

LAND SOUTH OF GREEN LANE CHESTERTON

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

Prepared on behalf of
WATES DEVELOPMENTS

September 2022



Ref: 2930-APA-RE-01-RP-L-0001 Rev. P04

PLANNING

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APPENDIX A:

METHODOLOGY AND TERMS FOR
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been commissioned by Boyer Planning, on behalf of Wates Developments. It has been prepared by Landscape Architects, Allen Pyke Associates Ltd., and provides an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed residential development at Land South of Green Lane, Chesterton.

1.2 The description of the Development is *“Outline planning application for up to 150 homes, parkland, sports pitches and public open space, alongside landscaping, SuDs, green / blue and hard infrastructure, with vehicular and pedestrian/cycle accesses (all matters reserved except for means of access).”*

Overview of Landscape & Visual Considerations

1.3 The Site abuts the settlement edge of Chesterton - a small South Oxfordshire village south west of the expanding suburban areas of Bicester.

1.4 It is wholly contained within the Wooded Estatelands of the Cotswolds Regional Landscape Character Area. It is not located within, nor openly visible from, any designated landscape. The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is over 10km to the west.

1.5 The Site’s most valued landscape features are the mature hedgerows and trees which form its boundaries and provide a sense of containment from the wider, relatively flat landscape, whilst also filtering views from the village’s southern edge.

1.6 It is visually well contained, being mainly visible from residents at Vespasian Way and motorists using Green Lane. There are limited views from the edge of the Chesterton Conservation Area which abuts the Site along its north eastern edge. These are not views valued in the Conservation Area Appraisal. In the wider landscape potential views of the new development may be possible from the footpaths leading to Little Chesterton; the Bicester and North Oxfordshire Cricket Club and the grounds of Bicester Health Club and Spa.

1.7 Retention of the hedgerows and trees along the site boundaries and introduction of new structure planting will reduce the effects on visual receptors. Furthermore the scale and location of the new built form will be appropriate to its immediate setting with significant areas of open space providing positive landscape elements which respond to published character guidance.

1.8 The LVA concludes that the Site can accommodate the proposed change without any significant adverse landscape or visual effects.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 The Appraisal applies a methodology developed by Allen Pyke Associates based on best practice as set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Third Edition, 2013 (GLVIA3) published by the Landscape Institute and IEMA. (See Appendix A)

2.2 GLVIA3 states that the role of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is to *‘consider the effects of development on the landscape as a resource in its own right and the effects on views and visual amenity’*. It refers to ‘landscape’, as adopted by the Council of Europe in the European Landscape Convention 2002, as being *‘an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and /or human factors.’* The application of the Convention is inclusive referring to natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas, including land, inland water and marine areas and it goes on to state that it *‘concerns landscapes that might be considered outstanding as well as every day or degraded landscapes’*.

2.3 The GLVIA3 requires that professional judgements are *‘reasonable and based on clear and transparent methods’* and that *‘in carrying out an LVIA the landscape professional must always take an independent stance, and fully and transparently address both the negative and positive effects of a scheme in a way that is accessible and reliable for all parties concerned’*.

2.4 A definition of each of the terms used throughout this Appraisal is found in Appendix A.

2.5 The Appraisal is undertaken in two parts; first the baseline study (Section 3.0 below), whereby a combination of desk-based research and site visits (August 2020 and January 2022) are used to assess the existing site conditions and consider the landscape elements (landform, vegetation, historic features, adjacent development, relevant planning policies and key views) that make up the Site and its surrounding context. This information contributes to an assessment of the susceptibility and sensitivity of landscape character and visual amenity.

2.6 Visual amenity considers existing views into, and out of, the Site from a variety of public viewpoints and, where relevant, from residential properties. It should be noted, however, that access to private properties is not usually possible so an assessment based on the nearest accessible viewpoint is used. This process assists in identifying the Zone of Visual Influence of the proposed development and people who have their views changed as a result of the proposals (Visual Receptors).


2.7 The second part (Sections 4.0 and 5.0 below), describe the scheme proposals and provides an assessment of the potential effects on the landscape and visual amenity established in the baseline survey. The results have been used to assess the potential magnitude of change that might be brought about by the proposed development and the significance of any temporary or residual effects.


3.0 BASELINE ASSESSMENT

Site Location

- 3.1 The Site is approximately 14.88ha in area. It is situated on the outskirts of the village of Chesterton in the Cherwell district.
- 3.2 Chesterton is a small village which lies 1km south west of the urban area of Bicester, and 2km north of Junction 9 of the M40 and the A41.
- 3.3 Middleton Stoney, Weston-on-the Green and Wendlebury are similar sized villages which are accessed via the linear road network which cuts between the M40 and A41 across the predominantly flat landscape. Little Chesterton is a small hamlet between Wendlebury and Chesterton. It is accessed by a narrow unnamed road connecting to Green Lane.
- 3.4 Weston-on-the-Green and Chesterton are designated as Conservation Areas.
- 3.5 Notable features within the Study Area include:
 - the open flat airfield associated with RAF Weston-on-the-Green;
 - the knoll formed by Graven Hill which is accentuated in wider views by the Ancient Woodland along its elevated parts;
 - new developments along the south western edge of Bicester, readily visible from the A41 corridor;
 - the M40 corridor is generally at grade but is visually contained by tree belts and localised areas of cutting.
- 3.6 A description of the land which forms the Site's setting (defined by the Study Area adjacent) follows.

LEGEND

 The Site

 Study Area

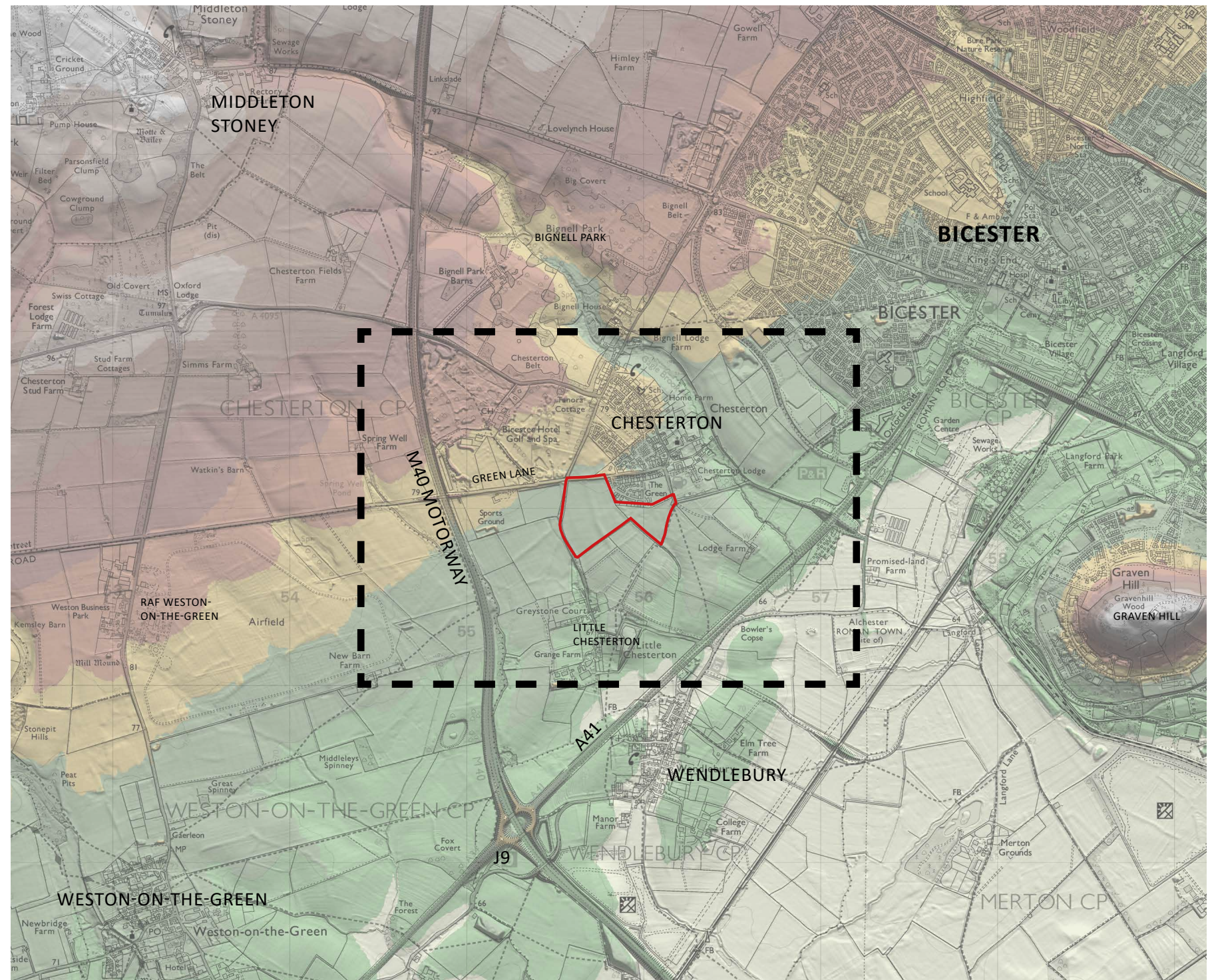






Figure 1: Topography Plan and Study Area

Site Context

- 3.7 Figure 2 identifies the Public Rights of Way within the Study Area. There are no National Trails within 2km of the Site. Footpaths are limited but provide access across the generally flat landscape between the villages and built up areas. The M40 and A41 corridors limit pedestrian connectivity.
- 3.8 Footpath 161-5-10; 161-4-10 and 161-3-10 abut the Site boundary and the north western and eastern edges respectively.
- 3.9 Notable land uses within 2km of the Site include:
- Recent residential development at Vespasian Way;
 - The playing fields and community hall at 'The Green';
 - Bicester Golf Course and Spa;
 - Bicester Sports Association (Sports Club and fields)
- 3.10 The Chesterton Conservation Area lies adjacent to the Site's eastern corner where it contains the Listed Bruern Abbey School and its walled grounds.
- 3.11 A key consideration of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal is the extent to which the Site is visible in views towards, or from, the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.

