further detail in terms of layout, building styles, heights and materials is set out within the Design and Access Statement.
An accessible landscape for quiet recreation for both rural and urban users, with numerous walking and riding routes, including the Cotswolds Way National Trail	The Site is not subject to public access and offers no recreational value. The Proposed Development incorporates areas of public open space which would be accessible to the local community. The Proposed Development will have no effect on this special quality.
Significant archaeological, prehistoric and historic associations dating back 6,000 years, including Neolithic stone monuments, ancient drove roads, Iron Age forts, Roman villas, ridge and furrow fields, medieval wool churches and country estates and parks	There are no archaeological or cultural heritage interests at the Site and there are no listed buildings and scheduled monuments in the wider area that contribute to the landscape character of the Site and its immediate surroundings. The Proposed Development will have no effect on this special quality.
A vibrant heritage of cultural associations, including the Arts and Crafts movement of the 19th and 20th centuries, famous composers and authors and traditional events such as the Cotswolds Olympicks, cheese rolling and woolsack races	The landscape of the Site and its immediate surroundings has no known associations with renowned artists or writers. The Proposed Development will have no effect on this special quality.

Table 5: Landscape Receptor Overall Effect

Receptor	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Effect
Character of the Site and its immediate surroundings	Medium	Construction	Moderate Negative	Moderate Adverse
		Year 1	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
		Year 15	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
NCA 95: Northamptonshire Uplands	Low	Construction	Localised Low Negative; Negligible Overall	Localised Minor Adverse; Negligible Overall
		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
NCA 107: Cotswolds	Medium	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
NCA 96: Dunsmore and Feldon	Low	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
Farmland Plateau LCT	Medium	Construction	Localised Moderate Negative; Low Negative Overall	Localised Moderate Adverse; Minor Adverse Overall

Receptor	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Effect
		Year 1	Localised Moderate Negative; Low Negative Overall	Localised Moderate Adverse; Minor Adverse Overall
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes LCT and Shenington LCA	Medium	Construction	Localised Low Negative; Negligible Overall	Localised Minor Adverse; Negligible Overall
		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
Cotswolds LCT 6: Ironstone Hills and Valleys, LCA 6A: Whichford Hills and Valleys and LCA 6B: Ratley Hills and Valleys	High	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
Cotswolds LCT 7: High Wold and LCA 7G: Edge Hill Ironstone Plateau	High	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
Warwickshire Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill LCT	Medium	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible

Receptor	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Effect
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
The setting of the Cotswolds AONB	High	Construction	Localised Low Negative; Negligible Overall	Localised Low Negative; Negligible Overall
		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
		Year 15	Negligible	Negligible

8.0 Assessment of Visual Effects

8.1 The following paragraphs assess the sensitivity of the views potentially affected, the magnitude of the predicted effect, and the overall effect on each view assessed, which would result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.

8.2 The assessment of visual effects during construction and after implementation (year 1 and year 15) for each of the identified visual receptors is summarised in **Table 7**.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

8.3 The sensitivity of visual receptors depends on the susceptibility of the visual receptor to changes in views as a result of the development and the value of the view (as set out in the method in Appendix A). This LVA assesses the impact on both public and private views, however in planning terms there is no private right to a view.

Susceptibility to Change

8.4 Walkers and cyclists using the local PROWs are judged to be of high susceptibility to change as their attention is likely to be focussed on the landscape views. Residents also have a high susceptibility to change as they are static receptors.

8.5 Road users within the study area have some views over the wider landscape and are considered to have a medium susceptibility.

8.6 Visitors to the Sugarswell Business Centre and Shenington C of E Primary School will not be focused on the wider landscape and have a low susceptibility to change.

Value of View

8.7 Parts of the wider study area lie within the Cotswolds AONB. These views are of high value in recognition of the scenic quality of views and the value likely to be placed on views, including by tourists.

8.8 Views from the Macmillan Way and d'Arcy Dalton Way are Promoted footpaths are of regional value. These routes are promoted at a county or regional level, in recognition of their wider recreational use and the value likely to be attached to views by visitors from the county or wider region.

8.9 Views from within Shenington and Alkerton Conservation Area are of local value. Users of footpaths which form part of the circular route to Shenington from Upton House are also of local value, this route is promoted at a local level and is likely to attract visitors from the local area.

8.10 Residents of surrounding properties and visitors to local businesses will experience private views across the Site. These views will be valued by residents and workers at a community value.

Receptor Sensitivity

8.11 In accordance with Method Table 8 at Appendix A, the sensitivity of each identified visual receptor is set out in **Table 6** below.

Table 6: Visual Receptor Sensitivity

Receptor	Viewpoint	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
1 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/11/20	3	Local	High	Medium
2 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/1/10	5	Regional	High	High
3 - Users of PRow Epwell Bridleway 203/10/10	12	Community	High	Medium
4 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/2/80	6	Community	High	Medium
5 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/10/10	7	Regional	High	High
6 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/12/40	11	Community	High	Medium
7 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/8/10	8, 9	Community	High	Medium
8 - Users of PRow Ratley and Upton Footpath 256/SM177/1	10	Local	High	Medium
9 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/16/10	13	Community	High	Medium
R1 - Users of Rattlecombe Road	1, 4	Local	Medium	Medium
R2 - Users of Stocking Lane	2	Local	Medium	Medium

Receptor	Viewpoint	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity
R3 - Users of Sugarswell Lane	Not Available	Community	Medium	Low
R4 - Users of unnamed road to the east of Alkerton	6	Community	Medium	Low
R5 - Users of Epwell Road	Not Available	Community	Medium	Low
R6 - Users of Mill Lane	Not Available	Community	Medium	Low
R7 - Users of The Level	1	Community	Medium	Low
R8 - Users of Kenhill Road	Not Available	Community	Medium	Low
A - Residents of Rattlecombe Road	Not Available	Local	High	Medium
B - Residents of Stocking Lane (including Long Acre)	Not Available	Local	Medium	Medium
C - Visitors to Shenington Airfield	Not Available	Community	Medium	Low
D - Visitors to Sugarswell Business Centre	Not Available	Community	Low	Low
E - Visitors to Upton House	Not Available	Regional	High	High
F - Visitors to Shenington C of E Primary School	Not Available	Community	Low	Low

Visual Effects during Construction

8.12 During construction visual impacts will arise from construction activities including site compounds and parking; the storage of materials; operational plant; and the construction of buildings, structures and landscape. The effects of construction works generally will be short term and temporary in nature. All construction works will be carried out in accordance with best practice to avoid, reduce or limit the extent of negative visual effects as far as possible.

