

BLADE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL

LAND SITUATED NORTH OF ORTON ROAD, WARTON,
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE, B79 0JZ

ON BEHALF OF

RICHBOROUGH, MICHAEL ENSOR CATON AND ANDREW
NORMAN CATON

APRIL 2025

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

- 1.1. BLADE Landscape Architects Limited ('BLADE') were commissioned on behalf of Richborough, Michael Ensor Caton and Andrew Norman Caton (the 'Applicant') to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) for a new residential development on land situated off Orton Road, Warton, North Warwickshire, B79 0JZ (the 'site').
- 1.2. The site is located at OS Grid Reference: SK 27972 03290 (site centre); see Appendix BLA 1. The site is located within the administrative area of North Warwickshire Borough Council, which acts as the statutory planning authority. The Site measures circa 6.37 Hectares in total and is currently managed as agricultural arable land.

The Proposed Development

- 1.3. The Applicant is submitting an outline planning application for the construction of up to 110 dwellings, with access, landscaping, sustainable drainage features, and associated infrastructure. All matters are reserved except for primary vehicular access from Church Road (the 'proposed development'); see Appendix BLA 2 of this LVA.
- 1.4. This LVA is part of a suite of documents accompanying a planning application for the Proposed Development. The Site and Proposed Development are described later within this LVA, with further Site details given in the Planning Statement which accompanies the planning application.

The Purpose of this Landscape Visual Appraisal

- 1.5. This report has been prepared by a Chartered Landscape Architect with experience in landscape design and planning in the development sector. All drawings referenced within this assessment are in Appendices of the LVA.
- 1.6. The purpose of this LVA is to identify the baseline conditions of the Site and surrounding area and to determine those landscape and visual characteristics that might inform the design of the development proposals, including recommendations for mitigation. It then provides an appraisal of the landscape and visual effects predicted to arise from the development of the Site as follows:
 - Landscape fabric, when there is physical change to components of the landscape; landform, land use or a land cover.
 - Landscape character, caused by changes in the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape; and
 - Visual amenity caused by changes in the appearance of the landscape as a result of Development.

Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.7. During February and March 2025, the Applicant's Planning Consultant (Evolve Planning) undertook a formal Pre-Application Consultation with the Local Planning Authority. Details on a number of technical disciplines were shared with the LPA to enable their consideration of the emerging development proposals.

- 1.8. In response, the LPA prepared a formal Pre-Application letter, which responded on these technical matters, including Landscape; see the final Appendix of this document. The LPA raised the following commentary:

'From discussions we have already had, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment it to be submitted with the application and we have had a dialogue with your technical team undertaking the assessment as to where the visual points should be.'

Warton, generally, can be described as nucleated, though there is a distinct linear form with the majority of built development located along the frontage to Austrey Road with a number of cul-de-sacs coming off on each side. The application site is within the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area. This describes a mixed open agricultural landscape with a scattering of small red brick nucleated hill-top villages of which Warton is an example. The Assessment identifies the need to conserve and strengthen the rural character and dispersed settlement pattern and recommends that new developments should reinforce the existing settlement pattern of the existing villages.'

The likely view would be that the proposal would introduce an appendage of new built development and would increase the intensity of built form, at odds with the general linear pattern.....'

- 1.9. In relation to village character, the LPA raised the following point:

'In this instance, the red line boundary is not directly adjacent to the Warton Development boundary on any of the sides of the development. The site is directly adjacent to the Bellway 'Cornfields' development on the eastern edge. However, given the development would not be directly adjacent to the development boundary, it would be regarded as expansion of Warton into the open countryside, which would be a disproportionate addition and not favourable. Development of the site would result in an appendage to the development boundary of what is a fairly linear settlement. The development would therefore be at odds with this and would have the biggest impact from a landscape point of view.'

- 1.10. These above points were considered during the undertaking of this LVA, and discussed within the final Section of this report.

2.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Site

- 2.1. BLADE's site survey which was undertaken in wintertime conditions (late February 2025), and identified the following features:
- 2.2. **Topography:** The site has a gently undulating landform from the western boundary to the southeastern corner of the site; circa 90m AOD to 79m AOD; see Image BLA 2.1:

Image BLA 2.1: Photograph taken within the Site looking across the landform from east to west. Photograph taken at OS GR: SK 27879 03298 (late February 2025)



- 2.3. Contextually, the site is found on the southwestern edge of Warton village, which has a similar landform as the site. The centre of the village is found at circa 91m AOD at the junction of Church Road and Maypole Road (circa 0.5km northeast of the site's location); see Image BLA 2.2:

Image BLA 2.2: Photograph taken on Church Road adjoining the northern boundary to the Site. The view is looking northeast along Church Road towards the junction of Church Road and Maypole Road. Photograph taken at OS GR: SK 27900 03343 (late February 2025)



- 2.4. Austrey Road is the main vehicle route running through the village and connects with Maypole Road; along this route land form is circa 79m AOD on the northern edge of the village and circa 80m AOD on the southern edge of the village.

- 2.5. Generally, landform rises to the north, east and south of the site, with the village found within a gently rolling landscape. Landform rises to the outlying village of Orton-on-the-Hill, which east of Warton at circa 2.3km distance. This village is located at circa 105m AOD.
- 2.6. The northeastern edge of the site adjoins the Public Open Space/Public Park found off Church Road, with a cemetery and a Church (Warton Holy Trinity) situated beyond and accessed from Church Road; see Image BLA 2.3:

Image BLA 2.3: Photograph taken from the Public Open Space/Public Park found off Church Road adjoining the northeastern boundary to the Site. Photograph taken at OS GR: SK 28181 03529 (late February 2025)



- 2.7. A newly developed housing scheme (Red Marl Way) neighbours the site along the east to southeastern edge of the site. This scheme is predominantly two storey scale and overlooks the boundary to the site; see Image BLA 2.4:

Image BLA 2.4: Photograph taken from within the Site looking across the southeastern edge towards the neighbouring residential development overlooking the Site. Note, the lack of planting landscape buffer between the two sites. Photograph taken at OS GR: SK 28181 03529 (late February 2025)



- 2.8. Beyond this, the site is enclosed by Orton Road running along the southern site edge. Church Road which runs along the western and northern edge (after the junction of Orton Road and Church Road on the southwestern edge of the site); see Image 2.5:

Image BLA 2.5: Photograph taken from Orton Road as its passes along the southern Site boundary heading east passed the village. Photograph taken at OS GR: SK 27869 03158 (late February 2025)



- 2.9. **Land Use and Landscape Fabric:** The site is a single, individual field managed for arable crop production. The site contains no trees within its interior. The site is lineated with a hedge line of native species; this runs along the north, south and western edges. This hedge line contains native hedgerow trees, and beyond this, there is a vegetated verge to Church Road with trees (see Image BLA 2.2 above and Image 2.6), and a vegetated verge along Orton Road to the site's western edge (see Image BLA 2.5 above):

Image BLA 2.6: Photograph taken from Church Road looking southwest passed the Site. Photograph taken at OS GR: SK 27883 03337 (late February 2025)



- 2.10. **Recreation:** There is no Public Access to the site or a Public Right of Way ('PRoW') within or passing along the Site's boundaries. There is a limited network of PRoW routes within the setting of the Site, especially within the initial 1 km distance of the site's location. There is a small number of PRoW passing along the village edge nearest to the site's location; see Appendix BLA 1.
- 2.11. Beyond this, PRoW pass through the wider open countryside and are generally linear in their route and limited in frequency possibly reflecting the large agricultural field pattern beyond the village.
- 2.12. Further analysis is provided within Section 7, Table BLA 7.1 further on in this LVA document.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1. The Proposed Development is shown in Appendix BLA 2. A summary of the proposed development is detailed below:

- Up to 110 no. new dwellings are proposed.
- Dwellings of two storey in height, with some 'pepper-potting' of up to 2.5 storey at nodal points within the scheme. The scheme is proposed at a similar density to the existing settlement pattern neighboring the site within the southwestern part of Warton such as the new housing scheme at Red Marl Way.
- Access to the development will be via a single vehicle and pedestrian access from the northern boundary situated closest to the village edge.
- The integration of the built scheme with extensive green infrastructure, green corridors and formal pedestrian walking routes.
- Formal public open space through the scheme, as well as semi-natural and natural green space with green corridor routes running through the scheme for pedestrian and cycle friendly movement, and linkage to the wider urban area and open countryside beyond the boundary of the site.
- SuDs attenuation basins and swales.
- Public open space with formal and informal landscape treatment, ecological betterment and habitat creation.

3.2. The DAS supporting this application provides full details of the development proposals, and proposed schedule of implementation, and the proposed Illustrative Site Masterplan is contained in Appendix BLA 2 of this LVA report.

4.0 LANDSCAPE MITIGATION MEASURES

- 4.1. Landscape mitigation measures have been developed through consideration of the host landscape character for the proposed development. These provide an appropriate solution for a development that offsets and / or reduces landscape and visual effects, and if practicable, enhances the local landscape fabric.
- 4.2. In understanding the Site's landscape context, and its relationship with its setting, BLADE refers to the North Warwickshire Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment, which was published in September 2010. The site is located adjoining the southwestern edge of Warton village. The site is managed as agricultural land.
- 4.3. This southwestern edge to the village adjoins the No Man Heath to Warton Lowlands Landscape Character Area (LCA 1), which is the host landscape; see Section 7 of this LVA for more detail.
- 4.4. For the No Man Heath to Warton Lowlands Landscape Character Area, the landscape management guidelines published within the North Warwickshire Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment (2010) help guide the future development of this landscape. For this host landscape character area, the LPA have an overall management strategy which seeks to maintain and strengthen the features of the landscape. These include the following:

'Conserve and strengthen the rural character and dispersed nucleated settlement pattern of this agricultural landscape.....Any new development should reinforce the existing settlement pattern of the rural villages.'
- 4.5. The LPA highlights the pressures for change in this landscape character area, and highlights the following key issues:

'The main pressure for change identified within this agricultural LCA is agricultural intensification, which has resulted in loss of traditional meadows, hedgerows, riparian vegetation and heathland. There may also be small scale development pressures for village expansion.'
- 4.6. From the outset of the masterplanning process, BLADE has iteratively fed into the design process to optimise the retention of the existing field hedgerow and field pattern, allowing for the bolstering of existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees to ensure the continuity for field pattern and structure of the landscape along the southwestern edge of the village.
- 4.7. Additionally to this, BLADE notes that the proposed development would retain the existing landform (except for the minor-remodelling for new homes, roadway and the proposed attenuation ponds), and therefore, the general pattern of the Site's landform would be retained.
- 4.8. New planting would be of native species of local importance, and if available, local provenance. The detailed landscape design proposal would be confirmed at the reserved matters stage. However, the Illustrated Landscape Masterplan (Appendix BLA 4) defines the landscape enhancement and mitigation principals for this outline planning application submitted by the Applicant.

4.9. This strategy would retain existing landscape fabric, and ensure it is bolstered and enhanced with similar native planting as well as providing new green infrastructure for the scheme. The Illustrative Landscape Masterplan confirms additional planting and landscape measures which reflect the LPA's guidance for the No Man Heath to Warton Lowlands Landscape Character Area, which included:

- *'Conserve the historic field pattern, with priority given to restoring and strengthening primary hedge lines including those alongside roads;*
- *Manage hedgerows to enhance the field pattern by planting up gaps, allow hedges to grow by reducing cut rotation intervals to 3 yearly intervals for wildlife benefits;*
- *Promote management of small woods and game coverts, in places long rotation coppicing may be appropriate;*
- *Enhance tree cover through small scale planting of broadleaved coverts and woods in keeping with geometric pattern of hedged fields and visually open character;*
- *Encourage natural regeneration of trees and vegetation alongside watercourses and promote small areas of wetland planting in areas currently lacking in habitats;*
- *Encourage ecological management of grassland areas and wetlands.'*

4.10. Drawing on this LVA and the forgoing technical information and analysis, the Proposed Development aims to offset and reduce the effect of the application proposal. The below initiatives draw on the further guidelines provided for this Landscape Character Area:

- Retention of the existing landscape features, and where practicable bolster the existing landscape fabric including existing field hedge lines and trees which enclose the Site's boundaries for visual mitigation, as well as the ecological amenity and habitat retention, as well as contribute to the structure of the landscape for the integration of the proposed scheme within.
- Locating the proposed residential development within the interior of the Site with green corridors running through to link with an extensive public open space, which would remain undeveloped; for instance:
 - Depth of standoff to eastern edge is circa 25 metres (minimum) up to circa 35 metres (maximum) excluding the area of the attenuation basin (N.B. Space also enabled for green infrastructure and new landscaping, filter views of the new scheme from the neighboring residential area, as well as break up the development mass of the new scheme in views from the open countryside east of Warton village from rising landform).
 - Depth of stand off to southern edge is circa 15 metres (minimum) up to circa 50 meters (maximum). (N.B. Space enabled for green infrastructure to buffer the scheme from road users passing along Orton Road, as well as views from the wider open countryside to the south).

- Despite the site being situated within landform gently rising to its western and northern edge, the design of the site has been deliberate in setting new built form well within the northern and western site areas, to offset from the higher landform of the site area. At this Outline Planning Application, the Applicant is proposing new development within these margins as follows:
 - North-Northwest - Approximate buffer depth: up to circa 25 metres positioning new built form up to circa 2 metres.
 - West-Southwest - Approximate buffer depth: up to circa 75 meters positioning new built form up to circa 5 metres lower than the southwestern edge.
- Further to this, the following measures have been introduced into the scheme to reduce the overall discernibility of the newly built form. These measures would also break up the development mass of the scheme when seen from the wider open countryside – from the east and south of Warton village:
 - Tree planting to streets with broad green corridors.
 - Central public open space affording an open area within the scheme and appropriate space for tree planting.
 - Wide buffers to the eastern, south and western edges setting development well within the site to enable a lower FFL for new development. New built form would be nestled below the wider context of the site i.e., the rising landform beyond Church Road near Donative Farm (circa 115m AOD) and Stiper's Hill to the west (circa 95m AOD).
- The site is of sufficient scale that it can integrate the scheme within green infrastructure of retained and bolstered landscape fabric, as well as new landscaping and habitat creation. The scheme which would be managed as natural and semi-natural green space, as well as providing areas of open space with an attenuation basin (lower southeastern edge).
- Currently, the recent housing development at Red Marl Way has created a raw and incongruous feature which is detrimental to the approach to the village from the southwest to west. A sensitively designed new development at the site could better integrate the western-southwestern edge of the village into its landscape setting and mitigate the effects of new homes at Red Marl Way.
- Develop a walkable, pedestrian-friendly environment with extensive green corridors which interlink with the wider village and provide connectivity to the nearby Public Rights of Way into the open countryside.
- The addition of hedgerow, and new tree planting includes locally characteristic orchard planting within the Site and to the Site's boundaries to afford enhancement to the existing landscape fabric, and arboricultural continuity for the long-term establishment of tree planting within the proposed scheme.
- Through these landscape measures – retaining and bolstering the existing features and enhancing with new landscaping – to preserve and enhances the existing character of the roadway into the village along Church Road and passing the village edge along Orton Road – therefore, the scheme seeks to preserve the existing characteristics of these routes. This is aided by deliberately setting new built form into site setting back as follows:
 - Northern edge: circa 10 metres and up to 25 metres in depth.
 - Southern edge to Orton Road: circa 15 metres and up to 50 metres in depth.

- Western edge: up to 75 metres in depth.
 - Provision of native hedging and ornamental planting to the new housing plots within the development; and
 - Ensuring the proposed dwellings respect the local built character including the layout, height and scale of buildings.
- 4.11. In combination, the establishment of these measures serves to reduce the potential for landscape and visual effects on the identified baseline receptors. The focus of these measures is less about screening and filtering views, rather, these measures are about enhancing the existing landscape resources and integrating the proposal well within its setting.

Construction Phase

- 4.12. It is envisaged that the Development Proposal would be delivered in one phase. Consequently, given the foregoing, the following activities and elements have the potential to cause a temporary direct effect on the landscape fabric of the application Site, and an indirect effect, on the landscape and visual amenity of the study area:
- Erection of, and visual effect, of temporary site hoarding / fencing to enclose the Site, and tree protection fencing (to accord to BS 5837: 2012) within the Site, and along its boundaries.
 - Temporary portacabin structures for site welfare and office, and vehicle parking area.
 - Earthworks excavation for the formation of construction levels.
 - Utility of Site access off Church Road for the proposed pedestrian access / egress for the Proposed Development – to be positioned optimizing retained hedgerow and tree planting;
 - Excavations for the construction of the proposed dwellings, garages, roads and drives; and
 - HGV deliveries to Site and movement of vehicles on Site delivering materials.
- 4.13. All ground disturbances would be confined as far as practicable and working widths during construction operations would be restricted resulting in a minimal interference with existing soil structures and habitats.

Construction Mitigation

- 4.14. The details of construction methods, timing and phasing are not known at this stage; however, this appraisal has assumed a reasonable worst-case scenario. The following measures could be implemented and adhered to during the temporary construction phase:
- An approved Arboriculture Method Statement (AMS) incorporating best practice guidance set out in British Standard 5837: 2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction could be adopted, which would ensure retained trees and hedgerow are not adversely affected during the construction process.
 - Visual screening, such as hoardings, could be adopted around sections of the Site boundary to protect more sensitive visual receptors in proximity, including residential receptors and users of the Public Right of Way as appropriate.

- Construction works that create dust would be kept to a minimum within proximity of residential receptors and receptors near the Site; and
- Mitigation measures for construction lighting are likely to include directional fittings and restricted hours of operation, and if requested by the LPA, could be outlined within the Lighting Strategy for the project.

5.0 FINDINGS OF THE BASELINE APPRAISAL

- 5.1. This LVA has involved a desk study, field work, data processing and analysis as well as interpretation using professional judgement undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect in late February 2025 and based on best practice guidance¹.
- 5.2. Typically, a 15-year time horizon is used as the basis for conclusions about the residual levels of effect. 15 years is a well-established and accepted compromise between assessing the shorter-term effects (which may often be rather 'raw' before any proposed mitigation has had time to take effect) and an excessively long time.

Definition of Study Area

- 5.3. To establish the baseline context of the Site and its surrounding, and to assess the potential limit of material effects, the study area has been considered at two geographical scales:
 - Initially, a broad 'study area' was adopted, the extent of which was illustrated on the Site Context plan (see Appendix BLA 2), which was formed mainly on a desk based study. This broad study area enabled the geographical scope of the appraisal to be defined based on the Site's environmental planning context and the extent of views to and from the Site; and
 - After undertaking our field-based assessment, this broad study area was redefined to the land area most likely to experience landscape effects. The extent of this detailed study area is within 2km distance ; see Appendix BLA 3.
- 5.4. Through on-site observations, a Zone of Primary Visibility (the 'ZPV') was also identified. Through visiting publicly accessible locations, walking PRow and driving the local road network, BLADE have determined a zone by which the Site is discernible.
- 5.5. The primary zone of visibility is where representative viewpoints are assessed, and whilst there may be views from the wider area beyond the primary zone, views are less open, and likely to be filtered, or to an extent screened by existing landscape features, built development or landform.
- 5.6. The site is found on the settlement edge of Warton village. The site is predominantly enclosed by native field hedgerows with hedgerow trees which aligns to the site's boundaries. To the eastern edge, this hedgerow is less obvious and has declined in a number of places, and to the southeastern site edge, has become lost or heavily declined. Here the site is neighboured by two storey dwellings. The combination of these immediate features is sufficient to substantially filter and screen the Site from direct view from the east.
- 5.7. The strength of the field's hedgerows, combined with the site being an open field located between Orton Road and Church Road bounded by residential development contains the site and severs its connectivity with the wider open countryside in a sensory and perceptual sense. Further to this, there

¹ *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013)*

is rising landform beyond the northern and western edge of the site that encloses the site and restricts sight of the open land within its boundaries.

- 5.8. There is no public access to the site, and no public rights of way running along its boundaries, In determining the ZPV, our field-based observations found the following:
- 5.9. **North to Northeast:** Discernibility of the site is limited to along Church Road, which is restricted by the vegetated and tree'd road and the site's own hedgerows and hedgerow trees. In many cases, there are small, glimpsed views of the site. The site is not seen wholesale from along this route, even from the western edge of the site at the junction of Orton Road and Church Road.
- 5.10. There are a small number of two storey dwellings aligned to the north of Church Road which are afforded direct views of the site from upper floor residential rooms. Beyond these dwellings landform rises to a hill around Donative Farm (circa 115 metres), but there is no public right of way or access to this location. As shown within the plotted Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Appendix BLA 3), this landform screens views from beyond as landform falls away to the north. In the wider open countryside beyond Warton village, the combination of intervening landform, field hedgerows and the generally well tree'd context of the village edge and its built form along Church Road reduces discernibility of the site. There is unlikely to be any views of the site's interior.
- 5.11. To the north-northeast of Church Road there are open fields neighbouring the residential area of the village. Generally landform falls away to the northern edge of Warton around Austrey Road. A small number of Public Rights of Way pass around the village edge. From these routes discernibility of the site is limited by intervening landform, as well as the well tree'd edge of the village. Furthermore, the vegetated nature of the site's edges and grass verges along Church Road, and further tree planting around the public park and cemetery of the nearby Church also add to the filtering of views (even during late winter-time conditions).
- 5.12. Beyond the northern edge of Warton, landform slopes away and is gently rolling. Whilst the fieldscape is medium to large, the effect of rising landform up to the village edge, the well tree'd village edge, field tress and riparian tree groups is sufficient to filter views of the site, whereby the site's interior is not seen at all.
- 5.13. Summary: Given the foregoing, BLADE finds that the Site has a very limited level of visibility. This is mainly found to the immediate setting of the site on Church Road either passing along its route (with glimpsed views of the site). There are views from the neighbouring public park and nearby Church yard, but vies are generally glimpsed due to intervening tree cover. Overall, the well tree'd environment of the village restricts views of the site.
- 5.14. **Northeast to East:** The discernibility of the site from the northeast to east is very limited and largely contained by the immediate 'layer' of residential development i.e., along Church Road and thereof. Many of these dwellings are arranged with oblique views of the site, and the effect of then nearby Church is also sufficient to restrict views of the site.
- 5.15. Landform through the village rises to where Church Road meets Maypole Road, and then settlement generally falls away to be shallower beyond. outside of the village landform is gently rolling to a lower

landform. The effect of the village built form within intervening views from the open countryside is sufficient to screen direct views of the site.

