

**Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual impact Assessment**  
**Land West of White Post Road, Banbury**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**

January 2016

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## 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd has been appointed by Gladman Developments Ltd (the “applicant”) in respect of land west of White Post Road, Banbury (the “application site”) to undertake a Landscape Visual and Impact Assessment which will form part of the Environmental Statement to be submitted under an Outline Planning Application for a residential development on the site.
- 6.1.2 Following the submission of the application in July 2015 and following comments from the Local Authorities Landscape Officer, this assessment has been updated to incorporate an assessment of additional viewpoints and photomontage visualisations and to further consider the effect of the development upon the setting of Bodicote, its residents and the strategic green gap between Banbury and the village of Bodicote.. This revised ES LVIA Chapter therefore supersedes that which was previously submitted.
- 6.1.3 A detailed appraisal of the surrounding study area has been undertaken using Ordnance Survey data, historical map data, local policy and published character assessments. This has informed the on-site field analysis to identify key viewpoints, analyse the landscape character and visual environment of the local area, and determine the extent and significance of any potential landscape and visual effects.
- 6.1.4 The assessment of effects has been derived from guidance provided within GLVIA3 (Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3 Edition) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in April 2013. The methodology is contained within section 2 of this chapter.
- 6.1.5 This chapter of the ES will include the following:-
- A description of the baseline conditions.
  - An assessment of potential effects that may arise during demolition, construction, operation and decommissioning (where appropriate).
  - A description of the proposed development and detail of the mitigation measures proposed to remove, reduce or remedy any potentially significant adverse effects.
  - A description of any significant adverse effects that may remain following implementation of the mitigation measures.
  - An assessment of any significant effects which may impact upon the landscape setting of the heritage assets and natural asset designations.
  - Cumulative environmental effects arising from the proposed development and other development proposals within the locality.
- 6.1.6 This assessment should be read alongside the other supporting material which accompanies this application.

6.1.7 This chapter on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has the following Appendices within section A6 of Environmental Statement Vol 2, Appendices to Chapters:

Appendix 6.1 Site and Setting Plan

Appendix 6.2 Opportunities and Constraints Plan

Appendix 6.3 Development Framework Plan

Appendix 6.4 Visual Assessment

Appendix 6.5 ZTV Analysis Diagram

Appendix 6.6 NCA 95: Northamptonshire Uplands

Appendix 6.7 OWLS: Upstanding Village Farmlands

Appendix 6.8 CDC: Ironstone Hills and Valleys

Appendix 6.9 CDC Banbury Landscape Sensitivity & Capacity Study Addendum 2014

Appendix 6.10 Local Plan 2031 Emerging Policies Map

Appendix 6.11 Cumulative Effect Table

Appendix 6.12 Cumulative Effect Sites Plan

Appendix 6.13 Illustrative Visualisations

## 6.2 METHODOLOGY

6.2.1 The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment have jointly published Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (2013) that gives guidance on carrying out a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), either as a standalone appraisal or part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This methodology takes on board the above guidance.

6.2.2 When assessing character within an urban context, this methodology can be applied to Townscape Assessments and how the development will affect the elements that make up the townscape and its distinctive character.

6.2.3 The main stages of the LVIA process are outlined below. This process will identify and assess the potential effects of a development on the landscape resource and the visual environment.

### a) Baseline study

6.2.4 Landscape

- Define the scope of the assessment.
- Outline the planning policy context, including any landscape designations.
- Establish the landscape baseline through a site visit and an assessment of published Landscape Character Assessments to identify the value of the landscape resource (receptor), at community, local, national or international levels where appropriate.

### Visual

- Define the scope of the assessment.
- Identify the extent of visual receptors within the study area, with the use of Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) where appropriate, and establish the number and sensitivity of the representative viewpoint and/or groups of people (receptors) within the study area whose views may be altered as a result of the proposals.

### b) Project description

6.2.5 The baseline study highlights clear opportunities and constraints for the integration of the proposals into the receiving environment. The aspects of the scheme at each phase that will potentially give rise to effects on the landscape and visual amenity will need identifying. At this time, the proposals can be modified to ensure that further mitigation measures are incorporated into the design as a response to the local landscape and visual environment.

### c) Description of Effects

6.2.6 The level of effect on both landscape and visual receptors should be identified in respect of the different components of the proposed development. In order to assess the significance of the effect on the receiving environment, it is necessary to consider the **magnitude**, i.e. the degree of change, together with the **sensitivity** of the receptor.

This will identify whether the effects are:

Adverse or Beneficial - beneficial effects would typically occur where a development could positively contribute to the landscape character or view. Neutral effects would include changes that neither add nor detract from the quality and character of an area or view. Adverse effects would typically occur where there is loss of landscape elements, or the proposal detracts from the landscape quality and character of an area or view.

Direct or Indirect – A direct effect will be one where a development will affect a view or the character of an area, either beneficially or adversely. An indirect effect will occur as a result of associated development i.e. a development may result in an increase of traffic on a particular route.

Short, Medium or Long Term – this relates to the expected duration and magnitude of a development. Within this assessment the potential effects are assessed during the Construction Phase, then at Years 1 and 10, following completion of the development.

Reversible or Irreversible – can the resulting effect of a development be mitigated or not, and whether the result of the mitigation is beneficial or adverse.

#### **d) Significance of Effects (EIA only)**

- 6.2.7 A final judgment on whether the effect is likely to be significant, as required by the Regulations. The summary should draw out the key issues and outline the scope for reducing any negative/ adverse effects. Mitigation measures need to be identified that may reduce the final judgement on the significance of any residual negative effects in the long term.

#### **Assessing the significance of effects**

#### **Landscape Sensitivity**

- 6.2.8 The sensitivity of a particular landscape in relation to new development is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. This takes into account the susceptibility of the receptor to the type of development proposed and the value attributed to the existing landscape. The following table explains each threshold and the factors that make up the degree of sensitivity.

**Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity Thresholds**

Sensitivity	Definition
High	Landscape resource where there is a high susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of high value, have a high degree of intimacy, strong landscape structure, relatively intact and contain features worthy of protection. Townscapes may include a high proportion of historic assets. Typical examples may be of National or County importance e.g. within the setting of National Parks, AONB's, Conservation Areas etc.

<b>Medium</b>	Landscape resource where there is a medium susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of medium value, good landscape structure, with some detracting features or evidence of recent change. Townscapes may include a proportion of historic assets or of cultural value locally. Typical examples may be designated for their value at District level.
<b>Low</b>	Landscape resource where there is a low susceptibility to change. Landscapes would be considered of low value, and contain evidence of previous landscape change.
<b>Negligible</b>	Landscape resource where there is little or no susceptibility to change. Typical landscapes are likely to be degraded, of weak landscape structure, intensive land uses, and require landscape restoration.

### Visual Sensitivity

6.2.9 The sensitivity of the visual receptor will be assessed against the magnitude of visual change, and is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. Each receptor should be assessed in terms of both their susceptibility to change in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views.

**Table 2: Visual Sensitivity Thresholds**

<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>High</b>	Viewers on public rights of way whose prime focus is on the landscape around and are often very aware of its value. Occupiers of residential properties with primary views affected by the development. Examples include viewers within National landscape designations, users of National Trails, Long Distance Routes or Sustrans cycle routes, or within the setting of a listed building.
<b>Medium</b>	Viewers engaged in outdoor recreation with some appreciation of the landscape, occupiers of residential properties with oblique views affected by the development, and users of rural lanes and roads. Examples include viewers within moderate quality landscapes, local recreation grounds, and outdoor pursuits.
<b>Low</b>	Viewers engaged in outdoor sport or recreation whose prime focus is on their activity, or those passing through the area on main transport routes whose attention is focused away from an appreciation of the landscape.



<b>Negligible</b>	Viewers whose attention is focused on their work or activity, and not susceptible to changes in the surrounding landscape.
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### Effect Magnitude

- 6.2.10 The magnitude of change relates to the degree in which proposed development alters the fabric of the landscape character or view. This change is categorised as high, medium, low, or negligible.

**Table 3: Magnitude of Change**

<b>Magnitude</b>	<b>Effect Definition</b>
<b>High</b>	Change resulting in a high degree of deterioration or improvement, or introduction of prominent new elements that are considered to make a major alteration to a landscape or view.
<b>Medium</b>	Change resulting in a moderate degree of deterioration or improvement, or constitutes a perceptible change within a landscape or view.
<b>Low</b>	Change resulting in a low degree of deterioration or improvement to a landscape or view, or constitutes only a minor component within a landscape or view.
<b>Negligible</b>	Change resulting in a barely perceptible degree of deterioration or improvement to a landscape or view.
<b>No Change</b>	It is also possible for a landscape or view to experience no change due to being totally compatible with the local character or not visible due to intervening structures or vegetation.

### Significance Threshold

- 6.2.11 The magnitude of change is then considered against the sensitivity of the landscape resource as a receptor or the existing character of the panorama / view. In formulating the significance of effect, reasoned professional judgement is required which is explained within the assessment. This is carried out both in terms of the predicted effects on landscape character or on visual amenities. The significance thresholds are predicted as Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible and None, and can be either beneficial or adverse. Unless otherwise stated, all effects are predicted in the winter months. The extent of mitigation measures should be clearly stated, and in the case of planting proposals, the contribution to reducing adverse effects should be demonstrated at different stages (construction stage, operational stage year 0, and year 10).

**Table 4: Significance of Effect**

Significance	Threshold Definition
<b>Major</b>	A high magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view that has limited ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a damaged landscape or view.
<b>Moderate</b>	A medium magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view that may have the ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a lower quality landscape or view.
<b>Minor</b>	A low magnitude of change that materially affects a landscape or view that has the ability to accommodate change. Positive effects will typically occur in a lower quality landscape or view.
<b>Negligible</b>	A negligible magnitude of change that has little effect on a landscape or view that has the ability to accommodate change.
<b>None</b>	It is also possible for a magnitude of change to occur that results in a neutral effect significance due to the change being compatible with local character or not visible.

6.2.12 The significance of the effect is measured on the ability of a landscape or view to accommodate the change. In assessing the significance of effects, the following matrix will be used to determine the significance thresholds, through determining the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of change.

**Table 5: Measuring Significance of Effect**

		Sensitivity of Receptors			
		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Magnitude of Change	High	Major	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor
	Medium	Major/ Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor
	Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible
	Negligible	Moderate/ Minor	Minor	Negligible	Negligible/ None

- 6.2.13 It should be noted that where there is no perceptible change in terms of the effect magnitude regardless of the sensitivity of the receptor, the significance of the effect on a landscape or view will be none.
- 6.2.14 A written statement summarising the significance of effects is provided, assisted by the tables and matrices. The final judgement relies on professional judgement that is reasonable, based on clear and transparent methods, suitable training and experience, and a detached and dispassionate view of the development in the final assessment.

#### **Assessing cumulative effects (EIA only)**

- 6.2.15 Cumulative effects are additional effects caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments. This can be cumulative landscape effects on the physical fabric or character of the landscape, or cumulative visual effects caused by two or more developments being visible from one viewpoint and/or sequence of views. The scope of cumulative effects should be agreed at the outset to establish what schemes are relevant to the assessment, and what planning stage is appropriate. It is generally considered that existing and consented developments and those for which planning applications have been submitted but not yet determined should be included.

## 6.3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

### National Policy

#### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)

- 6.3.1 The NPPF aims to provide one concise document which sets out the Governments planning policies for England by replacing previous Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs) and Planning Policy Statements (PPSs). It aims to provide a planning framework within which the local community and local authorities can produce distinctive local plans which respond to local needs and priorities.
- 6.3.2 The NPPF promotes a presumption in favour of sustainable development, defined as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs', and providing it is in accordance with the relevant up-to-date Local Plan and policies set out in the NPPF, including those identifying restrictions with regard to designated areas.
- 6.3.3 Paragraph 14 describes the key theme throughout the Framework is that of 'Achieving Sustainable Development' and confirms that the "presumption in favour of sustainable development" should be seen as a "golden thread running through both plan-making and decision- taking."

*"For decision - taking this means:*

*(i) "Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*

*(ii) Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:*

- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*

- Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted."*

- 6.3.4 In respect of the latter, footnote 9 within the Framework identifies the types of areas where development should be restricted and lists sites protected by the Birds and Habitats Directive and/or designated as SSSI's: land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Heritage Coast or within a National Park: designated heritage assets and locations at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.
- 6.3.5 Twelve Core Planning Principles are set out at Paragraph 17, of which the following are relevant to landscape and visual matters, stating that planning should:
- "not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
  - always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
  - take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*

- *contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework;*
- *promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, carbon storage or food production);*
- *conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations; and*
- *actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable."*

6.3.6 The NPPF then identifies thirteen aspects which should be considered in developing local plans and reviewing planning applications. Those of relevance to the landscape and visual considerations of the Application Site and proposed development include Section 7: Requiring good design. Paragraph 58 states that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments, inter alia:

*"..Establish a strong sense of place,*

- *respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping."*

6.3.7 Paragraph 61 states that:

*"planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment."*

6.3.8 Section 11: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment notes in paragraph 109 that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by inter alia *"protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils"*.

6.3.9 Paragraph 110 sets out that the aim, in preparing plans for development, should be to minimise adverse effects on the local and natural environment, and that plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value.

6.3.10 Paragraph 114 notes that furthermore, local planning authorities should:

*"set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure."*

6.3.11 Paragraph 125 states that:

*"By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation."*

## **Local Planning Policy**

### Emerging Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031

6.3.12 The emerging Cherwell Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for formal examination on January 2014. In June 2014 the Inspector suspended the examination to allow the Council to undertake main modifications in relation to meeting its objectively assessed housing needs over the plan period. The Council has since undertaken modifications along with further public consultation and has re-submitted these to the Inspector in October 2014. The Inspector's Report on Examination of the modified submission has been published and council officers are considering the report. It is intended that it will be presented to Members at meeting of the Council on 20 July 2015 with a recommendation for adoption.

6.3.13 Relevant policies include the following;

Policy ESD13: Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement

6.3.14 This policy seeks to secure the enhancement of the character and appearance of the landscape, particularly in urban fringe locations. Proposed development should not give rise to undue visual intrusion, it should be consistent with local character and should not harm the setting of local settlements.

Policy ESD15: Green Boundaries and Growth

6.3.15 Development proposals should incorporate appropriate green infrastructure. Green buffers identified within the draft local plan are intended to define the limits of built development between settlements, including Banbury and Bodicote. The application site would lie within the proposed modified green buffer.

Policy ESD16: The Character of the Built and Historic Environment

6.3.16 All new development is required to be of a high design standard and respect the areas built, natural and cultural context.

Policy ESD18: Green Infrastructure

6.3.17 The policy seeks to ensure the existing green infrastructure network forms an integral part of new development.

### Emerging Site Allocation Policy - Modified Submission of Cherwell District Council Local Plan Part 1

6.3.18 In October 2014 as part of the re-submission of the modified Local Plan to the Secretary of State, the following site allocation policy was included;

- Banbury 17 Land South of Salt Way

- 6.3.19 The development proposals of the application site falls within the eastern section of the new proposed Strategic Housing Allocation of Banbury 17, which comprises a broad tract of agricultural green field land extending across the southern settlement edge of Banbury.
- 6.3.20 The undeveloped southern section of the application site is shown on the emerging modified policy map as Outdoor Sports Provision.
- 6.3.21 The undeveloped eastern section of the application site is shown on the emerging modified policy map as New Green Space and Parks.

## 6.4 BASELINE CONDITIONS

### The Site & Context

- 6.4.1 Banbury is a historic market town located on the River Cherwell in Oxfordshire and lies 34km north north west of Oxford. With a population of approximately 46,850 it is a major centre within the district with a significant commercial and retail economy (refer Appendix 6.1).
- 6.4.2 Whilst the main planning authority is Cherwell District Council, the application site lies within Bodicote Civil Parish.
- 6.4.3 In relation to transport infrastructure, Oxford Road A4260 runs north-south some 250m east of the application site with the M40 lying further east at 1.75km. Further beyond this the mainline railway corridor lies 2.5 km east.
- 6.4.4 The application site occupies the land between Banbury's southern settlement fringe and the western realms of the village of Bodicote and is allocated within the emerging local plan.
- 6.4.5 The site is bounded by White Post Road directly in the east, the main route to Bodicote from Banbury, and Wykham Lane in the south, a rural lane which heads westwards to Broughton.
- 6.4.6 The historic route of Salt Way (also a restricted byway) bounds the site directly north, beyond which lies Banbury's urban fringe with the residential properties of Sycamore Drive.
- 6.4.7 To the west the application site abuts further agricultural land which also forms part of the wider development allocation within the emerging local plan, of which the site forms part, which extends towards Wykham Park some 2km west where Bloxham Road A361 heads north east to Banbury.
- 6.4.8 The application site falls within the eastern section of the new proposed Strategic Housing Allocation of Banbury 17. The land directly adjacent to the west also falls within Banbury 17 and is subject to a separate planning application 14/01932/OUT submitted by another party for up to 1000 homes.
- 6.4.9 The application site itself comprises three parcels of land, a large rectangular arable field to the west, a medium sized rectangular arable field located centrally and an irregular shaped small tract of land to the eastern most interface with White Post Road. The land cover in this tract of land is pasture with scattered parkland trees. Its irregular shaped northern perimeter is defined by the boundary with two large detached properties, one being Salt Way Day Nursery the other being a private residence. Access to these properties is off Salt Way. A distinctive feature of the application site is the large mature tree canopies which abound within and on the boundaries of these properties.
- 6.4.10 A well established hedgerow forms the eastern boundary with White Post Road, a busy main road which boasts mature street trees on the eastern side of the carriageway along with extensive areas of green open space. A primary school and local council offices occupy the land further south before the main settlement of Bodicote commences.



- 6.4.11 Immediately south of the application site eastern land parcel lies a large recreational ground with Bodicote Village Hall occupying its south eastern corner.
- 6.4.12 Immediately south of the application site central land parcel is Banbury Cricket ground whose access is off White Post Road via a curvilinear driveway lined with avenues of purple leafed specimen trees. The cricket club driveway traverses through and within the application site's eastern land parcel before dog-legging into the cricket ground's curtilage where an extensive car park facility is again framed with specimen trees. A prominent two storey pavilion stands sentinel to the north of the cricket pitch oval, with nets and an ancillary outbuilding also visually prominent. The dominant pavilion structure is ameliorated by mature hedgerow trees which frame the building within the north west and northern corner boundaries.
- 6.4.13 Wykham Lane bounds the cricket ground to the south with residential properties aligning its northern carriageway segregating the lane from the recreational and cricket grounds.
- 6.4.14 Beyond and west of these properties Wykham Lane is a narrow winding country lane with a meadow verge and well established high hedgerows which are fairly consistent in their continuity.
- 6.4.15 The largest westernmost farm field of the site has a rectangular plot of allotment gardens to the south western corner with informal access off Wykham Lane. It should be noted that the application site does not include this plot of allotments.
- 6.4.16 The application site's land parcels are sub-divided by field hedgerows which are trimmed yet gappy in places and are mostly devoid of hedgerow trees.
- 6.4.17 To the west of the application site's western land parcel lie more long rectangular arable fields and field hedgerows.
- 6.4.18 Salt Way adjacent to the north of the application site is strongly defined by a well-established hedgerow with intermittent mature hedgerow trees. It also forms a wildlife corridor and is of recreational amenity being part of the Sustrans network as well as a restricted byway.
- 6.4.19 There is currently no public access into the application site, apart from a public footpath which runs through the middle of the westernmost field from Wykham Lane connecting through to the restricted byway of Salt Way to the north of the site, and then linking through to the residential neighbourhood of Beaconsfield Road beyond.
- 6.4.20 The application site has low voltage transmission lines traversing north-south but these are not perceived as overly intrusive within the landscape.