LEGEND

-  The Site
-  161-6-10 Public Footpath
-  Chesterton Conservation Area
-  Listed Buildings

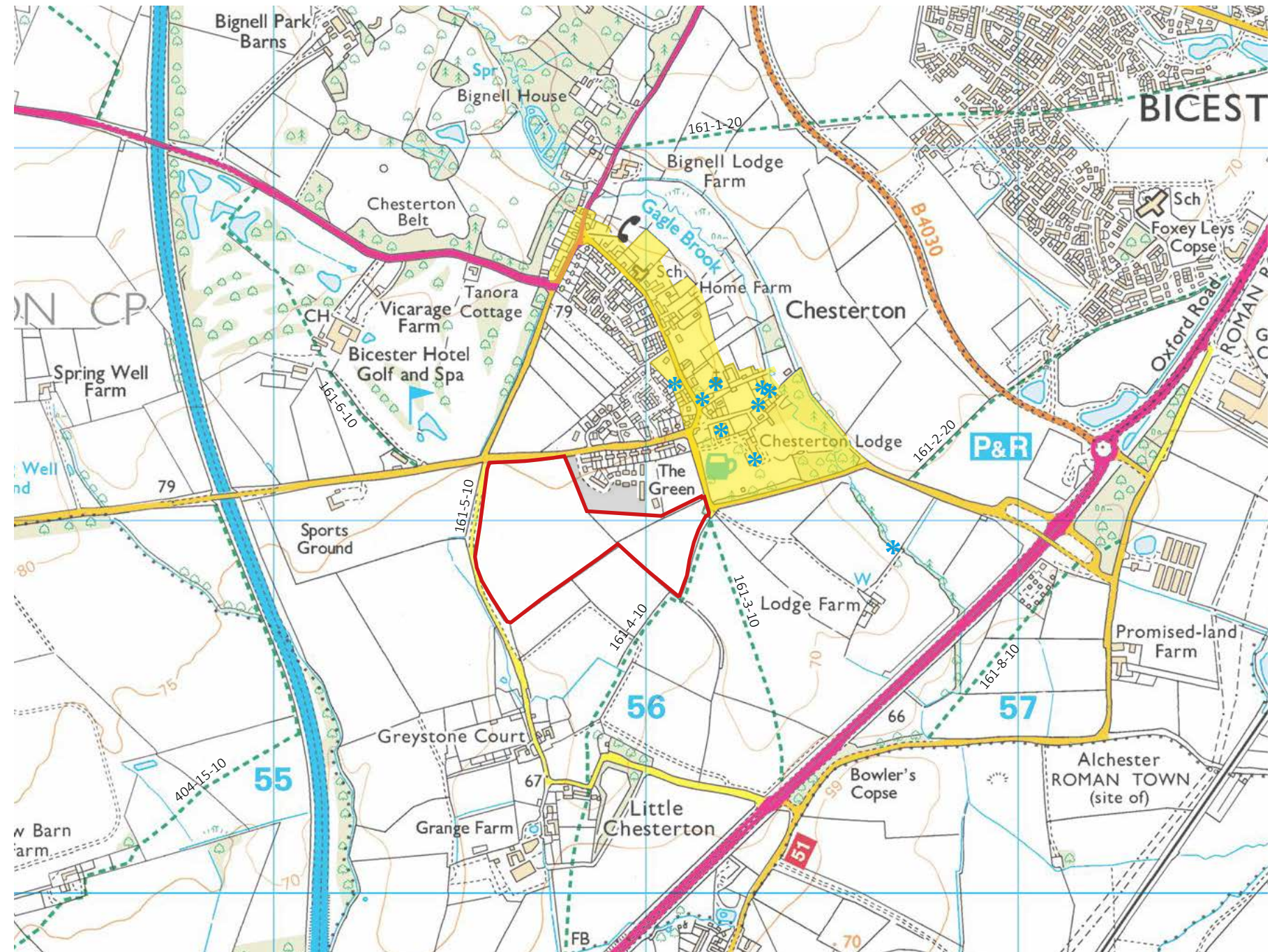
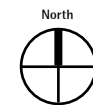


Figure 2: Site Context

Policy Context and Designations

National Policies

3.12 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) gives details of the national planning policy context and was published in 2012 and last updated in July 2021. The document provides the framework within which locally prepared plans for development, can be produced.

3.13 The following sections are relevant to this assessment:

- **Section 2** highlights that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It sets the environmental objective *‘to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.’*
- **Section 5** relates to delivering a sufficient supply of homes, paragraphs 78-80 relate specifically to rural housing. In Paragraph 80 it is noted that development of isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless it meets one or more of the criteria given. This includes where: *‘e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it: is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area’*
- **Section 8** recognises that access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities
- **Section 11** promotes making effective use of land in meeting the needs for homes and other uses and pushes planning policies and decisions to *‘encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside’;*

- **Section 12** focusses on achieving well designed spaces which are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change. It focuses on making ‘beautiful’ and ‘sustainable’ places. Paragraph 131 acknowledges the important contribution trees make to the character and quality of urban environments, whilst setting out a requirement that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly planted trees and existing trees are retained wherever possible.
- **Section 15** highlights the need to contribute to, and enhance, the natural and local environment through various measures listed at paragraph 174 which includes by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

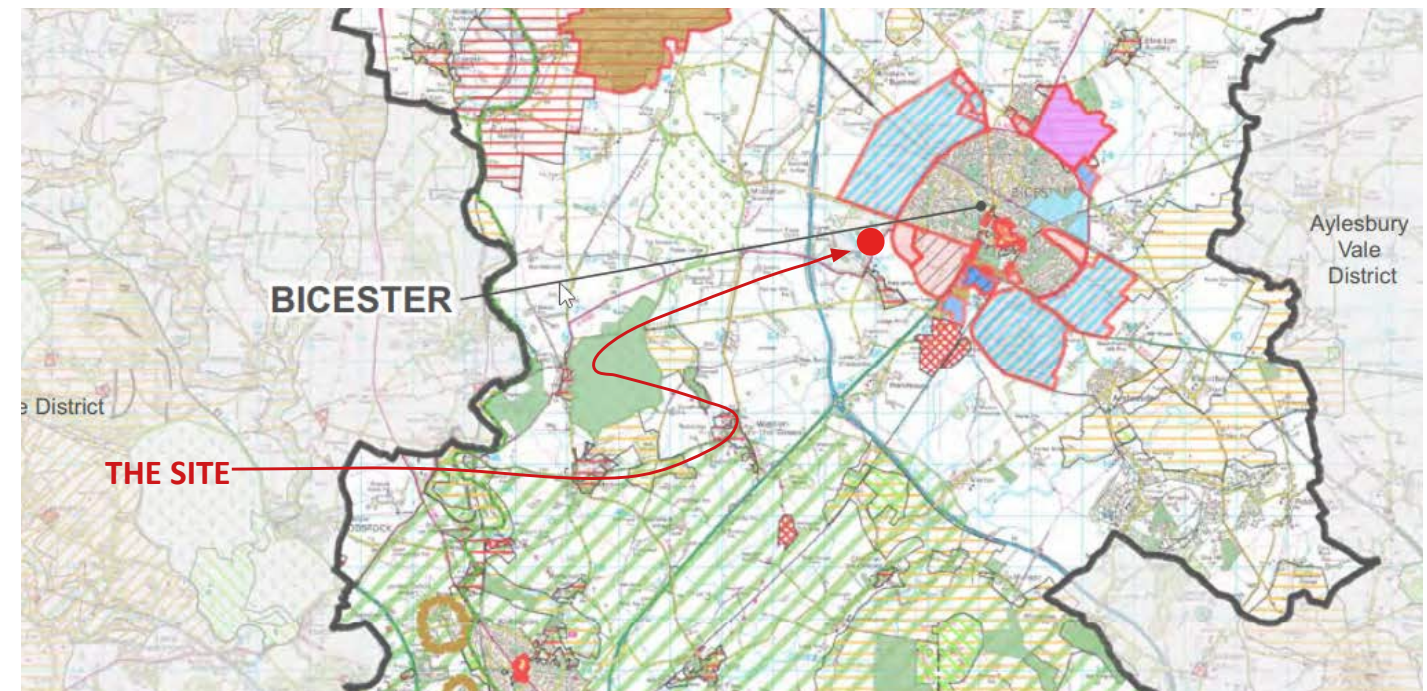
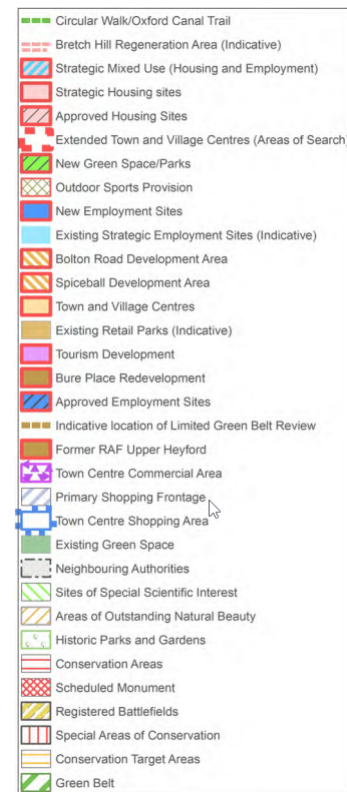


Figure 3: Extract from the Cherwell Local Plan Policies Map

Local Policies

3.14 The Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) contains strategic planning policies for development and the use of land in the District. It forms part of the statutory Development Plan for Cherwell to which regard must be given in the determination of planning applications. The key Local Plan policies considered relevant to this LVA are:

- Policy ESD 10: Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment;
- Policy ESD 13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement;
- Policy ESD 15: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment;

3.15 In addition, proposals should consider the Adopted Cherwell Residential Design Guide (July 2018) and the National Design Guide (MHCLG, January 2021).

Site Features and Characteristics

Topography and Drainage

- 3.16 The Site is generally level, dropping gently to the south from approximately 75m AOD (Above Ordnance Datum) along its boundary with Green Lane to approximately 71m AOD along its southern boundaries. There is a ditch running north south along the boundary of properties at Vespasian Way. It extends south to divide the Site into two. Additional ditches run along the southern boundaries to the arable land to the south.

Vegetation and Boundaries

- 3.17 The most sensitive landscape features within the Site are the boundary hedges, trees and tree belts which provide some sense of enclosure and filtering of views from overlooking and adjacent receptors.
- 3.18 Along the northern boundary to Green Lane the tree belts are relatively well established either side of the road providing a sense of enclosure along the Lane.
- 3.19 The western boundary is only partly enclosed by a mature tree belt. The remainder is open to the lane which leads to Little Chesterton.
- 3.20 Properties at Vespasian Way which back onto the Site have gappy hedgerows / scrub forming their boundary. The boundary to the open space at the Green is formed by a timber post and three rail fence.
- 3.21 The eastern boundary is enclosed by mature woodland either side of the lane which connects into the Conservation Area.
- 3.22 A ditch with a gappy hedge and one Condition C Oak tree divides the Site into two.



Tree Belts along Green Lane



Gap in boundary vegetation at Site's north western corner



Ditch and hedge to rear of properties at Vespasian Way



Summer view of northern boundary



South western corner of the Site



Eastern boundary vegetation



Mature Oak tree in hedge along Site's south eastern boundary and timber post and rail fence to existing open space land



Tree group along Site's western boundary



Boundaries of properties at Vespasian Way

Figure 4: Site Photographs

3.23 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Simon Jones Associates) reads as follows:

'The arboricultural character of the site can be defined as fields with predominantly native vegetative field boundaries. The trees are comprised of exclusively deciduous broadleaves that are growing in high density around the periphery of the two fields. The majority of specimens are native but there is a significant number of sycamore and also isolated non-natives (Norway maple).'

The most commonly found species is ash, which along with sycamore form the most dominant species in the local landscape. The majority of trees are semi-mature with relatively few mature trees (12) and low numbers of over-mature and young trees.

There are no veteran or ancient trees present. This is also reflected in the sizes of the trees, which are relatively small. The arboricultural character of the site is consistent with the surrounding landscape...