- 5.16. Landform rises to Orton-on-the-Hill, a small village situated circa 2.4km away from Warton, and at circa 100mAOD. The area around this village is similarly well tree'd and views are generally enclosed from around the villagescape, including the availability of views from the village Church situated at circa 100m AOD within the village.
- 5.17. Beyond the village's northern and western edges, there are a small number of Public Rights of Way which link with Orton Road and progress across open countryside. From these routes, the site is not seen wholesale, and views of the site's interior is limited to only the western edge, whereby the site is seen against the rising landform to Stiper's Hill (west) and the elevated landform around Donative Farm to the north (circa 115m AOD).
- 5.18. As demonstrated by the plotted Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Appendix BLA 3), the effect of intervening landform is sufficient to screen direct views of the site. As one approaches the village of Warton along Orton Road, road users are passing through lower lying landform, and the effect of intervening village built form and land uses and numerous tree groups or tree components is sufficient to substantially filter if not screen views of the site.
- 5.19. Summary: Given the foregoing, BLADE finds that the Site has a very limited level of visibility. This is found to be within the immediate location within the village along Church Road before the village centre at the junction of Maypole Road and Church Road. Beyond this, there is very limited scope to see the site from the wider open countryside to the northeast-east. Most of the site is screened by village related built form and also the extensive tree'd character of the village.
- 5.20. From elevated landform around Orton-on-the-Hill, a small proportion of the site's western edge is seen but is prominent in the views due to rising landform beyond wrapping around the site and extensive tree components on this higher land.
- 5.21. Generally, the site is not seen wholesale, and if seen it is glimpsed or at such a distance that only a small proportion of the site can be seen.
- 5.22. **Southeast to Southeast:** The main factor in seeing the site is the effect of intervening built form within Warton. The main route through the village is Austrey Road/Maypole Road/Little Warton Road, which in combination, run north to south through the village. Existing development along this route is predominantly two storey, and the majority of this built form is situated relative to the height of the site i.e., circa 83m AID to 90m AOD, with further two storey built form situated along the edge of the village including Barn End Road circa 77m AOD to 84m AOD.
- 5.23. This built form is often intervening in views from within the village, or from the area immediate to the village to the southeast and southwest and effects the discernibility of the site from the approaches to the village along Orton Road, and along Barn Lock Road. The effect of intervening field hedgerows and hedgerow trees along this routes further restricts views.
- 5.24. There is scope to see the site from areas outlying to the village as one passes through open countryside and longer views are possible across fields. Often these views are associated with either higher land

and / or a longer field pattern through which the PRow route is passing. This situation occurs as one progresses from Orton on the Hill along Orton Lane, and also from the south-southwest along Barn End Road and Walton Lane further out from the village circa 1-2km.

- 5.25. In these situations, the higher landform of the site along its western and southwestern edge is seen, but the lower central and eastern site areas are substantially filtered by intervening landscape components or screened by intervening built form at the village. The site is not prominent in these views due to the effect of rising land form to the west of the site (Stiper's Hill) and also the land rising to circa 115m AOD around Donative Farm to the north.
- 5.26. Summary: Given the foregoing, BLADE finds that the Site is frequently screened from view. The site is not seen wholesale. Generally, when the site is seen, only a relatively small area of the site is glimpsed between field hedge lines, trees, and roadside vegetation. Where the higher landform of the site is seen, it is seen against higher landform to the west and north, with the site seen below these features. Overall, the central and eastern parts of the site nestle within the landscape and are seldom seen from the southeast to southwest unless within close range where the site is experienced against the wider village's built form.
- 5.27. **West to Northwest:** To the west and northwest, the opportunity to see the site is limited to a small geographical area. This is due to the influence of Stiper's Hill screening views to the site from beyond; see the plotted Zone of Theoretical Visibility in Appendix BLA 3.
- 5.28. Additionally, the well tree'd and vegetated nature of the fields and roadside environment immediately west of the site further diminishes the opportunity to see the site, whereby, the site is only glimpsed for a short time duration. In these situations, the site is seen against the wider backdrop of the village and the houses neighbouring the site.
- 5.29. Summary: Given the foregoing, BLADE finds that the Site has a very limited zone of visibility across these geographical areas, with the discernibility of the Site limited to its immediate location within the village environment.
- 5.30. Overall Summary: Overall, BLADE finds the Site is most likely to be seen from its immediate setting from the adjacent public park, houses neighboring the site or glimpsed from Orton Road or Church Road. At these locations, one is approaching the southwestern village edge or within this location, with the site experienced against the wider village.
- 5.31. Beyond this, the landform to the north and north east of the site restricts seeing the site especially as there are no publicly accessible locations by which to see the site from.
- 5.32. There is scope to see part of the site from the open countryside to the east-southeast on elevated landform (Orton Road around Orton-on-the-Hill) and also along the approach to the village from the south along the roadway (Barn End Road). In both these situations, public footpath passes through open countryside and there is scope to see the western periphery of the site area where land is highest – in these situations, this is due to the elevated landform around Orton Lane, or the large field pattern south of the site area.

- 5.33. BLADE finds the Zone of Primary Visibility to be extensively limited to the immediate setting of the Site, the adjacent urban setting, along the main route into the village from limited areas of elevated landform to the east.
- 5.34. Even during the winter-time (late February 2025) there is limited scope of seeing the Site from the wider open countryside outside of the Site. However, in all these situations, the site is generally not seen wholesale and views are limited to the higher landform along the western periphery of the site.

Viewpoint Selection

- 5.35. Given the foregoing, representative viewpoints have been selected. In selecting these viewpoints, BLADE has been conscious of appraising the Site from all points of the compass, as well as within a range of distances to the Site, as well as testing the development proposals from a range of receptor types. The selection of these Viewpoints was agreed through consultation with the Local Planning Authority during February 2025; see the final Appendix of this LVA.
- 5.36. A list of the selected viewpoints and their reasons for selection is provided in Table BLA 5.2 overleaf. The location of representative viewpoints is illustrated on the Site Context Plan (Appendix BLA 1). Viewpoint Sensitivity is defined as high, medium or low based on an interpretation of a combination of parameters, as follows and defined in Table BLA 5.1:
- Location and context of the viewpoint;
 - Land use or main activity at the viewpoint;
 - Frequency and duration of use;
 - Landscape character and quality of the intervening landscape; and
 - Value attached to view.

Table BLA 5.1: Visual Sensitivity in relation to Main Activity at Viewpoint

Visual Sensitivity	Land Use
Very High	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View is: designed/has intentional association with surroundings; recorded in published material; from a publicly accessible heritage asset/designated/promoted viewpoint; nationally/internationally designated right of way; protected/recognised in planning policy designation.
High	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View of clear value but may not be formally recognised e.g. framed view of scenic value or destination/summit views; inferred that it may have value for local residents; locally promoted route or PROW.
Medium	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View is not widely promoted or recorded in published sources; may be typical of those experienced by an identified receptor; minor road routes through rural/scenic areas.
Low	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View of clearly lesser value than similar views from nearby visual receptors that may be more accessible.
Negligible	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View may be affected by many landscape detractors and unlikely to be valued.

Table BLA 5.2 – Summary of Representative Viewpoints (late-February 2025/Wintertime conditions)

Viewpoint	Location	OS Grid Ref	Approx Distance from the Closest Site Boundary	Reason for Selection (Site Topography: c. 79-90m AOD)
1	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: 247/AE2/1) passing along the northern edge of Warton village through open countryside	427751, 303981	0.65km N/0 degrees looking S/180 degrees	This viewpoint is situated on the northwestern edge of the village. The PRoW passes along the village edge and into the wider open countryside beyond. This route is not a promoted route and is not within a National or statutory designated landscape. PRoW users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 71m AOD.
2	View from Church Road locally to the site situated to the northeast	428174, 303587	0.35km NE/45 degrees looking SW/225 degrees	Viewpoint from a village edge location nearest the Church and also public open space. Receptors would have a medium susceptibility to change and a medium visual sensitivity. Topography: 83m AOD.
3	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: 247//AE14/1) passing through the northern village edge of Warton	428185, 303801	0.35 NE/45 degrees looking SW/225 degrees	Viewpoint from a PRoW passing along the northwestern village edge. PRoW users would passing to ad from the village into the open countryside. This route is not a promoted route and is not within a National or statutory designated landscape. PRoW users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 83m AOD.
4	View from Warton Lane as this minor B road approaches the northern edge of Warton village	428337, 304938	1.55km NE/45 degrees looking SW/225 degrees	View from local minor road approaching Warton village from the north. This route passes to and from the open countryside and affords broad open views towards the village. Receptors would have a medium susceptibility to change and a medium visual sensitivity. Topography: 67m AOD.
5	View from Orton Lane as this minor B road approaches the outlying village of Austrey to the northeast looking across open countryside to Warton	429740, 305764	3.1km NE/45 degrees looking SW/225 degrees	View from local minor road approaching Warton village from the north. This route passes to and from the open countryside and affords broad open views towards the village. Receptors would have a medium susceptibility to change and a medium visual sensitivity. Topography: 90m AOD.
6	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: T3a/1) situated to the east of Warton passing through open countryside from Orton-on-the-Hill	430334, 304855	2.65km E/75 degrees looking W/255 degrees	View from PRoW passing through open countryside in the wider context of the village. Located to the east-northeast, PRoW users would have broad, wide views across intervening fields to the village. PRoW users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 79m AOD.

7	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: T3a/1) situated on elevated landform at Orton-on-the-Hill to the east of Warton village	430361 , 304042	2.45km E/80 degrees looking W/260 degrees km	View from PRoW at the edge of Orton-on-the-Hill progressing from an elevated landform to the lower lying open agricultural fields. From this location views are broad and open across to Warton village. PRoW users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 96m AOD.
8	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: T3/1) situated to the east of Warton village	430006 , 303688	1.9km E/100 degrees looking W/280 degrees km	View from PRoW passing between Orton-on-the-Hill and Warton village, which at this location has an elevated position. From here, there are broad and open across to Warton village. PRoW users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 84m AOD.
9	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: T4/5) situated to the east of Warton village	429779 , 303452	1.65km E/110 degrees looking W/250 degrees km	View from PRoW passing between Orton-on-the-Hill and Warton village with the route situated at a similar landform to that of the site. From here, there are broad and open across to Warton village. PRoW users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 77m AOD
10	View from Orton Lane as this minor B road on the eastern outskirts of Warton village	429379 , 303360	0.4km SE/140 degrees looking NW/310 degrees	View from local minor road passing between Orton-on-the-Hill and Warton village as it passes nearest to the southeastern village edge. At this location, road users would be passing through the tree'd and hedgerow field edges. Receptors would have a medium susceptibility to change and a medium visual sensitivity. Topography: 73m AOD.
11	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) passing through open countryside to the south of Warton village	428445 , 302952	1.2km E/120 degrees looking W/240 degrees km	View from PRoW passing between south of Warton with back/towards the southwestern village edge. This route is not a promoted route and is not within a National or statutory designated landscape. PRoW users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 75m AOD.
12	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) passing through open countryside to the west of Warton village	427232 , 302888	0.6km W/260 degrees looking E/80 degrees	View from PRoW passing within medium range of the site to its west. This viewpoint demonstrates the discernibility of the site from the open countryside to the west. This route is not a promoted route and is not within a National or statutory designated landscape. PRoW users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 96m AOD.

13	View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) approaching the junction of Church Road and Orton Road to the west of Warton village	427778 , 303164	Within 0.1km W/270 degrees looking E/90 degrees N-	View from PRow passing within close range of the site to its west. PRow uses are approaching the junction of Church Road and Orton Road. This route is not a promoted route and is not within a National or statutory designated landscape. PRow users would have a high susceptibility to change and high visual sensitivity. Topography: 91m AOD.
14	View from Church Road looking northwest along its route on the outskirts of Warton village	427894 , 303344	Adj. northern site boundary looking NE/50 degrees	Viewpoint from Church Road closet to the site area. Receptors would have a medium susceptibility to change and a medium visual sensitivity. Topography: 87m AOD.

6.0 THE PLANNING CONTEXT AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

The Planning Context of the Application Site

- 6.1. With consideration of the current adopted Local Plan and its supporting Proposals Map (including the Proposal map and the Insert Map, Landscape-related designations and policy considerations are as follows (see also Appendix BLA 1):
- **National landscape designations:** The site does not lie within, adjoin, or is close to a Nationally designated landscape such as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Park. The site is not situated within the Green Belt.
 - **Local landscape designations:** The site does not lie within, adjoin, or is close to a locally designated landscape, such as a Significant Gap or Green Space. The site is found within Countryside on the western edge of the settlement overlooked by neighbouring residential development. It is judged that the Site has a peri-urban/urban edge context.
- 6.2. Consequently, given the foregoing the site is not afforded elevated protection under National and local planning policy in Landscape terms. The Site is not situated within the West Midlands Green Belt.

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)²

- 6.3. The NPPF was updated on the 12th December 2024 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 6.4. The NPPF Paragraph 131 states that the 'creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'.
- 6.5. Paragraph. 136 states that 'new streets [should be] tree-lined', and 'that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible'.
- 6.6. Paragraph 187 notes that the need to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital, with subsection a stating:

'.....protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan).'

² Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. (2024) NPPF. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

- 6.7. Paragraph 187 makes it clear that there is a hierarchy to the importance and value attributed to landscapes, and that the development plan should identify the quality of particular landscapes that are not subject to statutory protection, stating at subsection b:

‘recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.’

- 6.8. Relevant Planning Policy Guidance that accompanies the NPPF includes that relating to Green Infrastructure, Landscape, and Design (including the National Design Guide).

Local Planning Policy

- 6.9. The Site lies within the administrative area of North Warwickshire Borough Council, which is the Local planning Authority (LPA). Their Local Plan was adopted in 2021 with the aim of providing a clear vision for how new development can address challenges and identifies where, when, how much and how new development will take place in the district up to 2033, and these policies are afforded appropriate weight.

Policy LP14

- 6.10. The main Landscape-derived policy is the LP14 which is entitled ‘Landscape’, and states the following:

‘Within landscape character areas as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment (2010), Arden Landscape Guidelines (1993) and the Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (June 2010) (or successor document) development should look to conserve, enhance and where appropriate, restore landscape character as well as promote a resilient, functional landscape able to adapt to climate change. Specific landscape, geo-diversity, wildlife and historic features which contribute to local character will be protected and enhanced as appropriate.’

- 6.11. The policy continues under part a. and seeks to retain and bolster existing landscape resources and establish ecological habitat betterment through new development:

‘New development should, as far as possible retain existing trees, hedgerows and nature conservation features such as water bodies with appropriate protection from construction where necessary and strengthen visual amenity and bio-diversity through further hard and soft landscaping.’

- 6.12. This policy aims to protect and enhance woodland features and existing tree groups:

‘Development will not be permitted which would directly or indirectly damage existing mature or ancient woodland, veteran trees or ancient or species-rich hedgerows (other than where appropriate avoidance, mitigation, or compensation has been taken and any minimised harm is justified having considered the policies in this plan as a whole).’

6.13. The policy continues under part b, and states:

'The landscape and hydrological impacts of development proposals which themselves directly alter the landscape, or which involve associated physical change to the landscape such as recontouring, terracing, new bunds or banks and new water features such as reservoirs, lakes, pools and ponds will be assessed against the descriptions in the Landscape Character Areas.'

6.14. Whilst this is in part a reserved matters point (through detailed design to discharge conditions), the undertaking of this LVA has been mindful to work iteratively with the Site Masterplanner and Engineering consultants to best integrate the proposed development and minimise the disturbances to the existing landform within the Site.

6.15. This policy continues and states:

'New landscape schemes will look to use native species and incorporate benefits for biodiversity. Species that are invasive or problematic to the natural environment will be avoided.'

6.16. Through the iterative development of the Site Masterplan, ecological betterment and habitat creation has formed part of the proposed landscape mitigation and enhancement scheme. The drawn Illustrative Landscape Masterplan is contained within Appendix BLA 4.

6.17. This is the main Landscape-derived policy by which the proposed development would be assessed against. Further pertinent policies include:

Policy LP15

6.18. Policy LP15 is entitled 'Historic Environment', and states the following:

6.19. *'The Council recognises the importance of the historic environment to the Borough's local character, identity and distinctiveness, its cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits. The quality, character, diversity and local distinctiveness of the historic environment will be conserved or enhanced. In particular:*

- *Within identified historic landscape character areas development will conserve, or enhance and where appropriate, restore landscape character as well as promote a resilient, functional landscape able to adapt to climate change. Specific historic features which contribute to local character will be protected and enhanced and, development, including site allocations, should consider all relevant heritage assets that may be affected, including those outside the relevant site.'*

6.20. Further ancillary policies include the following overleaf:

Policy LP 17

- 6.21. Policy LP 17 is entitled 'Green Infrastructure' and seeks to 'maintain and enhance existing Green Infrastructure assets where possible', stating the following:

'Development proposals must, where appropriate, demonstrate how they contribute to maintaining and enhancing a comprehensive and strategically planned Green Infrastructure network. With reference to the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy and Offsetting sub-regional Strategy for Green Infrastructure and the local green infrastructure resource development should.'

Policy LP 2

- 6.22. Policy LP 2 is entitled 'Settlement Hierarchy', and identifies Warton as a category 3 settlement (a 'Local Service Centre'), and states the following:

'In Categories 1 to 4 settlements development within development boundaries will be supported in principle. Development directly adjacent to settlement boundaries may also be acceptable, including that which would enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities, provided such development is proportionate in scale to the relevant settlement and otherwise compliant with the policies in the plan and national planning policy considered as a whole (including in respect of Green Belt protections).'

- 6.23. The Applicant's development proposals have been developed iteratively through the undertaking of this LVA. As such, the scale, mass, height and layout of the site has been considered to best integrate the intended scheme within its setting through the retention and enhancement of existing landscape fabric, with the design of public open space and green infrastructure to offset and reduce the potential effect of the scheme.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 6.24. The Polesworth Parish Neighbourhood Plan covers the parish area within which Warton village is located. Currently, this Neighbourhood Plan is at a Referendum Version. With consideration of this, BLADE notes the following:

- The site is found outside but adjoining the settlement boundary recognised by the Parish Council for Warton village.
- The site is not situated within the Tamworth/Polesworth strategic Gap (situated west of Polesworth, and well beyond the village of Warton).
- The site is not listed within an area determined as important by the Parish Council under their Policy PNP9 – Preserving the Separate Identity of Polesworth's Villages.
- The site area appears not to be recognised as a Local Area of Green Space, and not integral to the preservation of views noted by the Parish Council as being key or important.

Arboricultural Considerations

- 6.25. The proposed development has been appraised through an Arboriculture Assessment and Arboriculture Impact Assessment (conforming to BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction). This assessment identified 9 individual trees, 3 tree groups, and 4 hedgerows.
- 6.26. The arborist confirmed that the '*National Planning Policy Framework states at section 193 c) that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists*'. The Arborist confirmed that there are '*no ancient or veteran trees, and no ancient woodland on, or adjacent to the site.*'
- 6.27. For the proposed access from Church Road, it was considered that this could be achieved '*without tree loss, though some hedgerow removal will be inevitable. The hedges are of low quality around the site and any loss could be mitigated through the restoration of the retained sections to give a net gain in hedgerow quality.*'

Heritage Considerations

- 6.28. There are no heritage assets within the application site, and the land is found outside of any Conservation Area. There are no Scheduled Monuments or Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields within, or in close proximity to the Site.
- 6.29. The site does not contain any Listed Buildings, and the closest architectural or built references are either new build housing or long established houses situated on Church Road. All these are situated on the southwestern edge of the village and seen in combination with the site.

Summary

- 6.30. BLADE summaries the planning policy background for this site as follows:
- The NPPF shows a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development.
 - The site does not fall within, or adjoin, any National or Local landscape designation, and is not afforded any elevated protection under National or Local Planning Policy.
 - There are no heritage assets within or adjoining the quantum of the site.
 - The arboriculture and landscape resources of the site are restricted to the site boundaries and are of relative value as a landscape fabric. There are no Veteran trees on site or adjoining its boundaries.
 - In the adopted Local Plan, the Local Planning Authority recognise a settlement boundary (built-up area boundary) as part of its adopted Policies Map. The site is located adjacent to the settlement boundary.

6.31. In summary, the Local Planning Policies contain a number of overarching policies of relevance to this study. The main themes of these policies, against which the proposed development could be tested, have been summarised here for convenience:

- Development proposals should consider the latest Landscape Character Assessment and its guidelines to retain and manage landscape features that contribute to wider landscape character and the setting of development;
- New development should seek to protect and restore the primary characteristics defined in character assessments and important features of the host landscape character area; and
- The location, materials, scale and use of any proposed development should be sympathetic to and complement local landscape character.

7.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Landscape Character

Existing Landscape Character Assessment

- 7.1. This section appraises the existing, or baseline conditions of the character of the Site, and its landscape context through consideration of published landscape assessments.
- 7.2. Such an assessment is worthwhile in enabling a better understanding of the site, and its context, but rarely delivers sufficiently site-specific or contemporary information to enable robust conclusions about the significance of any change through the proposed development. As such, BLADE has also undertaken its own field-based assessment of the site and its context, which is included later in this section.

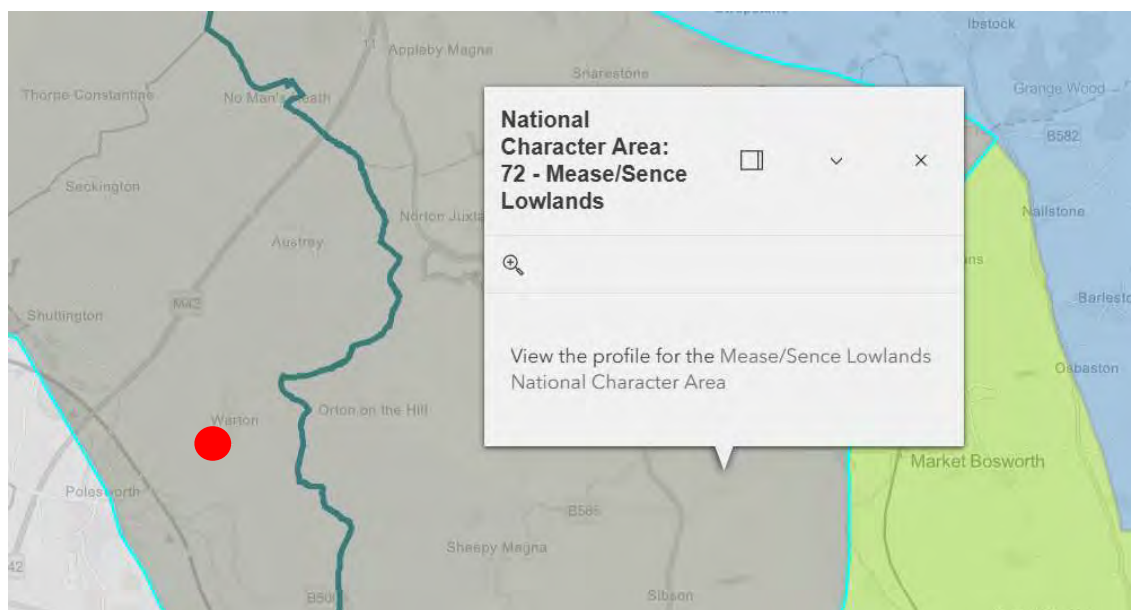
Background Published Evidence Base Documents

- 7.3. The following documents are relevant and will be discussed as appropriate later in this LVA:
- Natural England National Character Assessment (online resource);
 - Warwickshire County Council's Landscape Guidelines (published 1993); and
 - North Warwickshire Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment (2010).