8.13 The greatest levels of change during construction will be experienced by those receptors immediately adjoining the Proposed Development. This is due to the proximity to the Site and the extent of construction works that will be visible to receptors.

Users of Public Rights of Way

8.14 Users of PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/11/20 are close to the Site, however views will vary depending on users' location. Where the PRoW follows Kenhill Road user may have glimpsed views towards the taller elements of construction beyond the existing residential dwellings along Stocking Lane. From Viewpoint 3, on Shenington Airfield, there may be some distant, glimpsed views towards construction activity in winter months beyond intervening hedgerows. During construction, a small proportion of the view from the footpath would be affected in the short-term. The low magnitude of effect on views and medium sensitivity of PRoW users would result in a minor adverse overall effect.

8.15 From PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/1/10 there are some glimpsed views across the Site towards residential dwellings along Stocking Lane in summer months, which are likely to be slightly more open in winter. During construction users of the footpath would have views (approximately 500 m distant) of the construction of 2 storey properties in the central part of the Site, seen beyond intervening pastoral fields and dense field boundary hedgerows and trees. During construction, a small proportion of the view from the footpath would be affected in the short-term. The low magnitude of effect on views and high sensitivity of PRoW users would result in a minor adverse overall effect.

8.16 Users of PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/16/10 would experience a low adverse magnitude of effect on views during construction and in the short-term. These open views from the PRoW would include glimpsed views towards the taller elements of construction and possibly the ridges of residential dwellings along the northern site boundary. During construction, a small proportion of the view from the footpath would be affected in the short-term. The low magnitude of effect on views and medium sensitivity of PRoW users would result in a minor adverse overall effect.

8.17 From all other PRoW considered as part of the visual assessment construction work will be barely discernible beyond layers of intervening vegetation. The magnitude of effect will be negligible.

Road Users

- 8.18 Users of Rattlecombe Road have varying views towards the Site depending on distance, angle and levels of intervening vegetation. During construction users of Rattlecombe Road to the immediate east of the Site (Viewpoint 1) would have near and open views looking west towards the construction of residential dwellings. From Viewpoint 4 views towards the Site are well screened in summer months. In winter there are likely to be glimpsed views towards construction activity through gaps in existing vegetation. The magnitude of effect during construction will be up to moderate negative, with an overall moderate adverse effect.
- 8.19 Users of Stocking Lane will have direct, but channelled views towards construction activity along the existing agricultural access point. During construction there would be some localised disturbance and road users would have channelled views towards the construction of residential dwellings within the central part of the Site. The majority of construction activity will be screened from Stocking Lane by the existing boundary hedgerow to be retained. Overall, the construction of the proposed development would affect a small proportion of the view in the short-term. The magnitude of effect during construction would be low negative, with an overall minor adverse effect.
- 8.20 From Sugarswell Lane and the unnamed road to the east of Alkerton views of construction activity will be almost entirely screened by layers of intervening vegetation. The magnitude of effect during construction will be negligible, with an overall negligible effect.
- 8.21 Users of Epwell Road and Mill Lane are close to the Site but views towards it are heavily screened by existing roadside hedgerows which remain intact. Construction activity would be barely perceptible and the magnitude of effect and overall effect during construction would be negligible.
- 8.22 Users of The Level have clear views across the Site at the junction with Rattlecombe Road. In the short term, there will be some disturbance; however, hoardings and fencing will prevent views of the majority of construction. The magnitude of effect will be moderate negative at the junction with Rattlecombe Road, but low negative to negligible elsewhere. The overall effect will be minor adverse.
- 8.23 Users of Kenhill Road will have glimpsed views towards construction activity through gaps in the existing built form along Stocking Lane. The magnitude of effect during construction will be low negative with a minor adverse effect.

Residential and Other Properties

- 8.24 Residents of properties along Rattlecombe Road which have direct close views over the Site will experience some of the highest levels of change during construction. Views will vary depending on the angle and levels of intervening vegetation, but are possible from both upper and lower storey windows. Construction activity will occupy a large proportion of the view for the short-term. The magnitude of effect on views from residential properties with direct close views of the Site will be moderate negative, with an overall moderate adverse effect.

- 8.25 Residents of properties along Stocking Lane will have varying views of construction activity depending on angle and levels of intervening vegetation. In most instances views towards the Site are limited to upper storey windows. During construction views from these properties will be of a constantly changing landscape and construction activity will occupy a large proportion of the view in the short-term. The magnitude of effect will be moderate negative with an overall moderate adverse effect.

Other Receptors

- 8.26 Construction of the Proposed Development would be visible from some localised areas within Shenington Airfield, but such views would be experienced in the context of existing activity in the Airfield, leading to a low negative magnitude of effect. The overall effect during construction would be minor adverse.
- 8.27 From Sugarswell Business Centre the Site is beyond layers of intervening vegetation and construction activity would be barely discernible, even in winter months. The magnitude of effect and overall effect during construction would be negligible.
- 8.28 Visitors to Upton House would have no views towards construction activity as woodland, parkland and ornamental tree and shrub planting channel and filter views. The overall effect during construction would be negligible.
- 8.29 Shenington C of E Primary School lies to the west Site and is physically and visually separated from it by an agricultural field, with hedgerows on all boundaries. During the winter months there are likely to be glimpsed views through the existing tree belt, where construction activity will be visible. During summer months the taller elements of construction may be visible above the existing hedgerow (approximately 2m high). Receptors will be focused upon the particular activity in which they are engaged, but the wider landscape forms part of their attention. The magnitude of effect during construction will be low negative with an overall minor adverse effect.

Visual Effects during Operation

- 8.30 The spatial layout of development areas, open space and landscaping, as well as existing features to be retained, has been designed to complement and respect the character and context of the settlement and the surrounding countryside.
- 8.31 Existing boundary vegetation is to be retained wherever possible, creating a mature landscape framework for the Proposed Development to sit in. Further tree planting within the Site will break up the development and soften the built form. At year 1 post-completion, planting will have a minimal effect and would not mitigate effects substantially. As planting matures the magnitude of effect will decrease, reducing the overall effect by year 15.
- 8.32 Following the completion of the Proposed Development the greatest levels of effects will still be experienced by those receptors closest to the Site. Such effects have been mitigated by the design of the Proposed Development in conjunction with planting, which over time will become established and help to integrate the built form into its surroundings.