... There are two category 'A' trees (English oaks nos. 1052 and 1053) and 23 category 'B' specimens. The remaining 56 trees are assessed as category 'C' trees, being either of low quality, very limited merit, only low landscape benefits, no material cultural or conservation value, or only limited or short-term potential; or young trees with trunk diameters below 150mm; or a combination of these. Of the groups of trees and hedgerows, one off-site group of trees (G2) has been assessed as category 'A', six as category 'B', and the remaining seven as category 'C'.

LEGEND




-  The Site
-  Chesterton Conservation Area
-  Public Rights of Way



Figure 5: Aerial Photograph with Site Features

Existing Landscape Character

3.24 The following section reviews published landscape character assessments relevant to the Site and its surroundings.

National Level

3.25 At a national level Natural England has produced a National Character Areas Map which divides England into 159 distinct natural areas. The study area straddles NCA 107 the Cotswolds and NCA 108 The Upper Thames Clay Vales.

3.26 Key characteristics relevant to the Site and Study Area are:

- 'Low-lying clay-based flood plains encircle the Midvale Ridge. Superficial deposits, including alluvium and gravel terraces, spread over 40 per cent of the area, creating gently undulating topography. The Upper Jurassic and Cretaceous clays and the wet valley bottoms give rise to enclosed pasture, contrasting with the more settled, open, arable lands of the gravel.;
- Woodland cover is low at only about 3 per cent, but hedges, hedgerow trees and field trees are frequent.

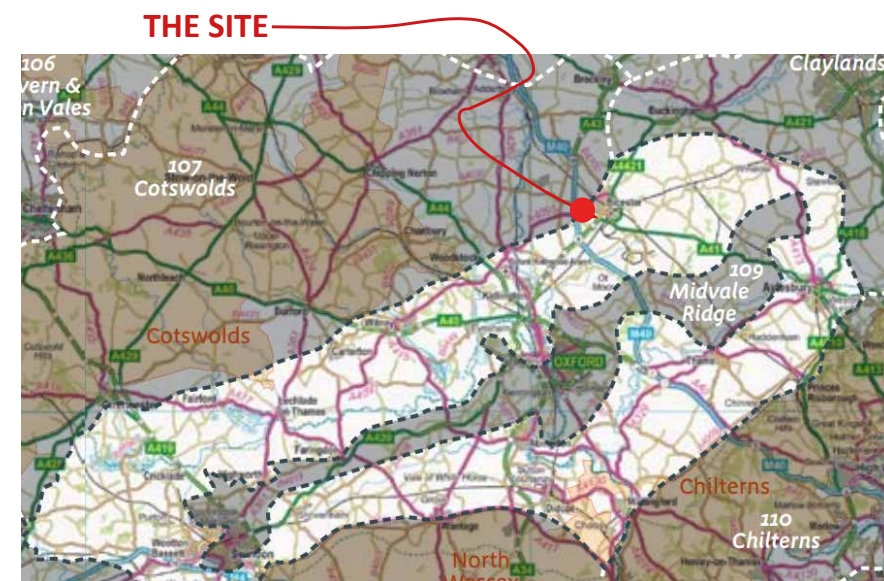


Figure 6: Extract from National Character Area Guidance for the Upper Thames Clay Vales (NCA 108)

- Fields are regular and hedged, except near the Cotswolds, where there can be stone walls.
- Settlement is sparse on flood plains, apart from at river crossings, where there can be large towns, such as Abingdon. Aylesbury and Bicester are major urban centres, and the outer suburbs of Oxford and Swindon spread into this NCA. Market towns and villages are strung along the springlines of the Chilterns and Downs. Major routes include mainline rail, canals, a network of roads including the M40 and M4 and The Ridgeway and Thames Path National Trails'.

Regional Level

3.27 The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) identifies the landscape types which fall within the Study Area. These are displayed on the Cherwell Local Plan Village assessment for Chesterton (WYG on behalf of Cherwell District Council, March 2016).

3.28 The Site is contained within the Wooded Estatelands - 'a rolling landscape characterised by the strong contrast between enclosed woodland and open downland'.

3.29 Key characteristics are listed as:

- Undulating downland dissected by dry valleys.
- A range of woodland types including varying sized plantations and blocks of ancient woodland.
- Large-scale, open arable fields and horse gallops.
- Sparsely settled landscape.

3.30 The OWLS sets a Landscape Strategy to 'Conserve the mosaic of open downland, woodland and sparse settlement.' and provides the following guidelines:

- Promote the sustainable management of existing woodland to safeguard its long-term survival;
- Promote the planting of small-scale deciduous woodland blocks using locally characteristic species such as oak and ash.
- Conserve the surviving areas of permanent pasture and

promote arable reversion to grassland, particularly on land adjacent to existing grassland.

- Safeguard, maintain and enhance the quality of unimproved chalk and limestone grassland with sustainable grazing techniques. Identify opportunities for calcareous grassland restoration by linking and extending the existing resource
- Strengthen the existing field pattern by planting up gappy hedges using locally characteristic species such as hawthorn.
- Maintain the dispersed and sparsely settled character of the landscape.
- Minimise the visual intrusion of structures in the landscape by careful siting and screen planting where appropriate

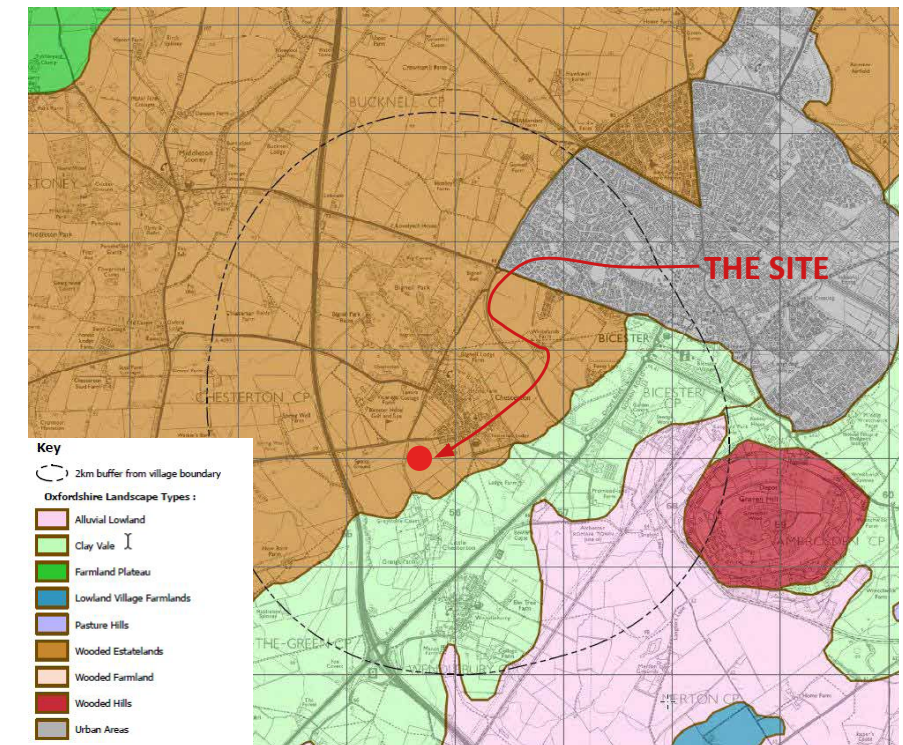


Figure 7: Extract from CDC Chesterton Village Analysis (WYG March 2016)

Local level

3.31 At a Local scale Allen Pyke Associates have identified the following Landscape Character Zones:

3.32 **LCZ1: Chesterton Arable** (incl the Site): An open, medium scale arable landscape with moderate condition hedgerows containing occasional mature trees. The noise from the M40 and A41 detract from any remoteness or tranquillity. The land south of the Site is more intimate in scale and contains public rights of way which add local value. The landscape is relatively flat and exposed where field boundary vegetation is lacking or degraded.

3.33 **LCZ2: Chesterton Residential** includes the residential edge formed by the Green and Vespasian Way. The built form is consistent and there is a notable sense of place formed by the pattern of elements. The playground and recreation ground at The Green is actively fronted by properties at Geminus Road. There is an opportunity to improve the settlement edge to the rear of Vespasian Way where rear gardens back onto the arable land.

3.34 **LCZ3: Recreational** includes the open space abutting the settlement edge including a small paddock, the Golf Club and Spa and the Sports fields to the north, north-west and west (extension approved in planning) of the Site respectively. The landscape condition and character varies depending on the extent of management.

3.35 **LCZ4: Chesterton Conservation Area** The Conservation Area Appraisal identifies four character areas (Fig 24, page 16). The majority of the land within the detailed study area falls within the Chesterton Lodge Area. This is described as: *'a distinct self contained character area within the village comprising the house, grounds and outbuildings of the former Chesterton lodge, now Bruern Abbey School'*.

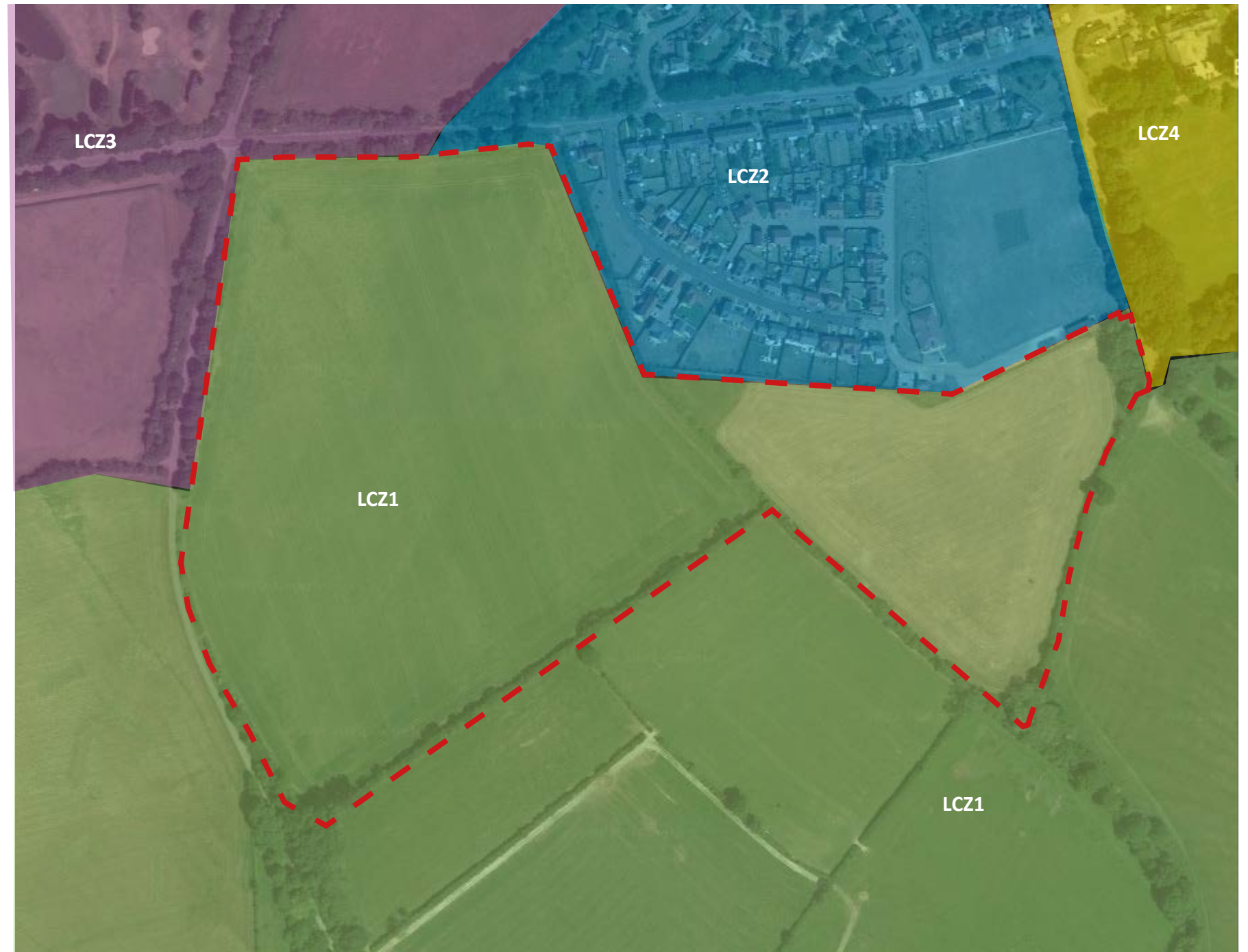
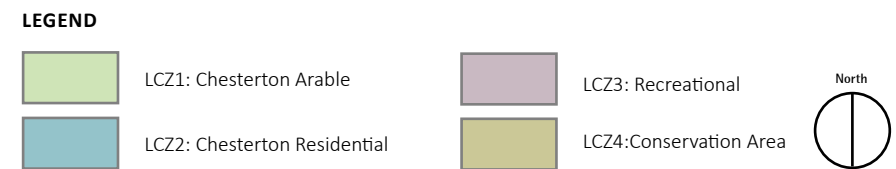