National Character Assessment

- 7.4. The landscape of England has been subject to a nationwide Landscape Character Assessment, 'The Character of England: Landscape, Wildlife and Natural Features' (Natural England). The site is located wholly within the National Character Area (NCA) 72 – Mease/Sence Lowlands; albeit close to the boundary with on the edge of the neighbouring NCA 97 Arden; see Image BLA 7.1:

Image BLA 7.1: Extract from Natural England's NCA on-line map. N.B. The approximate location of the Site is shown by BLADE with a solid red circle

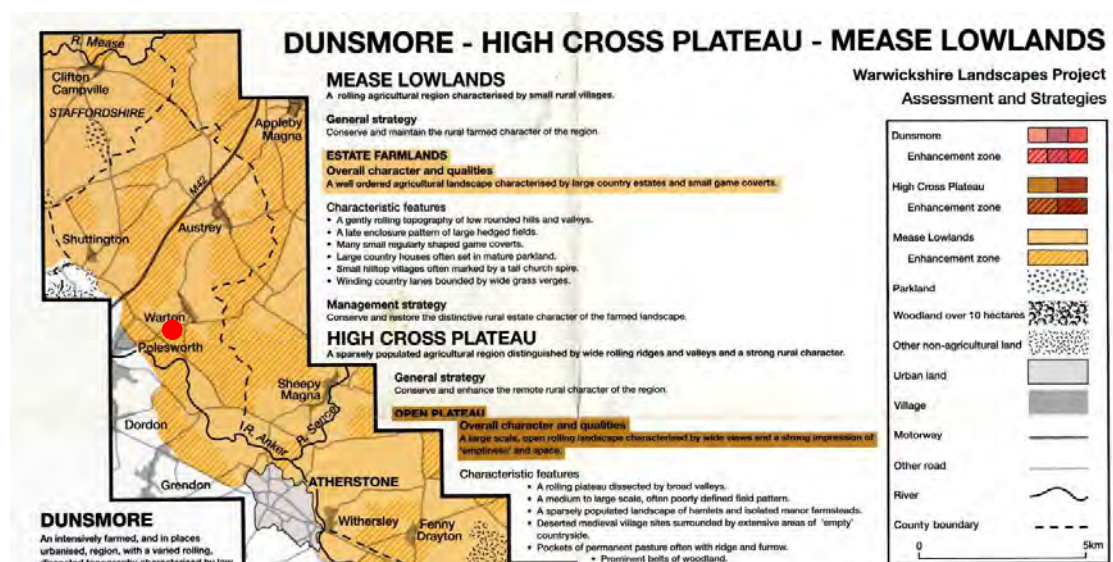


- 7.5. At over 32,000 Hectares, the Mease/Sence Lowlands covers a very extensive tract of land extending from Burton-on-Trent in the north to Nuneaton in the south and extends across Derbyshire in the north, Warwickshire in the south, Leicestershire in the east and Staffordshire in the west and comprises part of the river corridors of the middle reaches of the River Trent's catchment in the heart of England. It is a relatively narrow, linear and low-lying landscape, often clearly delineated at its edges by higher ground, and it is largely comprised of the flat flood plains and gravel terraces of the rivers.
- 7.6. Given our field based assessment (late winter-time conditions, 2025), it is considered, that whilst Natural England's descriptions are broadly representative of the wider landscape, it is too generic to provide specific characterisation of the Site.
- 7.7. The Site is found towards the peripheral edge of this National Character Area neighbouring NCA 97 Arden, and as such is situated within a hinterland area. As observed by BLADE during our field-based assessment, the character of the area is influenced by where both NCA's
- 7.8. For the scale of the Site and potential developable area the description of landscape character undertaken at a more localised level are more relevant in establishing the landscape resource baseline.

Warwickshire County Council's Landscape Guidelines (published 1993)

- 7.9. At a county level a landscape character assessment was completed for Warwickshire in 1993. In this work the site falls within the character area defined as the Mease Lowlands Landscape Character Area, and the Arden River Valleys Landscape Character Area, albeit on the edge of this Landscape Character area, with the neighbouring landscape character area situated west of Polesworth; see Image 7.2:

Image 7.2: Extract from the Warwickshire County Council's Landscape Guidelines, Arden Landscape map (1993). N.B. BLADE has marked the approximate location of the site with a red circle



7.10. The County Council describes the Mease Lowlands Landscape Character Area as follows:

'A well-ordered agricultural landscape characterised by large country estates and small game coverts.....a relatively low lying rolling agricultural region which runs in a broad belt along the River Mease from the Trent Valley lowlands in the west to Market Bosworth in the east. The region lies largely outside Warwickshire but includes the northern tip of the county beyond the Anker valley.....the character of the Mease Lowlands is strongly influenced by the historical development of the region. This is reflected in the pattern of large, hedged fields and the nucleated settlement pattern of small rural villages.'

7.11. Breaking this broad landscape character area down further into smaller, more discrete areas, the County Council finds the site to be located within the Estate farmlands Landscape Type, which is described as (N.B. BLADE has underlined those landscape features common to the site's surrounding context within the open countryside):

'.....a well ordered agricultural landscape characterised by its gentle, rolling topography, large, hedged fields and small rural villages. Of special importance, however, are the many small regularly shaped game coverts which occur throughout the area. These are associated with large country estates and together with the many halls often set in mature parkland they greatly influence the character of this landscape.'

7.12. The County Council continues and recognises (N.B. BLADE has underlined those landscape features common to the site's surrounding context within the open countryside):

'The Estate farmlands are an intensively farmed landscape with much arable cropping.....Small rural villages, typically situated on hilltops, are a feature of this landscape. Settlement pattern is strongly nucleated and there are few outlying dwellings or farmsteads. Most of the villages, which in Warwickshire include Warton, Austrey, Shuttington, Seckington, Newton Regis and No Man's Heath, contain both traditional vernacular buildings and more recent development. Tall church spires are particularly eye catching features in many of these hilltop villages. The area is served by a fairly dense network of minor roads and lanes typically bordered by wide grass verges.'

7.13. The County Council recognise the following key characteristics of the Estate farmlands Landscape Type (N.B. BLADE has underlined those elements common to the site's context):

- *'A gently rolling topography of low rounded hills and valleys.*
- *A late enclosure pattern of large, hedged fields.*
- *Many small regularly shaped game coverts.*
- *Large country houses often set in mature parkland.*
- *Small hilltop villages often marked by a tall church spire. Winding country lanes bounded by wide grass verges.'*

- 7.14. The County Council details a management strategy for the long term continuity of the Landscape Character Area, which states:

‘Conserve the historic nucleated settlement pattern by avoiding new development in open countryside.’

- 7.15. For this Landscape Character Area, The County Council number of strategic/headline landscape guidelines for the Mease Lowlands Landscape Character Area, for which only a few are pertinent to the development type proposed and for the undertaking of this appraisal; these are

- *‘Protect the character and special features of country roads.’*
- *Highway landscaping should be strongly linked to the surrounding landscape pattern.’*

- 7.16. For the Estate Farmlands Landscape Type, the County Council details a management strategy for the long term continuity of the Landscape Type, which states:

‘Conserve and restore the distinctive rural estate character of the farmed landscape.’

- 7.17. For this Landscape Character Area, The County Council number of strategic/headline landscape guidelines for the Mease Lowlands Landscape Character Area, for which only a few are pertinent to the development type proposed and for the undertaking of this appraisal; these are

- *‘Conserve the historic pattern of large, hedged fields, with priority given to strengthening and restoring primary hedgelines.’*
- *Enhance field pattern through more appropriate hedgerow management.*
- *Enhance tree cover through small scale woodland planting.’*

North Warwickshire Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment (2010)

- 7.18. Despite being prepared and published 15 years ago, the North Warwickshire Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment remains the LPA’s most recent published landscape character assessment. The primary objectives of this assessment included:

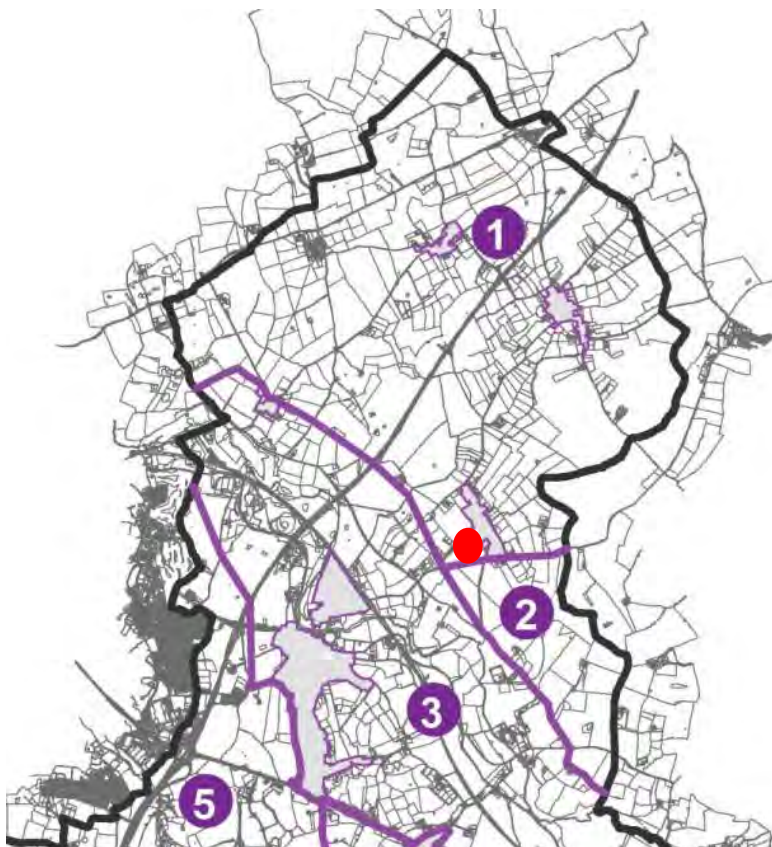
- *‘To undertake an assessment, focussed on the Main Settlements and Local Service Centres, identifying the distinctive landscape sub-units, together with the provision of broad descriptions and management prescriptions for each; and*
- *To identify factors of change that have influenced landscape change in the past, and development pressures which are likely to influence change in the future.*

- 7.19. The assessment work has been undertaken in two stages, for which the second stage *‘comprised a more detailed assessment, focussed on the main settlements and local service centres (Atherstone / Mancetter, Polesworth / Dordon, Coleshill, Old and New Arley, Grendon / Baddesley Ensor, Hartshill with Ansley Common, Kingsbury and Water Orton) to identify distinct landscape sub units, together*

with broad descriptions and management prescriptions for each. The sensitivity and capacity for change of each of these areas was assessed.' However, the village of Warton is not a main or local service settlement and was not appraised as part of this second stage works.

- 7.20. Consequently, the LPA's Stage One analysis is drawn on, for which, their study finds the site to be situated within the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands (Landscape Character Area 1) Landscape Character Area. As demonstrated by the below, the site is found on the peripheral edge of this landscape character area and close to the neighboring Landscape Character Area 2 (Little Warton to Fields Farm - Fen Lanes); see Image BLA 7.2:

Image BLA 7.2: Extract from the North Warwickshire Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment (2010), Part One, Figure 11 entitled Landscape Character Area. N.B. BLADE was marked the approximate location of the Site with a solid red circle



- 7.21. Given our field based assessment, we have considered the intactness of the host landscape character locally to the site, and within its quantum, but we have been mindful that there may be less of a landscape intactness due to its geographical position on the settlement edge of Warton, and the site location close to the neighbouring landscape character. Therefore, this location at the village edge may act as hinterland between the two landscape character areas.
- 7.22. The characteristics of the host landscape character area, the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands (Landscape Character Area 1) are considered as follows:

No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands (Landscape Character Area 1)

- 7.23. The LPA describes the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands (Landscape Character Area 1) which the LPA describes as (N.B. BLADE has underlined those landscape features common to the site's surrounding context within the open countryside):

'Visually open, mixed farmland located within a distinctive bowl landform. A series of ditches and small watercourses pass through the lower reaches and drain into the River Anker to the west.'

- 7.24. The LPA continues (N.B. BLADE has underlined those landscape features common to the site's surrounding context within the open countryside):

'This is a well ordered agricultural landscape, with scattered farmsteads and nucleated hilltop villages (Austrey, Seckington, Newton Regis and Warton) each with prominent church spires. The villages include both traditional vernacular buildings and more recent development, connected by a network of minor roads and lanes typically bordered by wide grass verges, some with hedges.'

- 7.25. And continues (N.B. BLADE has underlined those landscape features common to the site's surrounding context within the open countryside):

'Scattered small, regularly shaped game coverts and hedgerow trees provide little tree cover and the landscape is visually open, with panoramic views from the elevated fringes. From elevated locations within the character area distant hilltop masts and wooded ridgelines are visible but their influence on the character of the area is insignificant.'

- 7.26. Further to this, the LPA lists the following key characteristics (N.B. BLADE has underlined those landscape features common to the site's surrounding context within the open countryside):

- *'A distinctive shallow bowl landform of gently undulating low rounded hills that contain a central valley;'*
- *Mixed open agricultural landscape with a scattering of small red-brick, nucleated hill top villages with visually prominent church spires;*
- *Dense network of minor country roads and lanes, bordered by grass verges, some towards the north containing hedges with bracken hint at former heaths;*
- *M42 cuts through centrally;*
- *Strong rectilinear hedge pattern of late enclosure with in parts extensive very open areas of arable cultivation on the more elevated land, particularly towards Orton-on-the-Hill;*
- *Small flat pastoral fields on lower land, associated with a number of small tributaries of the Anker River particularly notable at Austrey Meadows;*
- *Tree cover confined to small regularly shaped game coverts and hedgerow trees;*

- Wide open views across the character area from the elevated fringes, from lower land views across open fields to near escarpments.'

7.27. Under the sub-heading of Pressures for change / key issues, the LPA notes the following within this Landscape Character Area:

'The main pressure for change identified within this agricultural LCA is agricultural intensification, which has resulted in loss of traditional meadows, hedgerows, riparian vegetation and heathland. There may also be small scale development pressures for village expansion.'

7.28. Under the sub-heading of Landscape /management strategies, the LPA summarises the prescribed management strategy for this landscape character:

'Conserve and strengthen the rural character and dispersed nucleated settlement pattern of this agricultural landscape.'

7.29. The text also identifies appropriate mitigation as well as general landscape management objectives and strategic opportunities for enhancing green infrastructure and biodiversity. The LPA highlights a number of landscape management guidelines for long term land management opportunities; these included:

- *'Conserve the historic field pattern, with priority given to restoring and strengthening primary hedge lines including those alongside roads;*
- *Manage hedgerows to enhance the field pattern by planting up gaps, allow hedges to grow by reducing cut rotation intervals to 3 yearly intervals for wildlife benefits;*
- *Promote management of small woods and game coverts, in places long rotation coppicing may be appropriate;*
- *Enhance tree cover through small scale planting of broadleaved coverts and woods in keeping with geometric pattern of hedged fields and visually open character;*
- *Encourage natural regeneration of trees and vegetation alongside watercourses and promote small areas of wetland planting in areas currently lacking in habitats;*
- *Encourage ecological management of grassland areas and wetlands.'*

7.30. BLADE considers that the description of the Landscape Character Area is broadly consistent with the wider landscape context of the Site as identified by the LPA in No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands (Landscape Character Area 1).

- 7.31. Church Road is not an unbreeched 'watershed' – development already lines the northern boundary of the road to create an established collection of large, detached dwellings with domestic curtilages aligned to this roadway. Additionally, the site is overlooked by the existing collection of residential dwellings at Red Marl Way.
- 7.32. In a landscape and village character sense, this built form, and the wider village environment which can be seen from the site area, reinforces the peri-urban/village edge location. This is particularly the case, when one considers the limited visual envelope (or zone of principle visibility) for the land. The site is enclosed by this residential development and robust field hedgerows. The countryside beyond Church Road and Orton Road is experienced as very broad and open with a much scale than the site area. This contrast reinforces the site's village edge location.
- 7.33. This perception is further reinforced through the landscape fabric at the site being impoverished as a result of several decades of intensive arable farming. Whilst there are a number of mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees, neither the condition of the site, or its character, are unique or rare locally.
- 7.34. Consequently, it is considered, that the published analysis and assessment of landscape character provides a contextual appreciation of the wider landscape. When on site, especially during winter-time months, one is aware of the presence of the surrounding village related land uses, albeit on the edge of the village, rather than feeling divorced from it in open countryside. Given this the Site is experienced as within the 'built limits' of the southwestern village edge.

Site Specific Landscape Character and Landscape Sensitivity

- 7.35. To independently assess the likely level of landscape and visual effects which the development proposals might incur will require an appropriately detailed assessment of the Site itself and its immediate surroundings.
- 7.36. Recognising that 'landscape' is a multi-dimensional concept embracing 'what we see', its time-depth and physical attributes, this LVA reviews and assesses change to landscape character in terms of the physical landscape and the Site's character. The Site context has been described in Section 2, and earlier in this section.

Landscape Susceptibility

- 7.37. Landscape sensitivity, the susceptibility of the landscape to change, is defined as the ability of the receptor (whether the overall character, individual fabric elements or perceptual aspects) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation.
- 7.38. With consideration of the published Landscape Character Assessment for North Warwickshire, the assessment notes that the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area is generally a 'visually open, mixed farmland located within a distinctive bowl landform',a well ordered agricultural landscape, with scattered farmsteads and nucleated hilltop villages' with 'tree cover confined to small regularly shaped game coverts and hedgerow trees.'
- 7.39. The LPA highlights the need to 'conserve and strengthen the rural character and dispersed nucleated settlement pattern of this agricultural landscape', 'conserve the historic field pattern, with priority given to restoring and strengthening primary hedge lines including those alongside roads'.....and

‘enhance tree cover through small scale planting of broadleaved coverts and woods in keeping with geometric pattern of hedged fields and visually open character.’

- 7.40. It is clear that the nature of the Proposed Development is consistent with the existing scale, pattern and land use of the prevailing character within the wider village of Warton, and the immediate built up area along Red Marl Way, Church Road and the roadways thereof. There is scope for mitigation which would be in keeping with the local landscape character, as well as proposing new landscaping to reduce the long term concerns for landscape surrounding the Site’s location, and the current detracting features. The overall susceptibility of the Site is medium.

Landscape Value

- 7.41. As set out within GLVIA version 3, when analysing the landscape baseline, it is necessary to establish the relative value of the potentially affected landscape. Para. 5.19 of the GLVIA version 3 states that: ‘A review of existing landscape designations is usually the starting point in understanding value, but the value attached to undesignated landscapes also needs to be carefully considered and individual elements of the landscape such as trees, buildings or hedgerows may also have a value. All need to be considered where relevant.’
- 7.42. The Site does not lie within a designated landscape. TGN 02/21: Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations identifies a range of factors that can be considered when identifying landscape value. Table 3 is derived from TGN 02/21 and provides a description as to the extent the valued factors are present within the Site based upon both the published landscape character and Site specific character; see Table BLA 7.1:

Table BLA 7.1 - Site Specific Landscape Appraisal by BLADE (late February 2025/Wintertime conditions)

Aspect	Definition	Observations
Natural Heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	There are no statutory or non-statutory ecological designations covering the Site. As set out in the Preliminary Ecological Assessment for the Site, the Site consists of a range of habitats including scrub, native hedgerow and scattered hedgerow trees. However, the majority of the Site is managed for arable crop production. There are no trees within the Site's interior, and there are no Veteran trees within the site, or adjoining its quantum. Hedgerows are of native species commonly found locally to the Site, although the eastern boundary hedgerow is degraded and outgrown in places and lacking scattered hedgerow trees with the land between the field and the neighboring collection of new housing having little if any landscape treatment and remaining open. This gives this southeastern site edge a degraded and impoverished feel. The natural heritage of the Site is therefore considered to be medium to low.
Cultural Heritage	Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape.	There are no designated heritage assets within the Site, the Site is not situated within a Conservation Area, Registered Park or Garden, Registered Battlefield or World Heritage Site. The cultural heritage of the Site is therefore considered to be very low.
Landscape Condition	Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure.	The Site is managed for arable crops and enclosed with robust hedgerows with hedgerow trees, and grass verges outside of this to the roadways which pass the site. The eastern boundary to the new residential development is more open and has a degraded section of hedgerow and less trees within its length. There are no veteran trees in the site, and the field hedgerows have some degree of dieback of native species. The site is reflective of 'visually open, mixed farmland' characteristic located around Warton, albeit the field site is smaller than that found locally. The site is bounded by residential development to the southeastern edge of the village, which overlooks the site and this settlement edge is readily discernible. This gives the site a peri-urban setting. The condition of the Site is therefore considered to be medium.
Associations	Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts.	The Site itself has no known notable cultural associations with art, literature or events in history. Associations are therefore considered to be very low.

Distinctiveness	Landscape that has a strong sense of identity and whether it contains rare character or features which are considered particularly important examples.	The Site contains some features consistent with the Mease Lowlands Landscape Character Area (Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines) including 'large, hedged fields', 'gentle, rolling topography, large, hedged fields' and 'minor roads and lanes typically bordered by wide grass verges.' For the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area (North Warwickshire Landscape Character Assessment) the typical features include 'minor roads and lanes typically bordered by wide grass verges, some with hedges', 'strong rectilinear hedge pattern', 'gently undulating landform' and 'tree cover confined to hedgerow trees.' The distinctiveness of the Site is therefore considered to be medium .
Recreational	Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important.	There is no Public Access to the site or a Public Right of Way ('PRoW') within or passing along the Site's boundaries. There is a limited network of PRoW routes within the setting of the Site, especially within the initial 1 km distance of the site's location. There is a small number of PRoW passing along the village edge nearest to the site's location; see Appendix BLA 1. Beyond this, PRoW pass through the wider open countryside and are generally linear in their route and limited in frequency possibly reflecting the large agricultural field pattern beyond the village. The recreational value of the Site is therefore considered to be low .
Perceptual (Scenic)	Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense.	The character of the Site is influenced by its surrounding context, being a location on the edge of existing dwellings and the village edge of Warton. Church Road is not an unbreeched 'watershed' – development already lines the northern boundary of the road to create an established collection of large, detached dwellings with domestic curtilages aligned to this roadway. The site is enclosed by this residential development, its wider robust field hedge lines, as well existing residential development, with rising landform to the north and west, which further reinforces the site's village edge position – rather than open countryside's outside of the village built influence. There are limited locations (particularly within the wider landscape to the northeast to the southeast) and from within lower lying landform to the west where the Site is visible in public views given the existing vegetation and built form surrounding the Site and the hedgerow'd vehicle routes nearest the site. The perceptual quality of the Site is therefore considered to be medium .