Users of Public Rights of Way

- 8.33 Following completion users of PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/11/20 will have varying views towards the Site depending on their position on the footpath. Where the PRoW follows Kenhill Road users may have glimpsed views towards the ridges of new residential dwellings along the northern site boundary, but these would be seen in context with the upper storeys and roofline of existing residential dwellings along Stocking Lane. From Viewpoint 3, on Shenington Airfield, there may be some distant, glimpsed views towards the completed development in winter months beyond intervening hedgerows. The completed development will occupy a small proportion of these views. At year 1 post-completion the magnitude of effect will be low negative, with an overall minor adverse effect, decreasing to negligible by year 15 as proposed planting within the framework of the development matures, helping to soften views of the roofscape.
- 8.34 Users of PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/1/10 will have glimpsed views towards the completed development, with views more open in the winter months. At year 1 post-completion proposed planting will have little effect and there will be a low negative magnitude of effect with a minor adverse overall effect. The Landscaping Layout shows areas of new tree planting to the south of the proposed residential dwellings; in the long-term this will further screen views of the Proposed Development, decreasing the magnitude of effect. At year 15 the magnitude of effect will be negligible, with an overall negligible effect.
- 8.35 Following completion, users of PRoW Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/16/10 may have some glimpsed views towards the roofline of residential properties along the northern site boundary; these would be seen in conjunction with the upper storeys and roofline of existing dwellings along Stocking Lane and would not appear incongruous. Proposed mitigation will do little to soften or filter these views and the magnitude of effect will be low negative at both year 1 and Year 15 with an overall minor adverse effect.
- 8.36 From all other PRoW considered as part of the visual assessment the completed development will be barely discernible beyond layers of intervening vegetation. The magnitude of effect would remain negligible.

Road Users

- 8.37 Users of Rattlecombe Road adjacent to the eastern site boundary would experience near, open views of the Proposed Development on pastoral land to the west of the road. The reinstatement of the ironstone wall would result in a small, but beneficial improvement to the western approach into the village. New development would be clearly visible to the west of the road and would be elevated above the road level, but set back beyond an area of public open space. The Proposed Development would form a large proportion of the view and the magnitude of effect would be high negative. The high negative magnitude of effect on views and medium sensitivity of road users would result in a major adverse effect. At Year 1 post-completion there will be clear views across the Site. It is anticipated that after 15 years the residential development will be partially filtered by proposed tree planting. There would still be some views towards the Proposed Development, particularly to upper storeys of residential dwellings along the eastern site boundary. Overall after 15 years and in the long-term, the proportion of the view affected by built development would be reduced to a moderate proportion and the magnitude of effect on views to the west would be moderate adverse.
- 8.38 Following completion views from Stocking Lane would vary depending on angle and levels of intervening vegetation. Views generally will be channelled along the existing agricultural access point, with glimpsed views through the existing hedgerow in winter months. From the Conservation Area boundary there will be glimpsed views towards the completed development through gaps in existing vegetation, and beyond the bungalows along Stocking Lane. At year 1 post-completion proposed planting will have little effect and the magnitude of effect will remain low negative with a minor adverse effect. Proposed planting will be beneficial in the long-term, but at year 15 the overall effect will remain minor adverse.
- 8.39 Sugarswell Lane and the unnamed road to the east of Alkerton are relatively distant from the Site and views of the completed development will be almost entirely screened by layers of intervening vegetation. The magnitude of effect at both year 1 and year 15 will be negligible, with an overall negligible effect.
- 8.40 Users of Epwell Road and Mill Lane are close to the Site but views towards it are heavily screened by existing roadside hedgerows which would remain intact. The completed development would be barely perceptible and the magnitude of effect and overall effect post-completion would be negligible.
- 8.41 Following completion users of The Level will have oblique views towards the completed development at the junction with Rattlecombe Road. At year 1 post-completion proposed planting will have little effect and the magnitude of effect will remain moderate negative with an overall minor adverse effect. Proposed planting will have little effect on this view and at year 15 the overall effect will remain minor adverse.
- 8.42 Users of Kenhill Road will have glimpsed views towards the completed development through gaps in the existing built form along Stocking Lane. The magnitude of effect will be low negative with a minor adverse effect. Proposed planting will have little effect on these view and at year 15 the overall effect will remain minor adverse.

Residential and Other Properties

- 8.43 Residents of properties along Rattlecombe Road will have varying views towards the completed development from upper and ground floor windows. For properties directly opposite the Site at year 1 post-completion there will be a localised high negative, magnitude of effect, with an overall major adverse effect. For residents of properties not directly opposite the Site, there may still be oblique views towards the completed development. Residents of these properties will experience a moderate negative magnitude of effect, with an overall moderate adverse effect. Proposed dwellings along the eastern site boundary are set back from the road beyond an area of public open space. Over time proposed tree planting will mature, decreasing the magnitude of effect to moderate negative by year 15. The overall effect will be moderate adverse.
- 8.44 Residents of properties along Stocking Lane will have varying views towards the completed development depending on distance, angle and levels of intervening vegetation. Following completion residents of these properties will have oblique views towards the Site from upper storey windows. The existing hedgerow along the northern boundary to be retained will continue to filter ground level views. Initially the effects of landscape mitigation will be small and the magnitude of effect will remain moderate negative with an overall moderate adverse effect. Mitigation will have little impact on these views, and the completed development will occupy a moderate proportion of the view for the long-term. The overall effect at year 15 will remain moderate adverse.

Other Receptors

- 8.45 The rooftops of the completed development would be visible from some localised areas within Shenington Airfield, but such views would be experienced in the context of existing activity in the Airfield, leading to a low negative magnitude of effect. The overall effect would be minor adverse. Tree planting within public open space along the western site boundary will help to soften and filter views of rooftops in the long-term, but the overall effect would remain minor adverse at year 15.
- 8.46 From Sugarswell Business Centre the Site is beyond layers of intervening vegetation and the proposed development would be barely discernible, even in winter months. The magnitude of effect and overall effect post-completion would be negligible.
- 8.47 Visitors to Upton House would have no views towards the completed development beyond layers of intervening vegetation. The overall effect post-completion would be negligible.
- 8.48 Shenington C of E Primary School lies to the west of the Site. The school boundaries are well vegetated, however the rooftops of the completed development will be visible from within the school grounds. The magnitude of effect at year 1 post-completion will be low negative with an overall minor adverse effect. It has been assumed that tree planting within the public open space to the west of the Site will screen and soften some views towards the proposed development, but the magnitude of effect would remain low negative at year 15 with an overall minor adverse effect.