### **Topography**

- 6.4.21 The southern settlement fringe of Banbury sits on a plateau with the ridgeline running along the approximate same line as Sycamore Drive. The application site occupies the land just south of this ridgeline on a gently south facing slope and can be considered to be relatively flat, with little localised undulations.

- 6.4.22 The application site is approximately 125m AOD in the north west corner and falls with few dips and folds at a relatively constant grade to 115m AOD in the south east corner.
- 6.4.23 Beyond Wykham Lane the terrain starts to fall away sharply down to the Sor Brook river valley and then rises up again on the southern valley side over towards Bloxham forming higher ground at Broughton in the south west and Hobb Hill & Fern Hill near Bloxham in the south.
- 6.4.24 The distinctive localised hillock of Crouch Hill is evident in the west which is a culturally significant natural landmark of Banbury.
- 6.4.25 Long distance views over to the south reveal the rolling high terrain of the Cotswolds with its limestone escarpment whilst over to the south east beyond Bodicote lies the eastern valley sides of the Cherwell river basin with the Northamptonshire Uplands beyond.

### **Hydrology**

- 6.4.26 The application site lies outside the Environmental Agency's flood risk zones 2 & 3.
- 6.4.27 There are no water courses or bodies within the application site itself.
- 6.4.28 The River Cherwell & Oxford Canal flow north to south some 1.6km over to the east beyond Bodicote.
- 6.4.29 The Sor Brook flows from north-south skirting west and south around the application site before turning south again towards a confluence with the Cherwell at Steeple Aston.
- 6.4.30 The Sor Brook valley basin lies 800m to the south and is prone to flooding being within flood risk zones 2 & 3.

### **Designations**

- 6.4.31 There are no statutory designations which affect the site itself.

#### National Designations

- 6.4.32 Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is located 10km to the west and south of the application site. It is considered that there is a sufficient disconnect between the application site and the AONB in terms of likely significant impacts either visual or landscape.

#### Heritage Assets

- 6.4.33 A detailed heritage assessment has been undertaken and accompanies this application. However, as an overview, Bodicote Conservation Area is located 150m to the south east of the application site. Its most western realms, is contained by layers of existing vegetative structures and not within the visual envelope of the development's built form.
- 6.4.34 Banbury Conservation Area lies some 950m directly north of the application site and is contained visually by built form.

- 6.4.35 Bloxham Conservation Area is located 2.5km to the south west of the application site and is contained by existing vegetative structures and prevailing topography.
- 6.4.36 There are no listed buildings within the site.
- 6.4.37 The nearest listed buildings are the Lodge to Bodicote House Grade II located 115m south south east with Bodicote House Grade II also to the south east of the application site at a distance of 215m. To the south Yew Tree Cottage and Brown Hatch both Grade II lie approximately 190m away on the outskirts of Bodicote village.

#### Public Rights Of Way

- 6.4.38 FP 137/13/10 traverses through the middle of the site north-south.
- 6.4.39 The following public footpaths are in close proximity:
- Restricted Byway RBW 120/43/10 & 20 runs adjacent along the northern site boundary, otherwise known as Salt Way.
  - BW 137/11/10 traverses north to south some 135m to the west of the site.
  - FP 120/47/10, FP 137/16/10 & FP 120/46/10 are located further west traversing north to south.
- 6.4.40 For a plan illustrating the application sites Opportunities and Constraints please refer Appendix 6.2.

### **Landscape Character**

#### **National Landscape Character Assessment**

##### Countryside Agency - Countrywide Landscape Character Assessment

- 6.4.41 A landscape assessment of the local area has been carried out which seeks to identify broadly homogenous zones that can be categorised in terms of quality and character. This is necessary in order to assess the potential impact that change will have on a particular landscape. The Countryside Agency produced a countrywide landscape character assessment resulting in the published Character Map of England. The map includes large tracts of countryside which have similar characteristics in terms of landform, geology, land use and other landscape elements.
- 6.4.42 Within the Countryside Agency Character Map of England document, the application site lies within the NCA 95: Northamptonshire Uplands character area (refer Appendix 6.6). The key characteristics of this area are identified as:
- *“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.*
  - *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...*
- *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...*
- *Nationally rare, locally abundant and prominent ridge and furrow, with frequent deserted and shrunken settlements. Several large historic...and 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..."*

6.4.43 It should also be noted that NCA 107: Cotswolds is located 1km south of the application site, commencing at the southern banks of the Sor Brook.

#### 6.4.44 Key Characteristics of NCA 107: Cotswolds

- *"Defined by its underlying geology: a dramatic limestone scarp rising above adjacent lowlands with steep combs, and outliers...the scarp and dip slope of the landscape...has influenced drainage, soils, vegetation, land use and settlement.*
- *Open and expansive scarp and high wold dipping gently to the south- east, dissected by river valleys.*
- *Arable farming dominates the high wold and dip slope while permanent pasture prevails on the steep slopes of the scarp and river valleys with pockets of internationally important limestone grassland.*
- *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.*
- *...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...*

6.4.45 The landscape character of the application site is sufficiently detached from the Cotswold NCA and relates well to the Northamptonshire Uplands.

### **Local Landscape Character Assessments**

#### The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS)

6.4.46 At a more local level, Oxfordshire County Council have produced The Oxfordshire Wildlife and Landscape Study (OWLS) which takes into account the Character Map of England but looks at the character at a more detailed level. The OWLS assessment identifies that the site is located within Landscape Type 8: Upstanding Village Farmlands (refer Appendix 6.7).

6.4.47 The Upstanding Village Farmlands is described as a hilly landscape with a strong pattern of hedgerows and nucleated villages characteristically built from the local ironstone.

6.4.48 Key characteristics are stated as;

- *“A steep sided, undulating landform.*
- *A well-defined geometric pattern of medium-sized fields enclosed by prominent hedgerows.*
- *A strong settlement pattern of compact, nucleated villages of varying sizes with little dispersal in wider countryside.”*

6.4.49 The land uses are mixed. Arable cropping dominates the areas around Deddington, Hempton, Bodicote and Claydon, whereas grassland, interspersed in places with small patches of scrub and secondary woodland, is largely associated with the steeper slopes. Ridge and furrow pasture is a characteristic feature of this grassland. These fields are sometimes used for pony grazing. A number of wide, species-rich road verges are located in the more elevated northern part of the landscape type.

6.4.50 There is very little woodland and it is largely confined to small plantations on the steeper grounds and in the parkland at Williamsote. Patches of scrub are found growing in the steeper gullies.

6.4.51 Within the OWLS assessment, under Cultural Pattern, the assessment notes that there is a prominent pattern of geometrically-shaped fields enclosed by moderately tall hedges. The hedges give structure to the landscape and are dominated by hawthorn, elm and elder. Fields are moderately-sized, except for the larger arable fields around Bodicote. Hedgerow trees, of oak and ash, are generally sparse but become denser where they are associated with grassland. Most of the remaining trees are concentrated along roadsides, footpaths, bridleways and parish boundaries. The elevated nature of the landform, combined with lack of woodland and tree cover, results in a rather open landscape.

- 6.4.52 The pattern of well-defined nucleated villages is very characteristic. They are often situated on rising ground and slopes, linked by straight roads. This nucleated settlement pattern is in contrast to the few dispersed farmsteads in the wider countryside. The vernacular character is strong in most of the settlements, but is particularly prominent in the smaller villages to the north of Banbury including Bourton and Mollington. The larger settlements, such as Deddington, Bloxham and Adderbury also retain a core of buildings with a strong vernacular character. The distinctive ironstone used as building material gives rise to characteristic warm orange-brown buildings with stone or slate roof tiles.
- 6.4.53 The landscape type is described in greater detail under smaller landscape description units. The application site lies within Local Character Area C: Bodicote (NU/16). The assessment identifies that this area is characterised by: *“...large-sized fields dominated by arable farming, with some smaller grass fields used for pony grazing. They are enclosed by low hawthorn hedges which are generally in good condition. Hedges bordering roadsides and old lanes are taller, well-maintained and more species-rich. There are a few young ash, field maple and oak trees in the hedges, and some small tree clumps close to farms.*
- 6.4.54 *Locally important habitats include plantations, semi-improved grassland, scrub and species-poor hedges with trees. There are also species-rich hedges bordering some roads and green lanes.”*
- 6.4.55 The OWL’s assessment outlines the various pressures being exerted upon the landscape;
- *“The hedgerow network is generally intact and in good condition, even in places dominated by intensive arable farming. However, around Bodicote the hedgerow pattern is weaker, with roadside hedges tending to be overgrown and internal field hedges generally low and gappy.*
  - *There is some residential development within the main settlements that is out of character, particularly in the larger settlements to the south of Banbury. There are also some industrial estates, but they are generally well screened by landscape planting.*
  - *Other land uses, such as the disused airfield and wireless station near Barford, can be visually intrusive.”*
- 6.4.56 The OWL’s assessment also sets out guidelines for the preservation and enhancement of the landscape under Landscape Strategy and states that: *“Conserve and enhance the strong pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and the nucleated settlement pattern and strong vernacular character of the villages”.*

#### Cherwell District Council Landscape Character Assessment 1995

- 6.4.57 The district council commissioned Cobham Resource Consultants to prepare a landscape assessment for the Cherwell District as a basis for a consistent, coordinated approach to planning policy, development control and landscape management and conservation.
- 6.4.58 The application site lies within the Ironstone Hills and Valleys Landscape Character Area (refer Appendix 6.8). The following extract describes its key characteristics;

*“The main distinguishing features are its extremely complex topography and the style of vernacular buildings which is unique to the Banbury region. The unspoilt ironstone villages and tranquil countryside are remote and isolated, particularly towards the west of the character area.*

*The geology of this area is faulted and fairly complex, which gives rise to a correspondingly complicated topography.*

*Since the area is faulted and uplifted, and also cut through by numerous small streams, the landscape is divided into very steeply sided, convoluted valleys with narrow valley bottoms and rolling, rounded hill lines. Underlying geology has given rise to iron rich clay soils of a characteristic red colour, much of which is classed as grade 2 agricultural land.*

*Rolling hills with rich soils are considerable agricultural assets and much of this area is in arable cultivation, the main crops being winter cereals with potatoes and sugar beet. In some areas, medium and large arable fields are still surrounded by hedges and the boundaries marked by hedgerow trees.*

*However, the area is riddled with steep sided valleys and narrow valley floors with a pattern of smaller fields and mixed farming, predominantly permanent pasture. Many hedgerows are unmanaged and growing out, and road verges sometimes include narrow stands of trees, which gives a well-treed impression, although the area lacks larger woodlands.*

*Streams in valley bottoms are locally marked with old willows with some pollarding, and with wet pasture.”*

- 6.4.59 The landscape character areas are further sub-divided into landscape types, the application site falls within Landscape Type R4b – Small-scale rolling farmland with strong field pattern, described as;

*“Wherever the landform levels out slightly, the small fields can be ploughed and crops of winter cereals grown. The resulting landscape is an intricate blend of mixed farming, with small variations in scale and local land use being closely related to topography, a tight knit small scale rolling farmland with strong field pattern.*

*Lanes and minor roads run straight along ridges wherever possible, dipping sharply down the valley sides to connect with villages. Hedgerows are mostly dense, well grown barriers, although where arable farming prevails they are closely trimmed. The practice of hedge laying is still continued locally as a means of maintaining a stockproof boundary. Many of the hedges contain mature hedgerow trees, the dominant species being oak and ash, with beech on the limestone outcrops....”*

- 6.4.60 The application site lies within an area classified as a ‘Conservation Landscape’. This category applies where ‘the landscape character and sense of place is particularly strong or where individual features are particularly notable for their landscape, ecological and/or cultural value.

*“Most forms of development are likely to be highly damaging to these sensitive landscapes. However, this does not necessarily mean that they could or should be fossilized. All of these landscapes require management to conserve their declining features, to reduce intrusive influences and to maintain and enhance long-term landscape and ecological value.”*

6.4.61 Relevant recommended guidelines, as set out within the Cherwell Assessment, include:

- *“Conservation and good management of hedgerows. Removal of hedges should be strongly resisted...”*
- *Continued renewal of hedgerow trees should be encouraged to prevent the decline of the hedgerow tree network...*
- *Development should only be permitted if it is sensitively sited and the scale, size, materials and character of the scheme are designed to blend in to the area...”*

#### Cherwell Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment 2010

6.4.62 Cherwell District Council commissioned Halcrow Group Ltd to undertake a Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment in order to inform its Local Development Framework and identify strategic areas within the district's two main centres of Banbury and Bicester which are able to accommodate development.

6.4.63 The application site falls within the broader strategic area referenced as Site G within the Capacity Study. It is worth noting that the application site only forms the eastern most section of the study area, however the study encompasses the tract of land extending from White Post Road in the east to Bloxham Road in the west, and bounded by Salt Way in the north and Wykham Lane to the south.

6.4.64 The following are relevant extracts from the study;

*“The landscape sensitivity of the site mostly varies from low to moderate, with the higher value in areas around Wykham Farm where woodland belts, pasture and smaller fields come together...”*

*“The visual sensitivity is judged to be moderate. Housing estates on the edge of Banbury and Bodicote overlook the site and are themselves visible in long views from the south... A large number of people use the Salt Way which is a Sustrans route and long distance footpath, and there is a visual sensitivity in relation to this.”*

*“The overall sensitivity to development is therefore moderate and high around Wykham Park, Wykham Farm and the edge of Bodicote.”*

With regard to cultural heritage value *“Wykham Farmhouse, Wykham Park and the Bodicote Conservation Area are of moderate value, with the remaining non-designated monuments within the site and in the wider study area of low value.*



*...The site is ordinary in terms of its scenic value and has a greater degree of tranquillity than sites closer to the motorway, although it is broken by traffic running on Wykham Lane. The value is judged to be low apart from the setting of the farms and the recreational areas associated with paths and sports fields which are high."*

*"Site G is judged to have a moderate capacity to accept residential development but only on the parts of the site which are of low value and landscape sensitivity. Other areas have a low capacity. The site has a high capacity to accept playing fields on the flatter areas and a high capacity to accept informal recreation and woodland in small blocks."*

With regard to mitigation the study notes that *"Screen planting would be effective, could protect views from the south and from Bodicote and could fit into the landscape. The Salt Way and other footpaths should be retained as substantial green corridors, and the setting of listed buildings should be protected. A local horizon west of Bodicote forms the setting of the old core of the village and development should not extend east of this line."*

In terms of Green Infrastructure *"The Salt Way is an important movement corridor for wildlife and people and should link to the Sor Brook valley by way of a green space around Wykham Farm and the footpaths."*

#### Banbury Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment Addendum 2014

6.4.65 White Young Green undertook a more in depth analysis of the strategic sites previously studied in the Cherwell District Assessment. In August 2014 they published an addendum which studied a smaller strategic area which previously formed part of Site G, this area now being referenced as Site 111 (refer Appendix 6.9). The application site falls within the northern half of Site111.

6.4.66 The following are relevant extracts from the study. In relation to landscape sensitivity, the addendum states that:

- *"The sensitivity of natural factors is Medium to Low.*
- *The sensitivity of cultural factors is Medium.*
- *The aesthetic value of the area is medium.*
- *The overall landscape quality and condition is Medium to Low."*

6.4.67 The combined Landscape Sensitivity is identified as Medium.

6.4.68 In terms of visual sensitivity, the addendum notes that:

- *"The general visibility of the area is Low.*
- *The visual sensitivity of the site to the surrounding visual receptors is Medium.*
- *There is a Medium sensitivity to mitigation e.g. screening at site boundaries."*

6.4.69 The combined Visual Sensitivity is identified as being Medium to Low.

6.4.70 With regard to landscape character sensitivity, the assessment notes that:

*“The Landscape Sensitivity has been assessed as Medium sensitivity and the Visual Sensitivity has been assessed as Medium to Low sensitivity. This results in a Medium to Low Landscape Character Sensitivity for Site 111.”*

6.4.71 In terms of landscape value, the addendum concludes:

- *“There are no landscape or ecological designations within the area. The value of designations is Medium to Low.*
- *The scenic value and tranquillity of the site is considered to be Medium value.*
- *The site is not accessible for public use however a public footpath does pass though the area and Salt Way passes along the north site boundary, which is a locally important feature. The area is important in preventing coalescence of Banbury and Bodicote and therefore plays an important function in visual terms. The perceived value is Medium.”*

6.4.72 The landscape value of Site 111 is considered to be Medium.

6.4.73 In terms of landscape capacity, the addendum concludes that: *“In general, the potential Landscape Capacity of Site 111 is Medium to High.”*

6.4.74 The addendum goes on to assess the capacity for residential development, stating that:

*“Visually the area is relatively well contained and therefore able to accommodate development from a visual point of view, however, the land provides an important buffer between Banbury and Bodicote. The area could accommodate development as long as the site is designed carefully in the eastern section to ensure a feeling of visual and physical separation is maintained.”*

6.4.75 The capacity for residential development is concluded as being Medium to High.

6.4.76 The addendum then set out future management and maintenance objectives, stating that:

*“Future management of the area should ensure the safeguarding of the landscape context of Salt Way as a historic route. If development occurs consideration should be given to structure planting to the south of the development to restrict long distance views from the south and also to maintain the separation of Banbury and Bodicote.”*

#### Cherwell District Council SHLAA 2014 Update

6.4.77 The SHLAA is part of the evidence base to be used to inform the preparation of the Council's Local Plan and will help the Council to identify specific sites that may be suitable for allocation for housing development.

6.4.78 The application site has been reviewed under this assessment for suitability as a strategic site allocation, under reference BA362. It should be noted that the site area of BA362 incorporates the section land currently used as allotment gardens, whereas the application site does not include this plot.