- 7.43. Overall, the Site is considered to be of medium landscape value. When combined with the susceptibility of the landscape (medium), the Site is considered to exhibit and medium landscape sensitivity.

8.0 POTENTIAL LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

Potential Effect on the Site's Landscape Resources

- 8.1. The construction of the Proposed Development would have a degree of adverse effects, but these would be for a temporary time period and would cease on completion of the construction phase. However, this effect would not be detrimental to the enjoyment and appreciation of the wider landscape, and should not, in and of itself, be a reason to raise an objection either by the Local Planning Authority or consultees.
- 8.2. The site would be changed from an individual arable field enclosed by linear native hedgerows with hedgerow trees, which is typical of the agricultural land within the Mease Lowlands Landscape Character Area, as well as the smaller No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area where there is a 'well-ordered agricultural landscape.....a network of minor roads and lanes typically bordered by wide grass verges, some with hedges.' Tree cover within this area is 'scattered small, regularly shaped game coverts and hedgerow trees provide little tree cover and the landscape is visually open', which is reflect of the open countryside outside of Warton village; especially between the village and Orton-the-Hill and the eastern edge of Tamworth (to the west).
- 8.3. The implementation of the proposed development would become part of the built settlement along the southwestern edge of the village, and the scheme would adopt similar characteristics of built form within the Site's context. The scheme would retain and bolster the existing field pattern and would not physically extend beyond these limits which are defined by the local road network within which the site is sandwiched.
- 8.4. The development would retain the general landform trend through the Site and so would still enable the perception of the typically gently rolling landform across the site from the west to the southeastern edge of the site, and the landform experienced along this southwestern periphery of the village, within which the scheme would be located.
- 8.5. The scheme would retain and bolster the existing hedgerows, and through a careful and considered landscape/green structure strategy create new soft landscape edges to the Site. These landscape areas would set development well within the site's boundary and has been deliberately restrained to retain extensive areas of the Site as open and undeveloped, and realise form green corridors through the scheme.
- 8.6. The intended scheme proposes to bolster existing hedgerows and trees to the Site's edges, and would re-establish weak hedgerow lines and plant new hedge lines and plant native trees, grassland and fruit tree orchard planting of local species. This will soften the existing residential edge along the eastern-southeastern Site boundary, which are currently experienced as raw and incongruous.
- 8.7. Through the reserved matters stage, native planting of local importance, and where practicable, local provenance would be advocated to promote the local landscape character. The landscape treatment would reflect that of the wider No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area, which is noted for its 'dense network of minor country roads and lanes, bordered by grass verges.....strong rectilinear hedge pattern.....tree cover confined to small regularly shaped game coverts and hedgerow trees.'

- 8.8. The masterplan of the site has been devised a new access from Church Road, nearest the village park. Along Church Road there are a number of large, detached dwellings. Masonry walls, timber close board fencing, formal pathways and private driveway, timber sheds and garages can be seen to these houses Church Road. The eastern edge of the site neighbours Red Marl Way, within which there are pedestrian footpaths, street lighting, front garden planting and close boarded fencing.
- 8.9. From a landscape and village character perspective, these domestic curtilages contribute to the village edge character and define a transition from open countryside (in a landscape sense) to the built core of the village.
- 8.10. The change in land use would result in a high magnitude of change on the sensory and perceptual dimensions of the landscape character. However, it is important to remember, this is not a reflection on the quality of the design for the new neighbourhood, but of the process that requires an assumption to be made that most people would see the visual and sensory change, from greenfield to development, as adverse.
- 8.11. It should be noted that such adverse effects would be necessary; indeed, it cannot be avoided if new residential developments are to be appropriately serviced with the necessary facilities. However, the magnitude of change across the site would be tempered by the following considerations:
- The development optimises the retention of the existing landform and be set back within the open space corridors within the wider Site area with strong tree lines which enclose the Site – especially through the Site and along its southern and western boundaries situated inside the local lane roadways.
 - The scheme is not experienced as prominent within views from the open countryside setting, especially when one considers the hillsides to the west and north of the site, as well as the influence of intervening built form within the village.
 - The scheme is designed to be of limited scale and density to integrate within the core of the Site area, retaining significant part of the site as new green corridors and spatial buffers for green infrastructure within which the intended built form would be integrated.
 - The scheme would retain and enhance areas of the existing green fields, including significant areas retained as open and landscaped with natural and semi-natural vegetation which has a native focus. These spaces would act as buffers to the proposed development and contribute to the greening up of the scheme to offset and reduce the current residential edge at Red Marl Way.
 - The central space of the scheme breaks up the perceived development mass from beyond the Site.
 - The proposed development would be consistent – in land use terms – with the neighbouring residential development overlooking the site from the east and southeast (Red Marl Way). This would not constitute a land use that is either un-neighbourly or incongruous in the settlement context. This is demonstrated by our field-based assessment (Section 5), whereby,

BLADE determined that the site have a minor Zone of Primary, seen on the approach into/out of the village primarily.

- 8.12. This existing and new landscape fabric would be appropriately maintained for longevity to conserve and enhance the local landscape character and facilitate bio-diversity improvements, retain the site's landform and rectilinear field pattern (a typical feature of the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area).
- 8.13. The focus of these measures is less about screening and filtering views, rather, the enhancement of the local landscape and habitat value, as well as the best integration of development at the Site. This is done through new landscaping and the conservation and enhancement of the local landscape character, and the creation of new planting of hedgerows and trees as part of the green infrastructure at the Site.

Construction Effects

- 8.14. Construction activities, movement of site traffic, lighting, noise, and sound would be present during the construction process. This would be carefully controlled by a conditioned construction method statement. Recommendations for protection of the retained trees and hedgerows, in accordance with relevant British Standards such as BS 5837: 2012, would ensure the rooting areas of the trees and hedgerows are not adversely affected by the construction process.
- 8.15. The construction stage is a temporary phase, and the effects generated through the buildings out of this new housing would cease after the development has been completed. The development proposed would change the character of the site from a green field and later the landscape fabric at the site.
- 8.16. The landscape of the site has been appraised to a medium landscape sensitivity to change, and a major/-moderate, adverse effect would result from constructing the scheme. However, this level of effect is temporary and not permanent.

Year 1 ('Initial Occupation') and Year 15 ('Residual Effect')

- 8.17. Following construction and the establishment of the landscape strategy, existing landscape fabric and new landscaping will be managed in accordance with an appropriate landscape management plan, or similar, to ensure the longevity of the green infrastructure as part of the development.
- 8.18. Apart from minor re-grading (for building footprints and attenuation ponds), the site will remain physically similar to the baseline and would not require extensive land remodelling. The development would result in a complete variance to the existing character of the site's ground cover. However, the development proposal has retained and integrated within the boundary hedgerow and trees and would not necessitate the amalgamation of the fields.

- 8.19. Additionally, the landscape mitigation measures integrated within the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan (Appendix BLA 4) would establish new landscape infrastructure across the wider site area enhancing existing weak fabric, enhancing existing hedgerow and tree planting and providing new tree planting and open space areas of semi-natural and natural green space through the scheme.
- 8.20. New tree planting and the establishment of green corridors through the site with elements of green and blue infrastructure will reinforce the perceived tree cover to break up the development mass and filter views of the proposed built form.
- 8.21. Proposed landscaping through the development would feature the provision of species-rich grassland to replace the previous arable land management, as well as establishing native structure planting, field margins, scrubland and areas of specimen tree and orchard planting with wildflower meadows. In combination, the foregoing aims to create a mosaic of landscape and habitat for amenity value, biodiversity as well as landscape mitigation measures to integrate the proposed development scenario, rather than providing extensive landscape buffers to otherwise screen a poorly located and badly designed scheme.
- 8.22. In the first year, the prevailing characteristic would be the new development, roads and lighting, whilst the proposed trees, ground cover and hedgerows would still be in relative infancy within a wider mature landscape setting which surrounds the site and encloses it. With the cessation of construction activities, the magnitude of change would reduce from substantial to moderate. This would yield a moderate adverse level of effect when combined with the medium sensitivity of the site.
- 8.23. By year 15, and the maturation of the landscape features, with tree and structure planting, as well as along the green corridors through the site, make an obvious contribution to the character of the site where they are able to grow more freely within the landscape buffer areas. This contributes to a reduction of impacts to slight, resulting in a moderate/minor adverse level of effect. The effect is permanent.

The Potential Effects on the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area

- 8.24. The Site is situated on the southwestern edge of the village and is overlooked by houses which neighbour the site's eastern edge, as well as a collection of large, detached dwellings along Church Road to the north.
- 8.25. It is judged that the land of the application site has a peri-urban location on the settlement edge of Warton, with this land being experienced inside extensive physical features, especially the site's hedgerows and trees. Beyond the immediate road network, there is a more expansive open countryside. This countryside is seen as typically 'visually open, mixed farmland located within a distinctive bowl landform', 'dense network of minor country roads and lanes, bordered by grass verges' and 'strong rectilinear hedge pattern.' Such features are noted in the published landscape character area for the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area (LCA 1).
- 8.26. The Site is an individual agricultural field with limited views outwards to the north and west due to rising landform which encloses intervisibility with the wider open countryside. The hedgerows and trees to Orton Road limit views southwards, and the extensive village built for to the east further encloses the site.

- 8.27. Whilst the site is experienced as open within its own boundaries, the scale of the field contrasts with the wider open countryside, as noted within the LPA's appraisal of the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area (LCA 1) with its 'shallow bowl landform of gently undulating low rounded hills.'
- 8.28. Church Road is not an unbreeched 'watershed' – development already lines the northern boundary of the road to create an established collection of large, detached dwellings with domestic curtilages aligned to this roadway. Additionally, the site is overlooked by the existing collection of residential dwellings at Red Marl Way.
- 8.29. In a landscape and village character sense, this built form, and the wider village environment which can be seen from within the site area, reinforces the peri-urban/village edge location. The site is experienced as part of a hinterland, and the transition between the village environment and the open countryside. This landscape character area is judged to be of moderate overall sensitivity to housing development. This is due to the ability of the landscape's topography and its enclosure (as aforementioned) to accommodate a collection of new housing within.
- 8.30. Given the nature of the scheme proposed, the character of the site's interior would change from a greenfield to that of a residential development. Such a change of landscape character should not be a detriment to the enjoyment and appreciation of the wider landscape, and should not, in and of itself, be a reason to raise an objection either by the Local Planning Authority or consultees.
- 8.31. The proposed development would retain and protect native, valuable landscape components where practicable including the trees and hedges to the boundaries. The proposal would make allowance for new tree planting to strengthen the boundary along all of the site's edges, as well as re-establish hedgerows currently degraded within the Site's interior and forming an extensive green corridor through the scheme buffering along the site's edge.
- 8.32. New native tree planting is proposed within the public open spaces and green corridors throughout the scheme with particular focus on the northern and western site areas, and the expansive green corridor with spaces also used for planting new community orchards (incorporating local fruit varieties) and forming green corridors for habitat creation and pedestrian friendly movement.
- 8.33. New street tree planting has been incorporated throughout the development parcel and ornamental planting to the plots themselves. The existing and new landscape fabric would be appropriately maintained for longevity to conserve and enhance the local landscape character and facilitate biodiversity improvements.
- 8.34. Outside of the confines of the Site, the area immediately surrounding the site would be subject to the greatest change to the defined host landscape character types. The site has an edge setting to a large village settlement and the predicted effect of the proposed scheme is expected to diminish considerably just a short distance into the surrounding area.
- 8.35. The effects on the immediate surrounding and the wider area are described as follows:

Construction Effects

- 8.36. In terms of the landscape character area outside of the site, construction activities would include the movement of site traffic, lighting, noise, and sound would be present during the construction process. In terms of direct effects, the influence of noise, dust and vibration would be predominantly experienced within the Site, with the Site's immediate boundaries restrict the effect of building out the scheme to within a localised, close range site.
- 8.37. Beyond this, the character of the Site would change from a green field to a residential development. The proposed development would introduce a variety of native, valuable soft landscape elements and features, which would positively contribute to the character of the area, as well as integrating green infrastructure into the overall scheme.
- 8.38. The Site's setting is considered to have a medium landscape sensitivity, and the magnitude of change would be high i.e., notable alteration to one or more key receptors/-characteristics of the baseline and additions re prominent conflicting elements. The resulting level of effects would be moderate, adverse during the Construction stage. This level of effect is not permanent and would diminish rapidly with distance from the site.

Year 1 ('Initial Occupation') and Year 15 ('Residual Effect')

- 8.39. Beyond the Site, across the wider open countryside settlement is mostly '*scattered farmsteads and nucleated hilltop villages (Austrey, Seckington, Newton Regis and Warton).....villages include both traditional vernacular buildings and more recent development, connected by a network of minor roads and lanes typically bordered by wide grass verges, some with hedges.*' Consequently, the Site is experienced as part of a hinterland, whereby there is a transition from open countryside (in a landscape sense) to the built edge of Warton on this village edge location; within which, traditional and modern development forms part of the character to the village settlements such as Warton.
- 8.40. Given the development proposals, the Site will be changed from an arable field to become part of the built settlement, adopting similar characteristics of built form within the Site's immediate context. This new built form would be of similar or less scale and height as the surrounding settlement edge and would be set within cells defined by hedgerow lines, tree planting and natural landscaping, as well as and wider buffer landscape space, orchard and tree planting to create a layered arrangement of green infrastructure.
- 8.41. Careful street alignment and the considered siting of the new public open spaces and green corridors will maintain a strong visual and sensory link with the Site's village edge setting. The existing boundary hedgerows and trees will be retained, buffered, strengthened and appropriately managed for longevity. Additional tree planting around and within the proposed development will add to the landscape fabric and biodiversity value.
- 8.42. At Year 1, the proposed development will introduce new built residential development changing the perceptual and sensory characteristics of this part of the host landscape from green field to that of settled, residential development at this peri-urban village edge.

- 8.43. Whilst the scheme has been designed to be an open scheme with extensive public open space and green infrastructure with new development deliberately restrained, the character of the scheme at Year1 would be that of new housing with new roads and housing. Whilst the non-developed part of the site would be extensive and would remain open, buffer enhancement planting and new planting would be too juvenile to substantially alter the landscape effect from the Construction Stage by Year 1.
- 8.44. This would lead to a moderate, adverse effect at Year 1 where neighboring the site within its receiving environment, but this level of effect would diminish rapidly with distance from the site, and the establishment and maturation of new landscaping.
- 8.45. By Year 15, the residual effect on this landscape type would be influenced extensively by the establishment and maturation of new landscape fabric at the site. The growth of new hedgerows and trees, the enhancement of, and ongoing management of existing hedgerows and trees and encouragement of species diversity through gapping up, and the maturation of tree groups, significant tree and orchard planting is expected to strengthen the contribution these features make to the character of this part of the host landscape character area.
- 8.46. This would lead to a low magnitude of change, which when combined with the medium overall sensitivity (in the worst-case scenario), would reduce the level of effect to minor adverse and permanent. There would however be an incremental reduction in the level of effect as these features – the trees in particular – mature and make a more noticeable contribution to local landscape character. Consequently, this level of effect would diminish even further with distance from the site. These effects are residual and permanent and diminish rapidly with distance from the Site.

9.0 POTENTIAL VISUAL EFFECTS

Potential Effects on Visual Amenity

- 9.1. An assessment of effects on each representative viewpoint carried forward to this analysis has been undertaken, and a summary of the result contained in Table BLA 9.1; and the representative viewpoints are contained in Appendix BLA 5.
- 9.2. This assessment was undertaken in late February 2025 (during winter-time conditions) and demonstrate the worst case scenario. The selection of these viewpoints was agreed with the Local Planning Authority in advance of the assessment; see the final Appendix of this LVA.

Table BLA 9.1 - Summary of Visual Effects on Representative Viewpoints (late February 2025/Wintertime conditions)

View-point	Location	Visual Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Level of Effect
1	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: 247/AE2/1) passing along the northern edge of Warton village through open countryside	Open countryside, village edge setting. PRoW users would have high to medium expectation of visual amenity. Route walked to and from the village to the open countryside. Route not in a National landscape. High susceptibility to change High visual sensitivity	Medium (Con) Low (Yr1) Negligible (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate/minor, adverse Minor, adverse
2	View from Church Road locally to the site situated to the northeast	Village setting heading into and out of a settlement. Non-promoted route/minor B road used for travelling between settlements. Users would not have a high expectation of visual amenity. Medium susceptibility to change Medium visual sensitivity	High (Con) Medium (Yr1) Low (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate/minor, adverse Minor, adverse
3	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: 247//AE14/1) passing through the northern village edge of Warton	Village setting. PRoW users passing between houses and car parking courtyards with garages. PRoW users would have a reduced expectation of visual amenity. Route not in a National landscape. Medium susceptibility to change Medium to High visual sensitivity	Medium (Con) Low (Yr1) Negligible (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate/minor, adverse Minor, adverse
4	View from Warton Lane as this minor B road approaches the northern edge of Warton village	Open countryside, non-promoted route/minor B road used for travelling between settlements. Users would not have a high expectation of visual amenity. Medium susceptibility to change Medium visual sensitivity	Negligible (Con) Indiscernible (Yr1) Indiscernible (Yr15)	Minor/-negligible, adverse Imperceptible Imperceptible
5	View from Orton Lane as this minor B road approaches the outlying village of Austrey to the northeast looking across open countryside to Warton	Open countryside, non-promoted route/minor B road used for travelling between settlements. Users would not have a high expectation of visual amenity. Medium susceptibility to change Medium visual sensitivity	Low (Con) Negligible (Yr1) Indiscernible (Yr15)	Minor, adverse Minor/-negligible, adverse Imperceptible

6	View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: T3a/1) situated to the east of Warton passing through open countryside from Orton-on-the-Hill	Open countryside setting. PRow users would have high expectation of visual amenity. Route walked through open countryside between nucleated settlements. Route not in a National landscape. High susceptibility to change High visual sensitivity	Negligible (Con) Negligible (Yr1) Indiscernible (Yr15)	Minor, adverse Minor, adverse Imperceptible
7	View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: T3a/1) situated on elevated landform at Orton-on-the-Hill to the east of Warton village	Open countryside setting. PRow users would have high expectation of visual amenity. Route walked through open countryside between nucleated settlements. Route not in a National landscape. High susceptibility to change High visual sensitivity	Medium (Con) Low (Yr1) Negligible (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate/-minor, adverse Minor, adverse
8	View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: T3/1) situated to the east of Warton village	Open countryside setting. PRow users would have high expectation of visual amenity. Route walked through open countryside between nucleated settlements. Route not in a National landscape. High susceptibility to change High visual sensitivity	Medium (Con) Low (Yr1) Negligible (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate/-minor, adverse Minor, adverse
9	View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: T4/5) situated to the east of Warton village	Open countryside setting. PRow users would have high expectation of visual amenity. Route walked through open countryside between nucleated settlements. Route not in a National landscape. High susceptibility to change High visual sensitivity	Medium (Con) Low (Yr1) Negligible (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate/-minor, adverse Minor, adverse
10	View from Orton Lane as this minor B road on the eastern outskirts of Warton village	Open countryside, non-promoted route/minor B road used for travelling between settlements. Users would not have a high expectation of visual amenity. Medium susceptibility to change Medium visual sensitivity	Negligible (Con) Negligible (Yr1) Indiscernible (Yr15)	Minor/-negligible, adverse Minor/-negligible, adverse Imperceptible
11	View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) passing through open countryside to the south of Warton village	Village edge setting. PRow users would have high expectation of visual amenity. Route walked passes to and from Warton. Route not in a National landscape. High susceptibility to change High visual sensitivity	Medium (Con) Low (Yr1) Negligible (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate/-minor, adverse Minor, adverse

12	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) passing through open countryside to the west of Warton village	Open countryside setting. PRoW users would have high expectation of visual amenity. Route walked through open countryside between nucleated settlements. Route not in a National landscape. High susceptibility to change High visual sensitivity	Negligible (Con) Indiscernible (Yr1) Indiscernible (Yr15)	Minor, adverse Imperceptible Imperceptible
13	View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) approaching the junction of Church Road and Orton Road to the west of Warton village	Village edge setting. PRoW users would have high expectation of visual amenity. Route walked passes to and from Warton. Route not in a National landscape. High susceptibility to change High visual sensitivity	Medium (Con) Medium (Yr1) Low (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate, adverse Moderate/minor, adverse
14	View from Church Road looking northwest along its route on the outskirts of Warton village	Village setting heading into and out of a settlement. Non-promoted route/minor B road used for travelling between settlements. Users would not have a high expectation of visual amenity. Medium susceptibility to change Medium visual sensitivity	High (Con) High (Yr1) Medium (Yr15)	Moderate, adverse Moderate, adverse Moderate/minor, adverse

Close Range Views

- 9.3. For motorists and pedestrians using Orton Road on the approach to the Site from the east and west and adjacent to the northern site boundary along Church Road, there is likely to be a moderate to minor, adverse effects that would be experienced during the construction phase. This is because of noise and vibration. These road users would have partial views over boundary vegetation, and would see the movement of plant, machinery and workforce activities. This level of effect would be temporary due to the temporary nature of the construction phase.
- 9.4. As a result of the proposed development, views of the site would change to include the upper portions of dwellings within the site although these would be set back from these relative edges to the north, south and west respectively.
- 9.5. Views will be fleeting for motorists travelling along the road and will be experienced within the context of the existing residential dwellings along the southwestern to southeastern edge of the village, which in later years has changed to not be perceived as a linear settlement (running north to south along Maypole Road).
- 9.6. At Year 1, the Proposed Development will result in minor, adverse effects. By Year 15, as the proposed landscaping matures, the extensive tree and landscape planting within the green buffers of the site would soften views of the proposed development. The resulting level of effect would be minor,

adverse to negligible for users of the roads given their existing context and the nature of the fleeting views.

- 9.7. As demonstrated by Viewpoint 12, the site is not currently seen by PRoW users. Given the extensive stand-offs to the scheme it is likely that the scheme would fundamentally alter the baseline views.
- 9.8. There is likely to be a moderate to minor, adverse effects experienced during the construction phase due to noise and partial views over boundary vegetation of movement of plant at close range. This level of effect would be temporary and cease once the scheme is built out. However, by Year 15, the residual effect is likely to minor, adverse if the scheme is discernible when passing along this PRoW enclosed by hedgerows and trees.
- 9.9. For Viewpoints 1, 2 and 3, the effect of the intervening landform, and the built form along Church Road are likely to substantially mitigate the change to the view from the scheme.
- 9.10. For Viewpoint 1, it is likely that the collection of new housing is likely to alter the perception of existing rooflines on the rising land. Given the effect of matured landscape buffer planting within the green infrastructure and setting development back from the northern site edge, the residual effect of the scheme would be minor, adverse. This level of effect would diminish rapidly with distance from the village as PRoW progress out into the wider open countryside; see Viewpoint 4.
- 9.11. For the PRoW users travelling around the settlement edge, a similar scenario is likely to occur; see Viewpoint 2 and 3. In these situations, the scheme is likely to be mitigated through its extensive offsets from Church Road, and the quantum of new built form limited.
- 9.12. At Year 1, the proposed dwellings would be visible where gaps in the vegetation along the route allow for glimpsed views. The existing juvenile vegetation along the north-eastern portion of the site is expected to have an increased level of filtering effect by the time of completion.
- 9.13. In these situations, the village setting is experienced in combination with these views, and the addition of the new built form would not fundamentally later the baseline view. The residual effect on PRoW users would be Minor, adverse and diminishing rapidly distance because of the wooded edge to the north of Warton and the effect of intervening landform.
- 9.14. For PRoW users travelling to and from the south of the village (see Viewpoint 11) , there would be a moderate, adverse effect during the construction phase. The effect of noise, dust, vibration and the movement of plant and construction activities would be seen from close range. This level of effect would be temporary. By Year 15, as the tree planting continues to mature, the views of the new built form would be further broken up and softened resulting in minor, adverse effects.