Table 7: Visual Receptor Overall Effect

Receptor	Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Effect
1 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/11/20	3	Medium	Construction	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 1	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
2 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/1/10	5	High	Construction	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 1	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
3 - Users of PRow Epwell Bridleway 203/10/10	12	Medium	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
4 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/2/80	6	Medium	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
5 - Users of PRow Shenington with	7	High	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible

Receptor	Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Effect
Alkerton Footpath 339/10/10			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
6 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/12/40	11	Medium	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
7 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Bridleway 339/8/10	8, 9	Medium	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
8 - Users of PRow Ratley and Upton Footpath 256/SM177/1	10	Medium	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
9 - Users of PRow Shenington with Alkerton Footpath 339/16/10	13	Medium	Construction	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 1	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 15	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
	1, 4	Medium	Construction	Moderate Negative	Moderate Adverse

Receptor	Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Effect
R1 - Users of Rattlecombe Road			Year 1	High Negative	Major Adverse
			Year 15	Moderate Negative	Moderate Adverse
R2 - Users of Stocking Lane	2	Medium	Construction	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 1	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 15	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
R3 - Users of Sugarswell Lane	Not Available	Low	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
R4 - Users of unnamed road to the east of Alkerton	6	Low	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
R5 - Users of Epwell Road	Not Available	Low	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
		Low	Construction	Negligible	Negligible

Receptor	Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Effect
R6 - Users of Mill Lane	Not Available		Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
R7 - Users of The Level	1	Low	Construction	Moderate Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 1	Moderate Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 15	Moderate Negative	Minor Adverse
R8 - Users of Kenhill Road	13	Low	Construction	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 1	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 15	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
A - Residents of Rattlecombe Road	Not Available	Medium	Construction	Moderate Negative	Moderate Adverse
			Year 1	Up to High Negative	Up to Major Adverse
			Year 15	Moderate Negative	Moderate Adverse
B - Residents of Stocking Lane (including Long Acre)	Not Available	Medium	Construction	Moderate Negative	Moderate Adverse
			Year 1	Moderate Negative	Moderate Adverse
			Year 15	Moderate Negative	Moderate Adverse
		Low	Construction	Low Negative	Minor Adverse

Receptor	Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Development Phase	Magnitude of Effect	Overall Effect
C - Visitors to Shenington Airfield	Not Available		Year 1	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 15	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
D - Visitors to Sugarswell Business Centre	Not Available	Low	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
E - Visitors to Upton House	Not Available	High	Construction	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 1	Negligible	Negligible
			Year 15	Negligible	Negligible
F - Visitors to Shenington C of E Primary School	Not Available	Low	Construction	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 1	Low Negative	Minor Adverse
			Year 15	Low Negative	Minor Adverse

9.0 Summary

General

- 9.1 This report presents the assessment of the anticipated effects on landscape character and views of the proposed development of land to the south of Stocking Lane, Shenington, incorporating 49 residential dwellings, associated infrastructure and landscaping.
- 9.2 The assessment considers the effects of the completed scheme on landscape character and visual amenity from the surrounding properties, roads and Public Rights of Way network; from construction to completion. The effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape and visual amenity have been assessed in accordance with the Guidelines for Visual and Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3). The nature and magnitude of landscape and visual effects will change during the various stages of the Proposed Development and have been assessed during the construction and operational phase. To take into account the establishment of the Proposed Development (in particular proposed vegetation), the operational phase has been assessed in the short to medium term (from year 1 to year 15) and long-term (year 15 and beyond). The assessment of effects is based on the submitted planning application drawings.

Landscape Baseline and Landscape Effects

- 9.3 The Site comprises approximately 2.8ha of greenfield land, part of which is used for horse grazing.
- 9.4 The Site is not subject to statutory landscape designation, however the study area encompasses parts of the nearby Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Upton House Registered Park and Garden.
- 9.5 At the County level the Site lies within the Farmland Plateau LCT, with parts of Shenington within the Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes LCT. The Farmland Plateau LCT is characterised by open ridges, large arable fields, rectilinear plantations and shelterbelts, sparse settlement and long, straight roads running along ridge summits. The Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes LCT includes pastoral and wooded landscapes associated with the steep slopes and valleys of small streams and main rivers.
- 9.6 The assessment of landscape effects has been carried out using the established hierarchy of published Landscape Character Assessments from national to county level. In conjunction with field work sensitive landscape receptors within the study area have been identified.
- 9.7 The study has assessed the potential effects on landscape character and concluded that there would be some localised moderate adverse in the short-term, which would become minor adverse in the long-term. The landscape character of the site would change as a result of the proposed development but would be consistent with its surroundings and would not impinge materially on landscape character beyond the Site.

- 9.8 Balanced against the negative effects on landscape character of built form is the reinstatement of the ironstone wall along the eastern site boundary and the historic hedgerow within the Site.
- 9.9 The Site is approximately 930m to the east of the Cotswolds AONB, which is characterised by the Cotswold Hills which rise above surrounding agricultural land. The Site forms part of a transitional landscape on the fringes of but outside the AONB. Construction activity will introduce uncharacteristic elements to the landscape, and would have a localised effect on the AONB's natural beauty as enjoyed from local PRoWs. From within the AONB views towards the Site are limited to gaps in existing field boundary hedgerows, and in many instances the Site is barely discernible beyond layers of intervening vegetation.
- 9.10 From Upton House Registered Park and Garden views towards the Site are screened by woodland, parkland and ornamental tree and shrub planting.

Visual Baseline and Visual Effects

- 9.11 A series of representative views surrounding the Site have been identified through desktop and field studies and pre-application advice from the Cotswolds National Landscape. 13 representative viewpoints have been assessed from publicly accessible locations including roads, in the proximity of houses, and from PRoW.
- 9.12 The location of the Site, existing vegetation and built form limit visibility of the Site to the near to middle distance. Near distance views are possible from Public Rights of Way within the local landscape, the local road network and adjacent residential properties. From the wider landscape the Site is barely discernible beyond layers of intervening vegetation and built form.
- 9.13 The greatest level of visual effects will be experienced by the closest receptors: primarily users of Rattlecombe Road to the east, Stocking Lane to the north and surrounding residential properties. Beyond this, existing vegetation along the site boundaries and within the wider landscape provides some filtering. During construction the overall effect on these receptors will be up to moderate adverse. Such effects will be mitigated by the design of the Proposed Development in conjunction with planting, although it will take time for new planting to become established. Long-term adverse effects will be restricted to those receptors close to the Site where the residual effect in most instances will be moderate or minor adverse.