6.4.79 Regarding Site BA362, the SHLAA concludes;

*“With a reduction of the gross site area to reflect a smaller developable area and the incorporation of formal and informal open space in the southern and eastern parts of the site, this is considered to be an appropriate site for residential development.”*

### **Landscape Sensitivity**

- 6.4.80 Whilst the National Character Assessment and the District Landscape Character Assessment are useful in providing an overview of the landscape character of the wider setting of the application site, and while Aspect broadly agrees with this assessment, it is considered that they represent a broad-brush assessment which does not necessarily reflect the intricacies of the landscape character of the assessment site and its immediate setting.
- 6.4.81 As such Aspect has undertaken a more localised landscape character assessment of the application site and the surrounding landscape.
- 6.4.82 The site is simple and open in character comprising of a flat expanse of arable farmland subdivided by field hedgerows with little hedgerow trees to provide vertical features. The Salt Way provides a defined, hedgerowed boundary to the north. More established vegetative structures are prevalent along the site boundaries particularly to the south in the vicinity of the cricket pavilion and to the east where mature trees provide boundary cover for the Salt Way Day Nursery and a large detached private residence.
- 6.4.83 It is considered that there are a number of factors that both influence and affect the character and sensitivity of the site and its setting to a change of the type proposed. Firstly, the character of the site is heavily influenced by the close proximity of existing urban influences, namely the residential properties along the southern urban fringe of Banbury. Urban influences are also prevalent emanating from the settlement of Bodicote to the east and south eastern site boundaries.
- 6.4.84 Although there is a good degree of woodland cover along the urban fringes relating to garden and street trees, and some hedgerow trees to the south, the site itself is of simple character and low in diversity and can be considered to be an unremarkable urban edge landscape.
- 6.4.85 There are also a number of peri-urban influences associated with the setting of the site, these predominantly being the cricket ground with its dominant pavilion structure along with ancillary features such as the out building, high practice nets and the formal tree lined car park and driveway. In addition the recreational ground to the east and the presence of the allotment gardens in the south west also detract from the rural character.
- 6.4.86 White Post Road is a busy through route from Banbury to Bodicote which also serves a primary school and large council offices. Wykham Lane can prove to be busy despite being a narrow rural lane. Sycamore Road is a somewhat quieter residential road to the north.
- 6.4.87 Overall the landscape sensitivity of the site is considered to be medium-low.

### Value of the Landscape

- 6.4.88 As part of this addendum LVIA chapter, further assessment of the landscape value of the site and its immediate context has been undertaken. Landscape value is subjective, and is based on the importance to society of the affected landscape, based on, and taking into account, views of consultees and the public. Information about what is important about a landscape and why is required in order to:
- *Establish the level of importance of the affected landscape and whether this is at a local regional or national level;*
  - *Enable any losses of landscape features, characteristics, or functions to be assessed in relation to the importance or value attached to them;*
  - *Enable the effects on other, less tangible, perceptual landscape characteristics to be assessed such as scenic quality, tranquillity or wilderness;*
  - *Assist in identifying features which could be enhanced; and*
  - *Identify mitigation proposals, through avoidance or relocation, by appropriate remedy or offsetting negative effects through compensatory measures.*
- 6.4.89 Firstly, it should be acknowledged that the Local Authorities designation of the land adjoining the southern edge of Banbury (including the site and the wider Banbury 17 allocation site) is recognised as an Area of High Landscape Value designation set out within the 1996 Local Plan. This designation denotes that the landscape adjoining the southern edge of Banbury and to the west of Bodicote is considered to be of some value locally. However, while the NPPF references the contribution of Local Landscape Designation such as this in terms of their value in landscape terms, this still remains a Local Landscape Designation, which the NPPF places only limited weight, favouring National level designations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 6.4.90 The AHLV designation represents a broad brush designation which extends to cover a large tract of the district. Within any designation of this scale there will be areas which contribute significantly to the overarching qualities of the landscape, and areas which offer only a limited contribution. The entirety of the AHLV cannot be considered to be a valued landscape. The AHLV policy does not include an assessment of value, sensitivity or quality, and does not identify features which are of less/no value. The AHLV remains purely and solely a record of the areas character. Not all parts of the AHLV are of value or of the same quality and not all elements are worthy of retention. Within any designation of this scale, be it of local or national importance there will be areas which are of reduced quality and or contribute little to the overall value of the landscape. The NPPF prescribes the need for a site assessment to determine whether there are physical qualities or components of the site. It is considered that sites located adjacent to a settlement edge, or which are influenced by existing settlements will be of a less value than sites located within the open countryside.
- 6.4.91 Finally, it should be noted that the sites allocation as part of the wider Banbury 17 allocation site, denotes that CDC consider that sites development can come forward without diminishing the value of the AHLV or significantly harming the setting of Banbury and Bodicote Village.

6.4.92 It therefore falls to assess the site and its immediate landscape context in relation to the Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact (GLVIA 3) which sets out at Box 5.1 a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes.

6.4.93 The factors listed within Box 5.1 of GLVIA 3 include:

- *Landscape quality (condition);*
- *Scenic quality;*
- *Rarity;*
- *Representativeness;*
- *Conservation Interests;*
- *Recreation Value;*
- *Perceptual aspects;*
- *Associations;*

6.4.94 Having set out these criteria an assessment of each of these factors is set out below.

#### Quality

6.4.95 It is considered that the quality of the wider landscape to be good and is, overall, an intact landscape in medium condition. However, and as stated, the site is influenced by the presence of the existing urban edge of Banbury and to an extent the settlement edge of Bodicote village to the east. The built form which adjoins the eastern, southern and (to a lesser extent) the western boundaries that, while not a detracting feature, does affect the character of the site, promoting a settlement fringe character which is distinctly different from the character of the wider landscape setting. Alongside this the existing vegetation structure associated with the site boundaries assists in containing the application site, and filtering views from the immediate and wider landscape context.

#### Scenic Quality

6.4.96 Having identified the need for a criteria based assessment which is prescribed by the NPPF, and the lack of evidence that the Lowland Vale designation meets with this requirement, it is considered that only limited weight can be given to the value of the Lowland Vale landscape designation.

6.4.97 Indeed, this is reinforced at paragraph 113 of the NPPF which states “**Local planning authorities should set criteria based policies against which proposals for any development on or affecting protected wildlife or geodiversity sites or landscape areas will be judged. Distinctions should be made between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, so that protection is commensurate with their status and gives appropriate weight to their importance and the contribution that they make to wider ecological networks**”. This clearly denotes that greater weight and value should be applied to national level designations, and that a hierarchical approach to the status of national and local landscape designation should be taken.

6.4.98 In this instance the site represents an edge of settlement site, which is influenced by the presence of the existing urban edge of Banbury to the north, built form lining White Post Road and the settlement edge of Bodicote to the east. These features reinforce a settlement fringe sub character area which is distinctly different from that of a site within open countryside and which is therefore of lesser value than a site located within open countryside away from the settlement edge. While the site may be valued by local residents as an open field and is appreciable when travelling along the Salt Way, and as part of the 'green gap' between Banbury and Bodicote, it remains just that and there are no particular features of landscape interest. As such, and in the absence of any formal designation or identification of any particular landscape features worthy of protection, the site cannot be considered a valued landscape in the terms intended by paragraph 109 of the NPPF.

#### Rarity

6.4.99 When considering the rarity and representativeness of the landscape, the site is at present an open agricultural field bound to the north and east and south east by the existing settlement edges of Banbury and Bodicote. The site is not therefore, a unique landscape within the context of Banbury/ Bodicote or indeed within the wider AHLV designation. The presence of the Salt Way and the established vegetation structure which characterises the eastern site area and south western boundaries and the contributions these features make to the quality of the settlement edge and the sense of separation between Banbury and Bodicote is noted, however, these features are set to be retained as part of the development proposals and as such the sites development would not diminish the role of these features.

6.4.100 Furthermore, the allocation of the site as part of the wider Banbury 17 allocation site, denotes that CDC consider that sites development can come forward without resulting on the loss of a rare or important landscape.

#### Conservation Interests

6.4.101 With respect the existence of any particular conservation interests, the site is not the subject of any ecological or conservation designation or constraint, and its current state as a monoculture agricultural field, ensures that there is limited local value.

#### Recreational Value

6.4.102 The PRow which traverses the site (FP 137/13/10) and the Salt Way which lines the northern boundary, provide access to the site and public access on and immediately adjacent to the site. There is therefore some recreation value to the site, albeit on an informal and transient basis. Nevertheless, pedestrians traversing the site and the Salt Way are undoubtedly doing so for the enjoyment of the landscape itself and as such it is considered that the site is of some value in a recreational sense. However, its allocation as part of the wider Banbury 17 allocation site, denotes that the role the site plays in terms of recreation is considered to be outweighed by the need for new housing by CDC. However, there remains a need to preserve the Salt Way and footpath FP 137/13/10 within an appropriate green corridor/ attractive landscape setting.

### Perceptual Quality

6.4.103 As noted, above while the site is covered by the AHLV designation, this designation represents a broad brush designation which extends to cover a large tract of the district. Within any designation of this scale there will be areas which contribute significantly to the overarching qualities of the landscape, and areas which offer only a limited contribution. The entirety of the AHLV cannot be considered to be a valued landscape. The AHLV policy does not include an assessment of value, sensitivity or quality, and does not identify features which are of less/no value. The NPPF prescribes the need for a site assessment to determine whether there are physical qualities or components of the site, which are of value. It is considered that sites located adjacent to a settlement edge, or which are influenced by existing settlements will be of a less value than sites located within the open countryside.

6.4.104 However, the perceived importance of the site to local residents and its role as part of the strategic green gap between the main urban area of Banbury and the village of Bodicote to the south should also be considered. At present the experienced as belt of open space which defines a clear separation between Banbury and Bodicote. The presence of the urban/settlement edge remains, however, a prominent characteristic of the landscape at this point and as such and the wider presence of Banbury is discernible from White Road/ northern edge of Bodicote and vice versa. This ensures that while the site development will narrow the strategic green gap, it will not appear incongruous within this context. Again, the value of the site as part of this strategic green gap has also been considered and outweighed by the need for new housing, as defined by CDC's allocation of the site as part of the Banbury 17 Allocation. Its development must therefore be considered within this context.

### Associations

6.4.105 Finally, it is understood that there is no direct associations between the application site and any particular historical figures or people, which should be considered of relevance in terms of landscape value. Although the historic role of the Salt Way should be considered.

### Summary

6.4.106 Having considered each of the eight factors for the identification and assessment of landscape value, it is clear that the site is of value locally in terms of the informal recreational role it has and indeed its role as part of the open green gap which separates the settlements of Banbury and Bodicote. Alongside this the importance of the Salt Way as an historic route through the landscape should also be noted, and the need to ensure this is preserved within an appropriate green corridor and landscape buffer should also be incorporated within the development layout.

6.4.107 It is therefore considered that the site and its immediate landscape context is of medium landscape value overall.

## **Landscape Visual Baseline**

6.4.108 The visual impact of the proposals has been assessed and a number of photographs have been taken from key viewpoints from publicly accessible areas to illustrate the site and its setting. The visual analysis and viewpoint locations are included within Appendix 6.4. The key viewpoint photographs are intended to form representative views from publicly accessible viewpoints, and while not exhaustive are considered to provide an accurate overview of the site and its setting.

### **Viewpoint 1**

6.4.109 Viewpoint 1 is a short distance view taken from the public highway White Post Road looking west directly at the application site. The view illustrates the degree of enclosure afforded to the application site by the well-established boundary hedgerow and large mature field trees within the site. The scene shows the approximate location of the main proposed vehicular gateway into the development.

6.4.110 The principle receptors are identified as road users and pedestrians along the carriageway pavements. In addition the viewpoint can be regarded as a representative view from the adjacent primary school, however views available from ground floor classroom windows will be substantially contained by intervening vegetative boundary structures, and users will have inward focus on educational activities. As such the combined sensitivity of the visual receptors is considered to be medium.

### **Viewpoint 2**

6.4.111 Viewpoint 2 is a short distance view looking north west along White Post Road taken at the junction access to the Bodicote House Council Offices, and a representative viewpoint from the Grade II Bodicote Lodge House. The view illustrates the substantial level of mature tree cover enjoyed by the eastern section of the application site. The foreground scene is dominated by the busy White Post Road, with its visually intrusive clutter of sign posts and lamp posts, and the generous vergeside pavements. The recreational ground is evident to the left middle whilst the application site can be seen bounded by hedgerows along its southern and eastern boundaries. The existing junction access to Banbury Cricket Ground can be discerned by a gap in the hedgerow boundary and rows of purple leafed specimen trees aligning its carriageway. Beyond there is an extensive backdrop of large mature trees associated predominantly with Salt Way and the boundaries of two large properties, Salt Way Day Nursery and a private residence.

6.4.112 The principle receptors are identified as:

- Road users concerned with the road corridor.
- Pedestrians substantially concerned with journeying from A to B not necessarily for the enjoyment of the landscape.
- Residential receptors.



6.4.113 The combined sensitivity of these visual receptors is considered to be high.

### **Viewpoint 3**

6.4.114 Viewpoint 3 is a short distance view looking south at the application site from Salt Way, a restricted byway 120/43/20 which traverses along the northern site boundary and adjacent the southern settlement fringe of Banbury. Salt Way also forms part of the National Cycle Network Route NCN 5.

6.4.115 The view is afforded from a gap in the fragmented hedgerow along Salt Way and illustrates the relatively flat topography and openness of the application site with long distance views available to the south east. The foreground is dominated by arable farmland on a gently south facing slope with regular subdivision by hedgerows. A low voltage overhead power line traverses the site in unison with a field hedgerow leading the eye to the two storey cricket pavilion of Banbury Cricket Ground which forms a distinctive feature in the middle distance framed by a consistent cover of mature hedgerow trees.

6.4.116 In the distance the southern perimeter can be seen as a boundary hedgerow defining the course of Wykham Lane with the outbuildings relating to the allotment gardens sitting adjacent. A linear tract of woodland planting provides the backdrop to the west in the vicinity of Wykham Farm Cottage running adjacent bridleway BW137/11/20. The hinterland extending to the south of the site is perceived as a well wooded landscape albeit predominantly comprising regular shaped arable farm fields bounded by a network of hedgerow and hedgerow trees.

6.4.117 The principle receptors are identified as users of the restricted byway and residential receptors relating to the properties along Sycamore Drive. As such the combined sensitivity of these receptors is considered to be high.

### **Viewpoint 4**

6.4.118 Viewpoint 4 is a short distance view looking back south eastwards at the application site further along Salt Way restricted byway 120/43/10.

6.4.119 The view illustrates the flat and open terrain of the application site segregated by field hedgerow enclosures and the degree of visual containment afforded to the site's eastern interface with White Post Road. Dominant in the left field of vision is the restricted byway Salt Way as it traverses eastwards towards Bodicote along with its established hedgerow and vergeside meadow evident to both sides of the track with the occasional hedgerow tree. In the middle ground can be seen the application site, arable farmland subdivided into small scale regular plots by hedgerow field boundaries. Overhead transmission lines traverse the site and the Banbury Cricket Club pavilion is just evident to the far right field of vision. The background is dominated by an extensive cover of mature trees associated with the boundary of private residential properties and White Post Road, this substantial vegetative structure all but concealing a partial filtered view of built form associated with the Bodicote settlement.

6.4.120 The principle receptors are identified as users of the restricted byway and residential receptors relating to the properties along Sycamore Drive. As such the combined sensitivity of these receptors is considered to be high.

#### **Viewpoint 5**

6.4.121 Viewpoint 5 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken from within the application site looking eastwards across the farmland.

6.4.122 The view again illustrates the flat openness of the farmland and the extent of mature woodland cover which forms a buffer between the southern urban fringe of Banbury and the village of Bodicote. The arable land cover is defined by a network of hedgerow field boundaries providing an ordered enclosure to the agrarian landscape and archetypical of the prevailing local landscape character. A glimpsed view of the residential built form associated with Sycamore Drive is evident within tree cover to the far left field of vision, in front of which Salt Way traverses eastwards defined by the hedgerow boundary. The byway passes behind a distinctive copse of mature trees in the middle ground, these trees being associated with the boundary of two detached properties, one of which is just evident between the foliage. The mature tree cover extends across the background scene following the line of White Post Road towards Bodicote.

6.4.123 The principle receptors are identified as users of the public footpath, and as such are considered to be of high sensitivity.

#### **Viewpoint 6**

6.4.124 Viewpoint 6 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken from within the farmland looking directly north across the application site.

6.4.125 The view illustrates the northern site boundary with the hedgerowed Salt Way traversing east to west in front of the built form associated with the southern urban fringe of Banbury. The openness of the application site with its flat but gently south facing slope dominates the foreground with extensive arable land cover. The skyline is dominated by the residential properties of Sycamore Drive and Beaconsfield Road interspersed by mature tree canopies, with a low voltage overhead transmission line also traversing the scene.

6.4.126 The principle receptors are identified as users of the public footpath, and as such are considered to be of high sensitivity.

#### **Viewpoint 7**

6.4.127 Viewpoint 7 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken in the vicinity of Wykham Lane looking north eastwards across the application site.

6.4.128 The view illustrates the southern urban fringe of Banbury abutting a gently sloping open expanse of arable land associated with the application site. The skyline is a balance of mature tree canopies interspersed with existing residential properties relating to Sycamore Drive and Beaconsfield Road.

Salt Way defined by its established hedgerow delineates the southern urban fringe of Banbury. To the middle left field of vision allotment gardens are in evidence whilst to the far left the two storey pavilion and associated outbuilding relating to Banbury Cricket Club sits within a framework of mature hedgerow trees, from whence a field hedgerow traverses the site northwards providing enclosure.

6.4.129 The principle receptors are identified as users of the public footpath, and as such are considered to be a high sensitivity receptor.

### **Viewpoint 8**

6.4.130 Viewpoint 8 is a mid-distance view looking north westwards from the vicinity of the residential property no. 17 Wykham Lane.

6.4.131 The view illustrates the undulating nature of the prevailing terrain with Wykham Lane traversing westwards over a localized ridge along with its well established hedgerow, hedgerow trees and vergeside meadow. The red brick cottage of no.17 dominates the scene with its trimmed ornamental garden hedge and shrub layer evident to the foreground. Mature trees beyond the garden plot define the peripheral vegetation of the Banbury Cricket Ground.

6.4.132 The principle receptors are identified as:

- Road users concerned with the road corridor.
- Residential receptors relating to Wykham Lane, particularly nos.17 and 16.

6.4.133 The combined sensitivity of these visual receptors is considered to be high.

### **Viewpoint 9**

6.4.134 Viewpoint 9 is a mid-distance view taken from adjacent farmland along bridleway 137/11/20 in the general vicinity of Wykham Farm looking west towards the application site.