Residential Dwellings

- 9.15. Given our field based assessment, it is considered that the construction stage would lead to moderate, adverse effects to the properties near the Site due to noise, dust and vibration, movement of plant, machinery, deliveries and general construction activities. This is not a permanent effect and would cease on the completion of this short-term construction stage.

- 9.16. Following completion of the construction phase at Year 1, the scheme would be experienced as a new development forming an extension to the existing residential built edge of Warton, and seen against the wider village's residential development. For instance; Red Marl Way and Church Road.
- 9.17. At this stage, the proposed landscape strategy would be juvenile. Existing trees to Site boundaries would be retained offering some filtering effect to views of the proposed development from day 1 for properties adjacent to the Site.
- 9.18. The development would not be wholly incongruous given the wider settled context of the Site and that the proposed dwellings would be in keeping with the local built character in terms of form, scale and materials. The resulting level of effect at year 1 will be moderate to minor adverse.
- 9.19. By Year 15, the long term visual effect would be reduced following the weathering of materials and maturation of the landscape strategy which includes the enhancement of the existing boundaries by creating new landscaped edges where they do not currently exist as well as the maturation of the existing recent tree planting on site. Views of the proposed development would be filtered, reducing the visual intrusion of the proposed dwellings, assimilating them further into the settled context.

10.0 SUMMARY

10.1. As can be seen, this is a site with relatively few intrinsic landscape constraints, especially given its proximity to the neighbouring village edge:

- The site is not designated at a local or national level for its landscape or scenic qualities. No such designation falls within 5km of the site.
- Through BLADE's own site-specific assessment, it is considered that the site does not qualify as a Valued Landscape.
- There is no Open Access Land within the site or along its boundaries. There are no Public Rights of Way crossing the site and no public access onto the site indicating that it does not have a community function for access.
- There are no Veteran trees within the site or affecting its boundaries.
- There are no listed buildings on the site.
- The site is not located within any conservation area.
- No part of the site lies within or close to any parks or gardens listed on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest.
- The landscape fabric has been impoverished because of several decades of intensive arable farming. Whilst there are several mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees, neither the condition of the site, or its character, are unique or rare locally.

Physical and Visual Containment

10.2. The main determinants of visibility to the site can be summarised as follows:

- BLADE finds the Zone of Primary Visibility to be extensively limited to the immediate setting of the Site, the adjacent urban setting, along the main route into the village from limited areas of elevated landform to the east.
- Generally, the site is not seen wholesale, and is not prominent in views, seen against the wider raising landform at Stiper's Hill (west) and landform around Donative Farm, up to circa 115m AOD.
- The Site is most likely to be seen from its immediate setting from the adjacent park the residential dwellings which in combination bound the site's eastern edge to the wider village.
- The landform to the north and north east of the site restricts seeing the site, often with the site not seen wholesale, and often with built form along Church Road being influencing one's ability to locate the site as there are no elevated vantage points to see the site from to the north.

- There is scope to see part of the site from the open countryside to the east-southeast on elevated landform (Orton Road around Orton-on-the-Hill) and along the approach to the village from the south along the roadway (Barn End Road). In both these situations, where public footpaths pass through open countryside there is scope to see the western periphery of the site area (where land is highest within the site). This is due to the elevated landform around Orton Lane, or the large field pattern south of the site area.

- 10.3. On this basis, the principal messages in terms of the site's intrinsic suitability to accommodate a new residential development can thus be summarised as follows:

The Character of the Site and its Landscape Fabric

- 10.4. The site is made up of an individual field managed for arable crop production. There are areas of grassland, scrub and native trees. The Site consists of a range of habitats including scrub, native hedgerow and scattered hedgerow trees, but the majority of the Site is managed for arable crop production. There are extensive native hedgerow trees within the field boundaries, but no trees within the site's interior. There are no Veteran trees within the site, or within its influence. Hedgerows are of native species commonly found locally to the Site.
- 10.5. The concept of landscape embraces more than simply 'what we see'. GLVIA "embraces this broad interpretation of what landscape means and uses it throughout" (GLVIA version 3, paragraph 2.3). Matters such as the quality and condition of the site's fabric of trees/vegetation, its social value, intactness and representativeness (of its host landscape type) are all relevant to judgments about both landscape value and the significance of landscape change.
- 10.6. It is relevant to highlight again that this is a piece of land that is not designated for its landscape or scenic value, nor has it been found to contain landscape features, arboricultural or ecological assets sufficient to materially constrain or preclude creative masterplanning. The effect of the proposals on the fabric and GI of the area – positive as well as negative - are intrinsic to proper assessment of the overall effects on the landscape.

Published Landscape Character Assessment

- 10.7. Despite being prepared and published some 15 years ago, the North Warwickshire Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment remains the LPA's most recent published landscape character assessment. This assessment has been undertaken at a Borough level and provides analysis of the broad areas which constitute the landscape of this local area.
- 10.8. Stage One of this published assessment finds the site within the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area. The typical landscape features include a 'well-ordered agricultural landscape.....a network of minor roads and lanes typically bordered by wide grass verges, some with hedges.' Tree cover within this area is 'scattered small, regularly shaped game coverts and hedgerow trees provide little tree cover and the landscape is visually open'.

- 10.9. As demonstrated in Section 7 and analysis provided within Table BLA 7.1, the Site contains some features consistent with the published analysis of the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands Landscape Character Area and the Site demonstrates a degree of representativeness of these key features, the site is overlooked by its proximity to Red Marl Way and the main vehicle route passing between Warton and Orton-on-the-Hill (east) and Tamworth (west).
- 10.10. Its visual and sensory character is affected by the adjacent urbanising influences of night-time light, noise and movement, rendering it 'less intact' in landscape terms than an identical parcel of land further from the village area because its visual and sensory character is affected by its situational context. These factors erode the tranquillity of the site intactness relative to the wider landscape character area.

Site Location

- 10.11. Church Road is not an unbreeched 'watershed' – development already lines the northern boundary of the road to create an established collection of large, detached dwellings with domestic curtilages aligned to this roadway. Additionally, the site is overlooked by the existing collection of residential dwellings at Red Marl Way and reinforces the peri-urban/village edge location.
- 10.12. The site is enclosed by this residential development, its wider robust field hedge lines, as well as existing residential development, with rising landform to the north and west, which further reinforces the site's village edge position – rather than open countryside's outside of the village built influence. These physical features influence the visual envelope (or Zone of Primary Visibility) for the land. Through our field-based assessment, this ZPV has been demonstrated to be limited.

Masterplanning Proposals

- 10.13. The scheme clearly seeks to bind the new development in urban design terms with the village of Warton using Church Road to realise a new access point. This is to be located so as to be found closest to the existing village related land uses such as the Church and community park, rather than being situated further to the west.
- 10.14. The recently built houses along the southwester village edge are experienced quite abruptly. The proposed scheme would afford a beneficial effect in setting development within a layers of green infrastructure. New built form would not be so exposed at the site as per the existing situation, and new homes would be located set well within the site within extensive open space and tree planting. This represents a more appropriate long-term interface between the built up village area and the surrounding countryside.
- 10.15. This is a very open development when considered as a whole. Development is concentrated where it is most appropriate in environmental terms to do so, and some 50% or more of the overall 6.37 Hectares site is proposed for forms of open space use. This open space will include natural/semi-natural landscapes, habitat creation and new landscaping to conserve and enhance typical ,landscape features of the host landscape character area.
- 10.16. Existing landscape features are retained and integrated wherever possible – including significant proportion of the existing hedgerow boundaries and hedgerow trees. This reflects the careful and considerate attention given to the retention of existing trees through the masterplanning process.

- 10.17. A significant contribution to local Green Infrastructure in the form of increased tree cover, habitats and public access is a feature of the proposals – reflecting the landscape management guidelines as prescribed within the County Council and District Council’s landscape character assessments.
- 10.18. The existing development at Red Marl Way creates a village edge, but the route of Church Road (and its junction with Orton Road) provide a strong and logical means to bind new development within, and further landscape planting to create a strong defensible edge to the village.
- 10.19. Church Road is not an unbreeched ‘watershed’ – development already lines the northern boundary of the road to create an established collection of large, detached dwellings with domestic curtilages aligned to this roadway. This is merely a precedent and pattern the development proposals continue by creating a new and attractive streetscape through the retention of and new landscape fabric within the site, and by not extracting long sections of field hedgerow along the site’s northern boundary.

The Site’s Landscape Value

- 10.20. The site’s landscape value can be considered in a number of different ways, including its planning status in landscape terms, the value attributed to it in this appraisal, and at a local level.
- 10.21. ***Intrinsic Landscape Value in the overall planning balance:*** In terms of the LCT’s intrinsic value, the site has no designatory status in landscape terms. While all landscapes have some intrinsic value, as recognised by the NPPF para 187(b), the site does not have an elevated value above the rest of the open countryside surrounding the Warton.
- 10.22. ***Landscape Value in terms of this LVA:*** Through the undertaking of our own site-specific assessment, BLADE attributes ‘medium’ sensitivity to the site, as well as the wider host landscape character area.
- 10.23. Medium sensitivity is defined as undesignated countryside and landscape features; some distinctive landscape characteristics and few landscape detractors, and the site is no more, or less, sensitive than any other open countryside surrounding Warton village.
- 10.24. The land proposed for development occupies an individual field, which has a lesser tranquillity than some of the agricultural fields surrounding the village. The effect of traffic movement along Orton Road and Church Road, as well as the adjoining residential dwelling and community park, in turn affects sensitivity to change.
- 10.25. ***Local Factors influencing Landscape Value:*** Within the context of its being undesignated landscape which does not meet the ‘valued landscape tests’ of para 187 (a), there are nonetheless local considerations that influence its local value.
- 10.26. The site offers attractive views over open countryside to the south of Orton Road and across to the existing village edge at Red Marl Way. These views are no doubt locally valued. However, the site contains no public rights of way and no open access land. The proposed development will deliver enhanced access to open, naturally landscaped spaces not currently available to the local population, so is, on balance, an enhancement to local landscape value which does carry weight.

- 10.27. The opportunity to experience open views of the adjacent farmland would not be wholly extinguished; rather relocated since the proposals include a site wider green infrastructure with public open spaces and public access through.

Landscape Enhancements Mitigation Measures

- 10.28. The proposed site masterplan has been developed iteratively through the undertaking of this Landscape Visual Appraisal, and has iteratively guided the extent and height of new built form being proposed.
- 10.29. This is a very open development when considered as a whole. Development is concentrated where it is most appropriate in environmental terms to do so, while some 50% of the overall 6.37 Hectares is proposed for some form of open space use, including natural/semi-natural landscapes, habitat creation and wider landscape areas which bolster and buffer the site's relatively contained nature, and forming a better interface with dwellings along Red Marl Close.
- 10.30. The Proposed Development aims to offset and reduce the effect of the application proposal through deliberately limiting development within the core of the scheme. Our field based assessment work identified that the western periphery of the site area is generally the most one sees of the site from the east and south of Warton village.
- 10.31. From these observations, masterplanning measure enabled extensive buffers to development to set within the scheme; these include:
- North-Northwest - Approximate buffer depth: up to circa 25 metres positioning new built form up to circa 2 metres.
 - West-Southwest - Approximate buffer depth: up to circa 75 meters positioning new built form up to circa 5 metres lower than the southwestern edge.
- 10.32. It is worth noting that through the implementation of these measures, built form within the site is anticipated to be no greater than 85m AOD in its FFL. This is like the circumstances found within the village. The main route through the village is Austrey Road/Maypole Road/Little Warton Road, which in combination, run north to south through the village.
- 10.33. Existing development along this route is predominantly two storey, and most of this built form is situated relative to the height of the site i.e., circa 83m AOD to 90m AOD, with further two storey built form situated along the edge of the village including Barn End Road circa 77m AOD to 84m AOD.
- 10.34. Further to this, the masterplan allows for retaining and bolstering the existing features and enhancing with new landscaping. Specifically, measure aim to o preserve and enhance the existing character of the roadways into the village along Church Road and passing the village edge along Orton Road. This is aided by deliberately setting new built form into site setting back as follows:
- Northern edge: circa 15 metres and up to 25 metres in depth.
 - Southern edge to Orton road: circa 15 metres and up to 50 metres in depth.

- Western edge: up to 75 metres in depth.

10.35. This is reflective of the published landscape management guidance for the host landscape character area, the No Man's Heath to Warton – Lowlands (Landscape Character Area 1), which overall aims to 'conserve and strengthen the rural character and dispersed nucleated settlement pattern of this agricultural landscape', and amongst other measures, seeks to ensure:

- *'Conserve the historic field pattern, with priority given to restoring and strengthening primary hedge lines including those alongside roads;*
- *Manage hedgerows to enhance the field pattern by planting up gaps, allow hedges to grow by reducing cut rotation intervals to 3 yearly intervals for wildlife benefits;*
- *Enhance tree cover through small scale planting of broadleaved coverts and woods in keeping with geometric pattern of hedged fields and visually open character;*
- *Encourage natural regeneration of trees and vegetation alongside watercourses and promote small areas of wetland planting in areas currently lacking in habitats.'*

10.36. Additionally, in the current situation the recent housing development to the southeastern edge of the site has created a raw village edge. This is detrimental to the approach to the village, for which a sensitively master planned scheme can establish measures of offset and overcome. Additionally, the effect of circa 50% of the site (by area) being undeveloped and utilised as open land would contain public open spaces, semi-natural and natural landscaping. This is not considered to be harmful to the views from the open countryside beyond the village.

11.0 CONCLUSION

- 11.1. BLADE Landscape Architects Limited was commissioned on behalf of Richborough, Michael Ensor Caton and Andrew Norman Caton to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal for a new residential development on land situated off Orton Road, Warton, North Warwickshire, B79 0JZ. This site area measures circa 6.37 Hectares in total and is currently managed as agricultural land.
- 11.2. The Applicant is submitting an outline planning application for the construction of up to 110 dwellings, with access, landscaping, sustainable drainage features, and associated infrastructure. All matters are reserved except for primary vehicular access from Church Road; see Appendix BLA 2 of this LVA.
- 11.3. The site is situated on the southwestern edge of the village. The development of the site would be in keeping with, or potentially better than, the adjoining development at Red Marl Way adjoining the site's eastern and southeastern boundary.
- 11.4. The scheme would continue a relatively recent trend in terms of the evolution of the village onto landscape of a similar character to that which existed before the latter day and established development around the southwestern edge of the village.
- 11.5. There is no landscape 'watersheds' here - no watercourses or topographic features separating Warton from the site to preclude the successful integration of the scheme within the adjacent village edge land uses and built form. In neither a topographic, landscape character or a spatial sense, does the site appear in conflict with established patterns of development, nor does it threaten coalescence with neighbouring settlements;. Given this, the scheme is unlikely to result in a significant change to the character of the wider landscape.
- 11.6. For the reasons amplified within this appraisal – site's peri-urban context on the village edge and the qualities of the new landscape proposed - the site is not intrinsically unsuited to accommodate new residential development should the needs of the current planning system so dictate. Indeed, in landscape terms, it is entirely well suited to such a purpose, subject of course to appropriate design and sensitive mitigation measures. Given this, I judge that there are no matters of such over-riding landscape importance that they outweigh the logic and suitability of this site.
- 11.7. As GLVIA reminds us, the landscape context for this proposal is not simply the open agricultural land of the site; it includes the peri-urban landscape of Warton along its southwestern edge, and the wider built context of the village, which provides the setting for this proposal.
- 11.8. So while we are all inclined to value openness and 'naturalness' over built form (which we presume harmful where it replaces the former), that inclination should not be a blindfold to the prospects for its' re-use in a different form which is sometimes a necessary and inevitable pressure on the landscape resource, subject of course to appropriately sensitive design.
- 11.9. With consideration of the points raised by the LPA in their Pre-Application Response, I make the following points and draw upon the evidence base of this LVA to demonstrate (N.B. Emphasis added by BLADE through underlining):

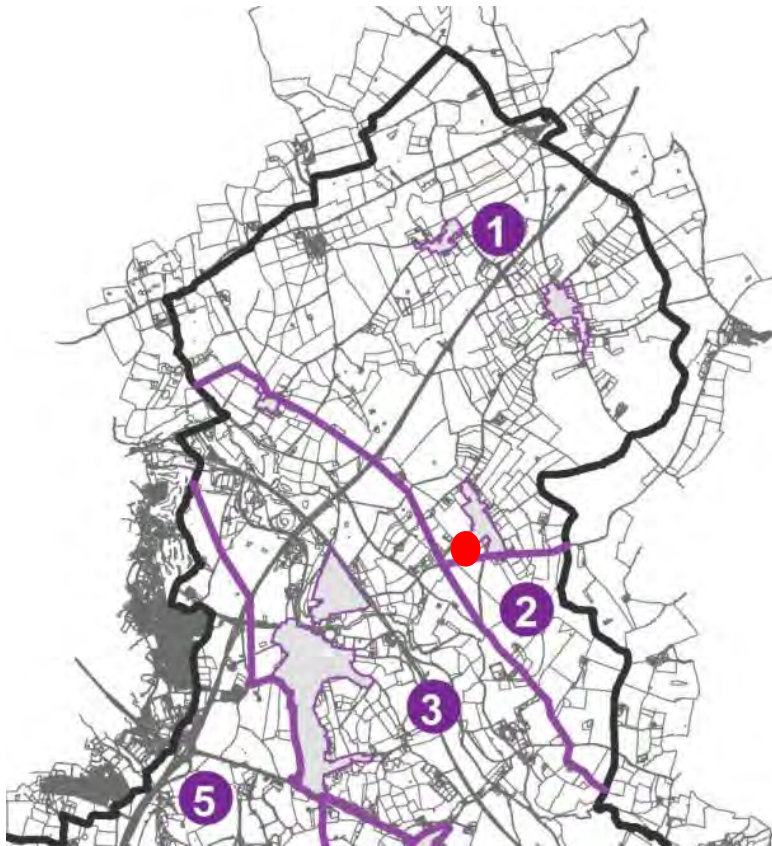
'From discussions we have already had, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment it to be submitted with the application and we have had a dialogue with your technical team undertaking the assessment as to where the visual points should be.

Warton, generally, can be described as nucleated, though there is a distinct linear form with the majority of built development located along the frontage to Austrey Road with a number of cul-de-sacs coming off on each side. The application site is within the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area. This describes a mixed open agricultural landscape with a scattering of small red brick nucleated hill-top villages of which Warton is an example. The Assessment identifies the need to conserve and strengthen the rural character and dispersed settlement pattern and recommends that new developments should reinforce the existing settlement pattern of the existing villages.'

The likely view would be that the proposal would introduce an appendage of new built development and would increase the intensity of built form, at odds with the general linear pattern.....'

- 11.10. The evidence base makes it clear that the village of Warton is not physically and perceptually connected to wider settlements, particularly the town Tamworth to the west, or the village of Polesworth interlying between the two settlements; this is demonstrated through Viewpoint 1,7,8,9 and 11 (see Appendix BLA 5).
- 11.11. Additionally, as demonstrated through the plotted Zone of Theoretical Visibility (Appendix BLA 3), there would be no discernibility of the Applicant's development from Polesworth because of intervening landform; see Viewpoint 1,4,5, 12 and 13 (Appendix BLA 5).
- 11.12. Further to this, and demonstrated by Viewpoint 5 to the northeast, as well as well as Viewpoint 11 and 12, the village would retain its nucleated character within the wider open countryside surrounding the village. Specifically in relation to the host landscape, the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area, there would be a limited effect from the proposed scheme, if not imperceptible.
- 11.13. The quantum of the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area is demonstrated with Section 7, Image BLA 7.2 above, and this has been replicated below for brevity:

Image BLA 7.2: Extract from the North Warwickshire Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment (2010), Part One, Figure 11 entitled Landscape Character Area. N.B. BLADE was marked the approximate location of the Site with a solid red circle



- 11.14. As demonstrated by Viewpoint 5 and 6, there would be an imperceptible effect of the scheme across the wider landscape character area. These two viewpoints were examined from PRoW running through the open countryside of the landscape character area (high susceptibility to change/high visual sensitivity).

- 11.15. Closer to the village, at Viewpoint 4 (northeast) and Viewpoint 10 (east) the long term effect of the scheme would be similarly imperceptible (despite being closer to the village). Viewpoint 1,2 and 3 pass through the village edge of Warton and afford views across the village area, whilst still having a broad appreciation of the open countryside setting to Warton. In these views, the scheme would lead to a Minor, Adverse effect.

- 11.16. As demonstrated above, whilst the proposed change to the scheme would be discernible, this change would only be experienced in the area immediately surrounding the village, and not the wider open countryside of the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area. The discernibility of the proposed scheme is likely to expediently reduce with distance away from the village edge because of landform, landscape fabric and the wider influence of village related built form.

- 11.17. This is similarly reflected by the examined landscape effects (indirect), which has identified a Minor, adverse effect on the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area. Beyond circa 0.75km, this level of effect would diminish rapidly from the site's location to an imperceptible level of effect.

11.18. Given the foregoing, I judge that the proposed scheme would not lead to substantial effects on the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area and would not fundamentally alter the nucleated characteristic of settlement within this landscape.

11.19. In relation to village character, I make the following points and draw upon the evidence base of this LVA to demonstrate (N.B. Empasis added by BLADE through underlining):

'In this instance, the red line boundary is not directly adjacent to the Warton Development boundary on any of the sides of the development. The site is directly adjacent to the Bellway 'Cornfields' development on the eastern edge. However, given the development would not be directly adjacent to the development boundary, it would be regarded as expansion of Warton into the open countryside, which would be a disproportionate addition and not favourable. Development of the site would result in an appendage to the development boundary of what is a fairly linear settlement. The development would therefore be at odds with this and would have the biggest impact from a landscape point of view.'

11.20. It is worthwhile noting, that the site's boundary is continuous with the LPA's settlement boundary for Warton.

11.21. Additionally, I judge the settlement of Warton to be neither a 'wayside' settlement, and in its current day form, it is not a distinctly linear settlement. Whilst, viewing a landscape from aerial photographs may lead to an interpretation of the village as being linear, GLVIA version 3 reminds us that the landscape is not to be experienced in a binary fashion.