Conclusion

- 9.14 This LVA has found that the effects of the Proposed Development will be restricted to a localised geographical area and would not result in substantial harm to landscape character beyond the Site boundary, nor would there be substantial detrimental effects to visual amenity across a wide area. The Proposed Development would not result in the alteration or loss of any landscape features or elements important to landscape character. It would not affect any other key characteristics of the landscape to the extent that diversity or quality of landscape will be substantially diminished.

- 9.15 The design of the Proposed Development has responded to the landscape and visual context to the Site by retaining boundary vegetation where possible within a framework of new strategic planting to create a sensitive transition between the Site and wider countryside.

References

Data Sources

- Ordnance Survey maps (1:25,000 Explorer Series);
- Historic Ordnance Survey maps;
- Aerial images;
- CPRE Night Blight Mapping (nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps); and
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC Map) (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>).

Legislation and Policy

- The National Planning Policy Framework, July 2021;
- National Planning Practice Guidance;
- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996;
- Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Part One), July 2015;
- Adopted Cherwell local Plan 2011 - 2031 (Part 1) Partial Review - Oxford's Unmet Housing Need, September 2020; and
- Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011.

Landscape Character Documents

- Northamptonshire Uplands National Character Area Profile 95, Natural England, 2014;
- Cotswolds National Character Area Profile 107, Natural England, 2015;
- Dunsmore and Feldon National Character Area Profile 96, Natural England, 2013;
- Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study, Oxfordshire County Council, Natural England and The Earth Trust, 2004;
- Cherwell District Landscape Assessment, Cobham Resource Consultants, 1995;
- The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment, LDA, 2004;
- The Cotswolds AONB Landscape Strategy and Guidelines, Cotswolds AONB Board, June 2016;
- Cherwell Landscape Assessment, Cherwell District Council, 1995; and
- Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines, Warwickshire County Council, November 1993.

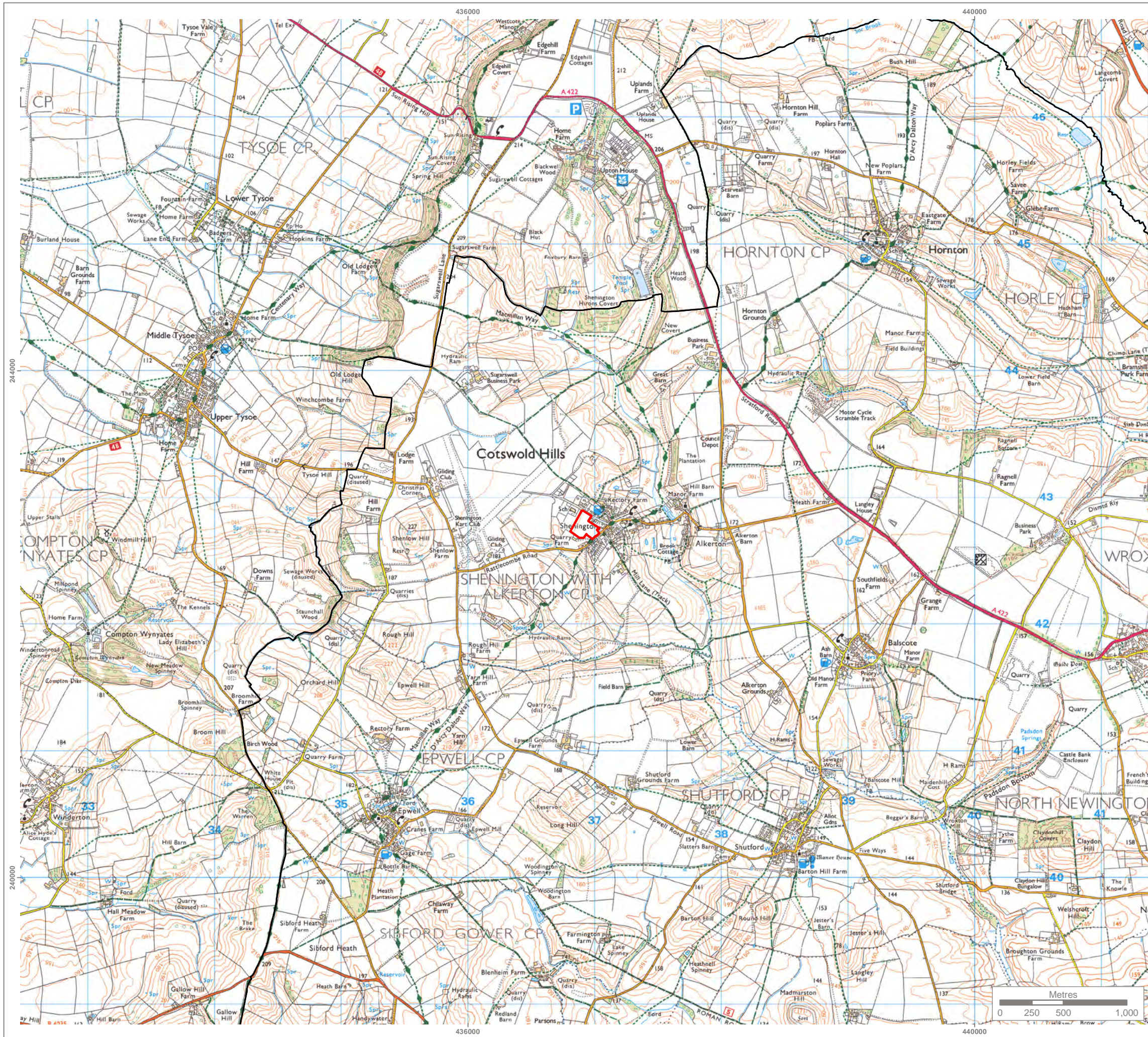
Best Practice Guidance

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, Third Edition 2013);
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England 2014;
- Visual Representation of Development Proposals. Technical Guidance Note 06/19. Landscape Institute, September 2019;
- Assessing landscape value outside national designations. Technical Guidance Note 02/21. Landscape Institute, May 2021; and
- BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction –

Recommendations (BSi, April 2012)

Other Guidance

- Cherwell Residential Design Guide, Cherwell District Council, July 2018;
- The Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018 - 2023, The Cotswolds Conservation Board, December 2018;
- Housing Position Statement, Cotswolds Conservation Board, April 2021;
- Landscape-led Development Position Statement, Cotswolds Conservation Board, April 2021;
- Tranquillity Position Statement, Cotswolds Conservation Board, June 2019;
- Development in the setting of the Cotswolds AONB Position Statement, Cotswolds Conservation Board, June 2019; and
- Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change, Cotswolds AONB Partnership, 2004.