Figure 8: Local Landscape Character Zones

3.36 In terms of threats *'The character of this area is formed by the open parklands of Chesterton Lodge and the greenery contained within and along its boundary. It is therefore important that these elements are protected as their loss would completely transform the appearance of the area.'*

Summary of Landscape Sensitivity

3.37 To assess the impact of development on landscape character Allen Pyke Associates have reviewed the assessments considered above and carried out a review of the landscape sensitivity from a national to local scale.

3.38 The methodology set out in Appendix A has been used to review and assess the Character, Condition and Value of each character area.

3.39 The 'Character' and 'Condition' ratings then determine the 'Susceptibility to Change'. The 'Value' and 'Susceptibility to Change' determine the 'Sensitivity' of each character area.







Name	Character	Condition	Susceptibility to Change	Value	Landscape Sensitivity
NCA 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales	Moderate	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
Wooded Estatelands	Moderate	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
LCZ1: Chesterton Arable	Moderate	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
LCZ2: Chesterton Residential	Moderate	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
LCZ3: Chesterton Recreational	Moderate	Moderate	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
LCZ4: Chesterton Conservation Area	High	Good	High	Moderate	High

Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity

Visual Assessment

- 3.40 A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) based on the scheme proposals was generated to inform site visits and to establish the extent to which the proposed development may be visible.
- 3.41 A site visit was carried out in January 2022 to assess the varying visibility of the Site from several public vantage points including roads and public rights of way. Visibility from private properties was also considered. The site visit and ZTV have informed a Zone of Visual Influence as indicated adjacent.
- 3.42 A selection of viewpoints demonstrates the degree to which the Site and the proposals may be visible in the near, middle and longer distance views. The plan adjacent demonstrates that the majority of views are contained to within 1km of the Site boundary. Beyond that the views are distant and filtered / obscured by intervening vegetation associated with the level landscape.
- 3.43 Visual receptors are people likely to have their views affected by the scheme proposals. They are listed below and considered in the following section.

LEGEND

-  Site Boundary
-  Land from which the Proposed Development may be visible
-  Land from which the Proposed Development may be glimpsed in longer views
-  1km distance offsets from the Site
-  Visual Receptor
-  Representative Views

VISUAL RECEPTORS:

- VR1** - Residents at Vespasian Way
- VR2** - Residents at the Green
- VR3** - Motorists at Green Lane
- VR4** - Motorists using lane to Little Chesterton
- VR5** - Users of the Green and the Community Centre
- VR6** - Visitors to Bruern Abbey School
- VR7** - Walkers using footpath 161-3-10
- VR8** - Walkers using footpath 161-4-10
- VR9** - Residents at Little Chesterton
- VR10** - Visitors to Bicester Sports Grounds
- VR11** - Visitors to Bicester Hotel and Golf Course
- VR12** - Residents at Penrose Gardens
- VR13** - Residents at Vendee Drive
- VR14** - Residents at Graven Hill
- VR15** - Residents at Merton
- VR16** - Users of Airfield and the B430

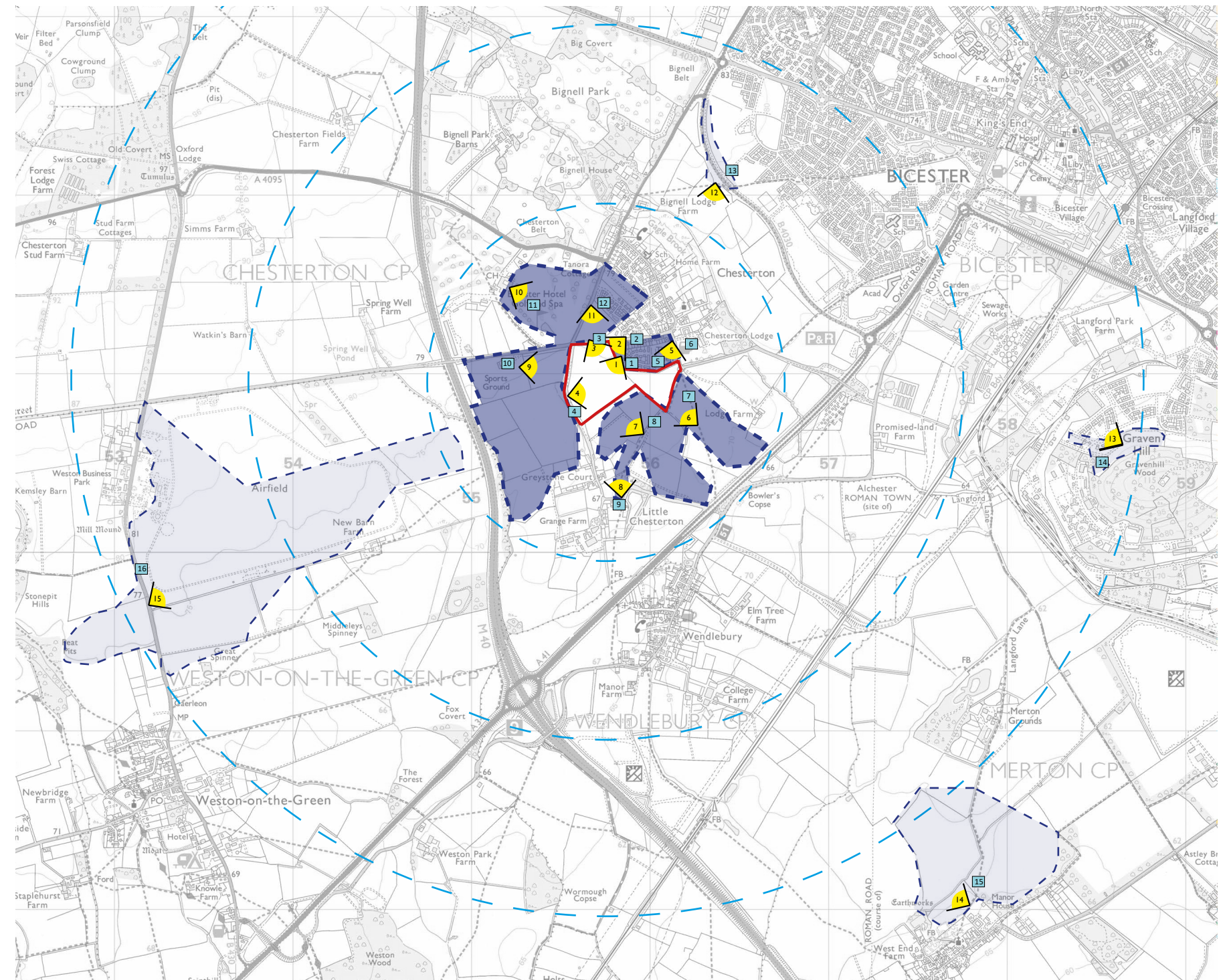


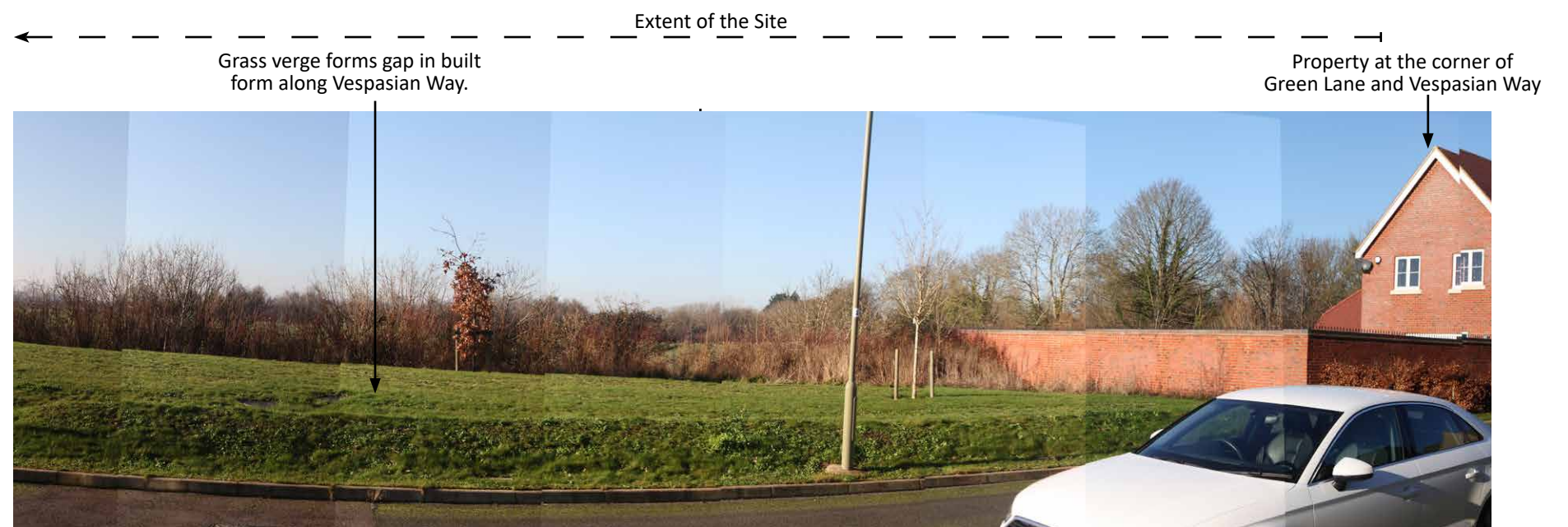
Figure 9: Zone of Visual Influence and Representative Views