6.4.135 The view illustrates the extent of visual containment afforded by the prevailing topography with localised dips and ridgelines abounding. Pastoral farmland occupies the foreground rising up to a hedgerow stock proofed by timber agricultural post and rail fence. Seen in the middle ground and beyond this field boundary is further agricultural land under cultivation, the distinctive red coloured ironstone clay soil much in evidence. The application site occupies the next field beyond.

6.4.136 The principle receptors are identified as users of the public footpath and the residential receptors of the nearby farm properties such as Wykham Farm Cottage, and as such they are considered to be high sensitivity receptors.

### **Viewpoint 10**

6.4.137 Viewpoint 10 is a mid-distance view taken from 300m away along public footpath 137/16/10 in the vicinity of Wykham Farm looking directly east towards the application site. The view can also be

regarded as a representative viewpoint from George's Barn and Wykham Farmhouse listed Grade II.

- 6.4.138 The view illustrates the relatively flat and open expanse of arable farmland laced with a regularity of field hedgerows. The application site is visible as the most distant farm field in the sequence to the left middle ground and enjoys a well wooded backdrop within which it is possible to discern the existing built form of Banbury's southern urban fringe. To the opposite end of the site and occupying the centre middle ground is the distinctive two storey pavilion of Banbury Cricket Club flanked by mature hedgerow trees. Its cricket pitch lies further to the right behind which a well wooded backdrop defines the tracking of White Post Road which heads south revealing the built form of Bodicote village nestling within its vegetation, the skyline defined by this tree cover. An existing contemporary structure relating to a local rural business is evident to the far left field of vision.
- 6.4.139 The principle receptors are identified as users of the public footpath and the residential receptors of the nearby farm properties, and as such they are considered to be high sensitivity receptors.

### **Viewpoint 11**

- 6.4.140 Viewpoint 11 is a mid-distance view taken from further along Wykham Lane in the vicinity of the allotment gardens looking north east towards the application site. The view takes advantage of an access point within the rural lane which is ordinarily well enclosed by a well-established hedgerow. The foreground shows an area of informal parking adjacent to a number of glass houses, outbuildings and fence lines associated with the allotment gardens. The application site is just discernible by a glimpsed view beyond the allotments as a patch of farmland rising along a south facing slope. The localised ridgeline beyond is occupied by Banbury's southern settlement edge with residential properties framed by a backdrop of mature urban woodland cover which also forms the skyline.
- 6.4.141 The principle receptors are identified as road users, but also users tending to their allotments, whose focus will be primarily inward on their gardening activities. As such the combined sensitivity of these receptors is considered to be medium.

### **Viewpoint 12**

- 6.4.142 Viewpoint 12 is a mid-distance view from the Bankside road, which skirts round the south eastern periphery of Banbury, looking south west towards the application site. The image has been taken from the bridge flyover across the A4260 Oxford Road. The foreground right shows the flyover slip road framed by mature tree canopies. To the middle ground an extensive tract of green space lies adjacent to Oxford Road which serves as an important buffer separating Banbury from Bodicote settlement, whose residential edge is just discernible through the mature tree cover beyond the greenspace.
- 6.4.143 Key receptors of this view will be motorists on Bankside and as such the sensitivity is considered to be medium.

### **Viewpoint 13**

- 6.4.144 Viewpoint 13 is a mid-distance view taken 700m away along Wykham Lane looking east towards the application site. The view has been taken from a farm gateway opening along a country lane which enjoys a well-developed hedgerow structure, evident in the foreground right. The scene shows a gently sloping arable landscape in cultivation bounded with field hedgerow enclosure. The skyline is defined by a ridgeline occupied by mature hedgerow trees and a woodland copse.
- 6.4.145 Key receptors of this view will be motorists on Wykham Lane and as such the sensitivity is considered to be medium.

### **Viewpoint 14**

- 6.4.146 Viewpoint 14 is a long distance view taken 1.4km away from along from along public footpath 120/49/10 looking east towards the application site. The scene is representative from the A361 Bloxham Road and Wykham Park Lodge.
- 6.4.147 The view illustrates the degree of containment afforded by the undulating and rolling pastoral landscape of Banbury's hinterland. An arable crop field dominates the scene with hedgerow tree cover just discernible over the ridgeline.
- 6.4.148 Key receptors of this view will be walkers and as such the sensitivity is considered to be high.

### **Viewpoint 15**

- 6.4.149 Viewpoint 15 is a long distance view taken from 1.7km away along public footpath 120/108/40, from local high ground of Crouch Hill at 160mAOD, looking south east towards the application site.
- 6.4.150 From the local natural landmark feature of Crouch Hill, panoramic uninterrupted long distance views are available across the district. The view illustrates a well-wooded landscape comprising a mix of urban tree cover, rural lane hedgerow trees and sporadic woodland copses with patches of arable farmland interwoven with regular hedgerows enclosures. A built up enclave of Banbury's urban fringe nestles within a strong framework of woodland cover at the base of the hillock, notably the residential properties pertaining to Waller Drive estate.
- 6.4.151 Set within a more distant layering of woodland cover to the right field of vision is a thin assemblage of built form relating to the village of Bodicote, with the distinctive Banbury Cricket Club pavilion just discernible. To the left of this lies the application site predominantly screened by existing vegetative structures. Beyond in the very far distance can be seen the rolling high ground of the Northamptonshire Uplands, a pastoral and woodland mosaic representing the eastern slopes of the Cherwell Valley.
- 6.4.152 The principle receptors are identified as users of the public footpath, and as such are considered to be of high sensitivity.

### **Viewpoint 16**

- 6.4.153 Viewpoint 16 is a long distance view taken 2.3km away from Bloxham Grove Road looking north east towards the application site. The scene is also a representative viewpoint from the northern realms of Bloxham and in particular the Warriner School.
- 6.4.154 The hedgerowed rural lane of Bloxham Grove Road occupies the central field of vision with longer distance glimpsed views available through gaps in the fragmentary hedgerow structure. Arable land can be seen in the middle ground with field hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees providing an impression of a well wooded scene through which the Old Barn is just discernible. Further afield in the background can be seen a ridgeline associated with the northern side of the Sor Brook valley, along which woodland cover predominates and frames a small section of built form relating to Banbury's southern settlement fringe.
- 6.4.155 The principle receptors are identified as road users, but also users of the school complex whose focus will be inward and on educational activities. As such the combined sensitivity of the visual receptors is considered to be medium.

### **Viewpoint 17**

- 6.4.156 Viewpoint 17 is a long distance view taken 1.3km away from the intersection of public footpath 136/2/40 and bridleway 136/15/10 within the vicinity of Bloxham Grove Road looking north towards the application site at a datum of 116mAOD.
- 6.4.157 The view illustrates the rolling landform of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys local character area. The scene is of a farm track and public right of way cutting its way through arable crops and veering down the sloped valleyside of the Sor Brook. Hedgerow tree canopies can be seen from the lower river basin whilst the farmland rises up on the opposite valley side. In the distance the terrain flattens out to a plateau where hedgerowed farmland is foreshortened. The ridgeline is commanded by a well wooded backdrop within which can be seen the built up southern urban fringe of Banbury to the centre of vision. The distinctive pavilion of Banbury Cricket Club acts as a marker for the application site which lies just to the left as a thin slither of farmland. Wykham Farmhouse is evident within the far left field of vision whilst glimpses of properties relating to the Bodicote settlement are visible through the tree cover to the far right.
- 6.4.158 The principle receptors are identified as users of the public footpath, and as such are considered to be of high sensitivity.

### **Viewpoint 18**

- 6.4.159 Viewpoint 18 is a long distance view taken from 3.3km away along public footpath 136/6/20, from the local high ground of Hobb Hill at 165m AOD, looking north east towards the application site. It can also be considered as a representative viewpoint from the nearby property of Woollen Hale.
- 6.4.160 The view once again illustrates the rolling landform of the Ironstone Hills and Valleys with its dips and folds stretching a tapestry of farmland, field hedgerows and woodland copses across its

expansive terrain. Uninterrupted panoramic views across the district are afforded from this localised high ground where pasture land cover is prevalent.

- 6.4.161 The scene is similar to that of viewpoint 17, with the land falling away towards the Sor Brook river valley before arable farmland rises gently on the opposite slope with the southern urban edge of Banbury occupying the plateau, merged into the landscape tapestry by a strong band of woodland cover adorning the ridgeline. The application site is largely screened by an extensive section of woodland plantation within Wykham Park, located just east of Tudor Hall School. Once again the cricket pavilion is just discernible as a marker point. Further to the right field of vision is Bodicote village which extends southwards across the ridgeline. Again in the far distance is the rolling high terrain of Northamptonshire Uplands on the eastern slopes of the Cherwell Valley.
- 6.4.162 The principle receptors are identified as users of the public footpath, and as such are considered to be of high sensitivity.

### **Viewpoint 19**

- 6.4.163 Viewpoint 19 is a localised view located approximately 130m to the south east of the site from the public footpath adjacent to the south eastern corner of the recreation ground which adjoins the south eastern boundaries of the site. The view represents an additional viewpoint included at the requested of the Local Authorities Landscape Officer. The view illustrates the degree of visual containment afforded to the site by the established belt of vegetation which lines the northern edge of the recreation ground and the existing driveway to Banbury Cricket Club. This vegetation structure filters and frames views into the site and is a prominent characteristic feature within the view. The existing Cricket Pavilion is also visible within the view, forming a prominent feature within views across the recreation ground, seen within the context of the established treescape which characterises the view.
- 6.4.164 The principle receptors are identified as users of the recreation ground and White Post Road and associated pavement. The sensitivity of the receptor is considered to be medium.

## **6.5 POTENTIAL EFFECTS**

- 6.5.1 The most obvious immediate potential effect is the loss of greenfield agricultural land to new built form.
- 6.5.2 With this comes the hardstanding elements and associated infrastructure works relating to the construction of a new residential development of a scale of this type. Environmentally there will also be the beneficial effects of the provision of public open space, children's play areas and comprehensive green infrastructure including tree planting, and attenuation ponds and ecological buffer zones.
- 6.5.3 There are a number of local residential receptors within the immediate proximity of the application site whose visual amenity may be impacted upon permanently, with temporary construction effects also harming tranquillity.
- 6.5.4 Potentially the development proposals may have landscape and visual impacts upon the landscape setting of Bodicote Conservation Area.
- 6.5.5 Finally there are a number of potential indirect effects likely as a result of both the construction and operational phases of the development proposals, which could impact upon the baseline condition. These range from light pollution and pedestrian pressures on the local path network and green infrastructure.



## 6.6 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

### Development Framework Plan (refer Appendix 6.3)

- 6.6.1 The outline proposals have been developed by the design team consultants to ensure a high quality and sustainable development which respects, maintains and enhances both the existing urban fabric, the local community and the adjoining wider landscape. The scheme seeks to be visually attractive, respecting the context, form and type of existing built form and building styles evident within the local area. Details of the proposals are included within the Design & Access Statement that accompanies the application.
- 6.6.2 The outline proposals are illustrated on Aspect Drawing 5713/ASP03 –Development Framework Plan.
- 6.6.3 The proposal is for a residential development of up to 280 dwellings. This will include the provision of public open space and green infrastructure as well as a wide variety of housing:
- High quality homes of varying sizes, types and tenures.
  - Affordable housing provision for local people. It is anticipated that a provision of 30% of these dwellings will be affordable (84 units)
  - Comprehensive Green infrastructure and Public Open Space.
- 6.6.4 Primary vehicular access will be from White Post Road using a new junction set further north away from the existing pedestrian crossing. The proposed road will incorporate a broad carriageway and landscaped verge with footways and a cycleway.
- 6.6.5 The curvilinear access road will meander its way westwards through the development forming a main residential street feeding a number of minor access roads serving quieter residential closes and cul de sacs. There will be a medium density development of dwellings made up of a mixture of detached and semi-detached dwellings and terraced / mews style properties blocks with associated parking.
- 6.6.6 A consolidated footpath network will feed a comprehensive green infrastructure connecting a series of major public open spaces. The scheme will also provide accessible children's play facilities with good neighbourhood stewardship amenity.

### Design Principles

- 6.6.7 A design process has been undertaken to ensure a carefully considered and sensitive development approach is achieved, refer to the Design & Access Statement for further detail. From the outset the proposals have sought to respond to and where possible enhance the existing features which characterise the site and its immediate setting with reference to relevant design guidance both national and local. As such a sensitively designed and located development will be in keeping with the existing character of the landscape setting.

- 6.6.8 A number of design principles have influenced the development proposals for the site which include:
- 6.6.9 The retention and enhancement of the existing vegetation structure associated with the site boundaries. This will include reinforcing the site boundaries along the southern and western perimeters with the planting of additional hedgerow trees to provide key visual screening and amelioration from the south.
- 6.6.10 The protection and enhancement of the existing vegetation structure associated with Salt Way including the gapping up of fragmented sections and planting of new hedgerow trees.
- 6.6.11 The existing field hedgerows internal to the site will also be retained and substantially reinforced with the gapping up of fragmented or lost sections.
- 6.6.12 A new structural landscape buffer will define the southern section of the development providing a framework for the public open space and helping to reinforce site boundaries to promote a robust development edge thereby creating a new urban fringe with the surrounding landscape.
- 6.6.13 A generous development set back will be provided to the northern site boundary in order to respect the historic setting of Salt Way. A new structural landscape buffer will be incorporated within this set back to promote a robust development edge and enhance a sense of enclosure and its rural character, in addition to promoting the wildlife value of the corridor.
- 6.6.14 The proposals seek to achieve a high quality, sustainable development which reflects the scale, layout and pattern of the adjacent urban fabric and which is appropriate to its setting.
- 6.6.15 The scheme aims to be visually attractive, respecting the context, form and type of existing built form and building styles evident within the locality. The layout will ensure that the development has a sense of identity and is legible.
- 6.6.16 The development proposals will reference the varying architectural styles and materials that characterise the local area, ensuring that the proposals respect and enhance the local character of the nearby Bodicote Conservation Area.
- 6.6.17 The provision of a substantial area of undeveloped space within the southern section of the scheme will reduce the visual impact in long distance views from the south. This zone will comprise green infrastructure in the form of sports pitches and an informal neighbourhood park area providing a community focus for the surrounding new residential properties. The parkland setting will promote a village green style character with wide open amenity green space punctuated by groups of specimen parkland trees, along with a children's play area. To the south of this parkland area there will be a naturalistically designed attenuation basin framed by woodland blocks.
- 6.6.18 An extensive area of undeveloped space within the eastern section of the scheme will help prevent coalescence of the two urban centres and promote the distinctiveness of the Bodicote village. This zone will comprise green infrastructure in the form of a more formal parkland setting incorporating a recreational ground character thereby relating to the adjacent land use. A youth games court will

be provided adjacent the existing recreational ground and a small parking facility will promote the green space as a community amenity.

- 6.6.19 The parkland setting will also provide a gateway element to development with wide open amenity green space punctuated by groups of specimen parkland trees, along with a children's play area. The existing access driveway to Banbury Cricket Club will be re-provided along the new development spine road, the old route being made good and integrated within the park. The existing avenue of specimen trees that line the driveway will be retained providing a sense of formality for the new park character.
- 6.6.20 Another key consideration to be addressed by the development proposals is the role of sustainable urban drainage system (SUD's) not just for drainage engineering but also for the sense of place and visual amenity that this brings to the site's green infrastructure. The attenuation pond will be appropriately sited in the low lying south eastern corner of the site within an area allocated for informal public open space.
- 6.6.21 The provision of ecologically valuable corridors to existing vegetation structures through creation of species rich margins and woodland edges will be a key GI component of the development proposals. This is particularly significant in the role of the retained field hedgerows and footpath corridors.
- 6.6.22 Street tree planting within the residential areas and larger parkland tree planting within areas of proposed open space will break up the appearance of urban development and increase the level of tree cover generally within the site.
- 6.6.23 Planting of small trees to garden plots (where feasible and at appropriate distances from built form) will assist in providing a consistent tree canopy coverage across the site to instil a rural edge character and provide visual mitigation.
- 6.6.24 The development proposals incorporate a strong network of pedestrian and cycle links which are vital for the successful sustainability of the community. These links seek to form direct and legible access to:
- Adjacent existing residential / neighbourhood areas.
  - Public transport facilities.
  - Local key community service facilities.
  - Local schools.
  - Important open spaces and recreational areas.
  - Surrounding wider countryside such as linking into the existing PROW network including Salt Way.
- 6.6.25 The public right of way traversing the site will be retained as part of a green corridor, passing through a number of green open spaces of varying scale including areas with recreational and children's play facilities. Where feasible opportunities should be taken within the design layout to

preserve glimpsed, channelled or wider views out of the site from key points along the public footpath, the main views being south towards the Sor Brook Valley, including St Mary's Church at Bloxham, and the distant undulating countryside of the Cotswolds.

- 6.6.26 The treatment along the retained public footpath corridor will be of particular importance to ensure the rural character and visual amenity of the path will not be adversely affected by the development, which will see back garden boundaries flanking on both sides of the track. In addition to affording views out wherever feasible, it is recommended through agreement that the footpath's amenity be refurbished with an appropriate surfacing if required and be accompanied by appropriate high quality landscaping—for example residential boundaries could comprise formal or informal native hedgelines, a generous verge of wildflower meadow accompanied by an avenue of small fruit trees (using local varieties) as a reference to the rural and cultural heritage. The section of footpath passing through the green open space will be lined by an avenue of specimen trees which will spatially demarcate the cricket pitch from the neighbourhood park setting.
- 6.6.27 New footpaths will also sensitively connect onto Salt Way, with due respect to the historic setting of the route, and link into the adjacent existing neighbourhood communities of Sycamore Drive and Beaconsfield Road.

### **Mitigation Measures**

- 6.6.28 Key green infrastructure proposals which form important mitigation measures are summarised as follows:
- The retention and reinforcement of existing landscape features, such as boundary hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees in order to promote local distinctiveness of the site in addition to enhancing visual amelioration and screening.
  - A development set back to respect Salt Way including a landscape structural buffer to enhance its setting.
  - The incorporation of new structural landscape buffers along the site's southern boundary to provide a robust development edge.
  - The provision of a green infrastructure incorporating public open space, recreational green space, comprehensive street and garden tree planting and amenity landscaped areas.
  - Provision of a green corridor accommodating an improved user experience and amenity for the retained public footpath which traverses the application site.
- 6.6.29 Overall a sensitive and considered design approach has been adopted which will allow the development to sit comfortably within its setting without detriment to the localised landscape character, visual environment or the amenity of the neighbouring properties and the wider landscape setting.