KEY

- Site boundary
- District boundary

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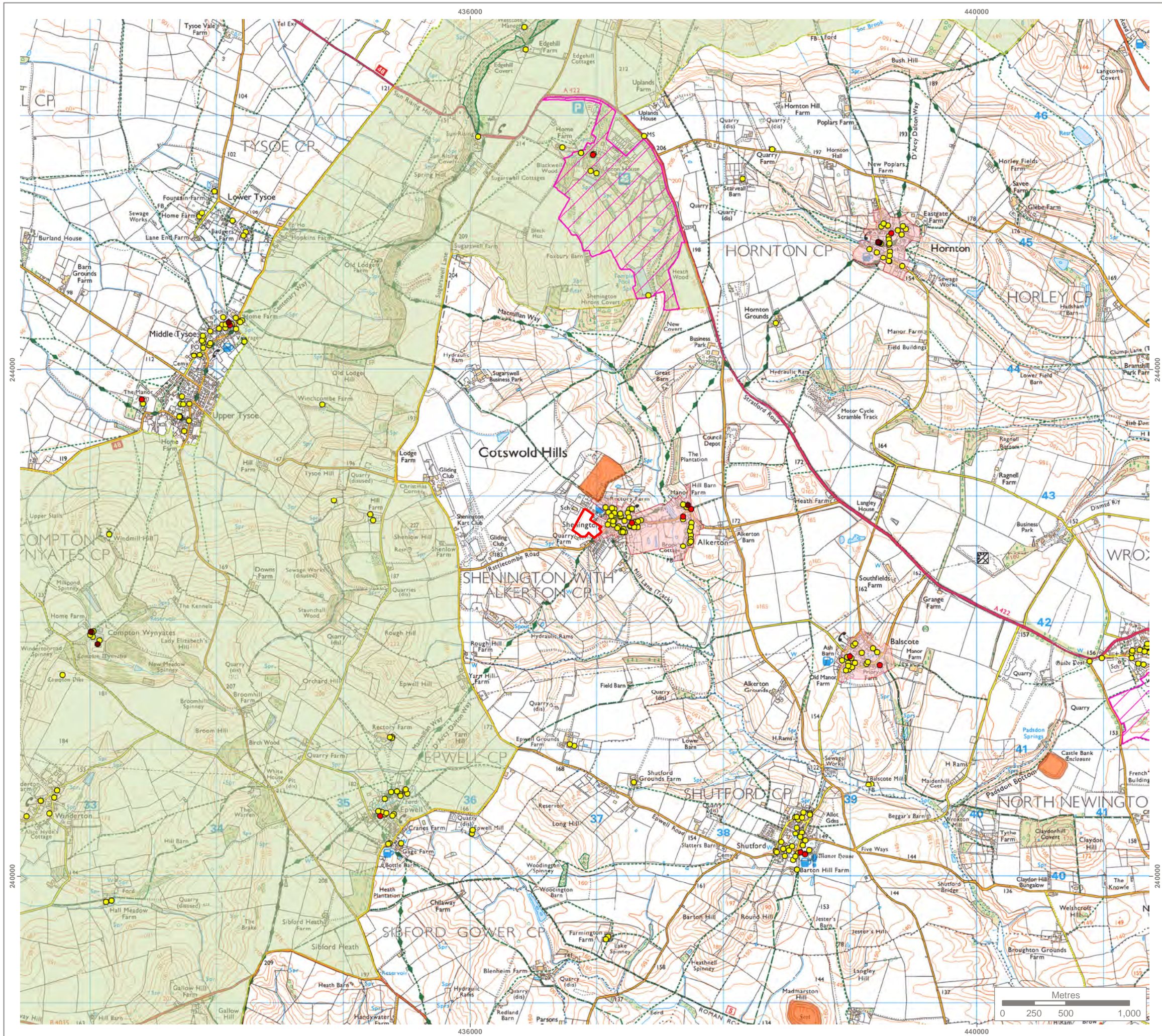
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Tel 01925 844004 e-mail tep@tep.uk.com www.tep.uk.com