Near Distance Visual Receptors (within 50m of the Site)

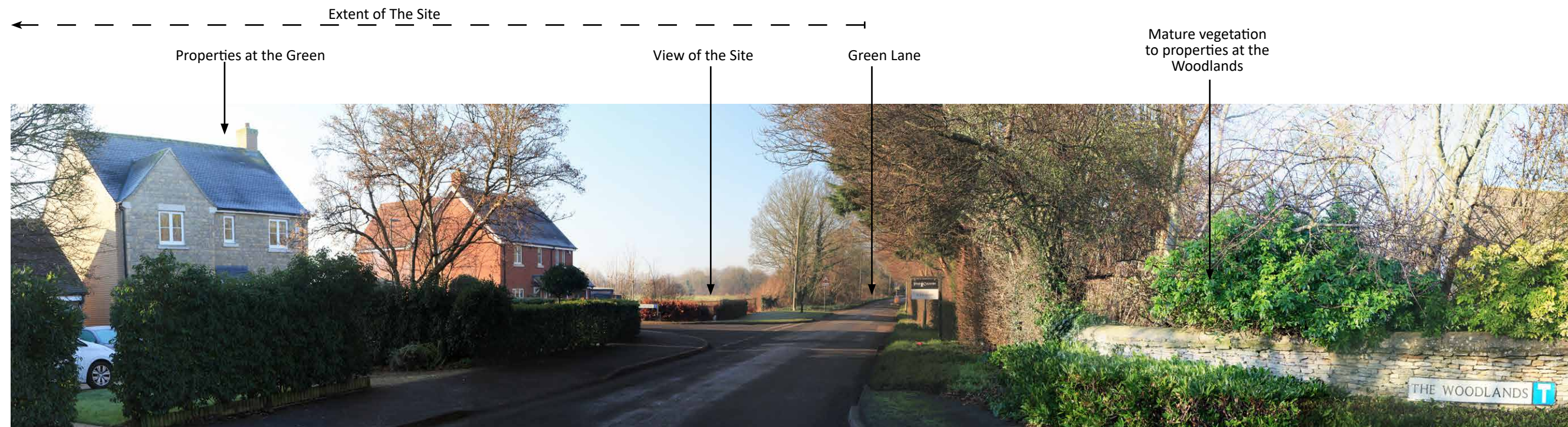
- 3.44 Properties overlooking the Site at Vespasian Way are the most susceptible to change as the arable landscape (including the Site) forms the backdrop to the views beyond their private gardens.
- 3.45 View 1 is taken from roadside footpath, at a gap in the built form. It demonstrates the open views across the Site from properties backing onto it (properties south of the road).
- 3.46 Properties to the north of the road will have views from their front elevations where gaps in the built form allow it.
- 3.47 It is not possible to access private properties but it is anticipated that the large private gardens will be dominant in the views from ground floor windows. Whilst the arable landscape (including the Site) and the hedgerow and trees forming the field boundaries will be positive elements in the views, they will mostly be visible from upper floor windows where orientated towards the Site.
- 3.48 Residents at the Green are set back from the Site and any views will be through gaps in the buildings at Vespasian Way. View 2 (following page) demonstrates that views of the northern boundary vegetation are possible from the road.
- 3.49 View 3 demonstrates that the vegetation along the Site's northern boundary generally restricts views into the Site. Occasional gaps allow for filtered views which are mostly possible in winter months when the leaves are off the trees and hedgerows. Motorists using the road have transient glimpsed views into the Site.
- 3.50 View 4 is taken from the lane leading south to Little Chesterton. It demonstrates that, at gaps in the roadside vegetation, there are open views across the Site towards the settlement edge of Chesterton. There is no roadside footpath along this lane. The northern most section, adjacent to the north western corner of the Site is indicated as a public footpath on the Rights of Way map but there is nothing on the ground to denote this and OS mapping does not show it.



VIEW 1: View from Vespasian Way, looking south



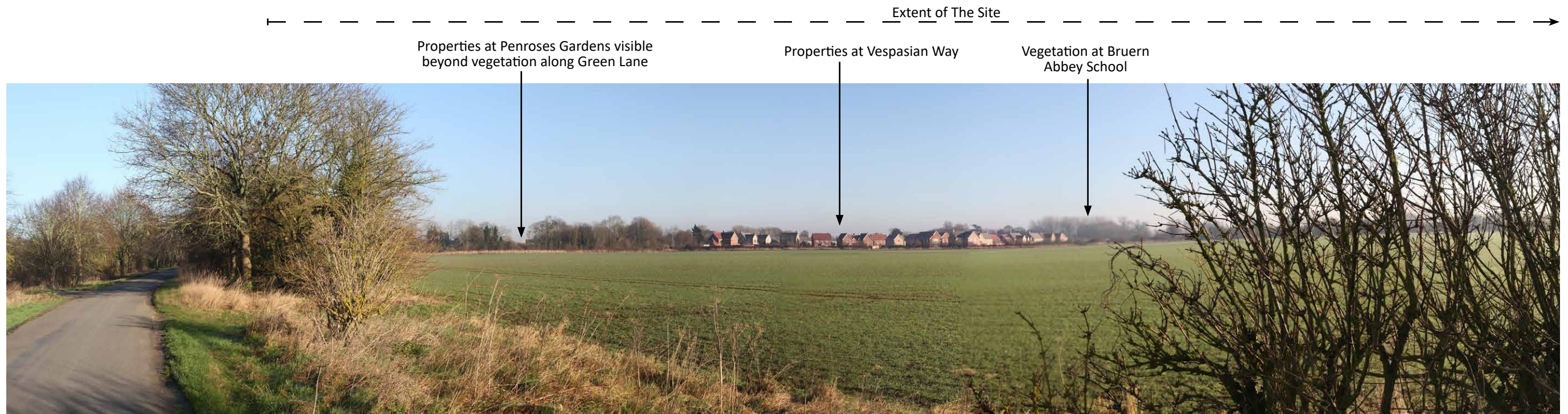
VIEW 1 (continued)



VIEW 2: View from Green Lane, adjacent to the Green.



VIEW 3: View from Green Lane, adjacent to the Site's northern boundary



VIEW 4: View from lane to Little Chesterton



VIEW 5: View from the edge of the recreation ground looking south west towards the Site.

Middle Distance Views (Within 500m of the Site)

- 3.51 Users of the recreation ground at Geminus Road have views across the eastern half of the Site. View 5 (previous page) is taken from the north eastern corner of the grounds just outside of the Conservation Area boundary where a bench is located. It demonstrates that the built form at Vespasian Way and Geminus Road obstructs views to the majority of the Site from receptors within the Village and Conservation Area.
- 3.52 Further afield there are views from the public footpaths south of the Site looking north towards the settlement edge. View 6 and 7 (adjacent and below) demonstrate that the housing at Vespasian Way is visible beyond the hedgerows and tree belts. The rural landscape south of Chesterton is dominant in the foreground and filters views towards the Site.

— — — — — Approximate Extent of the Site — — — — —



VIEW 6: From Public Footpath 161-3-10 looking towards the Site.

— — — — — Approximate Extent of the Site — — — — —

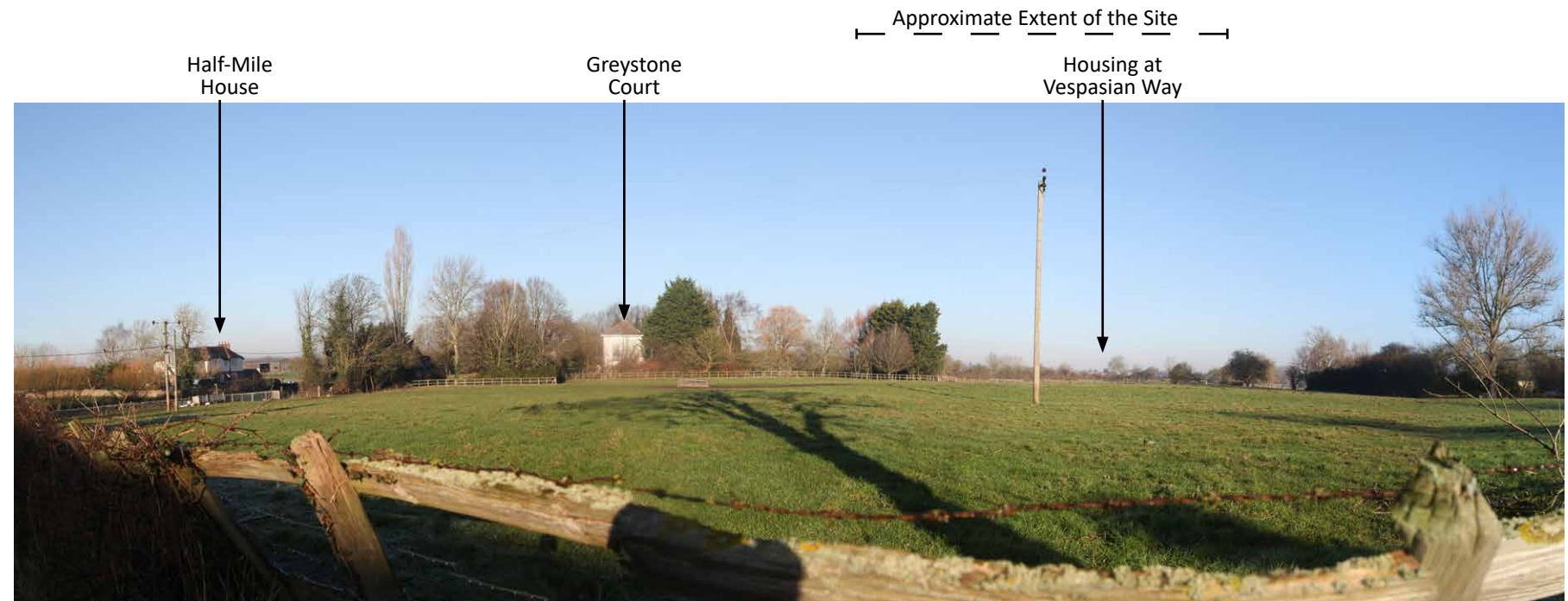


VIEW 7: From Public Footpath 161-4-10 looking towards the Site.

3.53 Residents at Little Chesterton may have distant glimpsed views towards the site from upper floor windows where orientated towards the north.

3.54 View 8 is taken from an unnamed lane within Little Chesterton. Properties along the northern edge of the hamlet are visible and include Half-Mile House and Greystone Court. These, and other properties along the lane, may have glimpsed views towards the Site from their upper floor windows. In these views the rural landscape dominates the view and the settlement edge of Chesterton is difficult to perceive, although the rooftops of properties at Vespasian Way are visible.

3.55 View 9 is taken from the Bicester Sports Grounds looking east towards the Site. Tree belts along the Site's western boundary obstruct views towards the settlement edge. The housing at Vespasian Way is glimpsed through the vegetation. Receptors experiencing this view are users of outdoor sport or recreation facilities. They do not depend on an appreciation of views in the landscape - this reduces their sensitivity. The view contains some positive attributes but it is not rare and does not have any local value attached to it.