## 6.7 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

- 6.7.1 The construction stage will extend over a 5 year period and carried out under a phased strategy managed over a schedule of development parcels extending around the site. The degree of effect incurred by any one receptor will therefore depend upon its proximity with that particular phase on the application site.
- 6.7.2 The construction phase will result in adverse but temporary effects upon visual amenity together with a generally disruptive immediate environment leading to a loss of tranquillity.
- 6.7.3 Mitigation strategies which can be employed to reduce the temporary landscape and visual effects of construction are proposed as follows:
- The use of hoarding around the construction site, where construction activity is in close proximity to visual receptors, to screen construction activity from the ground level, including from representative visual receptors;
  - Planting of structural landscape buffer zones at the inception of the development in order to create a well-established screen to residential properties to the northern adjacency of the site prior to construction phases reaching their proximity.
  - Controlling the lighting of construction compounds and machinery to minimise upward and outward light pollution through lantern design, direction and baffling and ensuring that the minimum area only is lit, for the minimum period;
  - Agreeing appropriate working hours with LPA to ensure that adverse visual effects of construction are not experienced by residential and PROW receptors at times when they could reasonably expect a cessation of construction activity, for example at evenings, weekends and bank holidays;
  - Locating compounds and stockpiles in the least visible locations within the Site; and agreeing siting of compounds with LPA; and
  - Protection of all retained vegetation on the site during construction by fencing, to be installed before the commencement of any phase of development; and in compliance with BS5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction - Recommendations.

### **Heritage & Recreational Receptors**

- 6.7.4 The following is an assessment of the significance of effect upon what are considered as key sensitive receptors after the above mitigation:

#### Bodicote Conservation Area

- 6.7.5 As there is no intervisibility there is no significant visual effect during the construction phase.

- 6.7.6 There will be a small amount of demolition of hardstanding elements (existing access to cricket ground) which should not involve too much force in breaking out. It is anticipated there will be no significant disturbance in terms of dust and noise.
- 6.7.7 There will be a significant increase in construction site related traffic which potentially could affect the tranquillity of the CA. Mitigation measures would include the diversion of such traffic away from the historic core and centre of Bodicote.
- 6.7.8 Given the natural sound barrier properties of intervening distance, built form and dense mature vegetative structures, it is considered that there will be no construction disturbance to tranquillity within Bodicote Conservation Area.

#### Public Footpaths along Crouch Hill

- 6.7.9 The construction site will form a relatively small element within a wider panoramic scene and therefore is considered to have moderate/minor significance of effect upon visual impact.
- 6.7.10 Given the natural sound barrier properties of intervening distance, built form and dense mature vegetative structures, it is considered that there will be moderate/minor construction disturbance to tranquillity.

#### Transient Receptors of Restricted Byway along Salt Way

- 6.7.11 The magnitude of change relating to loss of tranquillity for the passing transient user is considered to be medium depending on the proximity of the construction works. The magnitude of change relating to adverse visual impact is considered to be medium given the partial screening afforded by intervening established vegetation and post mitigation of site hoarding. This will be further mitigated against by the introduction of a 'plant ahead' strategy for the landscape buffer planting to the northern perimeter boundary. The sensitivity of the receptor is high resulting in a significance of effect of major/moderate for character and a major/moderate significance of effect for visual impact. These adverse effects will be temporary in nature.

#### Transient Receptors along Public Footpath FP 137/13/10

- 6.7.12 This footpath traverses through the application site and will either be diverted around the construction site or temporarily closed during the construction phase. This will result in a major significance of effect in terms of landscape (amenity value of the footpath) and a major/moderate significance of effect in terms of visual impact. These effects will be temporary.

#### Transient Receptors of Road Users Wykham Lane & White Post Road

- 6.7.13 The magnitude of change relating to loss of tranquillity is considered to be negligible given that drivers will not be directly subjected to the prevailing ambience. The magnitude of change relating to adverse visual impacts will be low given the focus of the driver on the road corridor, the mitigation of site hoarding and intervening vegetation. The sensitivity of the receptor is medium resulting in a significance of effect of minor for character and moderate / minor for visual impact.

### Banbury Cricket Club

- 6.7.14 The magnitude of change relating to loss of tranquillity once the construction phase has reached their general vicinity is considered to be high. The magnitude of change relating to adverse visual impact is considered to be low given intervening established vegetation and post mitigation of site hoarding. The sensitivity is considered to be medium, resulting in a major/moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and a moderate/minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact. These adverse effects will be temporary in nature, and it is also likely that the tranquillity impact will be mutually exclusive in temporal terms given that cricket matches will be generally played at weekends when construction work is unlikely.

### **Residential Receptors**

#### Salt Way Day Nursery & Private Residence

- 6.7.15 The magnitude of change relating to loss of amenity once the construction phase has reached their general vicinity is considered to be high. The magnitude of change relating to adverse visual impact is considered to be low given intervening established vegetation and post mitigation of site hoarding. The sensitivity is considered to be high, being that the garden and ground floor living spaces are the prime receptors, resulting in a major/moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and a moderate significance of effect in terms of visual impact. These adverse effects will be temporary in nature.

#### Residential Properties along Beaconsfield Road and Sycamore Drive

- 6.7.16 The magnitude of change relating to loss of tranquillity once the construction phase has reached their general vicinity is considered to be high / medium. The magnitude of change relating to adverse visual impact is considered to be low given the partial screening afforded by intervening established vegetation and post mitigation of site hoarding. This will be further mitigated against by the introduction of a 'plant ahead' strategy for the landscape buffer planting to the northern perimeter boundary. The sensitivity is considered to be high, being that the garden and ground floor living spaces are the prime receptors, resulting in a major/moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and a moderate/minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact. These adverse effects will be temporary in nature.

#### Residential Properties along Wykham Lane

- 6.7.17 The magnitude of change relating to loss of tranquillity once the construction phase has reached their general vicinity is considered to be high / medium. The magnitude of change relating to adverse visual impact is considered to be low given intervening established vegetation and post mitigation of site hoarding. The sensitivity is considered to be high, being that the garden and ground floor living spaces are the prime receptors, resulting in a major/moderate significance of

effect in terms of landscape character and a moderate/minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact. These adverse effects will be temporary in nature.

#### Primary School along White Post Road

- 6.7.18 Apart from the demolition of the existing access to the cricket ground and the construction of the new dual access provision, the majority of the development construction will take place further to the western realms of the application site. As such the magnitude of change relating to adverse visual impact is considered to be low given intervening established vegetation and post mitigation of site hoarding.
- 6.7.19 Acting on a medium sensitivity receptor, overall it is anticipated that there will be a moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character, and a moderate/minor effect on visual impact, and these being temporary in nature.



## **6.8 OPERATIONAL EFFECTS (YEAR 1)**

- 6.8.1 The visual impact of the proposals has been assessed and a number of photographs have been taken from key viewpoints from publicly accessible areas to illustrate the site and its setting. The visual analysis and viewpoint locations are included within Appendix 2. The key viewpoint photographs are intended to form representative views from publicly accessible viewpoints, and while not exhaustive e are considered to provide an accurate overview of the site and its setting.
- 6.8.2 As part of the ongoing dialogue with the Local Authorities Landscape Officer a number of Illustrative Photomontage Visualisations have been prepared from key locations within the immediate context of the site. These visualisations are included within Appendix 6.13 for reference and have been incorporated into the assessment of effects for views 3, 4 and 6 and additional viewpoint 19. These visualisations illustrate the site at years 1 and 10 to illustrate how the proposed landscape treatment will establish overtime to help integrate the proposals into the fabric of the localised context.

### **Effect upon the Visual Environment**

#### **Viewpoint 1**

- 6.8.3 Viewpoint 1 is a short distance view taken from the public highway White Post Road looking west directly at the application site, and is considered to be medium in sensitivity.
- 6.8.4 The development proposals in terms of built form will not be apparent when viewed from this location.
- 6.8.5 The immediate view will be of the new road junction into the development which will also serve as dual access to the cricket ground, the existing cricket ground driveway being removed with the hedgerow gapped up. The new access point will be located further north away from the primary school gate and will enjoy a wide carriageway with a landscaped verge, footways and cycleway. The well-defined hedgerow will be retained as the boundary feature along White Post Road.
- 6.8.6 The scheme will accommodate a generous development set back with the land immediately adjacent White Post Road being retained as important green open space and will enjoy a parkland setting with groups of specimen tree planting through which the new access road will wind its way westwards. A youth games court and children's play area will also be provided along with a small car parking facility to promote the greenspace as a local community amenity. A new footpath will also be created from White Post Road linking the development's network of green open spaces with both new and existing neighbourhoods.
- 6.8.7 It is considered that the proposals will result in a change of low magnitude, acting upon a low sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect is considered to be moderate/ minor.

## **Viewpoint 2**

- 6.8.8 Viewpoint 2 is a short distance view looking north west along White Post Road taken at the junction access to the Bodicote House council offices, and is considered to be of high sensitivity.
- 6.8.9 The development proposals in terms of built form will not be apparent when viewed from this location.
- 6.8.10 As with viewpoint 1, the immediate view will be of the reconfiguration of hedgerow and junction access points, with the stopping up of the existing cricket ground driveway and the provision of the new development gateway giving dual access further north along White Post Road. Again, the well-defined hedgerow will be retained and made good as the eastern site boundary feature along this main road.
- 6.8.11 Beyond this boundary hedgerow the green open space framed by impressive mature tree cover will be retained in this eastern section of the application site, with additional specimen tree planting enhancing the parkland setting.
- 6.8.12 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after completion constituting a significance of effect of moderate at year 1.

## **Viewpoint 3**

- 6.8.13 Viewpoint 3 is a short distance view looking south at the application site from Salt Way, a restricted byway 120/43/20, and is considered to be high in sensitivity. The role of the Salt Way in terms of its importance and value to local residents should be considered. The Salt Way at present offers an important opportunity for local residents to access the immediate countryside setting, and as such changes affecting this feature will undoubtedly alter how local residents access the countryside and the perception of the wider countryside setting and 'green gap' between Banbury and Bodicote.
- 6.8.14 Due to the gap within the mature hedgerow along Salt Way, the development proposals will be apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a noticeable degree of change to that which exists at present. It is considered however, that this change can be accommodated.
- 6.8.15 The immediate foreground view will comprise the north eastern realms of the development, this being full views of predominantly rear elevations of new built form relating to one of the quieter residential drives emanating from the primary access road spine. These dwellings will be a mix of styles and types, the density of which will allow glimpsed views further into the site providing a depth of view which will, when combined with the site's green infrastructure elements, help soften the development.
- 6.8.16 Due to their proximity these new dwelling units will form the skyline from this viewpoint and will truncate the long distance views.
- 6.8.17 The illustrative visualisations illustrate the extent to which the proposals will be visible within this location, demonstrating that the sites development will be apparent to the extent outlined above. At

year 1 the proposals will be seen within the context of the mitigation proposals along the boundary, which incorporate infill hedge planting and tree planting which will help to break up the façades of the proposed units when viewed from the Salt Way. By year 10 this vegetation establishes to form a robust green buffer to the site although glimpsed views of the proposals remain apparent. It is clear however, that the proposals will result in a significant change to the character of this view.

- 6.8.18 It is clear that the development of the site will alter the experience of pedestrians travelling along the Salt Way, indeed while the Salt Way will still function as an important Public Right of Way the perception of open countryside to the south will be lost, replaced with glimpsed views of suburban residential development akin to that which presently exists to the north. The proposals will not therefore appear alien within this setting despite the degree of change they will constitute.
- 6.8.19 In terms of the green gap which presently exists between Banbury and Bodicote, it is clear that the sites development will result in the perceived loss of this gap when viewed from the north, extending the settlement edge of Banbury closer to Bodicote itself. This has the potential to represent a significant change in terms of the value placed on these countryside views by local residents. However, this change and the effects experienced by local residents must be weighed against the need for new housing, and Cherwell District Council's (CDC) consideration that the site has the capacity to accommodate development of this scale as part of the wider Banbury 17 allocation can be accommodated.
- 6.8.20 It is therefore considered that the proposals will result in a change of medium to high magnitude in year 1 acting upon a high sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect is considered to be major to major/ moderate to moderate in year 1. While this would denote a significant effect, it should be noted that this is a preferred allocation site, and that development of this scale and type has already been considered acceptable in this context. Indeed, development is inevitable given the housing needs to be met, the landscape study undertaken by the Council in allocating the site and the acknowledgement by the Council that a significant amount of greenfield sites beyond the existing settlement boundaries are required to fulfil the current housing needs. While the proposals will constitute a significant change to that which exists at present, the proposals will overtime, soften and mature into this context. Indeed, the mitigation proposals will provide an effective green edge to the development preserving a green corridor within which the Salt Way will be preserved. When travelling along the Salt Way, pedestrians are aware of the presence of the existing settlement edge, and as such, while the proposals will restrict the existing view of the wider countryside to the south west (as would be the case in any event if the planting was enhanced along the southern boundary, its introduction will not be incongruous and is compatible with the settlement fringe sub-character of the site.

#### **Viewpoint 4**

- 6.8.21 Viewpoint 4 is a short distance view looking back south eastwards at the application site further along Salt Way restricted byway 120/43/10, and is considered to be high in sensitivity. As with viewpoint 3 the role of the Salt Way in terms of its importance and value to local residents should

- be considered. The Salt Way at present offers an important opportunity for local residents to access the immediate countryside setting, and as such changes affecting this feature will undoubtedly alter how local residents access the countryside and the perception of the wider countryside setting and 'green gap' between Banbury and Bodicote.
- 6.8.22 The development proposals will be apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a noticeable degree of change to that which exists at present. It is considered however, that this change can be accommodated.
- 6.8.23 The immediate foreground view will comprise of the Salt Way and hedgerow boundary being retained and enhanced. To the right a development set back will accommodate a landscape buffer and then rear garden plots to new development properties. These properties will be juxtaposed around one of the cul de sac residential drives within the northern realms of the development, and it is anticipated that there will be full and oblique views of rear elevations with some gable ends also in view. These dwellings will be a mix of styles and types, the density of which will allow glimpsed views further into the site providing a depth of view which will, when combined with the site's green infrastructure elements, help soften the development.
- 6.8.24 Due to their proximity these new dwelling units will predominantly form the skyline from this viewpoint, the roofscape merging into the backdrop of mature tree cover to the east of White Post Road.
- 6.8.25 As with viewpoint 3, illustrative visualisations of the proposals when viewed within the context of viewpoint 4 have been prepared, illustrating the proposals at years 1 & 10. As anticipated, the illustrative visualisations demonstrate that the proposals will be visible when viewed from this location, seen within the context of the Salt Way and associated vegetation structure associated with the existing hedgerow boundary. While the year 1 visualisation illustrates that the proposals will be visible, the proposals will be set back from the boundary seen within the context of the proposed mitigation which has been carefully considered so as to help soften the development edge and to preserve the green corridor within which the Salt Way runs. By year 10 this mitigation will have mature to obscure views of the proposed development, further reducing the effect of the proposals when viewed from this location.
- 6.8.26 Again, it is clear that the development of the site will alter the experience of pedestrians travelling along the Salt Way, indeed the while the Salt Way will still function as an important Public Right of Way the perception of open countryside to the south will be lost, replaced with glimpsed views of sub-urban residential development akin to that which presently exists to the north. The proposals will not therefore appear alien within this setting despite the degree of change they will constitute.
- 6.8.27 In terms of the green gap which presently exists between Banbury and Bodicote, it is clear that the sites development will result in the perceived loss of this gap when viewed from the north, extending the settlement edge of Banbury closer to Bodicote itself. This has the potential to represent a significant change in terms of the value placed on these countryside views by local residents. However, this change and the effects experienced by local residents must be weighed against the

need for new housing, and Cherwell District Council's (CDC) consideration that the site has the capacity to accommodate development of this scale as part of the wider Banbury 17 allocation can be accommodated.

- 6.8.28 It is therefore considered that the proposals will result in a change of medium magnitude in year 1 acting upon a high sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect is considered to be major/moderate in year 1. Reducing to an effect of moderate significant at year 10.

#### **Viewpoint 5**

- 6.8.29 Viewpoint 5 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken from within the application site, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.8.30 The development proposals will be apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a noticeable degree of change to that which exists at present. It is considered however, that this change can be accommodated.
- 6.8.31 The immediate view will comprise the central section of the development and in particular of the main tree lined primary access road along with landscaped verge, footpaths and cycleway. Located along this broad tree lined avenue will be new dwellings and generous front garden plots along with associated garage and driveways. It is anticipated that there will be full and oblique views of their front elevations with gable ends also in view. A cross road junction will also be evident in the middle distance detailed to provide a pedestrian dominant environment, and affording access to quieter residential closes and cul de sacs both north and south of the spine road.
- 6.8.32 Due to their proximity new built form will predominantly form the skyline from this viewpoint, although longer distance views of the development roofscape will potentially be softened in places by the mature tree canopies in the east. Indeed, dwellings will be a mix of styles and types, the density of which will allow glimpsed views further into the site providing a depth of view which will, when combined with the site's green infrastructure elements, help soften the development.
- 6.8.33 It is therefore considered that the proposals will result in a change of medium magnitude acting upon a high sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect is considered to be major/ moderate.

#### **Viewpoint 6**

- 6.8.34 Viewpoint 6 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken from within the farmland looking directly north across the application site, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.8.35 The development proposals will be apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a noticeable degree of change to that which exists at present. It is considered however, that this change can be accommodated.
- 6.8.36 The immediate view will comprise of the public footpath being retained and enhanced with a green corridor.

- 6.8.37 Located on both sides of the public footpath will be rear garden plots and their boundaries relating to new dwellings located along the secondary roads forming the quieter residential closes. It is anticipated that there will be oblique views of their rear elevations with gable ends also in view with their roofscape subtly rising with the site's topography. In the mid distance there will be full and partial views of the rear elevations relating to dwellings located along the main primary spine road.
- 6.8.38 The footpath corridor will enjoy a high quality landscape setting to reflect the rural character, the path being flanked on both sides by consistent and sensitive rear garden boundary treatments. A vertical emphasis will be provided by garden trees to help soften the residential elevations and associated roofscape as the dwellings rise sensitively with the topography of the site.
- 6.8.39 Due to their proximity new built form will form the skyline from this viewpoint especially those commanding the high ground of the site. The different styles, juxtaposition and density of dwellings will allow glimpsed views further into the site providing a depth of view which will, when combined with the site's green infrastructure elements, help soften the development.
- 6.8.40 A channelled view northwards through the site will be retained by the public footpath corridor which affords a view of the mature tree cover within the Sycamore Drive estate.
- 6.8.41 The Illustrative visualisation included within Appendix 6.13, demonstrate that the proposals will indeed result in a significant degree of change to that which presently exists, and that this change will be broadly in keeping with the description outlined above. It is clear that the proposals will result in a high degree of change to that which exists at present, however this change is considered compatible with the visual environment at this point. Built form associated with the existing urban edge is already a prominent feature within the site, and while the proposals will extend the influence of urban built form into the site, altering the character of the footpath, this is to be accepted for an internal viewpoint such as this, and which is located within the development parcel.
- 6.8.42 It is therefore considered that the proposals will result in a change of high magnitude in year 1 acting upon a high sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect is considered to be major in year 1. However, overtime, as the proposals will soften and mature into their setting, it is anticipated that the significant of effect will be reduced to major/ moderate at year 10. While this would denote a significant adverse effect it is considered that this change is compatible with the visual environment at the point, and will marking a distinct change from the currently open PRoW, it is compatible with a level of change perceived for a preferred allocation site, such as this.