Project
Stocking Lane, Sherington

Title
Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

Drawing Number
G8938.01.001

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KEY

Site boundary

Environmental Designations

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Ancient woodland

Conservation Area

Historic Designations

Grade I listed building

Grade II* listed building

Grade II listed building

Registered Park and Garden

Scheduled monument

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Site Map



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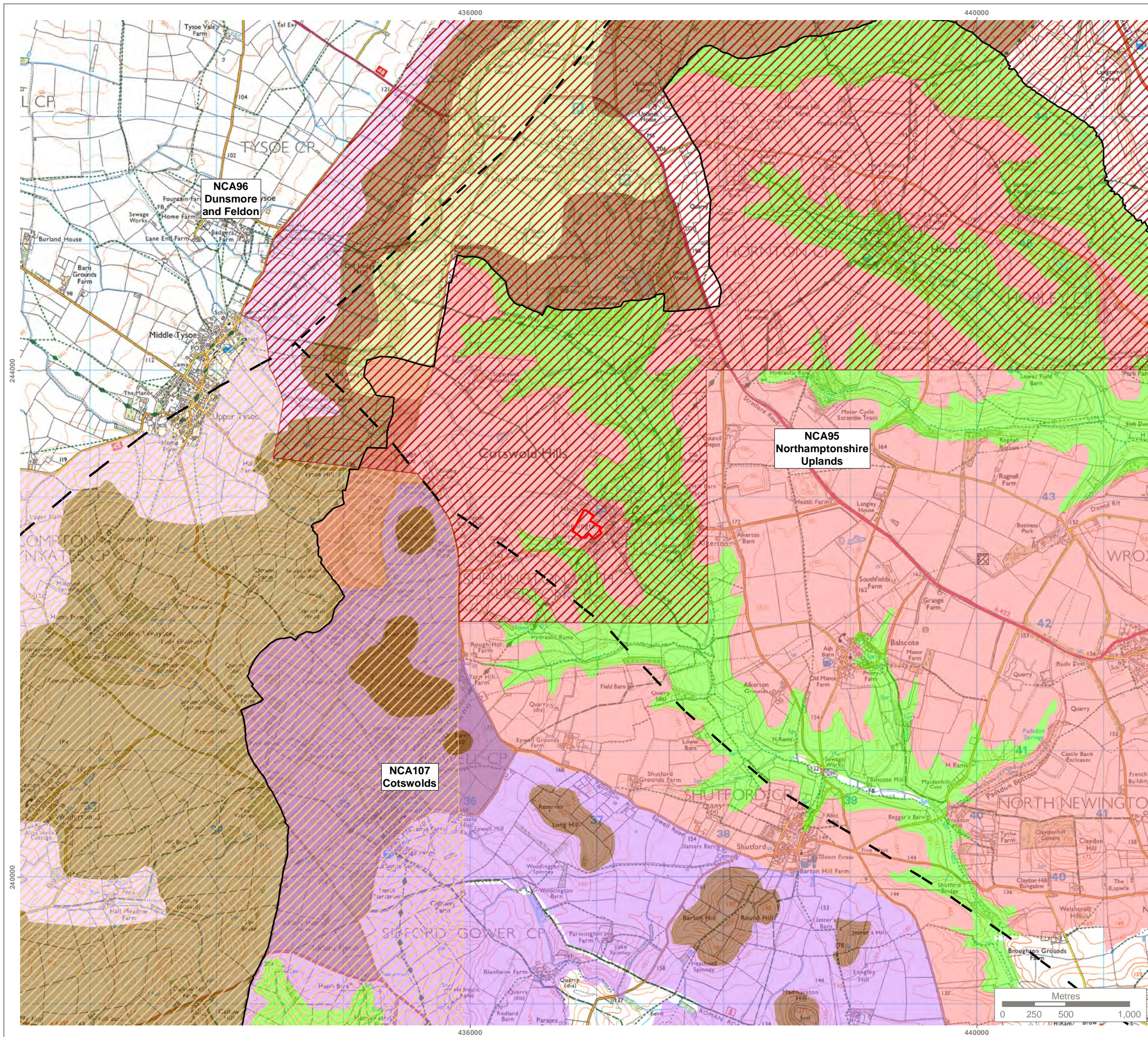
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Figure 2 - Landscape and Environmental Designations

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KEY

- Site boundary
- National Character Area
- District boundary
- Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study**
 - Farmland Plateau LCT
 - Pasture Hills LCT
 - Rolling Village Pastures LCT
 - Wooded Pasture Valleys and Slopes LCT
- Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment**
 - LCT 2 Escarpment
 - LCT 7 High Wold
 - LCT 19 Unwooded Vale
- Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines**
 - Cotswolds - Plateau Redlands and Edge Hill
 - Cotswolds - The Wolds

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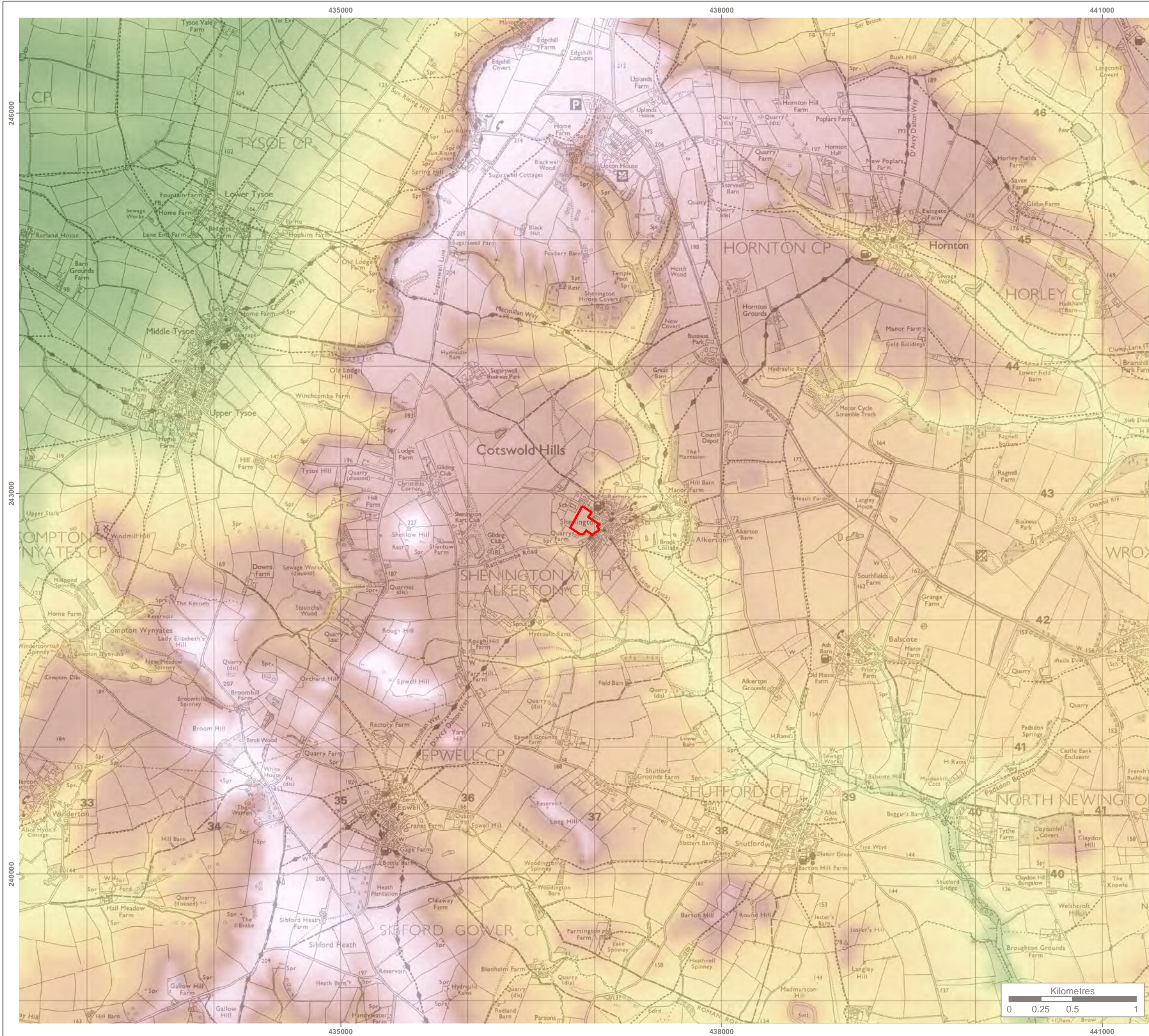
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Figure 3 - Landscape Character