VIEW 8: From edge of Little Chesterton looking north.



VIEW 9: From Bicester Sports Ground

3.56 View 10 is taken from the balcony of the Bicester Golf Club looking across the golf course towards the south east. Intervening vegetation within the course, and along Green Lane, obstructs any views towards the Site.

3.57 View 11 is taken at a gap in the vegetation along the unnamed road connecting from Penrose Gardens to Green Lane. Properties at the Woodlands (north of Vespasian Way) are glimpsed through intervening vegetation. Tree belts along Green Lane filter views towards the Site.

Approximate Extent of the Site

Green Lane



VIEW 10: From Clubhouse balcony at Bicester Golf Club

Properties at Norrie's Drive (off Penrose Gardens)

Properties at the Woodlands (off the Green)

Approximate Extent of the Site



VIEW 11: From gap in roadside vegetation along unnamed road towards Penrose Gardens

Long Distance Views

- 3.58 Beyond 1km the flat, rural, occasionally wooded, landscape reduces the potential for visibility towards the Site.
- 3.59 New developments at the edge of Bicester may have distant views from their upper floor windows where orientated towards the Site.
- 3.60 View 12 is taken from Vendee Drive and demonstrates how the intervening vegetation around Chesterton obstructs views to the Site from beyond 1km to the north of the Site.
- 3.61 Graven Hill is visible from within the Site. The Hill is wooded and there are no public footpaths along the upper slopes. View 13 is taken from a road along the south facing slopes adjacent to ongoing site works. It is not possible to see the Site from this location, however there may be distant glimpses from upper floor windows of the new dwellings where orientated towards the south west and from the upper slopes of the Hill should access be opened to the public.

Approximate location of Chesterton
(and the Site) beyond intervening
vegetation



VIEW 12: From edge of recent developments off Vendee Drive



VIEW 13: From edge of recent developments at Graven Hill

3.62 In views from the south and west the open level landscape allows for long distance views towards the Site.

3.63 View 14 is taken from a public footpath at the edge of the village of Merton. Graven Hill is visible on the skyline. The Site is not visible beyond the landscape which forms the setting to the A41 and M40 corridors.

3.64 View 15 is taken from the B430 (Northampton Road) looking east across the level open landscape surrounding the Weston on the Green Airfield. Tree belts (including Middleton Spinney) are visible on the skyline. Chesterton and the Site are difficult to perceive in the view.

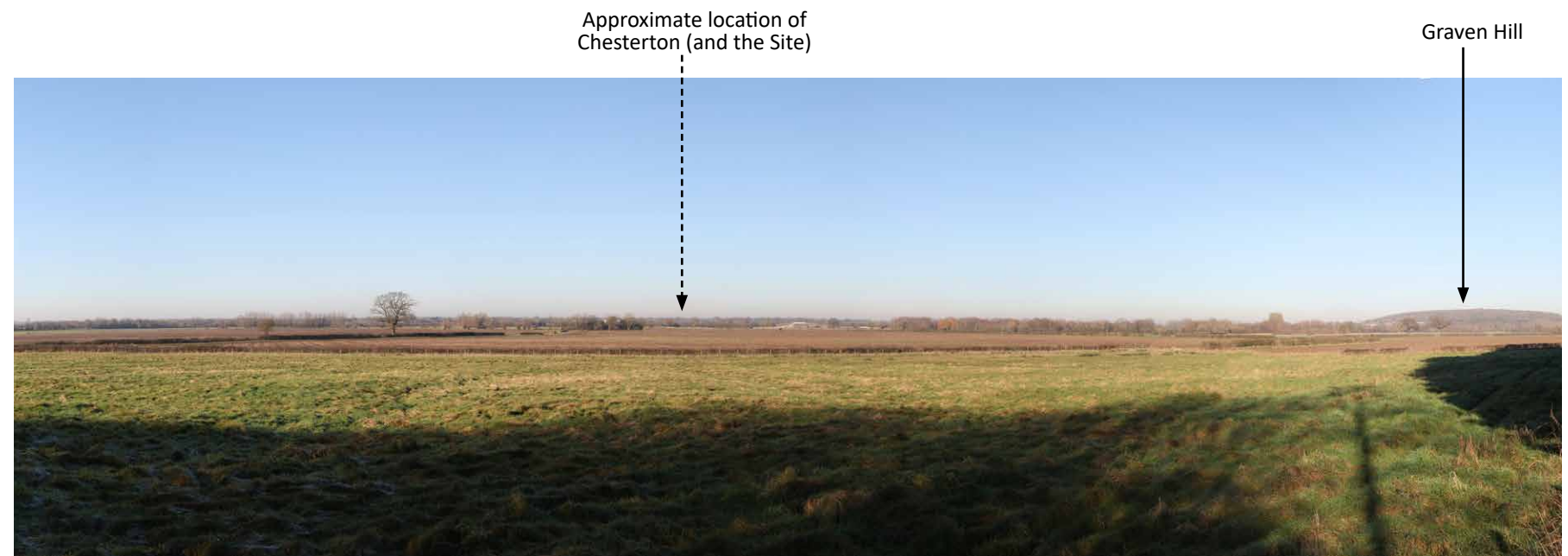
Summary of Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

3.65 Table 2 (following page) provides a summary of the assessment of the sensitivity of the visual receptors and should be read alongside the methodology at Appendix A.

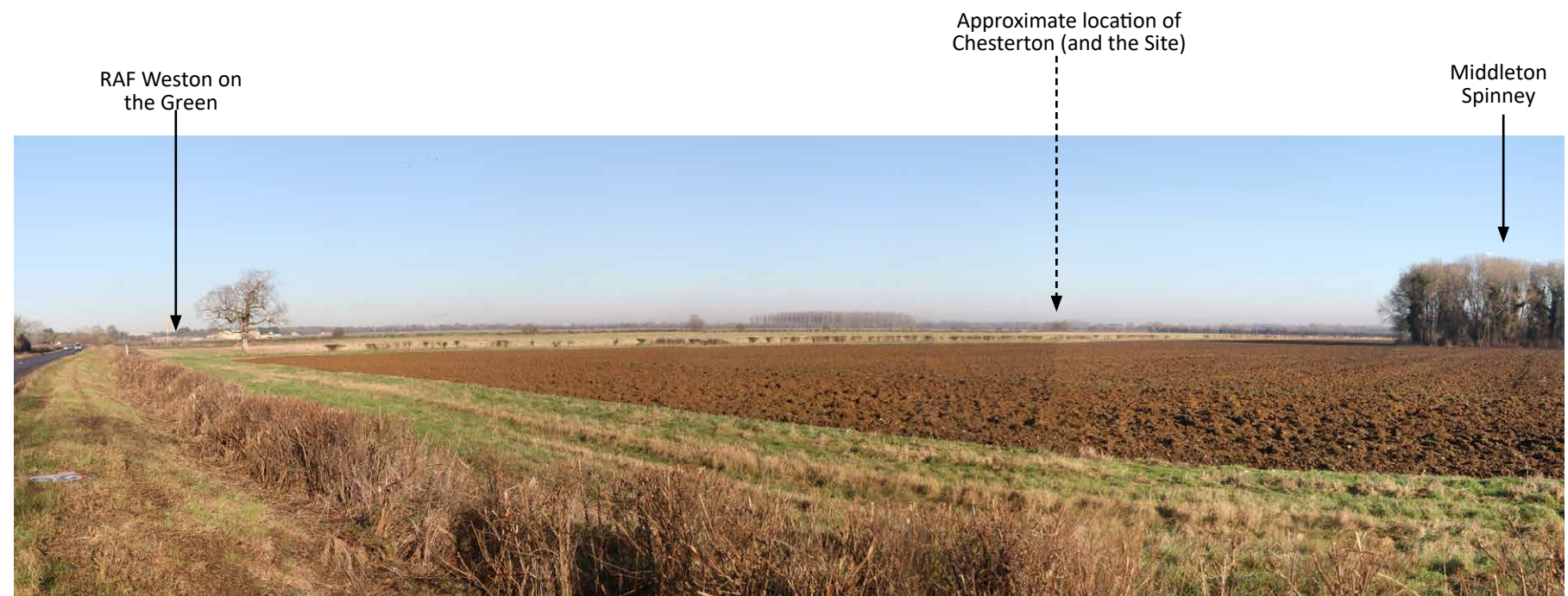
3.66 It can be concluded that the most sensitive visual receptors are those overlooking the Site at Vespasian Way and the Green and walkers and motorists passing the Site on its northern and western boundaries. Visitors to Abbey Gruern School, which is within the Conservation Area boundary, are assessed as high, although off-site vegetation obstructs views to the Site.

3.67 The values of views across the rural landscape which forms the setting to the village are assessed as moderate. Although the landscape viewed is not designated it is valued by local residents in their views out from the settlement edges.

3.68 Proposals should seek to retain and enhance the boundary vegetation to maintain the visual containment of the Site and to ensure a softened extended settlement edge in the long term.



VIEW 14: From edge of recent developments off Vende Drive



VIEW 15: From edge of recent developments at Graven Hill

Visual Receptor Name	Visual Receptor Ranking	Nature of the View of the Site	Susceptibility to Change	Value	Sensitivity of Visual Receptor
VR1: Residents at Vespasian Way	A	Good	High	Moderate	High
VR2: Residents at the Green	A	Moderate	High	Moderate	High
VR3: Motorists at Green Lane	B	Moderate to Good	Medium to High	Moderate	Moderate to High
VR4: Motorists Using Lane to Little Chesterton (incl FP 161-5-10)	B	Moderate to Good	Medium to High	Moderate	Moderate to High
VR5: Users of the Green and Community Centre	B	Good	High	Moderate	High
VR6: Visitors to Bruern Abbey School	A	Poor	Medium	High	High
VR7: Walkers using FP 161-3-10	A	Poor	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
VR8: Walkers using FP 161-4-10	A	Poor	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
VR9: Residents at Little Chesterton	A	Poor	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
VR10: Visitors to Bicester Sports Grounds	B	Poor	Low	Moderate	Low
VR11: Visitors to Bicester Hotel and Gold Club	B	Poor	Low	Moderate	Low
VR12: Residents at Penrose Gardens	A	Poor	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
VR13: Residents at Vendee Drive	A	Poor	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
VR14: Residents at Graven Hill	A	Poor	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
VR15: Residents at Merton	A	Poor	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
VR16: Users of Airfield and B430	B	Poor	Low	Moderate	Low

Table 2: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

4.0 SCHEME PROPOSALS

4.1 The Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (Figure 10 following page) presents opportunities for Green Infrastructure within the Site.