### **Viewpoint 7**

- 6.8.43 Viewpoint 7 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken in the vicinity of Wykham Lane looking north eastwards across the application site, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.8.44 The development proposals will be apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a noticeable degree of change to that which exists at present. It is considered however, that this change can be accommodated.

- 6.8.45 The immediate view will comprise the southern section of the development, namely an undeveloped zone set aside as a neighbourhood park. An expanse of green open space defined by groups of specimen parkland trees will occupy the centre foreground. Groups of trees will also frame a naturalistically designed attenuation basin located to the right field of vision with woodland block planting buffering the eastern boundary with Banbury Cricket Club pavilion. An avenue of specimen trees line the retained public footpath intersecting the site leading north where a children's play area will be evident in the middle distance. To the far left field of vision beyond the allotment gardens, naturalistic tree groupings and woodland block planting will provide a framework for a new proposed cricket pitch oval.
- 6.8.46 Built form of the new development will be evident in the far middle distance beyond the green open space and specimen parkland trees. There will be both full and partial views of predominantly rear elevations of new dwellings along with their rear garden plots and boundaries.
- 6.8.47 From this viewpoint the development will appear as a foreshortened band of built form which will mostly replace the existing scene of residential dwellings along Sycamore Drive and Beaconsfield Road. The development's roofscape will vie for the skyline competing with the mature urban tree backdrop located within the existing residential estate.
- 6.8.48 It is therefore considered that the proposals will result in a change of medium to low magnitude in year 1 acting upon a high sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect is considered to be major/moderate to moderate in year 1.

### **Viewpoint 8**

- 6.8.49 Viewpoint 8 is a mid distance view looking north westwards from the vicinity of the residential property no. 17 Wykham Lane, and is considered to be of high sensitivity.
- 6.8.50 The development proposals will not be apparent when viewed from the Wykham Lane itself, views being truncated by intervening vegetative structures and built form.
- 6.8.51 In consideration of the views available from the residential property, the immediate view will be of the boundary hedgerow on their western property boundary. Beyond this hedgerow the development's green infrastructure proposals will occupy the land adjacent, these being a structural planting buffer and an attenuation basin and further afield a neighbourhood parkland setting.
- 6.8.52 It is likely new built form pertaining to the northern development section will be contained by intervening topography and existing vegetative structures.
- 6.8.53 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after completion constituting a significance of effect of moderate to moderate/minor at year 1.

### **Viewpoint 9**

- 6.8.54 Viewpoint 9 is a mid distance view taken from adjacent farmland along bridleway 137/11/20 in the general vicinity of Wykham Farm, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.

- 6.8.55 The view predominantly looks towards the south west of the application site and the green infrastructure proposals associated with the undeveloped area. The development proposals to the north will be scarcely apparent when viewed from this location, being partially contained by intervening topography and existing vegetative structures.
- 6.8.56 It is likely that a small section of roofscape relating to the development's higher northern section will be visible protruding above the intervening existing vegetative structure.
- 6.8.57 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after completion constituting a significance of effect of moderate at year 1.

### **Viewpoint 10**

- 6.8.58 Viewpoint 10 is a mid distance view taken from 300m away along public footpath 137/16/10 in the vicinity of Wykham Farm, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.8.59 The development proposals will be apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a noticeable degree of change to that which exists at present. It is considered however, that this change can be accommodated.
- 6.8.60 The scheme's green infrastructure proposals will occupy the land to the right of Banbury Cricket Club pavilion, notably a parkland setting of open space and cricket pitch, framed by specimen tree groupings and structural woodland planting to the site perimeter. These measures will screen the Banbury Club pavilion structure within the scene.
- 6.8.61 The main development proposals will be in evidence to the left of the cricket pavilion and will take the form of a foreshortened band of built form of mixed dwelling types and juxtaposition, predominantly rear elevations with some gable ends in view. These will extend from the vicinity of the pavilion across the farmland scene to the far left field of vision, the scale taking a similar form to the pavilion two storey building. The well wooded backdrop will therefore be predominantly retained as the skyline.
- 6.8.62 A small degree of amelioration to the building elevations will also be afforded by the presence of the existing fragmented hedgerow and hedgerow trees along the site's western perimeter.
- 6.8.63 It is therefore considered that the proposals will result in a change of medium/low magnitude in year 1 acting upon a high sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect is considered to be major / moderate to moderate in year 1.

### **Viewpoint 11**

- 6.8.64 Viewpoint 11 is a mid-distance view taken from further along Wykham Lane in the vicinity of the allotment gardens, and is considered to be medium sensitivity.
- 6.8.65 The development proposals will be apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a degree of change to that which exists at present. It is considered however, that this change can be accommodated.



- 6.8.66 The immediate change within the view will encompass the northern section of the development comprising new dwellings on the site's higher ground.
- 6.8.67 Whilst new tree planting will provide a degree of visual amelioration, there is likely to be both full and partial views of predominantly rear elevations of new dwellings and their roofscape.
- 6.8.68 From this viewpoint these new dwellings will appear to be foreshortened and will mostly replace the existing scene of residential dwellings along Sycamore Drive and Beaconsfield Road. Being located closer to the viewer the development will however appear slightly more imposing than the existing residential edge, its roofscape competing for the skyline with the well wooded backdrop of urban trees.
- 6.8.69 The presence of the new built form within the scene will not constitute an unexpected feature given the presence of the existing urban character of Banbury's southern settlement edge.
- 6.8.70 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after completion constituting a significance of effect of moderate / minor at year 1.

#### **Viewpoint 12**

- 6.8.71 Viewpoint 12 is a mid-distance view from the Bankside road, which skirts round the south eastern periphery of Banbury, and is considered to be medium sensitivity.
- 6.8.72 The development proposals will not be apparent when viewed from this location, being contained in full by intervening existing vegetative structures and built form.
- 6.8.73 As such the development proposals produce no significance of effect upon the baseline receptors relating to this viewpoint.

#### **Viewpoint 13**

- 6.8.74 Viewpoint 13 is a mid-distance view taken 700m away along Wykham Lane, and is considered to be medium in sensitivity.
- 6.8.75 The application site lies beyond intervening topography and a layering of existing vegetative structures and is therefore not visible.
- 6.8.76 As such the development proposals produce no significance of effect upon the baseline receptors relating to this viewpoint.

#### **Viewpoint 14**

- 6.8.77 Viewpoint 14 is a long distance view taken 1.4km away from along from along public footpath 120/49/10, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.8.78 Views of the application site are fully contained by the intervening topography.
- 6.8.79 As such the development proposals produce no significance of effect upon the baseline receptors relating to this viewpoint.

### **Viewpoint 15**

- 6.8.80 Viewpoint 15 is a long distance view taken from 1.7km away along public footpath 120/108/40, from local high ground of Crouch Hill, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.8.81 The development proposals will be scarcely apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a minimal degree of change to that which exists at present. The roofscape will form a very small element within a wider panoramic scene and furthermore will not constitute an unexpected feature given the presence of other existing urban fringes within the scene.
- 6.8.82 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after completion constituting a significance of effect of moderate at year 1.

### **Viewpoint 16**

- 6.8.83 Viewpoint 16 is a long distance view taken 2.3km away from Bloxham Grove Road, and is considered to be medium in sensitivity.
- 6.8.84 The development will be only just discernible as a thin band of foreshortened built form which will in effect replace the existing scene of Banbury's southern residential edge. Additionally views of the development will not constitute an unexpected feature given the existing presence of the urban fringe of Banbury within the scene.
- 6.8.85 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after completion constituting a significance of effect of moderate / minor at year 1.

### **Viewpoint 17**

- 6.8.86 Viewpoint 17 is a long distance view taken 1.3km away from public footpath 136/2/40 within the vicinity of Bloxham Grove Road, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.8.87 The development will be apparent as a thin slither of built form which will in effect replace the presence of Banbury's southern residential edge within the existing scene.
- 6.8.88 Additionally views of the development will not constitute an unexpected feature given the presence of the existing residential edge and will be perceived as being part of the existing urban fringe of Banbury. On the whole the new development with its comprehensive green infrastructure proposals will constitute a new settlement edge to south Banbury, one which is more integrated within the surrounding environment than the present situation.
- 6.8.89 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after completion constituting a significance of effect of moderate at year 1.

### **Viewpoint 18**

- 6.8.90 Viewpoint 18 is a long distance view taken from 3.3km away along public footpath 136/6/20, from the local high ground of Hobb Hill, considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.8.91 The development will be only just discernible as a thin slither of foreshortened built form which will in effect replace the existing scene of Banbury's southern residential edge within the panorama. The development proposals will be scarcely apparent when viewed from this location, resulting in a minimal change to that which exists at present. The built form will form a very small element within a wider scene and will merge within the surrounding landscape framework of woodland cover.
- 6.8.92 Additionally views of the development will not constitute an unexpected feature given the presence of the existing residential edge within the scene, and will be perceived as the being part of the urban fringe of Banbury.
- 6.8.93 Mitigation proposals will also include structural buffer planting to reinforce the western and southern site boundaries which in time will further serve to provide further screening of the development
- 6.8.94 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after completion constituting a significance of effect of moderate at year 1.

### **Viewpoint 19**

- 6.8.95 Viewpoint 19 is a localised view located approximately 130m to the south east of the site from the public footpath adjacent to the south eastern corner of the recreation ground which adjoins the south eastern boundaries of the site. The viewpoint is considered to be representative of the character of the existing green gap between the settlements of Bodicote and Banbury, illustrating that the perception of Banbury from the settlement edge of Bodicote is at present one of open green space which benefits from a good degree of separation from the wider urban area of Banbury, which is undoubtedly valued by local residents. However, it should be noted that while views to the north west are characterised by open space, linear development is readily perceived along White Post Road to the north and north east. The visual environment is therefore typical of a sub-urban edge of settlement location such as this. The principle receptors are identified as users of the recreation ground, White Post Road and associated pavement. Consideration should also be given to the value of this view and indeed the perception of the green gap for local residents on the northern edge of Bodicote. The sensitivity of these receptors is considered to be high.
- 6.8.96 When viewed from this location the development of the site will be discernible, with glimpsed views of the proposed built form within the north eastern, eastern and southern parts of the site, available through the existing vegetation structure which characterises the view. It is likely that during the winter months when leaf cover is weaker, that views of the proposals will be more widely available, however these views will be seen within the context of the Cricket Pavilion and the existing urban edge of Bodicote and Banbury, such that the proposals would not be seen as incongruous within this setting. In terms of the change experienced by local residents in terms of their perception of

the 'green gap' and the sense of separation from Banbury; It is acknowledged that the sites development will result in a reduction in the sense of separation, bringing the settlement edge of Banbury closer to Bodicote. It should be noted, however that the recreation ground and cricket ground will remain open and the belt of existing vegetation which defines the southern site boundary at this point will be retained. Furthermore, the proposals will be accompanied by a robust network green infrastructure, which promotes the retention and enhancement of existing field boundaries, proposed green corridors alongside primary routes and the new planting within the proposed development parcel. This green infrastructure is in keeping with the wider aspirations of the Banbury 17 allocation proposals. Alongside this the retention of the south western site area as Public Open Space will preserve a green gap between the two settlements albeit at a reduced depth. However, it should be noted that in the allocation of the site as part of the wider Banbury 17 allocation, the loss or reduction in the green gap was accepted by Cherwell District Council (CDC), denoting that CDC consider this loss acceptable.

- 6.8.97 The magnitude of change is illustrated within the photomontage visualisation included within Appendix 6.13, which demonstrates the degree of containment afforded to the proposals and the extent to which the proposed built form will be apparent. The introduction of the proposed landscaping within the Public Open Space Area will also represent a noticeable change within the view, however this change will be compatible with the character of the view.
- 6.8.98 Alongside the aforementioned planting within the POS, further mitigation proposals will include structural buffer planting to the site boundaries, which will further reinforce the degree of visual containment afforded to the development.
- 6.8.99 As such it is considered that the magnitude of change will be medium/ low after completion constituting a significance of effect of Major/ Moderate to Moderate, reducing to moderate by year 10.

### **Effect upon the Landscape Character**

- 6.8.100 With regard to the effect of the proposals on the landscape character, it is considered that the development of the site in this location would not cause undue detrimental effects to the localised or wider character reviewed in the baseline assessment. It is considered the significance of effect upon landscape character to be moderate.
- 6.8.101 The green infrastructure elements within the southern realms of the development, incorporating the recreational and public open spaces, will form a new settlement edge to south Banbury, thereby creating a sensitive and diffused interface along the urban rural transition.
- 6.8.102 The scheme seeks to consolidate on the existing public footpath network and indeed it is considered the user experience along the retained right of way running through the middle of the development proposals will be enriched with a responsive environment comprising a green corridor which also passes through the southern green open space, the latter forming a neighbourhood park for the local community and also a cricket pitch.

- 6.8.103 The proposed cricket pitch and neighbourhood park forms a strong green infrastructure within the undeveloped zone of the southern section of the application site. This undeveloped zone reduces the visual impact of the scheme in long distance views from the south. Otherwise built form would be seen extending down the whole of the south facing sloping site, in addition to the existing urban edge. Since built form is proposed to only the higher ground on the site on the same plateau as the existing residential properties, the resulting impact sees the new dwellings effectively replacing the existing residential built up edge within the scene.
- 6.8.104 In addition, the scheme proposes an undeveloped zone to the eastern realms of the application site. Here green open space will take the form of a more formalised parkland setting incorporating a recreational character to relate well with the adjoining recreational ground. This green infrastructure is vital to protect against coalescence and will combine with the extensive green open space prevailing across the carriageway of White Post Road to help protect the distinctiveness and sense of identity of Bodicote village.
- 6.8.105 The value of Salt Way with respect to a wildlife corridor and a recreational amenity for walking, riding and cycling is also significant. As such it is important that the scheme not only seeks to protect these values but also to enhance and indeed celebrate them. The experience of Salt Way is also substantially a factor of the internal sequential journey of its linearity, and the progression of various spatial qualities along its tract.
- 6.8.106 The setting of the Salt Way within the stretch along the northern perimeter of the application site is somewhat weak in character, being too open and one dimensional. On its northern flank lie the residential properties of Sycamore Drive and Beaconsfield Road, with their rear garden boundaries of predominantly trimmed garden hedges.
- 6.8.107 On its south flank there is open flat agricultural farmland with little intrinsic interest. The value here is in the sum of the whole, the tapestry of landscape components that make up the rural setting extending across to the visible horizon in the south. Its boundary to the south is a gappy and fragmented hedgerow devoid of hedgerow trees.
- 6.8.108 Thus the character of Salt Way along this stretch is underwhelming. Its predominant character as portrayed in other sections along Salt Way is defined by established vegetation which creates an intimate character. From this sense of enclosure comes the element of surprise and wonder from discovering glimpsed views out of the enclosed archway, and the experiential journey and progression through varying spatial scales and qualities.
- 6.8.109 Unfortunately this character is absent along the application site's northern boundary, but an enhancement strategy is proposed to engender a richer character to the benefit of this route.
- 6.8.110 This strategy includes the gapping up of fragmented sections and planting of new hedgerow trees to create varying spatial rhythms. In addition a development set back will respect its setting. Due to the paucity of hedgerow trees to provide verticality there is scope to propose a structural landscape buffer within this set back zone. This will create a sense of enclosure at least to one side of the route providing variety to the sequential experience. At various key points along this buffer

planting there will be glimpsed views out and these vistas will work in conjunction with the design of the development layout where potential views through the scheme will be coordinated if feasible. Creating glimpsed vistas through both the landscape buffer enclosure and channelling them through the development by good design will thereby enable Salt Way to connect through to its wider setting.

- 6.8.111 These measures will also enhance the value of the Salt Way route as an ecological corridor. In addition increasing the connectivity with other footpaths linking into adjacent neighbourhoods will enhance accessibility and thereby improve the route's recreational amenity too.
- 6.8.112 The development proposals fall within the eastern section of the new proposed Strategic Housing Allocation of Banbury 17 Land South of Salt Way, part of the emerging policies of Local Plan Part 1 (refer Appendix 6.10).
- 6.8.113 Banbury17 comprises a broad tract of agricultural green field land extending across the southern settlement edge of Banbury. The land directly adjacent to the west also falls within Banbury 17 and is subject to a separate planning application 14/01932/OUT submitted by another party for up to 1000 dwellings.
- 6.8.114 Cherwell District Council has recently approved a development for 350 dwellings outside the settlement boundary and within the setting of the Salt Way, this development being Land South of Salt Way and West of Bloxham Road.

#### Summary

- 6.8.115 This landscape and visual assessment considers that the application site represents an appropriate and logical addition to the urban settlement that will not compromise the integrity of the surrounding open countryside nor the heritage assets of either Banbury or Bodicote.
- 6.8.116 The siting, scale, height, appearance and layout of the proposed dwellings will reflect the existing built context of the existing local character. Built form and the pattern of the existing settlement is a component within the immediate landscape character and as such it is considered that the localised character has the capacity to integrate the proposals.
- 6.8.117 In summary the proposals have sought to promote a sensitive and considered development approach, maintaining a level and layout of development which both respects and enhances the setting of the receiving environment and the localised context.
- 6.8.118 The proposals have incorporated a landscape led approach, with careful consideration given to the location of the proposed open space areas, the retention and enhancement of the existing boundary vegetation and new structure planting within the site. These features ensure that the proposals can be accommodated within this setting without detriment to the quality and character of the receiving environment.
- 6.8.119 Overall this site specific assessment is broadly in agreement with the Landscape Capacity Study and considers the application site to have a medium-high capacity for change of the type proposed. The landscape character of the site is considered to be of medium – low sensitivity. The proposals

will result in a medium magnitude of change and as such the significance of the effect will be moderate.