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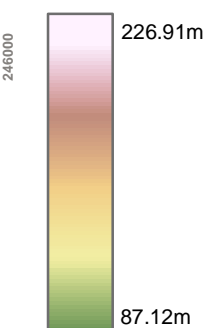
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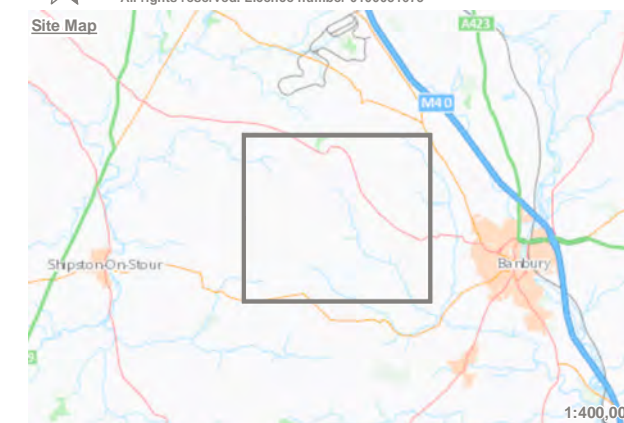
 Site boundary

Elevation (in metres above OS Datum)



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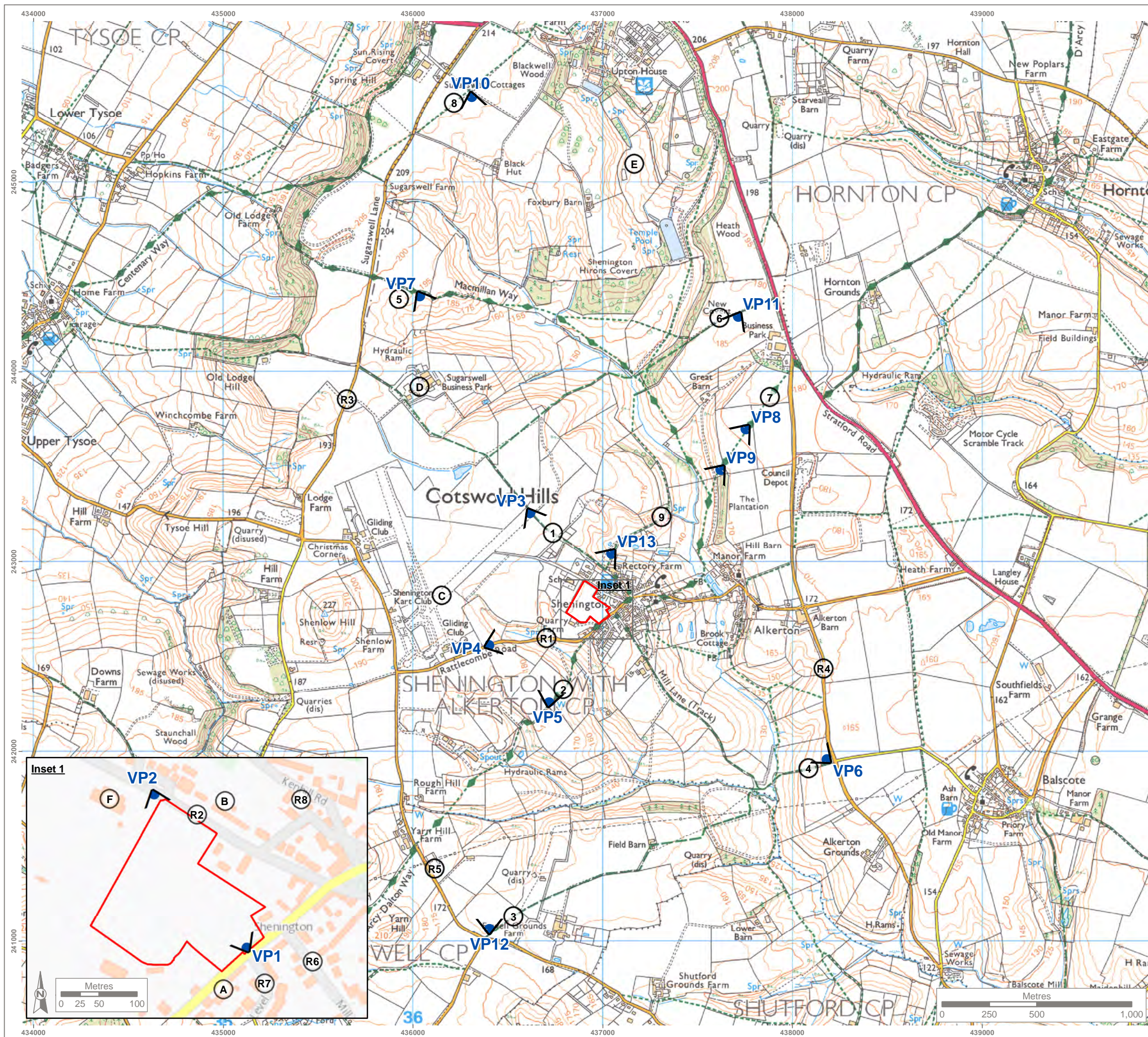
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Figure 4 - Topography

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KEY

- Site boundary
- Viewpoint location
- Visual receptor

- 1 - Users of PRoW 339/11/20
- 2 - Users of PRoW 339/1/10
- 3 - Users of PRoW 203/10/10
- 4 - Users of PRoW 339/2/80
- 5 - Users of PRoW 339/10/10
- 6 - Users of PRoW 339/12/40
- 7 - Users of PRoW 339/8/10
- 8 - Users of PRoW 256/SM177/1
- 9 - Users of PRoW Sherington with Alkerton Footpath 339/16/10
- A - Residents of Rattlecombe Road

- B - Residents of Stocking Lane
- C - Visitors to Sherington Airfield
- D - Visitors to Sugarswell Business Park
- E - Visitors to Upton House
- F - Sherington C of E Primary School
- R1 - Users of Rattlecombe Road
- R2 - Users of Stocking Lane
- R3 - Users of Sugarswell Lane
- R4 - Users of unnamed road to the east of Alkerton
- R5 - Users of Epwell Road
- R6 - Users of Mill Lane
- R7 - Users of The Level
- R8 - Users of Kenhill Road

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Figure 5 - Visual Receptors and Viewpoint Locations

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