4.2 Landscape Treatments will seek to address the following objectives:

- Retain, protect, enhance and manage existing boundary vegetation to ensure that the Site maintains its sense of enclosure;
- Ensure that the new built form is sensitive to views from adjacent receptors, in particular from properties overlooking the Site at Vespasian Way and from walkers and motorists using the adjacent public rights of way;
- Provide an attractive entrance to the Site from Green Lane;
- Provide for small to medium street trees within the development selected for seasonal, wildlife, foraging and amenity value;
- Provide for medium native tree planting along the development edge to provide an attractive, wildlife friendly frontage onto the open space areas;
- Allow for a series of innovative, creative and contextually relevant play areas which will complement the existing open space and play facilities and be overlooked and easy to maintain in the long term;
- Identify opportunities within the new development and its open space areas for community uses, wildlife enhancements and foraging opportunities;
- Utilise a co-ordinated palette of hard landscape materials, street furniture and boundary treatments which compliment the new built form and reduce unnecessary street clutter;

- Identify opportunities in the Site to draw reference to the nearby Conservation Area and along the development edge through interpretation boards or design of the play and street furniture;
- Ensure the planting strategy for the Site not only seeks to compliment the street scene and buildings and clearly define public and private boundaries; but also to provide green links through the Site to maximise the biodiversity and SuDS value at a local scale;
- Allow for SuDS features to be designed to accommodate shallow shelving which will encourage habitats to develop, thereby further enhancing the biodiversity and amenity value of the Site;
- Overall, ensure the new development will provide a reasonable, attractive extension to the settlement edge.

4.3 The Design and Access Statement provides more detail on character development within the proposals and the materials palette which will ensure legibility and a strong sense of place.

4.4 The detailed landscape design of the Site will be determined at Reserved Matters and Conditions Clearance stages. The proposals will focus on achieving the above and responding to National and Local Planning Policy Guidance and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

4.5 A Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan will be prepared to clear condition. This will ensure that the landscape treatments proposed are maintained to ensure they provide benefit in the long term and to ensure they respond to the changing needs of the community.



Figure 10: Illustrative Landscape Strategy

5.0 ANTICIPATED EFFECTS

Effects on Site Features

- 5.1 The Arboricultural Impact Assessment confirms that *'no mature, veteran or ancient trees, no category 'A' or 'B' trees, and no trees of high landscape or biodiversity value are to be removed. None of the main arboricultural features of the site are to be removed. The proposed removal of trees will represent only a very minor alteration to the main arboricultural features of the site and the overall arboricultural character of the site. As such the proposals will not have an adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape or the adjacent conservation area'*.
- 5.2 The existing ditch network will be improved and new drainage features introduced to respond to the proposed change of use. Localised earthworks will be necessary to ensure the new built form drains effectively. Gentle 1 in 3 banks will occasionally feature in the landscape to further enhance the functioning of the Site.
- 5.3 The existing public right of way network will be unaffected and opportunities to link to the existing public rights of way and neighbouring community facilities will be provided.
- 5.4 The only notable adverse effect on landscape features will be the loss of arable land to accommodate the new housing.
- 5.5 The Landscape Proposals demonstrate that a range of new habitats and features will be introduced which will add biodiversity and amenity benefit. The Illustrative Landscape Strategy suggests the following biodiversity benefits to the Site at this outline stage:
- Over 300 new trees including street trees, edible fruiting trees and large parkland native trees within the open space areas;
 - Approximately 2 ha of mosaic scrub with woodland trees;
 - Over 1 ha of seasonal wildflower meadows;
 - Community Woodlands and foraging routes.

- 5.6 Overall there will be a residual beneficial effect on Site features.

Effects on Landscape Character

- 5.7 The retention and enhancement of field boundaries and the introduction of a robust landscape structure to compliment the new built form will result in an attractive extension to the settlement edge.
- 5.8 The only permanent loss, with a residual adverse effect, will be the replacement of open arable farmland with a housing development. However the new landscape features, and a built form which is responsive to context, will outweigh the harm and present an overall benefit to the local landscape associated with the Chesterton settlement edge.
- 5.9 There will be no residual adverse effects on Landscape Character at a National to Local Scale.

Effects on Visual Receptors

- 5.10 The most notable visual effects will be on residents overlooking the Site at Vespasian Way. Currently they enjoy views towards the south across the arable farmland towards Little Chesterton. The scheme proposals have evolved to ensure that development is set back from the existing settlement edge to allow for structure planting along their rear and side boundaries and to allow for retention and enhancement of the central hedge which divides the Site in two. New areas of mosaic scrub, woodland, native trees and community orchards will bring positive elements into the views and filter views to the new housing.
- 5.11 During construction there will be adverse effects associated with a working construction Site. These effects will be temporary and, once the structure planting is implemented and allowed to establish, the effects on their views will be reduced.
- 5.12 There will remain a residual adverse effect as a result of the loss of rural land in their view, positive features will be introduced into the view to mitigate these effects.

- 5.13 At year 15, once structure planting has established, the significance of any effects will be reduced and the positive elements in the view will outweigh the loss of the arable land.
- 5.14 In middle distance views the new roofscape will be visible either in front of or adjacent to the existing roofscape of Vespasian Way. During construction and at year 1 there will be notable change to these views with the extended settlement edge being one of many elements in the view, however the existing arable landscape with its well managed hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees will continue to form the foreground and the positive elements in the view. At year 15 the new structure planting within the public open space will mature, and filter, views to the new development and there will be an overall improvement in the view.
- 5.15 Any changes in longer distance views will barely be perceptible in the wider view.
- 5.16 Summaries of the anticipated landscape and visual effects are provided in Tables 3 and 4 below. They should be read alongside Appendix A.

Name	Landscape Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change			Significance of Landscape Effects; Direction of Landscape Effects		
Landscape Character Area / Zone					<i>(Temporary Effects)</i>		<i>(Residual Effects)</i>
		<i>Construction</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 15</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 15</i>
NCA 108 Upper Thames Clay Vales	Moderate	None	None	None	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Wooded Estatelands	Moderate	Low	Low	Low	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
LCZ1: Chesterton Arable	Moderate	High	Medium	Low	Substantial; Adverse	Moderate; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
LCZ2: Chesterton Residential	Moderate	Medium	Medium	Low	Moderate; Adverse	Moderate; Beneficial	Minor; Beneficial
LCZ3: Chesterton Recreational	Moderate	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Minor; Adverse	Neutral	Neutral
LCZ4: Chesterton Conservation Area	High	Low	Negligible	None	Moderate; Adverse	Minor; Adverse	Neutral

Table 3: Effects on Landscape Character

Name	Sensitivity of Visual Receptor	Magnitude of Change			Significance of Landscape Effects; Direction of Landscape Effects		
Visual Receptor					<i>(Temporary Effects)</i>		<i>(Residual Effects)</i>
		<i>Construction</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 15</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Year 1</i>	<i>Year 15</i>
VR1: Residents at Vespasian Way	High	High	High	Moderate	Substantial; Adverse	Substantial; Adverse	Substantial; Beneficial
VR2: Residents at the Green	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Substantial; Adverse	Substantial; Adverse	Moderate; Beneficial
VR3: Motorists at Green Lane	Moderate to High	Medium	Medium	Low	Substantial; Adverse	Substantial; Adverse	Moderate; Beneficial
VR4: Motorists Using Lane to Little Chesterton (incl FP 161-5-10)	Moderate to High	Medium	Medium	Low	Substantial; Adverse	Substantial; Adverse	Moderate; Beneficial
VR5: Users of the Green and Community Centre	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Substantial; Adverse	Substantial; Adverse	Moderate; Beneficial
VR6: Visitors to Bruern Abbey School	High	Low	Low	Negligible	Moderate; Adverse	Moderate; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
VR7: Walkers using FP 161-3-10	Moderate	Medium	Low	Low	Moderate; Adverse	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
VR8: Walkers using FP 161-4-10	Moderate	Medium	Low	Low	Moderate; Adverse	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
VR9: Residents at Little Chesterton	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
VR10: Visitors to Bicester Sports Grounds	Low	Medium	Low	Low	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
VR11: Visitors to Bicester Hotel and Gold Club	Low	Low	Low	Negligible	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
VR12: Residents at Penrose Gardens	Moderate	Low	Low	Negligible	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Adverse	Minor; Beneficial
VR13: Residents at Vendee Drive	Moderate	None	None	None	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
VR14: Residents at Graven Hill	Moderate	None	None	None	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
VR15: Residents at Merton	Moderate	None	None	None	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
VR16: Users of Airfield and B430	Moderate	None	None	None	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

Table 4: Effects on Visual Receptors

Compliance with Planning Policy

- 5.17 The scheme proposals have the ability to respond to National and Local Policy Guidance as follows:
- 5.18 The Site allows for the retention, and enhancement, of the site boundaries and a scale of built form which will allow for the protection, and enhancement, of the natural, built and historic environment.
- 5.19 In accordance with Local Plan Policy ESD13: Opportunities are provided to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, through the restoration, management and enhancement of existing landscape features. A range of new habitats will be provided including mosaic scrub, woodland trees, wildflower meadows and community orchards. Existing hedgerows will be retained and enhanced. The LVA demonstrates that the proposals have the ability to respect and enhance local landscape character, and secures appropriate mitigation where the effects on local landscape can not be avoided.
- 5.20 The LVA demonstrates that the proposals will not cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside; will not cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography. They will be consistent with local character and will not affect any areas of high tranquillity. They will not harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, nor harm the historic value of the landscape.
- 5.21 The proposals have had 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).
- 5.22 The Illustrative Landscape Masterplan demonstrates the opportunity for a comprehensive landscaping scheme which illustrates the ability of the Site to respect and enhance the special characteristics of the area and enhance local landscape character in the long term.

- 5.23 The visual assessment demonstrates that the scheme proposals have the ability to respect the visual amenity of local residents and provide the opportunity to introduce features which will enhance the scenic quality of the Site and extended settlement edge. Existing trees and hedgerows within the site are predominantly retained and additional planting will enhance the arboricultural value of the Site.
- 5.24 The new built form will be designed at the Reserved Matters / Conditions Clearance stage to ensure a high quality design which positively contributes to the overall appearance of the area. The scheme proposals have the ability to respond to all criteria listed in local policies and to respond to Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 5.25 The Site, and its setting, both present opportunities for the provision of high quality open space which would enhance the health and well-being of the local community. (NPPF Section 8).

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The scheme proposals are submitted in outline form. The parameters of scale, location and access are appropriate to the existing settlement edge of Chesterton.
- 6.2 The Landscape and Visual Appraisal demonstrates that the proposals have the ability to comply with Planning Policy and Guidance at all levels.
- 6.3 The future planning and delivery of the Site presents opportunities to manage and reduce adverse effects during the construction phases and to ensure long term benefit to the landscape and visual receptors.
- 6.4 Overall the new development will provide an appropriate extension to the Chesterton Village edge. It has the ability to provide significant community benefit through a range of flexibly designed open space areas which will form a species rich permanent green edge to the village in the long term.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY & TERMS FOR LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS
(Allen Pyke Associates, version February 2022)

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the methodology and terms used by Allen Pyke Associates in Landscape and Visual Appraisals (LVAs) and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) to establish, and describe, the potential effects on landscape character and visual amenity of a development.

The methodology has been adapted from the guidance given in the Landscape Institute/IEMA publication 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (3rd Edition 2013).