#### Assessment of Perceived Effects in relation to Local Residents

- 6.8.120 As identified above, the site provides significant informal recreation space for local residents with the existing footpath which traverses the site and the Salt Way to the north and potential new routes to the west, providing access to the site and opportunities for the appreciation of the existing countryside/settlement edge at this point. It is clear that the sites development will constitute a significant degree of change, replacing what is at present an open agricultural field with new residential built form. This change will be most noticeable when viewed from footpath FP 137/13/10, constituting a wholesale change to that which presently exists and this is not disputed. However, the footpath route is to be retained and incorporated as part of the proposals and while the character of this PRow will be permanently changed from one of an open agricultural field to that of a suburban residential development; the role of the footpath as a functional route and link to the wider countryside will be maintained. Alongside this much of the route will remain within the proposed open space areas, preserving the open nature of the route for much of its length.
- 6.8.121 With regard to the effect upon the Salt Way residents who traverse this route will experience a degree of change, however, this change will be seen within the context of the existing settlement edge and as such will not appear incongruous within this setting. Alongside this, the preservation of the route within a robust green corridor and the provision of new tree, shrub and hedge planting along the boundary will help to further preserve the setting of the Salt Way. While views of the proposed development will be visible these will therefore, be experienced within the context of the existing settlement edge and the proposed green buffer which is to define the sites northern boundary. These features will ensure that while the proposals will result in a perceptible degree of change, that this change can be accommodated without significant adverse effect.
- 6.8.122 Indeed the Cherwell Local Plan 2011 -2031 clearly identifies that *“Banbury 17 provides the opportunity to develop the south west of Banbury in a coordinated, integrated and planned way, delivering the necessary facilities and infrastructure in a timely manner”*. The emerging Local Plan clearly denotes that the development of this site is acceptable, and can be accommodated within significant adverse effect upon the immediate visual environment, landscape setting, local residents and the Salt Way non-designated heritage asset.
- 6.8.123 Finally, when considering the perceived role of the site in terms of preserving the degree of separation between the urban area of Banbury and the village of Bodicote to the south. It is acknowledged that the sites development will be perceptible and will extend the influence of Banbury towards Bodicote. However, a substantial buffer will still be retained, with the eastern and southern site areas preserved as Public Open Space which when combined with the open space associated with the Cricket Grounds and Recreation Ground to the south east will ensure that a substantial green gap is maintained. The proposals will not result in the coalescence of the two settlements. Alongside this the retention of the established vegetation which lines the south eastern site boundaries will maintain an additional level of visual separation between the two settlements.

6.8.124 As such it is considered that while the development will extend the southern urban edge of Banbury, it will not result in the coalescence of the two settlements and will preserve the integrity of Bodicote Village, and finally, it is considered that the proposals are in keeping with the wider aspirations set out within the Banbury 17 allocation.



## 6.9 RESIDUAL EFFECTS (YEAR 10)

6.9.1 This section outlines the effects of the development once the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals have established and matured.

### **Effect upon the Visual Environment**

#### **Viewpoint 1**

6.9.2 Viewpoint 1 is a short distance view taken from the public highway White Post Road looking west directly at the application site, and is considered to be medium in sensitivity.

6.9.3 Green infrastructure proposals will include specimen tree planting within this parkland area. These measures, in addition to the eastern boundary hedgerow and the existing mature tree cover (predominantly associated with the boundary of two large residential properties adjacent Salt Way) will provide an effective visual containment of the new built form within the field to the west.

6.9.4 After leaf fall during the winter months it is anticipated that there will be some degree of visual transparency of the development but that these will be partial and glimpsed views only.

6.9.5 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and planting proposals. Acting on a medium sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of neutral minor.

#### **Viewpoint 2**

6.9.6 Viewpoint 2 is a short distance view looking north west along White Post Road taken at the junction access to the Bodicote House council offices, and is considered to be of high sensitivity.

6.9.7 Specimen tree planting within the eastern section of the application site will enhance the parkland setting, which together with the retention of existing vegetative structures, will provide an effective visual screen to the development located within the next field to the west.

6.9.8 After leaf fall during the winter months it is anticipated that there will be some degree of visual transparency of new built form but that these will be partial and glimpsed views only.

6.9.9 It is considered that the proposals will result in a change of low magnitude, acting upon a medium sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect is considered to be minor and neutral.

6.9.10 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after year 10 upon maturation of the tree planting proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of moderate / minor neutral.

#### **Viewpoint 3**

6.9.11 Viewpoint 3 is a short distance view looking south at the application site from Salt Way, a restricted byway 120/43/20, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.

- 6.9.12 Green infrastructure proposals will include a substantial level of tree cover throughout the scheme in the form of both street and garden tree planting. These measures will in time soften the impact of the development, visually ameliorating the built form elevations and breaking up the dominance of the roofscape thus helping to integrate the dwellings into the receiving environment.
- 6.9.13 Mitigation proposals will include the reinforcement and gapping up of the fragmented hedgerow along the northern site boundary with Salt Way, which in time will provide visual amelioration to this section of the development. Additionally there will be a development set back to accommodate a structural landscape buffer along the northern site boundary providing visual screening and a robust development edge to both the restricted by-way of Salt Way and the existing residential estate of Sycamore Drive. It may be a consideration here to adopt a 'plant ahead' strategy with respect to the structural planting in order that a reasonable degree of establishment is already in place by the time the construction phase commences.
- 6.9.14 During winter months after leaf fall it is likely that some filtered and glimpsed views of the development may be afforded through the mitigation planting but its density should be adequate to maintain a reasonable degree of amelioration.
- 6.9.15 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate.

#### **Viewpoint 4**

- 6.9.16 Viewpoint 4 is a short distance view looking back south eastwards at the application site further along Salt Way restricted byway 120/43/10, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.9.17 Green infrastructure proposals will include a substantial level of tree cover throughout the scheme in the form of both street and garden tree planting. These measures will in time soften the impact of the development, visually ameliorating the built form elevations and breaking up the dominance of the roofscape thus helping to integrate the new dwellings into the receiving environment.
- 6.9.18 Mitigation proposals will include the reinforcement and gapping up of the fragmented hedgerow along the northern site boundary with Salt Way. Additionally there will be a development set back to accommodate a structural landscape buffer along the northern site boundary providing visual screening and a robust development edge to both the restricted by way of Salt Way and the existing residential estate of Sycamore Drive.
- 6.9.19 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate.

#### **Viewpoint 5**

- 6.9.20 Viewpoint 5 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken from within the application site, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.

- 6.9.21 Green infrastructure proposals will include a substantial level of tree cover throughout the scheme in the form of both street and garden tree planting. These measures will in time soften the impact of the development, visually ameliorating the built form elevations and breaking up the dominance of the roofscape.
- 6.9.22 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be medium after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and planting proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate.

### **Viewpoint 6**

- 6.9.23 Viewpoint 6 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken from within the farmland looking directly north across the application site, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.9.24 Green infrastructure proposals will include a substantial level of tree cover throughout the scheme in the form of both street and garden tree planting. These measures will in time soften the impact of the development, visually ameliorating the built form elevations and breaking up the dominance of the roofscape thus helping to integrate the new dwellings into the receiving environment.
- 6.9.25 The presence of built form within the scene will not constitute an unexpected feature given the visibility of the existing urban character of Banbury's southern settlement edge.
- 6.9.26 Mitigation proposals will include a structural landscape buffer along the northern site boundary. The full establishment of this structural landscape will in the future provide some relief to the roofscape of the development on the higher northern section of the site. This ameliorating effect can be encouraged by a 'plant ahead strategy' if feasible.
- 6.9.27 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and planting proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate.

### **Viewpoint 7**

- 6.9.28 Viewpoint 7 is a short distance view from public footpath FP 137/13/10 taken in the vicinity of Wykham Lane looking north eastwards across the application site, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.9.29 Green infrastructure proposals will include a substantial level of tree cover throughout the scheme in the form of both street and garden tree planting. These measures will in time soften the impact of the development, visually ameliorating the built form elevations and breaking up the dominance of the roofscape thus helping to integrate the new dwellings into the receiving environment.
- 6.9.30 Mitigation proposals will include a structural landscape buffer along the northern site boundary. The establishment of this structural landscape will in time ensure that the skyline on the higher ground will be predominated by woodland cover giving relief to the roofscape scene.
- 6.9.31 The presence of built form within the scene will not constitute an unexpected feature given the presence of the existing urban character of Banbury's southern settlement edge.

- 6.9.32 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate.

#### **Viewpoint 8**

- 6.9.33 Viewpoint 8 is a mid-distance view looking north westwards from the vicinity of the residential property no. 17 Wykham Lane, and is considered to be of medium sensitivity.
- 6.9.34 Mitigation proposals will include a structural landscape buffer along the western site boundary with Banbury Cricket Ground. It is likely that full establishment of this structural landscape will in time provide full containment of the development roofscape on the higher northern section of the site.
- 6.9.35 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be negligible after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and planting proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate / minor.

#### **Viewpoint 9**

- 6.9.36 Viewpoint 9 is a mid-distance view taken from adjacent farmland along bridleway 137/11/20 in the general vicinity of Wykham Farm, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.9.37 It is likely new built form pertaining to the northern development section will be partially contained by intervening topography and existing vegetative structures.
- 6.9.38 Mitigation proposals will include a structural landscape buffer along the western site boundary. The full establishment of this structural landscape will in time provide full containment of the development roofscape on this higher northern section of the site.
- 6.9.39 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be negligible after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and planting proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate / minor.

#### **Viewpoint 10**

- 6.9.40 Viewpoint 10 is a mid-distance view taken from 300m away along public footpath 137/16/10 in the vicinity of Wykham Farm, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.
- 6.9.41 Green infrastructure proposals will include a substantial level of tree cover throughout the scheme in the form of both street and garden tree planting. These measures will in time soften the impact of the development, visually ameliorating the built form elevations and breaking up the dominance of the roofscape thus helping to integrate the new dwellings into the receiving well-wooded environment.
- 6.9.42 Mitigation proposals will include structural landscape buffer planting along the west and southern site perimeters which in time will serve to provide further screening of the new dwellings.
- 6.9.43 It is therefore considered that the proposals will result in a change of medium magnitude in year 1 falling to low magnitude in year 10, acting upon a high sensitivity receptor. The significance of effect

is considered to be moderate in year 1 levelling off at moderate/minor once mitigation and green infrastructure proposals have matured.

- 6.9.44 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be low after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and planting proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate.

#### **Viewpoint 11**

- 6.9.45 Viewpoint 11 is a mid-distance view taken from further along Wykham Lane in the vicinity of the allotment gardens, and is considered to be medium sensitivity.

- 6.9.46 Mitigation proposals will include a structural landscape buffer along southern site boundary whose establishment will in time ensure that the new built form will be screened from the allotment gardens.

- 6.9.47 The presence of the new built form within the scene will not constitute an unexpected feature given the presence of the existing urban character of Banbury's southern settlement edge.

- 6.9.48 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be negligible after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and planting proposals. Acting on a low sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse minor.

#### **Viewpoint 12**

- 6.9.49 No views of the development proposals will be afforded due to intervening built form and established vegetative structures.

- 6.9.50 As such there is no residual significance of effect to report from this viewpoint location.

#### **Viewpoint 13**

- 6.9.51 No views of the development proposals will be afforded due to intervening topography and established vegetative structures.

- 6.9.52 As such there is no residual significance of effect to report from this viewpoint location.

#### **Viewpoint 14**

- 6.9.53 No views of the development proposals will be afforded due to intervening topography.

- 6.9.54 As such there is no residual significance of effect to report from this viewpoint location.

#### **Viewpoint 15**

- 6.9.55 Viewpoint 15 is a long distance view taken from 1.7km away along public footpath 120/108/40, from local high ground of Crouch Hill, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.

- 6.9.56 The proposals will only be just discernible as a very thin slither of roofscape sandwiched within a block of woodland mass, which will be further integrated in time by the scheme's green infrastructure tree planting proposals, which include extensive tree cover throughout the scheme

in the form of street and garden tree planting in addition to structure planting to the western site boundary.

6.9.57 The roofscape will form a very small element within a wider panoramic scene and furthermore will not constitute an unexpected feature given the presence of other existing urban fringes within the scene.

6.9.58 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be negligible after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate/minor.

### **Viewpoint 16**

6.9.59 Viewpoint 16 is a long distance view taken 2.3km away from Bloxham Grove Road, and is considered to be medium in sensitivity.

6.9.60 The built form will form a very small element within a wider scene and will be merged into the surrounding landscape assisted by the framework of woodland cover.

6.9.61 Mitigation proposals will include structural buffer planting to reinforce the western and southern site boundaries which in time will serve to provide further screening of the development.

6.9.62 Additionally views of the development will not constitute an unexpected feature given the existing presence of the urban fringe of Banbury within the scene.

6.9.63 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be negligible after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals. Acting on a medium sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of neutral minor.

### **Viewpoint 17**

6.9.64 Viewpoint 17 is a long distance view taken 1.3km away from public footpath 136/2/40 within the vicinity of Bloxham Grove Road, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.

6.9.65 Green infrastructure proposals will include a substantial level of tree cover throughout the scheme. These measures will help integrate the new dwellings into the well-wooded receiving environment, softening the impact of the roofscape. Furthermore, the mature tree backdrop will retain the skyline.

6.9.66 Mitigation proposals will also include structural buffer planting to reinforce the western and southern site boundaries which in time will serve to provide further screening of the development.

6.9.67 Additionally views of the development will not constitute an unexpected feature given the presence of the existing residential edge and will be perceived as being part of the existing urban fringe of Banbury.

6.9.68 On the whole the new development with its comprehensive green infrastructure proposals will constitute a new settlement edge to south Banbury, one which is more integrated within the surrounding environment than the present situation.

6.9.69 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be negligible after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of neutral moderate / minor.

#### **Viewpoint 18**

6.9.70 Viewpoint 18 is a long distance view taken from 3.3km away along public footpath 136/6/20, from the local high ground of Hobb Hill, and is considered to be high in sensitivity.

6.9.71 The built form will form a very small element within a wider scene and will be merged into the surrounding landscape framework of woodland cover assisted by the scheme's green infrastructure.

6.9.72 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be negligible after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate/minor.

#### **Viewpoint 19**

6.9.73 Viewpoint 19 is a localised view approximately 130m to the south east of the site from the public footpath adjacent to the south eastern corner of the recreation ground which adjoins the south eastern boundaries of the site, and is considered to be of high sensitivity.

6.9.74 Glimpsed views of the proposed built form will still be discernible from this location, albeit heavily filtered by the intervening existing and proposed vegetation structure. The extent to which the development will be visible is likely to be increased during the winter months when leaf cover is weakest. However, as the existing and proposed landscaping matures and develops the visibility of the site will be reduced, helping to further integrate the proposals.

6.9.75 As such it is considered the magnitude of change will be negligible after year 10 upon maturation of the mitigation and green infrastructure proposals. Acting on a high sensitivity receptor this constitutes a significance of residual effect of adverse moderate/ minor.

<b>Table 6: Summary of Visual Effects</b>					
<b>Viewpoint</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Nature of Effect</b>	<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<b>Significance (Year 1)</b>	<b>Significance (Year 10)</b>
<i>Viewpoint 1</i> – from White Post Road looking west	Medium	Direct, Neutral	Low	Moderate / Minor	Minor
<i>Viewpoint 2</i> –from Bodicote Lodge House looking north west	High	Direct, Neutral	Low	Moderate	Moderate / Minor
<i>Viewpoint 3</i> –from restricted byway 120/43/20 Salt Way looking south west	High	Direct, adverse	Medium - High	Major to Major/Moderate	Major/ Moderate
<i>Viewpoint 4</i> – from restricted byway 120/43/10 Salt Way looking south east	High	Direct, adverse	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate
<i>Viewpoint 5</i> – from PROW 137/13/10 looking east	High	Direct, adverse	Medium	Major / Moderate	Moderate
<i>Viewpoint 6</i> – from PROW 137/13/10 looking north	High	Direct, adverse	High	Major	Major/ Moderate
<i>Viewpoint 7</i> -from PROW 137/13/10 looking north	High	Direct, adverse	Medium-Low	Major / Moderate to Moderate	Moderate
<i>Viewpoint 8</i> - from Wykham Lane looking north west	High	Direct, adverse	Low-Negligible	Moderate to Moderate/ Minor	Moderate / Minor
<i>Viewpoint 9</i> - from bridleway 137/11/20 looking east	High	Direct, adverse	Low	Moderate	Moderate / Minor
<i>Viewpoint 10</i> - from PROW 137/16/10 looking east	High	Direct, adverse	Medium-Low	Major/ Moderate to Moderate	Moderate
<i>Viewpoint 11</i> - from Wykham Lane looking north east	Medium	Direct, adverse	Low	Moderate / Minor	Minor
<i>Viewpoint 12</i> - from Bankside flyover looking south west	Medium	N / A	None	None	None
<i>Viewpoint 13</i> - from Wykham Lane looking east	Medium	N / A	None	None	None
<i>Viewpoint 14</i> - from PROW 120/49/10 looking east	High	N / A	None	None	None



<i>Viewpoint 15</i> - from PROW 120/108/40 Crouch Hill looking south east at 160mAOD	High	Direct, adverse	Low	Moderate	Moderate/ Minor
<i>Viewpoint 16</i> - from Bloxham Grove Road looking north east	Medium	Direct, Neutral	Low	Moderate / Minor	Minor
<i>Viewpoint 17</i> - from intersection PROW 136/2/40 & bridleway 136/15/10 looking north	High	Direct, Neutral	Low	Moderate	Moderate / Minor
<i>Viewpoint 18</i> - from PROW 136/6/20 Hobb Hill looking north east at 165mAOD.	High	Direct, adverse	Low	Moderate	Moderate / Minor
<i>Viewpoint 19</i> – from White Post Road adjacent to the recreation ground	Medium	Direct adverse	Low	Moderate// Minor	Minor

### Summary of Visual Effects

- 6.9.76 A thorough and comprehensive visual impact assessment has been undertaken to understand to what affect the development proposals will have on the significant surrounding designations both heritage and natural, and indeed any other sensitive receptors.
- 6.9.77 A ZTV study (see Appendix 6.5) has also been undertaken to identify appropriate viewpoints to be assessed within a 4km radius of the application site where high ground, public footpaths and key settlements could potentially be affected by the proposals. In line with GLVIA3, this has been calculated using a bare earth model which does not take into account the containment provided by vegetation or buildings.
- 6.9.78 Notwithstanding the built environment, it can be seen that the greatest extent of theoretical visibility of the development lies to the west and the higher ground of the southern slopes of the Sor Brook Valley. This zone of theoretical visibility will be further curtailed predominantly by the tranches of linear hedgerow structures pertaining to field boundaries and rural lanes.
- 6.9.79 The visual assessment has identified the following conclusions:
- 6.9.80 The application site is visually well contained due to prevailing topography, intervening built form and established vegetative structures around its site boundaries and within its immediate setting. These substantially limit the visibility of the site to views from the immediate locality, these views being from adjacent public rights of ways and public highways.
- 6.9.81 With regard to views from a wider landscape context intervening built form, prevailing topography and offsite vegetation ensure that there is a natural visual envelope enjoyed by the site that mostly conceals it from all directions but from the south and also localised high ground in the west, the impact being partial views predominantly of the roofscape.