11.22. In recent years, there has been new development permitted to the southern half of the village. These developments include the expansion of the village with new homes to the southeast along Orton Road, new development beyond the Fox and Dogs pub, south of Orton Road, as well as the new homes built out along Red Marl Way, and streets thereof. Prior to this, development has been implemented running east to west from Maypole Road along Ivycroft Road and The His (development likely to have been prior to the 2000's).

11.23. I acknowledge, that linear from, which the LPA refer. However, this would have once been prevailing at the village, and in current day, this pattern has now diminished with the southern half of the village having a more 'development in depth' characteristic.

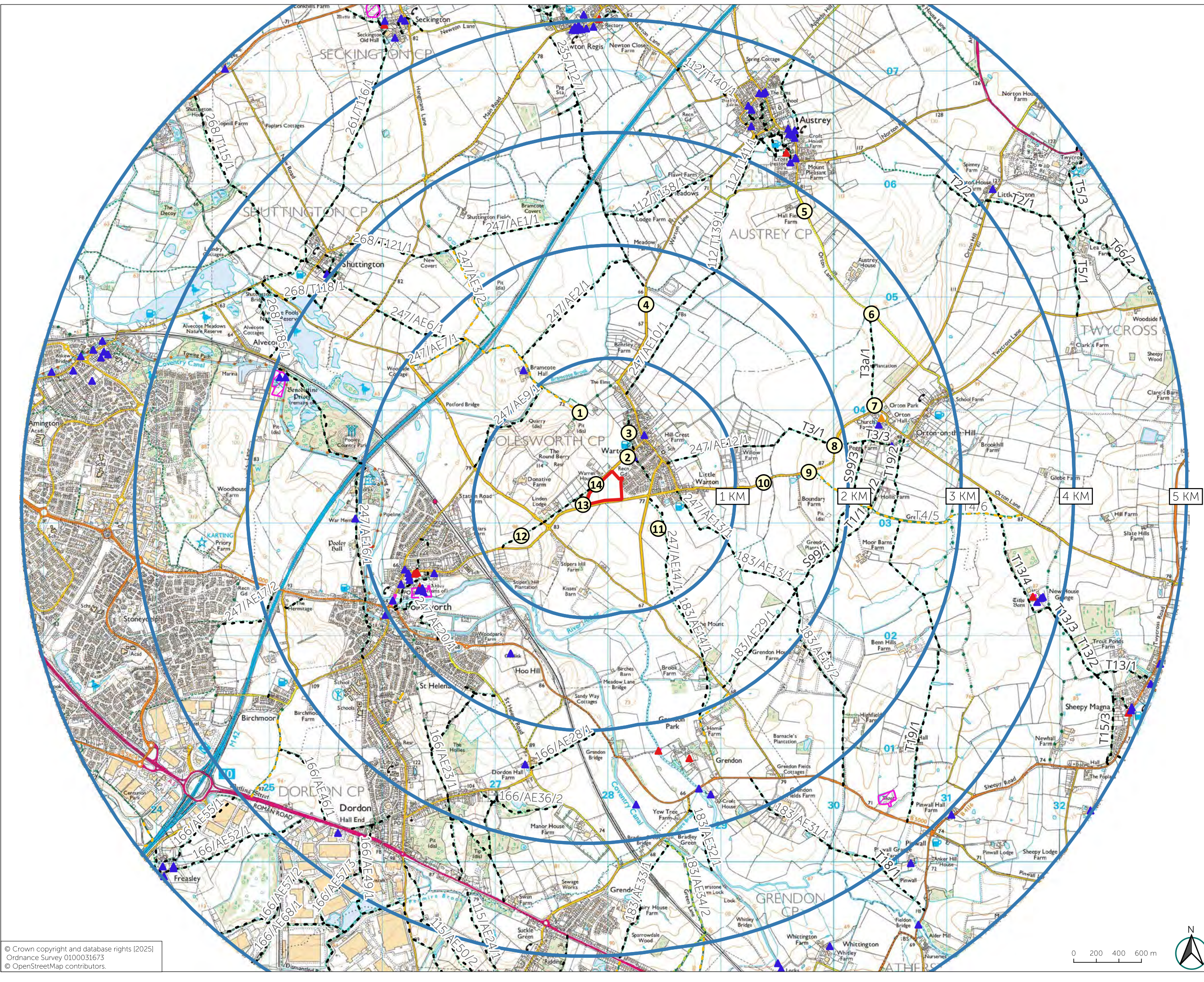
11.24. As demonstrated above, the scheme is not likely to lead to coalescence or ribbon development to merge (physically or perceptually) Warton with outlying villages, and the scheme would preserve the nucleated character of the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area.

11.25. From a landscape and village character perspective, the domestic curtilages (Red Marl Way) contribute to the village character and are perceived as part of the village. Additionally, Church Road is not an unbreeched 'watershed' – development already lines the northern boundary of the road to create an established collection of large, detached dwellings with domestic curtilages aligned to this roadway.

- 11.26. In combination, these features help to define a perceived transition from open countryside (in a landscape sense) to the built core of the village. A common theme to the dwellings along Church Road which deliver the strong building line, is the roadside walls, grass verges and hedgerows, as well as the vegetated verges (along the southern edge of Church Road).
- 11.27. This is a characteristic which would not be interrupted by the proposed scheme. The new dwellings as proposed would not occupy a significant roadside frontage (only the width of the access into the scheme). The proposed landscaping scheme retains and bolsters the existing landscape fabric as well as provide extensive offset to development to integrate the scheme into the site with extensive green infrastructure.
- 11.28. What is clear is the proposed scheme is within a part of the village which:
- Has a long history of built development (along Church Road and around the Church).
 - Has much recent development (Red Marl Way), as well as more latter day development and period properties.
 - Includes large dwellings in large plots with an obvious residential curtilage along Church Road running westwards from Maypole Way.
- 11.29. An historical association with the village is another indicator of what is and what is not part of the village. The Church Road public park adjoins the site's northeast-eastern edge (a public open space dating back more than 25 years) and the Holy Trinity Church and its associated burial ground is situated within 150 metres of the site. By any reasonable judgement, these land uses would be considered 'part of the village'.
- 11.30. It is clear that the village has grown to the southeast and southwest, so that the Church and its burial ground, and the public open space are no longer peripheral to the main route through the village (Maypole Way).
- 11.31. It seems to me that a collection of new homes situated close to the village Church, burial ground and a community park would not be considered inappropriate. All the more so, when the land on the other side of the site is either modern day development, or period properties within well-defined curtilages.
- 11.32. It is not my role to undertake the overall planning balance, but from a strictly landscape perspective, my professional opinion is that the proposals as now formulated, will deliver a coherent and logical development of new homes on the southwestern edge of Warton village providing a high-quality new landscape with a new social landscape function, and would preserve the distinctiveness of the village, as well as the open countryside setting of the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area, and its nucleated settlement pattern.
- 11.33. The scheme will replace the site's agricultural character, but a substantial degree of naturalness will remain, albeit in a different form to that which currently exists. Given our undertaking of this appraisal, BLADE believes this scheme represents a sustainable, well designed re-purposing of the site in landscape terms and one which is compliant with relevant guidance and policy when read as a whole.

APPENDIX BLA 1

Site Context Plan



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KEY

Application Site

Distance Intervals (1km)

Viewpoints (1-14)

Listed Buildings

I

Grade II

Grade II*

Scheduled Monuments

National Cycle Network

Leicestershire Restricted Byway

Leicestershire Bridleway

Leicestershire Footpath

Public Rights of Way

Bridleway

Footpath

Restricted Byway



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CLIENT
Richborough

PROJECT
Land off Orton Road, Warton

DRAWING TITLE
Site Context

DRAWING STATUS
Planning

DRAWING NO. 1708-L-RP-LVA-PL-101	REVISION V2
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SCALE @ A3 1:30,000	DATE FEB 2025
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0 200 400 600 m



APPENDIX BLA 2

Development Proposals



The scaling of this drawing cannot be assured

Revision	M	Legend and Access Graphic Update	Date	26.03.25	Drn	J.W.	Ckd	T.L.
----------	---	----------------------------------	------	----------	-----	------	-----	------

- Site Boundary
- Proposed Residential Development
- Proposed Open Space and Paths
- Proposed Highway
- Proposed Sustainable Drainage
- Existing Recreation Ground
- Proposed Access/Egress for All Modes
- Proposed Access/Egress for Pedestrians
- Existing Landscape



Project
LAND OFF ORTON ROAD,
WARTON

Drawing Title
ILLUSTRATIVE FRAMEWORK PLAN

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
30.01.25	1:1,000@A1 1:2,000@A3	J.W.	T.L.
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
333101884	RG-M-AI02	M	

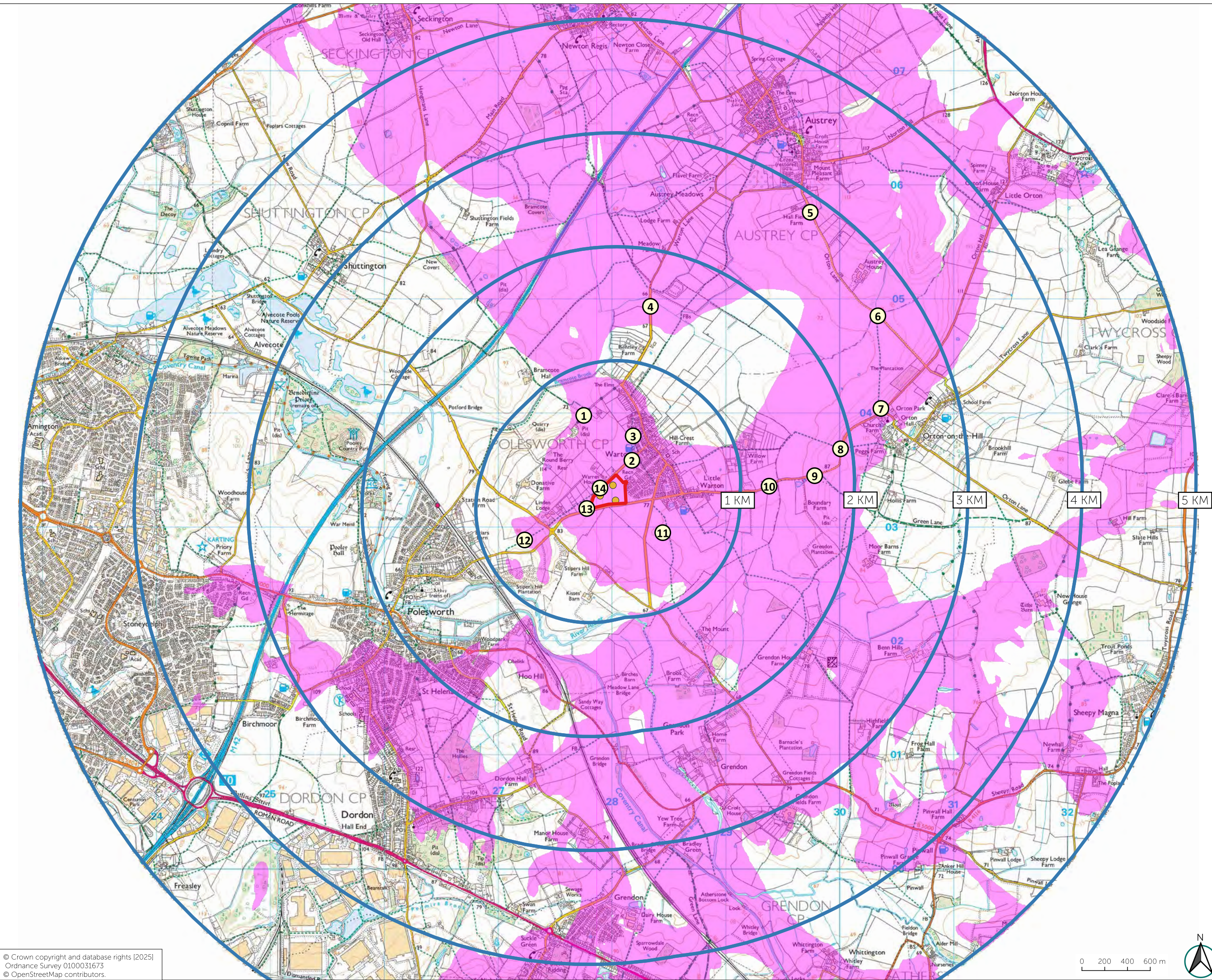
0 150m

Stantec UK Limited
The Blade
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Reading
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APPENDIX BLA 3

Plotted Zone of Theoretical Visibility



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- KEY
- Application Site
 - Distance Intervals (1km)
 - Viewpoints (1-14)
 - ZTV Reference Points
- ZTV (11.5m)
- Zone of theoretical visibility (11.5m)

NOTES:

This figure is based on the following parameters (height above ground level):
Pedestrian height: 1.6m
Viewers height: 2.0m
Landform data: OS Terrain 5 (5m grid)
Proposal height: 11.5m

This ZTV is based on a bare earth model of the landform and does not illustrate any effects of screening such as buildings and vegetation.



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PROJECT
Land off Orton Road, Warton

DRAWING TITLE
Theoretical Visibility (11.5m)

DRAWING STATUS
Planning

DRAWING NO.
1708-L-RP-LVA-PL-102

REVISION
V2

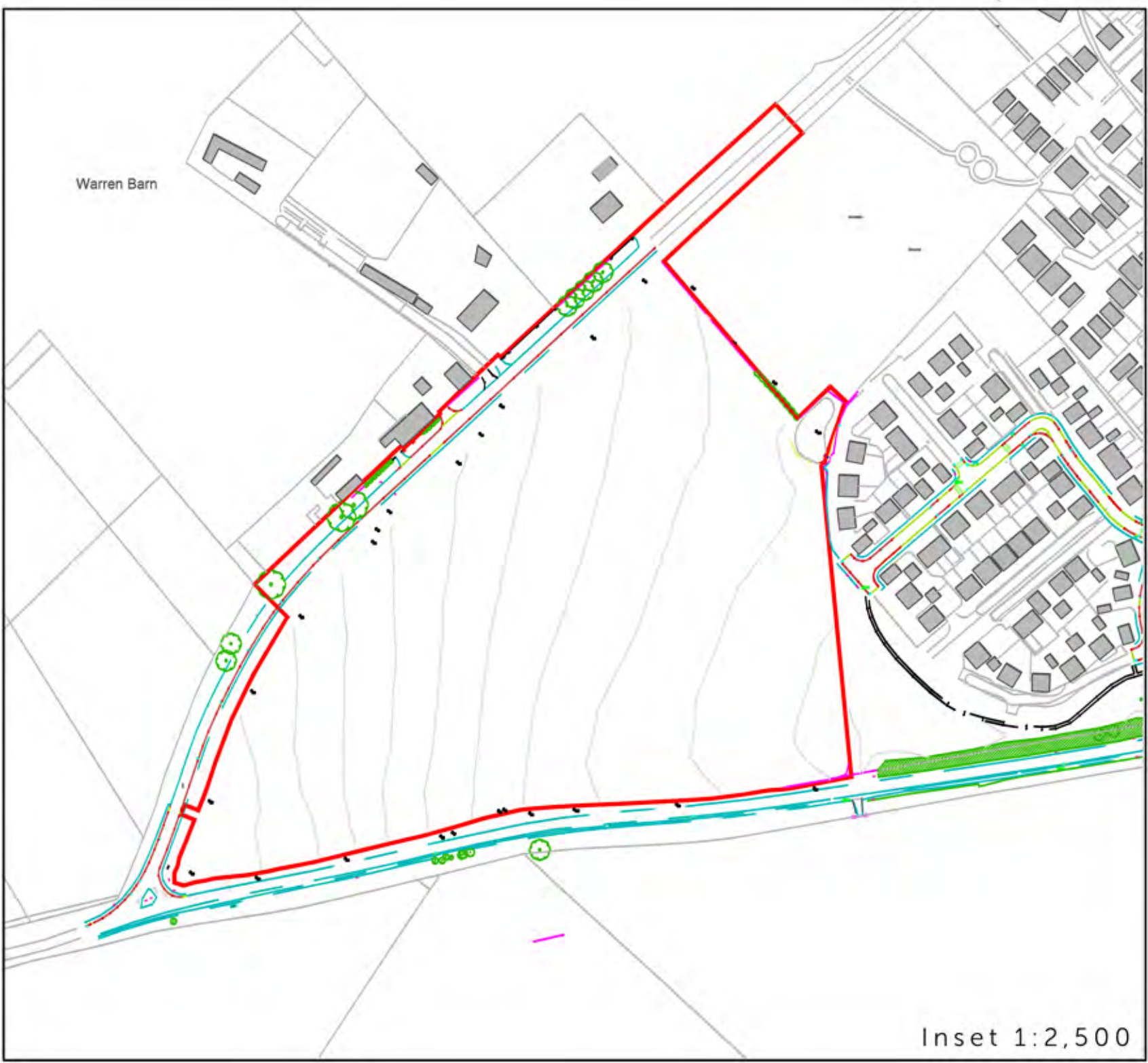
SCALE @ A3
1:30,000

DATE
FEB 2025



APPENDIX BLA 4

Illustrative Landscape Masterplan



- LEGEND
- Boundary
 - Existing trees retained
 - Existing trees removed
 - Existing hedgerows to be removed
 - Existing hedgerows to be retained (+ enhanced)
 - Existing hedgerows recently planted
 - Existing scrub retained
 - Proposed species-rich native hedgerow undersown with E11
 - Proposed traditional orchards
 - Proposed native trees
 - Proposed modified grassland
 - Proposed other neutral grassland (EM3 Species-rich grassland)
 - Proposed other neutral grassland (EM10 Tussock meadow)
 - Proposed other neutral grassland (EM8 Wetland meadow)
 - Proposed other neutral grassland (EP1 Pond edge)
 - Proposed fencing
 - Existing pond
 - Proposed development parcels



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CLIENT
Richborough, Michael Ensor Caton & Andrew Norman Caton

PROJECT
Land north of Orton Road, Warton

DRAWING TITLE
Landscape Strategy

DRAWING STATUS
Planning

DRAWING NO.
1708-L-D-PL-200

REVISION
V3

DRAWN	CHECKED	SCALE	PAPER SIZE	DATE
ST	--	1:500	A0	FEB-2025

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0 10 20 35
m

REV	Description
V3	Layout updated
V2	Fencing extent reviewed
V1	First Issue

Date
27/03/25
12/03/25
05/03/25

APPENDIX BLA 5

Representative Viewpoints

APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 1:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: 247/AE2/1 passing along the northern edge of Warton village through open countryside

Grid Reference	427751, 303981
Elevation	71m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	0.65km N/O degrees
View Direction	S/180degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 12:46 (24HR CLOCK)

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CLIENT Richborough	
PROJECT Orton Road, Warton, North Warks	
DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 1	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025

APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 2:
View from Church Road locally to the site situated to the northeast

Grid Reference	428174, 303587
Elevation	83m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	0.35km NE 45 degrees
View Direction	SW/225 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 12:23 (24HR CLOCK)

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DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 2	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025

APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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VIEWPOINT 3:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: 247//AE14/1) passing through the northern village edge of Warton

Grid Reference	428185, 303801
Elevation	83m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	0.35km NE/45 degrees
View Direction	SW/225 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 12:29 (24HR CLOCK)

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DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025

APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 4:
View from Warton Lane as this minor B road approaches the northern edge of Warton village

Grid Reference	428337 , 304938
Elevation	67m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	1.55km NE/45 degrees
View Direction	SW/225 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 12:54 (24HR CLOCK)

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DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025



VIEWPOINT 5: View from Orton Lane as this minor B road approach the outlying village of Austrey to the northeast looking across open countryside to Warton

CLIENT	Visual Survey	SINGLE FRAME
Richborough	Viewpoint 5	
PROJECT	February 2025	
Orton Road, Warton,		
N Warks		

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WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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VIEWPOINT 5:
View from Orton Lane as this minor B road approaches the outlying village of Austrey to the northeast looking across open countryside to Warton

Grid Reference	429740 , 305764
Elevation	90m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	3.1km NE/45 degrees
View Direction	SW/225 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 13:37 (24HR CLOCK)

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PROJECT Orton Road, Warton, North Warks	
DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 5	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025



VIEWPOINT 6: View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: T3a/1) situated to the east of Warton passing through open countryside from Orton-on-the-Hill

CLIENT
Richborough

PROJECT
Orton Road, Warton,
N Warks

Visual Survey
Viewpoint 6

February 2025

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WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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VIEWPOINT 6:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: T3a/1) situated to the east of Warton passing through open countryside from Orton-on-the-Hill

Grid Reference	430334 , 304855
Elevation	79m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	2.65km E/75 degrees
View Direction	W/255 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 13:54 (24HR CLOCK)

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PROJECT Orton Road, Warton, North Warks	
DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 6	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025



VIEWPOINT 7: View from Public Right of Way PRoW (LPA ref: T3a/1) situated on elevated landform at Orton-on-the-Hill tom the east of Warton village

CLIENT
Richborough

PROJECT
Orton Road, Warton,
N Warks

Visual Survey
Viewpoint 7

February 2025

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WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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VIEWPOINT 7:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: T3a/1) situated on elevated landform at Orton-on-the-Hill to the east of Warton village

Grid Reference	430361 , 304042
Elevation	96m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	2.45km E/80 degrees
View Direction	W/260 degrees km
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 13:41 (24HR CLOCK)

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CLIENT
Richborough

PROJECT
Orton Road, Warton, North Warks

DRAWING TITLE
Viewpoint 7

DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025
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APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 8:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: T3/1) situated to the east of Warton village

Grid Reference	430006 , 303688
Elevation	84m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	1.9km E/100 degrees
View Direction	W/280 degrees km
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
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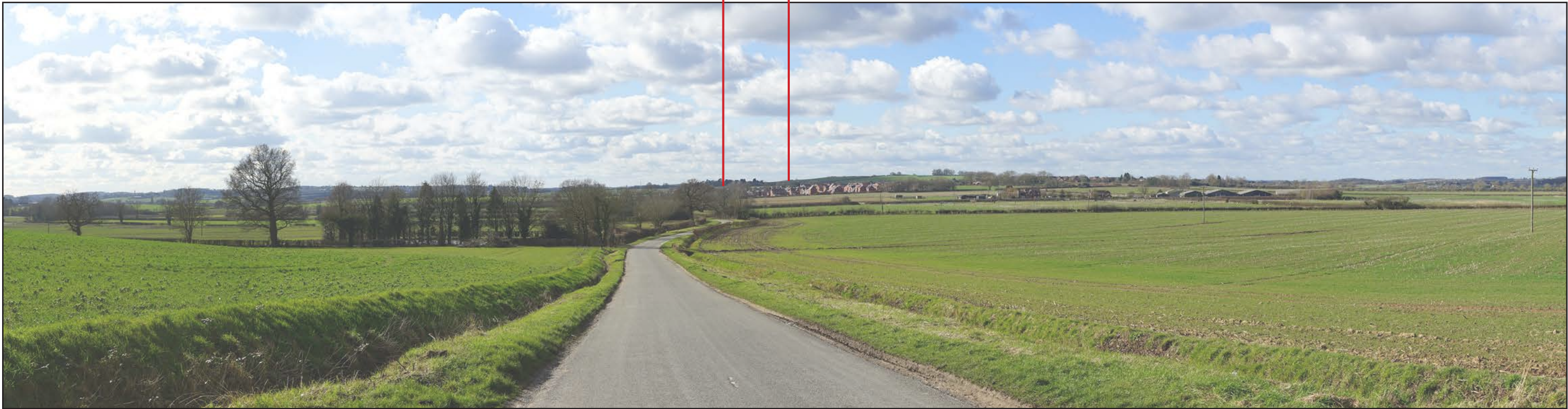
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PROJECT Orton Road, Warton, North Warks	
DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 8	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025

APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 9:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: T4/5) situated to the east of Warton village

Grid Reference	429779 , 303452
Elevation	77m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	1.65km E/110 degrees
View Direction	W/250 degrees km
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 13:46 (24HR CLOCK)

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DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 9	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 10:
View from Orton Lane as this minor B road on the eastern outskirts of Warton village

Grid Reference	429379 , 303360
Elevation	73m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	1.2km E/120 degrees
View Direction	W/240 degrees km
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 14:48 (24HR CLOCK)

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CLIENT Richborough	
PROJECT Orton Road, Warton, North Warks	
DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 10	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025

APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 11:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) passing through open countryside to the south of Warton village

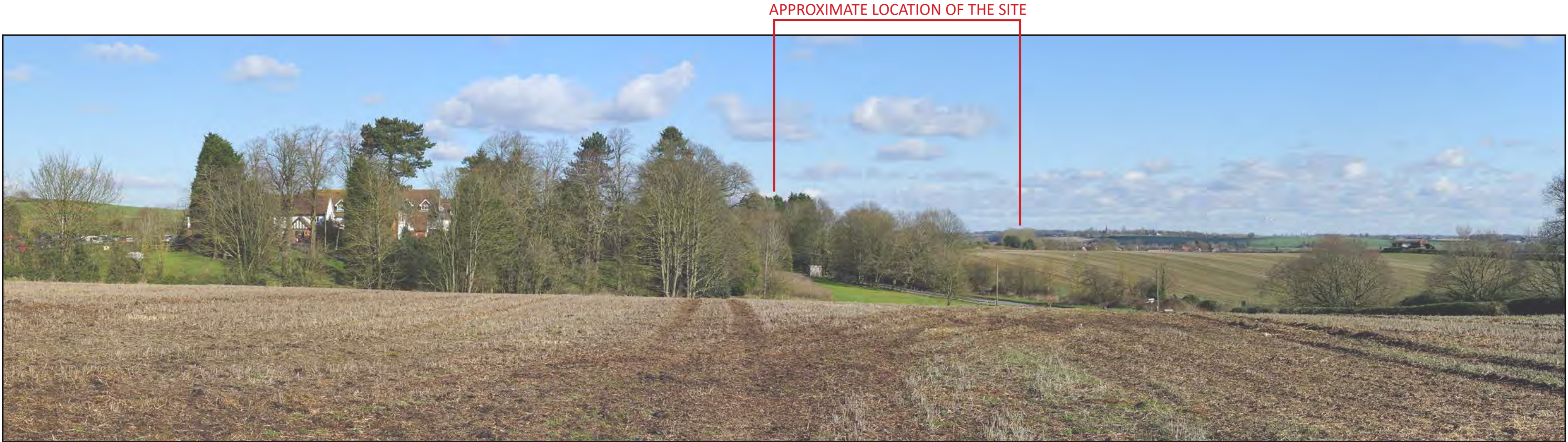
Grid Reference	428445 , 302952
Elevation	75m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	0.4km SE/140 degrees
View Direction	NW/310 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 15:12 (24HR CLOCK)

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CLIENT Richborough	
PROJECT Orton Road, Warton, North Warks	
DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 11	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 12:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) passing through open countryside to the west of Warton village

Grid Reference	427232 , 302888
Elevation	96m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	0.6km W/260 degrees
View Direction	E/80 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 13:12 (24HR CLOCK)

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CLIENT Richborough	
PROJECT Orton Road, Warton, North Warks	
DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 12	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025

APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF THE SITE



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 13:
View from Public Right of Way PRow (LPA ref: 247/AE14/1) approaching the junction of Church Road and Orton Road to the west of Warton village

Grid Reference	427778 , 303164
Elevation	91m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	Within 0.1km W/270 degrees
View Direction	E/90 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 14:05 (24HR CLOCK)

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DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 13	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025



WIDE ANGLE BASELINE PANORAMA OF EXISTING VIEW TOWARDS THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

THIS IMAGE PROVIDES LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CONTEXT ONLY

VIEWPOINT 14:
View from Church Road looking northwest along its route on the outskirts of Warton village

Grid Reference	427894 , 303344
Elevation	87m AOD
Distance to nearest Site Boundary	Adj. northern site boundary
View Direction	NE/50 degrees
Paper Size	420 x 297 mm A3
Camera	Sony A7 II
Lens	Sony E-mount E50mm F1.8oss
Projection	Cylindrical
Photograph Date and Time	27/02/2025 13:09 (24HR CLOCK)

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CLIENT Richborough	
PROJECT Orton Road, Warton, North Warks	
DRAWING TITLE Viewpoint 14	
DRAWING STATUS Planning	DATE February 2025

APPENDIX BLA 6

Methodology

This methodology is specific to developments determined by the Local Planning Authority as not requiring a full Environmental Impact Assessment. The Third Edition of the GLVIA3 provides clarification that the same principles and processes apply for EIA and non-EIA assessments however there is no requirement for establishing whether the effects are significant given this development falls out with the formal requirements of Environmental Impact Assessment.

The methodology sets out the approach for the core steps in describing the baseline conditions, identifying where potential impacts may occur and evaluating the subsequent effects. In accordance with GLVIA3, the appraisal reflects the clear distinction between the landscape as a resource and visual amenity. The steps of the methodology used in the LVA are set out below:

- Illustrative Tools
- Baseline Conditions:
 - Landscape Baseline
 - Visual Amenity Baseline
- Potential Effects - including magnitude of change and nature of change:
 - Assessment and Evaluation of Landscape Effects
 - Assessment and Evaluation of Effects on Visual Amenity

ILLUSTRATIVE TOOLS

In accordance with The Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Visual Representation of Development Proposals, a proportionate approach has been applied to determine the visualisation type appropriate for this project. It is considered annotated viewpoint photographs are sufficient level of detail to support the appraisal.

The viewpoint assessment is illustrated by photographs taken to represent a maximum visibility scenario. Photographs have been annotated to show the extent of the Site within the view, its context and highlight key features. The photographs used have been taken using a full frame sensor digital camera with a 50 mm lens equivalent mounted on a tripod, which conforms to the GLVIA guidance since this lens size is considered to most closely represent the view obtained by the human eye. The photographs have been taken to most represent a maximum visibility scenario during the season in which the assessment is undertaken.

It should be noted that whilst photography is a valuable tool to assist in the visualisation process, it cannot be expected to replicate the actual view or predicted view which would be attained on the ground. The photographs provide the viewer with a fair representation of the proposed development Site within its setting.

BASELINE CONDITIONS

Desktop Survey Work

The following desktop sources were consulted in order to compile the baseline information:

- Existing Landscape Character Assessments;
- Register of Parks and Gardens;
- Ordnance Survey Maps; and
- Aerial photography.

Landscape Baseline

Landscape receptors comprise the landscape fabric of the site, landscape character areas/ types and designated landscapes which may be affected either directly or indirectly by the proposed Development.

Existing Landscape Character Assessments have been reviewed and interpreted for use within the appraisal based on field work and further desktop survey work. A description is provided of the existing landscape elements, features, characteristics, designations and the value, condition and importance of the landscape and resources within the study area which are likely to have potential impacts as a result of the proposed Development.

An evaluation is required for each landscape character area/ type and landscape receptor which has the potential to interact with the development on:

Landscape value – It is often regarded in association with landscape designations however other more local factors have been considered such as local heritage or community interest. Key factors in regard to landscape value include landscape condition, scenic quality, rarity, recreational value, tourism, local heritage and community interest.

Susceptibility to change – Landscapes are constantly changing and evolving. The current pressures in the landscape have been clearly stated in the absence of the proposal for each landscape character area/ type.

Landscape sensitivity to changes has been defined as high, medium, low or negligible based on professional interpretation of a combination of parameters including:

- The value placed on the landscape as defined by designation/other identifiable form of recognition;
- The scale and pattern of the landscape and its elements/features;
- The simplicity or complexity of the landscape;
- The nature of skylines;
- Landscape quality or condition;
- Existing land-use;

- Visual enclosure/openness of views and distribution of visual receptors; and
- The scope for mitigation, which would be in character with the existing landscape.

Table A.2: Sensitivity of The Landscape Baseline

Landscape Sensitivity	Land Use
Very High	<i>Value:</i> Nationally/internationally designated/valued countryside and landscape features; strong/distinctive landscape characteristics; absence of landscape detractors. <i>Susceptibility to Change:</i> Strong/distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; absence of landscape detractors; landscape receptors in excellent condition. Landscapes with clear and widely recognised cultural value. Landscapes with a high level of tranquillity.
High	<i>Value:</i> Locally designated/valued countryside (e.g. Areas of High Landscape Value, Regional Scenic Areas) and landscape features; many distinctive landscape characteristics; very few landscape detractors. <i>Susceptibility to Change:</i> Many distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; very few landscape detractors; landscape receptors in good condition. The landscape has a low capacity for change as a result of potential changes to defining character.
Medium	<i>Value:</i> Undesignated countryside and landscape features; some distinctive landscape characteristics; few landscape detractors. <i>Susceptibility to Change:</i> Some distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; few landscape detractors; landscape receptors in fair condition. Landscape is able to accommodate some change as a result.
Low	<i>Value:</i> Undesignated countryside and landscape features; few distinctive landscape characteristics; presence of landscape detractors. <i>Susceptibility to Change:</i> Few distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; presence of landscape detractors; landscape receptors in poor condition. Landscape is able to accommodate large amounts of change without changing these characteristics fundamentally.
Negligible	<i>Value:</i> Undesignated countryside and landscape features; absence of distinctive landscape characteristics; despoiled/degraded by the presence of many landscape detractors. <i>Susceptibility to Change:</i> Absence of distinctive landscape elements/aesthetic/perceptual aspects; presence of many landscape detractors; landscape receptors in very poor condition. As such landscape is able to accommodate considerable change

Visual Amenity Baseline

Visibility Analysis concentrated on publicly accessible areas and key receptors including residential and outdoor recreational areas, as well as road and public footpath networks. The aim is to identify the interactions between the proposal and the visual receptors.

The study area is based upon analysis of the natural landform, using contours from the 1:25k Ordnance Survey map and a desktop review of intervening structures which are predicted to screen views of the Development such as buildings on mass and block woodland from the aerial.

Fieldwork is undertaken to establish the extent of available views towards the Site and to establish the extent of views from the Site.

Visual receptors comprise those individuals or groups of people who may have views of the Proposed Development. The main groups of visual receptors are usually defined as follows:

- Residents;
- Tourists or visitors, which includes users of outdoor recreational facilities including strategic recreational footpaths, cycle routes or public rights of way whose attention would be focused on the landscape; important landscape features with physical, cultural or historic attributes; principal views from residential buildings; beauty spots or picnic areas;
- Hill walkers, which includes those walking on unmarked footpaths; and
- Road users.

Viewpoint Assessment - A selection of viewpoints was identified and considered to be representative of the main sensitive receptors in the study area for the purposes of assessing the proposed Development. The viewpoints have been numbered in a clockwise direction starting in the north and were chosen to be representative such as a promoted visitor attraction or illustrative to demonstrate a particular effect or theme from the appraisal.

Viewpoint Description - The extent and nature of the existing views are described by reference to the following and illustrated though annotated photographs:

- Composition of the view, landscape character, features, visual amenity and quality of the landscape;
- nature of the view;
- elevation;
- direct or indirect/ angled;
- full or partial;
- open or filtered;
- seasonal variation; and
- extent.

The extent of view and proportion of the development which is visible is categorised as follows:

Full views - Where greater than 75% of the proposed Development is visible

Partial views - Where less than 75% of the proposed Development is visible

Restricted views - Where less than 50% of the proposed Development is visible and/ or very limited views of the proposed Development

Distance: The distance of the views towards the application and development is categorised below:

Short distance - less than 0.25km

Medium distance - between 0.25 and 0.5km

Long distance - Greater than 0.5km

Viewpoint Sensitivity is defined as high, medium or low based on an interpretation of a combination of parameters, as follows and defined in Table A.1:

- Location and context of the viewpoint;
- Land use or main activity at the viewpoint;
- Frequency and duration of use;
- Landscape character and quality of the intervening landscape; and
- Value attached to view.

Table A.2: Visual Sensitivity in relation to Main Activity at Viewpoint

Visual Sensitivity	Land Use
Very High	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View is: designed/has intentional association with surroundings; recorded in published material; from a publicly accessible heritage asset/designated/promoted viewpoint; nationally/internationally designated right of way; protected/recognised in planning policy designation.
High	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View of clear value but may not be formally recognised e.g. framed view of scenic value or destination/summit views; inferred that it may have value for local residents; locally promoted route or PROW.
Medium	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View is not widely promoted or recorded in published sources; may be typical of those experienced by an identified receptor; minor road routes through rural/scenic areas.
Low	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View of clearly lesser value than similar views from nearby visual receptors that may be more accessible.
Negligible	<i>Value/Susceptibility to Change:</i> View may be affected by many landscape detractors and unlikely to be valued.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS

The text below provides an analysis of the potential direct/ indirect impacts based on site reconnaissance to make a professional judgement on the magnitude and evaluation of effects of the main landscape and visual receptors identified in the study area as outlined in the Baseline Conditions.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

Magnitude of Landscape Effects - The effect on landscape character as a result of the proposed Development is largely dependent on; the characteristics of the receiving landscape, the consistency of the proposed development in relation to the receiving landscape and the perceptions of the proposed development influenced by distance, weather and appearance.

Landscape effects are classified as substantial, moderate, slight, negligible and none based on a professional judgement which combines landscape sensitivity, value, susceptibility to change and the level of interaction with the proposed Development.

The criteria utilised in ascribing magnitude of change of landscape effects throughout this assessment are as follows:

Very High: Total loss or considerable alteration to key elements/ features/characteristics of the view that is directly visible resulting in a substantial change to the baseline condition;

High: Notable loss/alteration/addition to one or more key receptors/-characteristics of the baseline; or addition of prominent conflicting elements

Medium: Partial loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the view. Change perceived as a partial or localised change within a broader, unaltered context which may be noticed directly or obliquely;

Low: Limited loss or small alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the view. Change is discernible but underlying composition of the view would be similar to baseline;

Negligible: Barely discernible loss or alteration to key components; addition of elements not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape

Indiscernible: In some circumstances, changes to key landscape components will be lower than negligible and changes will be described as 'Imperceptible'. This will lead to an imperceptible effect i.e., less than negligible.

Landscape effects also consider whether the Development:

- Reinforces the landscape elements, structure and key landscape characteristics (positive). Or would it include low or negligible changes that maybe considered part of the baseline condition (neutral). Or an adverse effect which may include the loss of landscape elements such as mature trees and hedgerows as part of construction leading to a reduction in the landscape quality and character of an area.
- Would have a physical change to landscape fabric (direct) or consequential change (indirect).
- Results in short term (up to 5 years), medium term (up to 25 years) or long-term changes (25+ years).
- Would have reversible or irreversible effects on the landscape.

Assessment of Effects on Visual Amenity

Magnitude of the Visual Effects - The magnitude of change arising from the proposed development at any particular viewpoint is described as substantial, moderate, slight or negligible based on the interpretation of a combination of largely quantifiable parameters, as follows:

- Distance of the viewpoint from the development;
- Duration of the predicted impact;
- Extent of the development in the view, e.g. the horizontal angle subtended by the development;
- Angle of view in relation to main receptor activity;
- Degree of contrast;
- Visual permeability of proposed Development, i.e. extent to which views would be blocked or would be restricted;
- Background to the Development; and
- Extent and nature of other built development visible.

In the case of magnitude of change occurring within designated areas or along roads or recreational routes, the proportion of the designated area or length of the route affected by the proposals is also a consideration.

The criteria utilised in ascribing visual magnitude of change throughout this assessment are as follows:

- Very High: Substantial change to the baseline, forming a new, defining focus and having a defining influence on the view
- High: Additions are clearly noticeable and part of the view would be fundamentally altered.
- Medium: Moderate alteration to one or more key characteristics of the baseline view.
- Low : Proposed development will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.
- Negligible: Barely discernible loss or alteration to key components; addition of elements not uncharacteristic within the existing landscape.
- Indiscernible: In some circumstances, changes at representative viewpoints will be lower than negligible and changes to the existing baseline of the view will be described as 'Imperceptible'. This will lead to an imperceptible effect i.e., less than negligible.

Visual effects also consider whether the Development:

- Results in short term (up to 5 years), medium term (up to 25 years) or long-term changes (25+ years).
- Would have reversible or irreversible effects on the visual amenity.

EVALUATING LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

Landscape or visual effects have been assessed as major, major/moderate, moderate, moderate/minor, minor or minor/negligible. These categories have been based on combining viewpoint sensitivity and predicted magnitude of change (Table A.2).

Table A.2: Evaluation of Landscape and Visual Effects

	MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
Receptor Sensitivity	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Very High	Substantial	Major	Major/-moderate	Moderate	Moderate/-minor
High	Major	Major/-moderate	Moderate	Moderate/-minor	Minor
Medium	Major/-moderate	Moderate	Moderate/-minor	Minor	Minor/-negligible
Low	Moderate	Moderate/-minor	Minor	Minor/-negligible	Negligible
Negligible	Moderate/-minor	Minor	Minor/-negligible	Negligible	Negligible/-none

The matrix is not used as a prescriptive tool, and the methodology and analysis of potential effects at any particular location must allow for the exercise of professional judgement. Thus in some instances a particular parameter may be considered as having a determining effect on the analysis.

APPENDIX BLA 7

Pre-Application Correspondence from North Warwickshire Borough Council



North Warwickshire
Borough Council

Neil Cox
Evolve Planning And Design

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Pre-Application Enquiry

Application Ref: PRE/2025/0021

Case Officer: Amelia Bow
Direct Dial: 01827 719418

Date: 12 March 2025

Site Address: Land South Of Warton Recreation Ground, Orton Road, Warton, (Grid Ref: Easting 427989.67, Northing 303287.7)

Description of Development: Screening Opinion for a residential led development of up to 110 dwellings including the provision of public open space and associated infrastructure and landscaping

Applicant: - Evolve Planning on behalf of Richborough Ltd

Dear Neil,

I refer to your pre application enquiry that was received by this Authority on 4 February 2025 for the development of land south of Warton Recreation ground for approximately 110 dwellings. The EIA Screening Request has been dealt with in a separate letter, but it does touch upon some of the issues of the site therefore you are advised to read the two letters in conjunction with each other.

Principle of Development

The first and key consideration is Local Plan Policy LP2 (Settlement Hierarchy) which sets out the distribution of development in accordance with the Borough's settlement hierarchy. In this instance, it is the Warton Development Boundary.

Warton is identified as a Category 4 Other Settlement in LP2. LP2 states that development within development boundaries will be supported in principle. Development directly adjacent to a development boundary may also be acceptable, provided development is *proportionate*. It goes on to say that all development will be considered on its merits and will cater for windfall housing developments, usually on sites of no more than 10 units. The policy does state 'usually' which does allow for flexibility where the provision of more than 10 units would be justified.

In this instance, the red line boundary is not directly adjacent to the Warton Development boundary on any of the sides of the development. The site is directly adjacent to the Bellway 'Cornfields' development on the eastern edge. However, given the development would not be directly adjacent to the development boundary, it would be regarded as expansion of Warton into the open countryside, which would be a disproportionate addition and not favourable. Development of the site would result in an appendage to the development boundary of what is a fairly linear settlement. The development would therefore be at odds with this and would have the biggest impact from a landscape point of view.

It is therefore necessary to assess the application against the 'tests' set out in the policy and other material considerations. The point I want to convey is that a strong case will need to be made in a planning

application for expansion of development beyond the Warton development boundary south eastwards, as this may not be viewed favourably.

My above comments have been made in light of the appeal at land adjacent to Curlew Close (APP/R3705/W/22/3312660) for 28 dwellings which was dismissed. It was concluded that the development would be at odds with the spatial strategy in the Development Plan and would result in a significant expansion on the outskirts of a small village. Given the context of this site with regards to the location, my concern is that the site would not be viewed favourably in this regard. There are several relevant policies to be assessed in the determination of the application and it will be necessary to establish whether there is significant and demonstrable harm caused to them, if they are to outweigh the general approach set out in LP2. As I have set out above, I therefore consider that you would need to provide greater justification for the location and in particular, for expanding built form south eastwards.

Landscape and Character

From discussions we have already had, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment it to be submitted with the application and we have had a dialogue with your technical team undertaking the assessment as to where the visual points should be.

Warton, generally, can be described as nucleated, though there is a distinct linear form with the majority of built development located along the frontage to Austrey Road with a number of cul-de-sacs coming off on each side. The application site is within the No Mans Heath to Warton - Lowlands Landscape Character Area. This describes a mixed open agricultural landscape with a scattering of small red brick nucleated hill-top villages of which Warton is an example. The Assessment identifies the need to conserve and strengthen the rural character and dispersed settlement pattern and recommends that new developments should reinforce the existing settlement pattern of the existing villages.

The likely view would be that the proposal would introduce an appendage of new built development and would increase the intensity of built form, at odds with the general linear pattern set out above.

Affordable Housing Need

The proposal is providing 40% affordable housing. The Local Planning Authority would expect to see a tenure mix of approximately 85% affordable rent and 15% intermediate tenure, in accordance with LP9. It is therefore positive that there will be 84% affordable rent (which is 37 homes) and 16% intermediate homes (which is 7 homes). We have already had correspondence from Paul Roberts at North Warwickshire Borough Council regarding the housing mix which you have already seen. The waiting list indicates that 1 bed dwellings are still the highest requirement. You provided an updated revision to the housing mix which included 8 1-bedroom dwellings. No further comments have been received to date from Housing. There may continue to be a push for smaller affordable dwellings. You are advised to submit an affordable housing statement with the application.

Local Plan Policy LP7 (Housing Development) does also seek for the provision of specialist housing, and it will be sought in all major developments and relative to evidence of need. As such, consideration should be given to homes for those with mobility issues and homes for older people, including bungalows. The provision of housing will need to be backed up with strong evidence.