The approach has been adapted to allow the assessment of broad urban areas but is not designed to provide the detailed appraisal required for specific townscape studies (see Landscape Institute TCA Technical Note: 05/2017)

The assessment process is divided into two stages:

- STAGE 1: Assessment of Existing Baseline Conditions & Sensitivity
- STAGE 2: Assessment of the Effects of the Proposed Development

STAGE 1: ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING BASELINE CONDITIONS & SENSITIVITY

The 'Sensitivity' of the existing landscape/townscape character or view is determined through the combined assessment of the 'susceptibility to change' and 'value' of the area or view. The 'susceptibility to change' is defined as 'the ability of the landscape to accommodate the proposed development without undue negative consequences'. 'Susceptibility' is derived by combining the 'Character' of the area or type of ranking of the receptor experiencing the view with an assessment of its 'Condition' of the landscape or the 'nature of the view'.

1. DETERMINING SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE

1a. Assessing Landscape/Townscape Character:

The 'Character' of an area is defined using the following criteria:

Character	Criteria
High	Where the area is wholly/predominately intact, may have no/few incongruous elements or forms part of a wider distinct pattern/coherent landscape/townscape and has a highly recognisable or distinct sense of place.
Moderate	Where the area has a recognisable pattern, may have some incongruous elements that detract from/only make a moderate contribution to the intactness of the area, and provide some sense of place.
Low	Where the area has no recognisable pattern/structure, or may have few similar coherent/a disparate collection of elements that make little/no contribution to the intactness of the area, and result in a limited/no sense of place.

The 'Condition' of the Landscape/Townscape is defined using the following criteria:

Condition	Criteria
Good	Where the area is highly managed/excellent good repair/quality
Moderate	Where the area is reasonably managed/average repair/quality
Poor	Where the area is un-managed/poor repair/quality

1b. Assessing Visual Amenity:

'Visual Receptor Types' are ranked in accordance with the land use of the viewpoint from which people (the receptors) will experience the view. These are defined using the following criteria:

Visual Receptor Type Ranking	Criteria
Type A- High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents at home or using their gardens; • People engaged in outdoor recreation, including the use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape or particular views; • Visitors to heritage assets, and/or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience; • Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by local residents.
Type B- Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users of outdoor sport or recreation facilities that do not involve or depend on an appreciation of views in the landscape; • People at their place of work whose attention may be focussed on their work or activity, not on their surroundings. • Users of retail and employment sites, sports and recreational facilities where the views are secondary to the activity at hand; • Users of public roads and transport routes where views add to the travel experience.
Type C- Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users of Industrial sites, agricultural land, derelict or abandoned land, or busy commuter links where there is little appreciation of the view.

The 'Nature of the View' is defined as follows and considers the extent to which the site can be seen from a particular receptor:

Nature of View	Criteria
Good	Where there is an open view/panoramic view to or from the site and/or is not enclosed or
Moderate	Where the view to or from the site is largely open and/or partially screened/enclosed and is interrupted by some natural/man-made features and/or the site is in the distance.
Poor	Where the view to or from the site is largely screened/obscured by intervening features, or is enclosed and/or only forms a minor part of the view, or the site is difficult to perceive in the distance.

1c. Quantifying Susceptibility to Change

Combining the 'Character' with 'Condition' or 'Visual Receptor Ranking' with 'Nature of the View' determines the 'Susceptibility to Change' of an area or view:

Character / Receptor Ranking	LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE & VISUAL SUSCEPTIBILITY		
High / Type A	High	High	Medium
Moderate / Type B	High	Medium	Low
Low / Type C	Medium	Low	Low
	Good / High	Moderate/Medium	Poor/Low
	<i>Condition / Nature of View</i>		

The definition of the landscape/townscape or visual 'Susceptibility to Change' is:

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	Where the components and qualities of an area/view could be easily affected and would have a low ability/capacity to accommodate the proposed change.
Medium	Where the components and qualities of an area /view could be moderately affected and would have a medium ability/capacity to accommodate the proposed change.
Low	Where the components and qualities of an area /view could be affected in a minor/negligible manner and would have a high ability/capacity to accommodate the proposed change.

2. DETERMINING SENSITIVITY

2a. Assessing the Landscape / Townscape Value

The 'Value' of an area is defined as follows and considers any relevant designation or local recognition. For landscapes which are not designated the assessment considers the criteria set out in Table 1 of the Landscape Institutes's Technical Guidance Note TGN 21/02 'Assessing Landscape Character outside of Designated Landscapes'.

Landscape Value	Criteria	Examples	Level of Importance / rarity
Exceptional	Very high importance and rarity	World Heritage Site	International
High	High importance or rarity	National Park, AONB, Broads or other statutory/inalienable area designations	National, Regional
Moderate	Moderate importance	Non-statutory landscape (SLA, AGLV), Conservation Area, Heritage Coast or valued undesignated area recognised through use/association/ publications. Valued locally for one or more of the criteria listed in Table 1 of TGN 21/02: Natural Heritage; Cultural Heritage; Landscape Condition; Associations; Distinctiveness; Recreational; Perceptual (scenic); Perceptual (wildness and tranquility); Functional.	County, Local
Low	Low importance with positive characteristics.	Undistinguished and undesignated area with some redeeming feature/features and possibly identified for or being improved.	Local
Poor	Low importance but with negative characteristics.	Area having few/no redeeming features and/or possibly identified for recovery.	Local

2b. Assessing the Value of the View

The 'Value of a view' is defined as follows and considers the relationship between specific features or locations with local residents and visitors and their enjoyment or quality of the view:

Value of View	Criteria
Exceptional	A view of high scenic value, natural/man-made beauty, and/or is uninterrupted by incongruous elements, and/or is an important recognised view within/towards or across a statutory designated landscape or heritage/locally important feature/viewpoint.
High	A view of good scenic value, natural/man-made beauty, and/or uninterrupted by incongruous elements, and/or is a recognised view within/towards or across a designated landscape or heritage/locally important feature/significant viewpoint.
Moderate	A view of some scenic value or intrinsic merit/natural/man-made beauty with some incongruous elements within, towards or across a locally important landscape/view or towards a locally recognised feature or reference point.
Low	A view of little/no intrinsic merit and contains some positive attributes and/or a view which is not rare and does not have any local value attached to it.
Poor	An open or partially screened view which is unsightly with no positive attributes and/or a view which is not rare and does not have any local value attached to it.

2c. Quantifying Sensitivity

Combining the 'Value' and the 'Susceptibility to Change' determines landscape/townscape character and visual sensitivity to change:

Landscape / Visual Value	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE		
	Exceptional / high	High	High
Moderate	High	Moderate	Low
Poor / low	Moderate	Low	Low
	High	Medium	Low
	Landscape or Townscape / Visual Susceptibility		

The definition of 'Landscape/Townscape or Visual Sensitivity' is as follows:

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	Where the elements that make up a character area or view are of considerable merit and/or would be difficult to restore or could not be replaced/removed without substantial detriment to the overall character area or view.
Moderate	Where the elements that make up a character area or view are of merit and/or could in part be restored or replaced/removed without a notable detriment to the overall character area or view.
Low	Where the elements that make up a character area or view are of little merit and/or could be restored or replaced/removed without detriment to the overall character area or view.

STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

The assessment of 'Magnitude' and 'Significance' of the effects on both Landscape/Townscape Character' and 'Visual Receptors' is undertaken during three periods to identify the temporary operational and residual effect of the proposed development:

- **Construction** (temporary effects)
- **Year 1**- Operational Period (temporary effects with landscape/mitigation treatments established in part)
- **Year 15** – Operational Period (residual effects after landscape/mitigation treatments established in full)

The 'Significance of the Effects' on landscape character and visual receptors can be positive or negative (the 'Direction') and are described as being either 'Beneficial' or 'Adverse'. Where the development is unlikely to have any discernible influence the 'Direction' is described as being 'Neutral'.

DETERMINING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

The 'Significance' of the effects of development on landscape character and visual receptors is determined by combining the assessment of:

- the 'Sensitivity' of the landscape or view, as established in the (Stage 1) baseline assessment; and
- the potential 'Magnitude of Change' resulting from the proposed development.

2a. Assessment of Magnitude of Change

The following criteria are considered when assessing the 'Magnitude of Change' on landscape/ townscape character or views:

- Scale, duration and/or reversibility of development;
- Effect of any components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the scheme;
- The change in and/or partial or complete loss of elements, features or aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape/townscape;
- The addition of new features or elements that will influence the area's character; and,
- The landscape proposals and/or mitigation treatments.

The 'Magnitude of Change' on landscape/townscape character or view is defined using the following criteria:

Magnitude of Change	Criteria
High	Where the scale/type/extent of the proposed scheme (or works to facilitate it) would be the dominant element in or adjacent to a character area or view.
Medium	Where the scale/type/extent of the proposed scheme (or works to facilitate it) would be one of a number of important elements in or adjacent to a character area or view.
Low	Where the scale/type/extent of the proposed scheme (or works to facilitate it) would be a minor element in or adjacent to a character area or view.
Negligible / None	Where the scale/type/extent of the proposed scheme (or works to facilitate it) would be remote and/or be an inconsequential element in or adjacent to a character area or view.

2b. Quantifying the Significance of Effects

Combining the 'sensitivity' (from the Baseline Assessment) with the 'magnitude of change' including the contribution of the landscape proposals and/or mitigation measures determines the 'significance of effects' on landscape/townscape character or views/visual receptors:

Sensitivity	SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS			
	Exceptional / high	Substantial	Substantial	Moderate
Moderate	Substantial	Moderate	Minor	Neutral
Poor / low	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Neutral
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible/None
	<i>Magnitude of Change</i>			

The 'Significance of Effects' to the temporary or residual changes in landscape/townscape character or for a view/visual receptor are defined as follows:

Effects on Character / Views	Criteria
Substantial	Where the scheme would cause a substantial change in the quality, condition and/or nature of the existing character area or view and the new development (or works to facilitate it) would be the dominant element.
Moderate	Where the scheme would cause a notable change in the quality, condition and/or nature of the existing character area or view and the new development (or works to facilitate it) would be one of a small number of elements in the overall setting.
Minor	Where the scheme would cause a slight change in the quality, condition and/or nature of the existing character area or view and the new development (or works to facilitate it) would be one of many elements in the overall setting.
Neutral	Where the scheme would cause a negligible or no change in the quality, condition and/or nature of the existing character area or view and the new development (or works to facilitate it) would be obscured or hidden by many other elements in the overall setting.

2c. Quantifying the Direction of the Significance of Effects

The 'effects' of change can be either beneficial (positive), adverse (negative) or neutral and is determined by weighting a combination of the following criteria:

Beneficial Criteria (+)

- Fits well with scale of landform &/or pattern of an area/view
- Increases attributes or enhances in contribution to an area/setting/view
- Enhances balance of elements in an area/view or sense of tranquillity
- Provides ability to include adequate or appropriate mitigation
- Complements local/national planning policies or guidance to protect an area's character or a view

Adverse Criteria (-)

- Out of scale with landform &/or pattern of an area/view
- Loss of attributes or deterioration in contribution to an area/setting/view
- Disrupts balance of elements in an area/view or sense of tranquillity.
- Lacks ability to include adequate or appropriate mitigation
- Conflicts with local/national planning policies or guidance to protect an area's character or a view

Neutral

- Where there is no discernable change to an area's character or a view
- Where there is no positive or negative affect on an area's character or a view