- 6.9.82 Furthermore, views of the new development will be seen within the overall context of the existing residential settlement of Banbury and as such the new built form will not be perceived as being out of place.
- 6.9.83 The retention and enhancement of the existing hedgerows and treescape to the site's boundaries will maintain the character of the site setting, and ensure that the degree of separation and containment currently afforded to the site is maintained and enhanced where necessary.
- 6.9.84 Green infrastructure is proposed along the southern and western perimeters to provide a robust development edge with the rural interface as well as providing visual amelioration from surrounding public rights of way and views from the south.
- 6.9.85 The built form of the development proposals will not co-exist within the same visual envelope as landscape setting associated with the Bodicote Conservation Area.
- 6.9.86 Key views out of the site are to the south where long distance views are afforded of the south valley slopes of the Sor Brook valley and far distant views of the rolling high ground of the Cotswolds. In addition the localised high ground of Crouch Hill is a culturally significant natural landmark to the west. Where feasible, it is recommended that channelled, glimpsed or indeed wider views towards these scenic elements should be incorporated within the scheme.
- 6.9.87 In regard to long distance views out to the south afforded from gaps within the Salt Way hedgerow enclosure, the layout seeks to preserve key views over to the south, from various points along the route. Opportunities to achieve this will prevail at openings where footpaths from the south connect into Salt Way.
- 6.9.88 It is acknowledged that at year 1 the proposals will give rise to a number of major / moderate adverse effects upon views within the immediate context of the site. The significance of the effect reduces with distance and the presence of intervening features such as built form and established vegetation.
- 6.9.89 The proposals do however incorporate a significant degree of landscape mitigation which will mature to create a high quality context of the site which will not only create a pleasant environment in which to live, but also integrate the proposals into the receiving environment. Overall it is considered that the development will generally have a residual significance of effect ranging from moderate to moderate / minor upon the visual environment at year 10 and those effects will be mostly limited to the immediate setting of the site. These effects are not considered significant and as such it is considered that the proposals can be integrated without long term harm to the receiving visual environment.

### **Effect upon the Landscape Character**

- 6.9.90 In terms of the residual effects of the proposals upon the receiving landscape character, with regard to the national and regional character areas, it is considered that the maturing of the proposed planting and establishment of the proposed green infrastructure, associated with the proposals, will reduce the perceived presence of the proposals. It is considered that the enhancement of the green

edge to the site and the urban – rural transition will ensure that the proposals can be integrated in this location without long term harm. The proposed development will be perceived in the wider context of the southern expansion of Banbury and incorporates appropriate measures to ensure that an appropriate and defensible edge to the urban area is achieved. It is therefore considered that the residual effect of the proposals upon these wider landscape character areas will be minor to negligible.

- 6.9.91 With regard to the immediate landscape context of the site, the maturing of the comprehensive landscape scheme will reinforce the integration of the proposed built form, softening the built elevations and enhancing the adjoining streetscenes and pedestrian routes. The proposed open space and recreation facilities will also have established to become key focal points within the community. The Cherwell landscape capacity assessment and SHLAA both identify that this site has the capacity to accommodate residential development. This is reinforced through the sites allocation within the emerging Local Plan. It is considered that the maturing of the proposed landscape treatment and wider Green Infrastructure will ensure that the proposals can be integrated without significant harm to the setting of Banbury or its landscape context. The proposals represent a high quality extension to the urban area that will form a robust and defensible edge to the settlement without compromising the key characteristics of the receiving landscape. The significance of the residual effect is therefore considered to be minor to negligible neutral.

## 6.10 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

6.10.1 Cumulative Effects arise as a result of a number of different factors and combined changes. These generally fall into two categories;

- Cumulative effects arising from a range of developments, occurring at different locations or over a period of time. Separately, such individual projects may not create an unacceptable degree of adverse impact but collectively the results may potentially be significant.
- Cumulative effects caused by the proposed development in conjunction with other developments that occurred in the past, present or are likely to occur in the foreseeable future.

6.10.2 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013 have been referenced to set out the parameters of the cumulative study, together with a number of assumptions that have been taken in order to achieve a common sense and appropriate assessment.

6.10.3 The following are limitations and assumptions which relate to the cumulative assessment:

- The number of dwellings considered as a significant development has been set at 50 units.
- The sites which are deemed to fall within the parameters of the cumulative assessment are developments that have received planning consent and developments which have been validated and decision pending.

6.10.4 Potential cumulative sites are outlined in the Cumulative Effects Table and have been researched from the CDC online planning portal and are accurate at the time of publication of this report (early July 2015).

6.10.5 A common sense judgment should be taken to assess which sites are most likely to lead to significant effects and which sites can be scoped out of the assessment. Advice in GLVIA3 states that:

*“The challenge is to keep the task reasonable and in proportion to the nature of the project under consideration. Common sense has an important part to play in reaching agreement about the scope of assessment...It is always important to remember that the emphasis in EIA is on likely significant effects rather than on comprehensive cataloguing of every conceivable effect that might occur.”*

6.10.6 The potential cumulative schemes reviewed in the Cumulative Effect Table (refer Appendix 6.11) have been grouped together geographically on a local and district level basis. This is further represented on the Cumulative Effect Sites Plan (refer Appendix 6.12).

### Local Level Cumulative Effect

6.10.7 It is considered that only the Banbury South group has the potential to result in significant cumulative effects in terms of landscape and visual impact due to the agglomeration of four

substantial development sites within the same district landscape character area in addition to co-existing within the same visual envelope.

- 6.10.8 The Banbury South group comprises land west of White Post Road (application site), land south of Salt Way, land south of Salt Way / west of Bloxham Road and land south of Salt Way Crouch Farm, all development proposals corresponding to emerging strategic housing allocations of Banbury 16 and 17.

#### Potential Cumulative Landscape Character Effects

- 6.10.9 These site allocations propose to extend the southern residential edge of Banbury onto adjacent agricultural farmland and thereby creating a new urban rural fringe interface.
- 6.10.10 This change of use will inevitably result in a cumulative loss of farmland with a corresponding reduction in openness and sense of rurality. However planning policy will dictate that existing vegetative structures such as hedgerows and mature trees will be retained and enhanced. Furthermore all new development will be required to provide the benefits of comprehensive green infrastructure and mitigation planting in order to sensitively integrate new proposals into the receiving environment and formulate a new robust and sensitive settlement edge with the adjacent rural landscape.
- 6.10.11 Whilst there is a combined encroachment of the settlement edge upon the southern hinterland, no sensitive landscape or ecological designations are affected- in fact all the Banbury South sites exhibit an unremarkable open farmland character strongly influenced by their urban edge location.
- 6.10.12 Indeed the key characteristics of the district landscape character area Ironstone Hills and Valleys, are not well represented within the proposed schemes. The landscape is predominantly simple relatively flat large scale open arable land with regular linear field boundaries- the richer more diverse character areas being found further west and south where a more complex topography of river valley folds and dips and localized ridgelines abound.
- 6.10.13 This is further emphasized by Cherwell District Council's landscape sensitivity and capacity studies, both the district level and Banbury assessment. These studies have generally found that the development sites in Banbury South have a medium to low landscape character sensitivity and have a medium to high landscape capacity for residential development.
- 6.10.14 As such it is considered that there is a moderate cumulative significance of effect in terms of landscape character and that the immediate southern hinterland of Banbury has the capacity to accept the cumulative large scale development of the types proposed.

#### Potential Cumulative Landscape Visual Effects

- 6.10.15 The development proposals comprising site allocations Banbury 16 and 17 are generally well contained by prevailing topography and the surrounding network of established hedgerows.

- 6.10.16 As such there are very few viewpoints from where all the Banbury South cumulative sites can be seen within the same field of vision and thus will not be perceived as a large conjoined development sprawl of built form encroaching upon the receiving landscape.
- 6.10.17 The following viewpoints will potentially afford views of all the Banbury South cumulative sites within the same field of vision;
- 6.10.18 Viewpoint 15 along public footpath on the localised high ground of Crouch Hill. The various development proposals will form a prominent component within the scene as combined views but will be seen merging into the surrounding landscape by belts of mature tree cover and perceived as being within the context of the nearby built up edge associated with Waller Drive. It is considered to be a major/moderate cumulative significance of effect in terms of visual impact. Mitigation and green infrastructure will allow further integration of the proposals leaving a residual cumulative effect of moderate.
- 6.10.19 Viewpoints 17 and 18 from public footpaths along the higher ground to the south of the Sor Brook Valley afford long distance views of the cumulative sites against the southern settlement edge of Banbury, again broken up by intervening belts of mature tree cover which integrate the proposals within the scene.
- 6.10.20 The cumulative built form will assume a less prominent element within the field of vision forming a moderate cumulative significance of effect in terms of visual impact. After mitigation and green infrastructure it is likely this will be further reduced to a residual cumulative effect of moderate/minor.
- 6.10.21 There will be transient sequential views available to restricted byway users along the adjacent Salt Way whereby glimpsed views of all of the cumulative sites will be afforded during the progression of the journey. Views will vary from partial to full views of one perhaps two individual sites within the same field of vision. It is considered that the residual cumulative significance of effect ranges from moderate to moderate/minor in terms of visual impact.
- 6.10.22 There will also be transient sequential views available to road users along Wykham Lane, Bloxham Road and Bloxham Grove Road whereby glimpsed views of one or more or all of the various individual cumulative sites will be afforded during the progression of the car journey. Due to the high hedgerows these will be mostly only available at farm gate openings, and will likely be partial views of probably just a single or two developments at a time. It is considered that the residual cumulative significance of effect ranges from moderate/minor to minor in terms of visual impact.
- 6.10.23 The various cumulative sites of Banbury South are generally well contained and integrated within their receiving environment with an overall residual cumulative effect of moderate adverse in terms of visual impact. Although it is noted that the Banbury Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment Addendum (2014) does not assess the cumulative effect of the sites of Banbury South, it should be noted that the assessment does identify the application site as being of medium to low visual sensitivity, noting that there is sufficient potential to provide mitigation on the site boundaries without altering the characteristics of the existing landscape. Indeed it is the neighbouring allocation

site (110) to the west which is noted as being of medium visual sensitivity overall. This denotes that, in visual terms, the application site has a greater capacity to accommodate development, however, when combined it is considered that the overall visual sensitivity will be medium.

#### District Level Cumulative Effect

- 6.10.24 There are also potential views of other cumulative sites relating to other geographical groups within the cumulative assessment. Due to the containment of the established hedgerow network, these are predominantly only available from the high grounds of Crouch Hill in the west of Banbury and Hobb Hill in the Bloxham area. These views will be successive (where the observer has to turn their head/arc of vision to see the various developments) and long distance views, of mainly the Banbury South and West groups, as well as the Bloxham and Adderbury groups.
- 6.10.25 The various developments will be seen as disparate and small elements within a broad panoramic arc and not perceived as a continuous mass of built form. Furthermore, they will be seen relating to their respective settlement edges and integrated within the landscape by their respective green infrastructure and mitigation planting.
- 6.10.26 As such the district visual cumulative effect is considered to be minor and indeed would not be considerably greater than the individual significance of effect considered in isolation for each site.
- 6.10.27 There are also possible transient sequential views available to road users as they progress along the Bloxham Road affording potential views of the adjacent Bloxham and Banbury South groups. Due to the high hedgerows these will be mostly only available at farm gate openings, and will likely be glimpsed partial views of probably just a single or two developments at a time. However the magnitude of change on a receptor of low sensitivity is not considered to be sufficient to result in significant visual cumulative effects.

#### **Conclusions**

- 6.10.28 In consideration of potential cumulative effects on landscape character at the district level, again it is inevitable that there will be a high magnitude of change in land use with agricultural land giving way to residential development. However many of the large scale development proposals correspond to strategic housing allocations and identified as having good capacity to accommodate residential development within the CDC landscape sensitivity assessments. This is reinforced through the site's incorporation as an allocated site within the emerging Local Plan.
- 6.10.29 The various proposed development areas will be more strongly influenced by their respective urban edge locations and the presence of adjacent existing residential uses, transport infrastructure and other landscape detractors. Due to their relative visual containment, it is likely any significant effects on landscape character would be confined to the localised scale of the sites themselves and not extend to the wider landscape character or visual environment. There will clearly be some inevitable impacts associated with the development of the allocated Local Plan sites to meet the housing need and was a matter considered by the inspector as part of the Local Plan Examination when

determining that the Local Plan, the justification and the allocations made were sound and that the plan was in accordance with National Guidance.



## 6.11 STATEMENT OF EFFECTS

6.11.1 The Landscape and Visual Assessment study has found the following conclusive effects:

### **Construction**

6.11.2 Effects upon significant receptors, which will be temporary in nature:

Bodicote Conservation Area - significance of effect of none.

Public Footpath along Crouch Hill- moderate / minor significance of effect in terms of landscape character and moderate/minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

Transient Receptors of Restricted Byway along Salt Way – major / moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and major/moderate significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

Transient Receptors along Public Footpath FP 137/13/10 – major significance of effect in terms of landscape character and major/moderate significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

Transient Receptors of Road Users Wykham Lane & White Post Road - minor significance of effect in terms of landscape character and moderate / minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

Banbury Cricket Club – major / moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and moderate / minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

Residential receptors Salt Way Day Nursery & Private Residence – major / moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and moderate significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

Residential receptors along Beaconsfield Road and Sycamore Drive – major / moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and moderate / minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

Residential receptors along Wykham Lane – major / moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and moderate/minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

Primary School receptor along White Post Road - moderate significance of effect in terms of landscape character and moderate/minor significance of effect in terms of visual impact.

### **Completion & Residual (Years 1 and 10)**

6.11.3 The application site is visually well contained due to prevailing topography, intervening built form and established vegetative structures around its site boundaries and within its immediate setting. These substantially limit the visibility of the site to views from the immediate locality, these views being from adjacent public rights of ways and public highways.

6.11.4 With regard to views from a wider landscape context intervening built form, prevailing topography and offsite vegetation ensure that there is a natural visual envelope enjoyed by the site that mostly

- conceals it from all directions but from the south and also localised high ground in the west, the impact being partial views predominantly of the roofscape.
- 6.11.5 Furthermore, views of the new development will be seen within the overall context of the existing residential settlement of Banbury and as such the new built form will not be perceived as being out of place.
- 6.11.6 Green infrastructure is proposed along the southern and western perimeters to provide a robust development edge with the rural interface as well as providing visual amelioration from surrounding public rights of way and views from the south.
- 6.11.7 The built form of the development proposals will not co-exist within the same visual envelope as the Bodicote Conservation Area.
- 6.11.8 It is acknowledged that at year 1 the proposals will give rise to a number of major / moderate adverse effects upon views within the immediate context of the site. The significance of the effect reduces with distance and the presence of intervening features such as built form and established vegetation.
- 6.11.9 Overall it is considered that the development will generally have a residual significance of effect ranging from moderate to moderate/minor upon the visual environment and that effects will be mostly limited to the immediate setting of the site.
- 6.11.10 The site is simple and open in character comprising of a flat expanse of arable farmland subdivided by field hedgerows with little hedgerow trees to provide vertical features.
- 6.11.11 The character of the site is heavily influenced by the close proximity of existing urban influences, namely the residential properties along the southern urban fringe of Banbury. Urban influences are also prevalent emanating from the settlement of Bodicote to the east and south eastern site boundaries.
- 6.11.12 Although there is a good degree of woodland cover along the urban fringes relating to garden and street trees, and some hedgerow trees to the south, the site itself is of simple character and low in diversity and can be considered to be an unremarkable urban edge landscape.
- 6.11.13 Overall the landscape sensitivity of the site is considered to be medium-low.
- 6.11.14 With regard to the effect of the proposals on the landscape character, it is considered that the development of the site in this location would not cause undue detrimental effects to the localised or wider character reviewed in the baseline assessment. It is considered the significance of effect upon landscape character to be moderate at Year 1.
- 6.11.15 The green infrastructure elements within the southern realms of the development, incorporating the recreational and public open spaces, will form a new settlement edge to south Banbury, thereby creating a sensitive and diffused interface along the urban rural transition.
- 6.11.16 The scheme proposes an undeveloped zone within its southern section to reduce the visual impact of development in long distance views from the south.

- 6.11.17 The scheme proposes another undeveloped zone within its eastern realms in order to prevent potential coalescence between Banbury and Bodicote and to promote the distinctiveness of the latter.
- 6.11.18 This landscape and visual assessment considers that the application site represents an appropriate and logical addition to the urban settlement that will not compromise the integrity of the surrounding open countryside nor the heritage assets of either Banbury or Bodicote.
- 6.11.19 The proposals have incorporated a landscape led approach, with careful consideration given to the location of the proposed open space areas, the retention and enhancement of the existing boundary vegetation and new structure planting within the site. These features ensure that the proposals can be accommodated within this setting without detriment to the quality and character of the receiving environment.
- 6.11.20 The proposals represent a high quality extension to the urban area that will form a robust and defensible edge to the settlement without compromising the key characteristics of the receiving landscape. The significance of the residual effect is therefore considered to be minor to negligible neutral.
- 6.11.21 The local level cumulative effect assessment has found a moderate cumulative significance of effect in terms of landscape character and that the immediate southern hinterland of Banbury has the capacity to accept the cumulative large scale development of the types proposed.
- 6.11.22 The various cumulative sites of Banbury South are generally well contained and integrated within their receiving environment with an overall residual cumulative effect of moderate to moderate/minor in terms of visual impact.
- 6.11.23 The district level visual cumulative effect is considered to be minor and indeed would not be considerably greater than the individual significance of effect considered in isolation.
- 6.11.24 At a district level it is considered the cumulative effect on landscape character is moderate minor to minor.
- 6.11.25 The application site forms part of the emerging proposed Strategic Housing Allocation of Banbury 17. The land directly adjacent to the west also falls within Banbury 17 and is subject to a separate planning application 14/01932/OUT submitted by another party.

### **Conclusions**

- 6.11.26 In conclusion, given the need for housing within the district and the fact that the site is an emerging allocation, the application site represents an appropriate and logical extension to the settlement that will not compromise the integrity of the surrounding open countryside nor the setting of heritage assets.
- 6.11.27 The proposals have incorporated a landscape led approach, with careful consideration given to the location of the proposed open space areas, the retention and enhancement of the existing boundary vegetation and new structure planting within the site. These features ensure that the

proposals can be accommodated within this setting without detriment to the quality and character of the receiving environment.

6.11.28 In essence the development represents a consolidation of the urban fabric to accommodate the increasing pressures on housing supply, ensuring that future generations of Banbury have the opportunity of securing a home within their own community, thereby providing a robust and sustainable settlement for the 21st Century.

6.11.29 It is considered that the application site and receiving environment have the capacity to accommodate the proposals. The proposals will not result in significant harm to the landscape character or visual environment and, as such, it is considered that the proposed development can be successfully integrated in this location, is supportable from a landscape and visual perspective, and therefore meets the landscape requirements of both national and local planning policy.