Open Space Requirements

The site area is approximately 5.7ha. with 110 dwellings proposed, this provides a housing density of 19.3dph. The lower density does allow for significant areas of open space to be included around the perimeter, and particularly to the southwest. Justification for this lower density should be provided in light of LP7 which requires development of at least 30 dwellings per hectare. The arrangement of open space will be an important consideration. An application should ensure there would not be a hard edge to the edge of the settlement, therefore, the open space to the southwest is positive.

North Warwickshire's Open Space Recreation and Sport Supplementary Planning Document sets out that contribution for a development of 110 dwellings would be required to provide a Local Area for Play and a Locally Equipped Area for Play. A contribution would also be sought for a MUGA/Skate Park or towards enhancing existing facilities particularly for youth provision. There is no on-site provision of a play area within the site however, it is acknowledged that there is an existing play area and recreation ground to the northeast, which the development could provide contributions to in lieu of meeting the on-site requirement.

Parking Space Requirements and Access

North Warwickshire's Local Parking Standards requires 1 space per 1 bedroom dwelling and 2 spaces for 2+ dwellings. There should also be the addition of 0.5 visitor spaces. The vision document does say that parking would be provide as a minimum of 2 car parking spaces for all dwellings in line with current parking standards. As long as visitor spaces is also taken into account, it is likely that parking provision will be policy compliant.

It would be through consultation with Warwickshire Council Council's Highways Authority that it would be determined whether the parking layout would be acceptable or not. For example, consideration of the visibility splays for cars existing driveways, ensuring driveways do not conflict with the swept path of larger vehicles such as refuse trucks, the gradients of driveways and avoiding tandem parking. We have not consulted with the Highways Authority as part of this pre-application request, therefore you are advised to seek separate advice from the Highways Authority. More information can be found here

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/developer-contributions/guidance-applicable-planning-applications/1>

The proposals indicates that the access into the site will be taken via the Bellway Cornfields development and will utilise their current access point off Barn End Road. This would result in one access point for around 210 dwellings. This may be the upper limit with regards to how many dwellings can be served by one access point. Again, you are advised to contact the Highways Authority separately regarding this matter. Multiple access points may help to provide more permeable development and increase connectivity. Nonetheless, new access will require a Road Safety Audit hence the importance of ongoing dialogue with the Highways Authority.

Biodiversity

WCC's Ecologist have reviewed the proposals as part of the EIA Screening Request and have provided some initial comments in relation to the proposals. Please also review the EIA Screening letter.

There are no statutory or non-statutory sites of nature conservation interest, or Priority Habitats on, or adjacent to, the application site. Warwickshire Biological Records Centre holds a number of protected and notable species records within the local area of the site including bats, badger, slow-worm, grass snake and common toad. The site lies within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone (Defra MAGIC map) for the type of development proposed and Natural England would be consulted on the proposed development. It is understood that badger mitigation was a requirement for the adjacent Bellway Cornfields residential development to the east. The proposals could have an impact on a badger sett, and a badger survey will be required prior to determination to inform mitigation, as appropriate.

The application will need to demonstrate 10% net gain to biodiversity as a result of the proposals in line with the Environment Act (2021). Visually, the retention of the hedge line adjacent to the Orton Road and Church Road boundaries are a must for the scheme both from a bio-diversity point of view but also visually, to provide a soft-edge to the settlement.

Archaeology

I have discussed the archaeological matters with John Robinson johnrobinson@warwickshire.gov.uk as part of the EIA Screening Request. The proposed development is located within an area of significant archaeological potential. Finds including a pottery assemblage and animal bones recovered during clearance of land approximately 800m to the north of the proposed development indicates a possible Roman settlement at this location (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record ref. MWA220). A complex of cropmark features (MWA6728) located approximately 350m to the north of the proposed development area have been recorded from aerial photographs. A range of finds an features (MWA5760) dating to the Mesolithic (MWA5761, MWA5762), Neolithic MWA5763), Bronze Age (MWA5764) and Iron Age (MWA5765) were recorded during archaeological fieldwork undertaken at Kisses' Barn, approximately 900m to the south of the proposed scheme. Metal detecting across the surrounding fields has resulted in the recovery of a range of metalwork objects ranging in date from the Early Bronze Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods. There is therefore a potential for this site to contain archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric, Roman, medieval and later periods, the significance of any such remains, if present, is not understood.

In order to be able to understand the archaeological implications of the proposed scheme the results from an agreed programme of evaluative archaeological fieldwork should be included with the information accompanying the planning application. This will allow for an informed planning decision to be made. John would envisage the evaluative fieldwork as comprising a geophysical survey and trial trenching. The scope of

the trial trenching will be informed by the results from the geophysics. You may wish to contact John separately.

Flood Risk

The site is located within Flood Zone 1. However, there is anecdotal evidence of surface water flooding along Church Lane (heading north eastwards from the site), particularly in adverse weather. LP33 (Water and Flood Risk Management) of the Local Plan states that water runoff from new development must be no more than natural greenfield runoff rates and developments should hold this water back on the development site through high quality Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS), reducing pollution and flood risk to nearby watercourses. Given the anecdotal evidence along Church Lane, the LPA would want to see that discussions have taken place with the Local Lead Flood Authority.

S106 Obligations

At this stage we have not consulted with statutory consultees and therefore, I am not able to provide an exacting figure for what S106 Contributions may be required. A review of previous applications in the area, including the refused application at Curlew Close, indicate that contributions could be requested for the following:

- North Warwickshire Borough Council Leisure and Community Development- contributions toward enhancing the existing recreational ground and play area to the northeast.
- Public health- contributions for the provision of additional health care facilities which could include the Polesworth and Dordon Group Practice and/or the George Eliot NHS Trust.
- Warwickshire County Council Education- contributions towards the provision of early years and secondary education, particularly for Nethersole C of E Primary School (Warton) and Polesworth Secondary School. In determining school provisions and capacity figures, deliberation will be given to the number of potential pupils the site will create particularly in relation to the figures that will be generated at the allocated housing site H4 (Polesworth and Dordon). H4 is to provide a new two form entry primary school and will provide a financial contribution to existing school provisions in the area.
- Warwickshire County Council Library provision.
- The County Council may require a contribution to maintain public rights of way which fall fully or partly within a 1.5-mile radius of the site.

The County Council requires a monitoring fee for the monitoring and administration of County Council obligations, due upon signing of the agreement.

Please note, the above are indicative and not all may be requested for development on this site and at this stage, I would not be able to provide you with exact amounts. I would direct you to Warwickshire County Council's Infrastructure and Sustainable Communities Team (01926 738802). The NHS Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board is the contact for health matters.

Submission Requirements

As previously set out to you, the following would be expected to be submitted with a subsequent planning application.

- Application Form
- Relevant fees
- Ecology Surveys (Ecological Appraisal and any further reports it recommends)
- Phase 1 Contamination Report/ Desk Top Study
- Archaeological evaluative work
- Agricultural Land Classification Report (given the Grade 2 Classification)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Transport Assessment, Travel Plan and any associated access plans
- Drainage Assessment/Sustainable Drainage Statement
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Design and Access Statement
- Illustrative Masterplan and any indicative layouts and elevations (where appropriate)
- Affordable House Statement
- Draft Heads of Terms
- Planning Statement

- Site Location Plan
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain Metric

Local Plan Review

I understand that you are intending to submit a planning application at the end of March. However, North Warwickshire Borough Council is undertaking a Local Plan Review. There is a Call for Sites currently open, with the absolute deadline for sites being 31st March 2025. You may want to consider promoting the land through the call for sites as an alternative option. You would need to consider the impact on timescales for this as it is a much longer process, but it may be beneficial in light of the above.

Conclusion

The primary concern with the proposed development is the expansion of built development beyond the Warton Development Boundary and south westwards into the open countryside creating an appendage to the built form which is not proportionate in this location. This would not be in keeping with the settlement pattern of Warton, particularly in this part of the village where development is linear. The development would introduce a depth to the built form which would be harmful to the landscape and character of the area.

The opinions in this pre-application response have been formed based on the information you have provided, secondary sources of information, a meeting and, without undertaking a site visit or undertaking public consultation. The Case Officer for a future application will have to take into account any comments received during public consultation which may influence the scheme.

Any policies or guidance referred to above can be viewed on the Council's planning website at www.northwarks.gov.uk/planning.

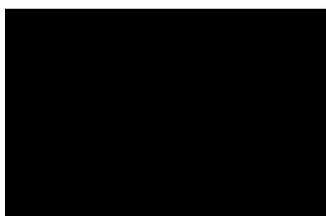
Please note that the Council encourages the submission of applications by email planningcontrol@northwarks.gov.uk or on line, via the Planning Portal's Planning Application Service at www.planningportal.gov.uk. Please note that there is no transaction fee payable if you submit your application directly to the Council but if you choose to submit via the Planning Portal a transaction fee will be charged for most submissions. Alternatively, you can print copies of application forms from the Council's website www.northwarks.gov.uk/planning and submit them in person or by post.

You can find details of fees payable and further information about what you will need to submit with your application at www.northwarks.gov.uk/planning. The Council accepts electronic payment for application fees via telephone.

This letter does not constitute a Certificate of Lawfulness of Proposed Development.

I hope that the above is of assistance to you but please appreciate that my views are informal and without prejudice to the outcome of any subsequent planning applications.

Yours sincerely

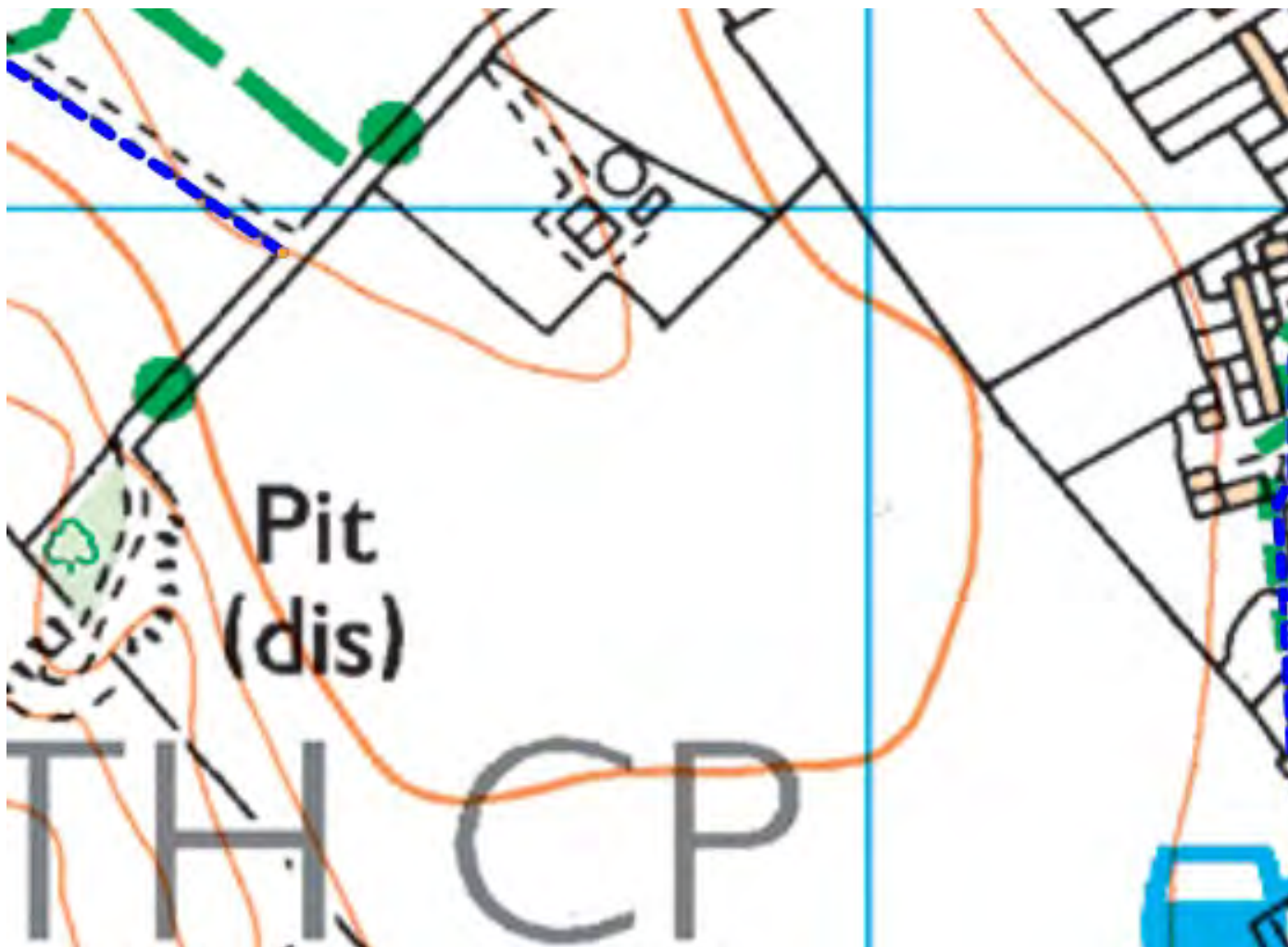


Amelia Bow
Planning Control Assistant
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From:
Sent: 26 February 2025 15:33
To:
Cc:
Subject: RE: Land South of Recreation Ground, Warton - Landscape

Hello James,

Yes, viewpoint 7 is in relation to PRoW 247/AE112 (shown below).



And yes, to confirm the LPA request and as per your bullet points;

1. Moving point 1 closer to The Elms on Gravel Lane (or you may consider photographing both points).
2. Point 6 shown on the map.
3. Point 2 moved closer to the corner.
4. Point 7 as per the above footpath above.

Kind regards



Planning Control Assistant
North Warwickshire Borough Council

Phone:

Web: www.northwarks.gov.uk

Social:     

Public Procurement is changing with the introduction of the new Procurement Act 2023 on 24 February 2025. More information on how this may affect you as a supplier to the Council:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/information-and-guidance-for-suppliers>



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Sent: 26 February 2025 15:26

Subject: RE: Land South of Recreation Ground, Warton - Landscape

Importance: High

Caution: Warning external email

Thanks Amelia.

Please may I check your point 7 'footpaths in the vicinity' of the site as above – are you referring to the PRoW which passes through the village (albeit through a built-up area) or from the pedestrian footpaths such as that on Church Road? Sorry to ask, but it is helpful for us to be sure of what is anticipated by the Authority.

To summarise of the 4 viewpoints to be modelled for an accurate visual representation, the following are requested by the LPA:

- The aforementioned your point 1 i.e., 'closer to Gravel Lane (the new properties at the Elms)'
- Your position below shown as point 6
- View 2 moved closer to the bend of the roads as shown below
- Your point 7 'footpaths in the vicinity' of the site as above.

If you could confirm that would be appreciated.

Regards



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From:

Sent: 26 February 2025 15:16

Subject: RE: Land South of Recreation Ground, Warton - Landscape

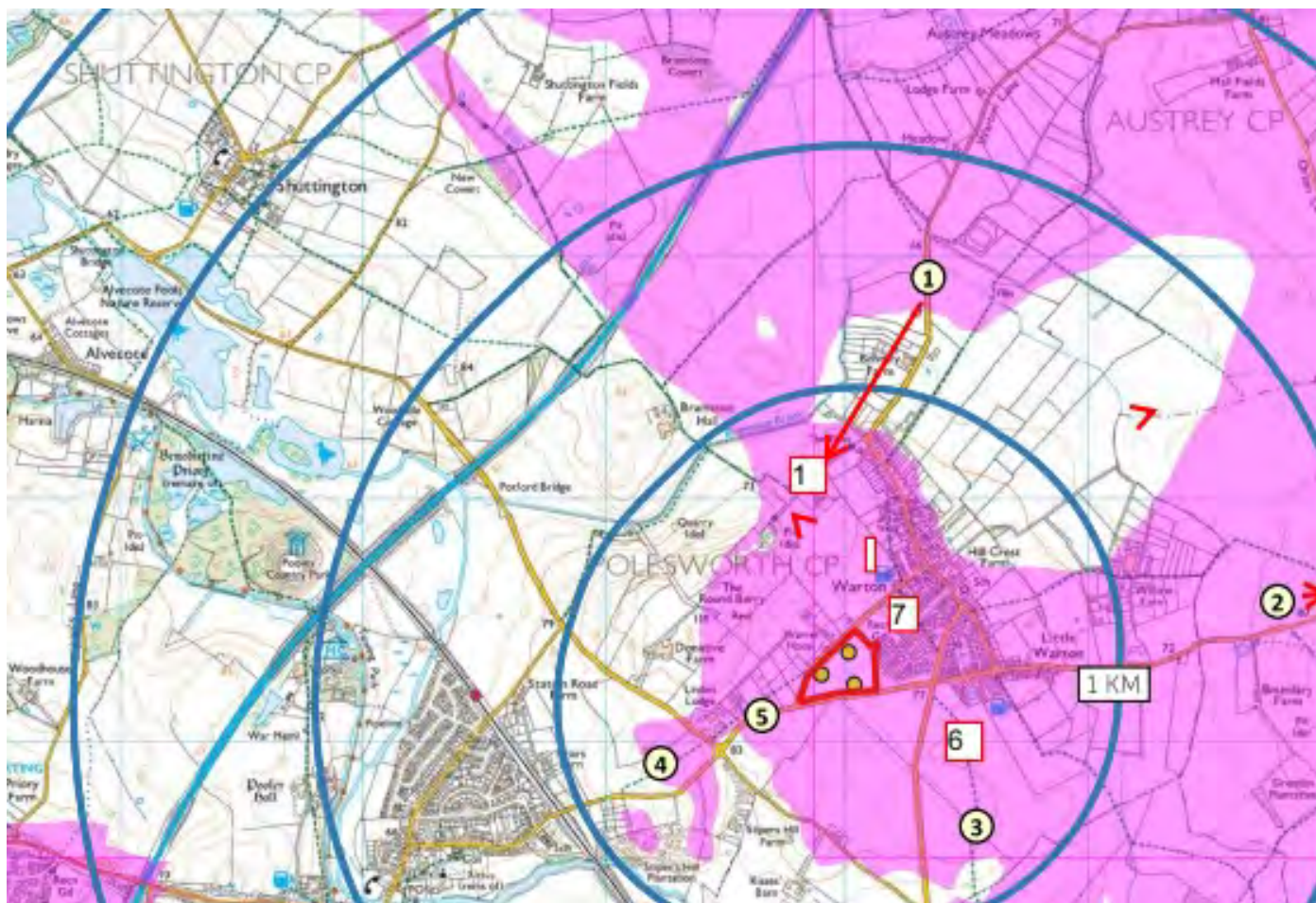
Good afternoon James,

Our initial thoughts are that viewpoint 1 should be closer to Gravel Lane (the new properties at the Elms) otherwise, you may want to consider an additional viewpoint here instead.

Viewpoint 2 should be at the corner, before the bend in the road.

We have also provided an additional viewpoint at 6 which we believe should be undertaken.

Finally, there are footpaths in the vicinity and so we have also included viewpoint 7 which we think should also be photographed due to views from the footpath.



Please appreciate I haven't undertaken a walkover of the area and so, there may be additional requirements. Kind regards



Planning Control Assistant
North Warwickshire Borough Council

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Sent: 26 February 2025 13:31

Subject: RE: Land South of Recreation Ground, Warton - Landscape

Caution: Warning external email

Good afternoon both,

It would be really good to receive your input on this matter.

I am going to site tomorrow am to take the photography for the LVA.

Happy to chat through on the phone if that is easier.

Regards



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Sent: 21 February 2025 11:04

Subject: RE: Land South of Recreation Ground, Warton - Landscape

Good morning both,

Sorry to send an email so promptly but are you able to provide me with an update on the below.

Happy to chat on the phone if that is easier.

Regards

Sent: 20 February 2025 11:04

Subject: RE: Land South of Recreation Ground, Warton - Landscape

Importance: High

Good morning both,

RE: Land South of Recreation Ground, Warton - Landscape

BLADE are conducting the LVA and Landscape Design work for this project.

Further to then below, please see the attached GIS suite of a site context plan and plotted ZTV (2.5 storeys) for the site. I have indicated 5 locations for possible viewpoints for AVR/'Montages'. These have been informed by my own site visit, baseline trawl and also the plotted ZTV.

Please could you consider the attached and let me know your preference for location for AVBR/Montages. We have discussed preparing 3-4 viewpoints with our Client. These images will be obviously reflective of the level of detail at an OPA stage and would be indicative of Year 1 and Year 15 timeframes.

The location of each viewpoint is noted in terms of its OS grid ref, elevation and distance to inform you.

I would be happy to talk through or receive your direction for another location.

We are keen to cack on with the work asap, so your earliest response is appreciated.

Regards

Sent: 13 February 2025 13:28

Afternoon again Amelia,

Apologies for the multiple emails this afternoon.

At our meeting yesterday, you raised some 'in principle' concerns in respect of landscape impact and the elongation of Walton as a settlement to the west, beyond the existing settlement boundary.

James Bullock at Blade (copied in) is in the process of preparing the landscape evidence to support our planning application. As part of this evidence, we are looking to provide photomontages or pre-post development from agreed viewpoints.

Would it be possible to agree the viewpoints with the Council at this stage please?

Kind regards



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Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 12:17

Afternoon Amelia,

Thank you for taking the time to meet us yesterday to discuss the above proposal. We found the discussion really helpful.

At our meeting you agreed to provide us with the following information:

- Details of Ward Members (Brynnen Ririe, David Humphries?)
- Date Polesworth NDP due to go to referendum
- Flexibility on housing mix with particular reference to one bed provision (across all tenures)
- Alternative mechanisms to 40% on-site affordable housing provision e.g. approach by Walton Homes on Little Warton Lane

- Validation checklist
- Draft HoTs and references to other strategic residential applications in the Borough recently
- Capacity at Warton Nethersole's CofE Primary School

I also promised that I would send you some bullet points to aid your presentation to Board members tomorrow:

Proposal:

- Outline scheme with details to follow in subsequent reserved matters application(s)
- Up to 110 homes (including 40% affordable provision) forming second phase to Cornfields development
- Vehicular access achieved off Red Marl Way with separate emergency access formed off Church Road or Orton Road
- Additional active travel links connecting to wider village and the recreation ground
- New open space including provision of central green space and wildlife corridor extending to all site boundaries
- Retention of existing trees and hedgerows and new planting throughout development
- Sustainable Drainage System to deal with surface water, including attenuation pond within southeastern extent of the site - reflective of approach on neighbouring site.
- Development stepped away from high-point of the site to the west to avoid landscape harm.

Community Engagement:

- A leaflet will be distributed to all properties within Warton on 22nd February
- A dedicated consultation website will be live from 22nd February to allow members of the local community to submit views
- Separate discussions with ward members and Parish Councillors will be sought to understand local issues and local infrastructure requirements
- All issues raised through consultation will be captured within a Statement of Community Engagement, submitted as part of the application

If there is anything further you require prior to tomorrow's meeting, do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards



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