



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

GLEN PARVA, LEICESTERSHIRE
MANOR OAK HOMES

Landscape Visual Impact Assessment



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 First Environment Consultants Ltd has been appointed by Manor Oak Homes to assess the landscape and visual matters relating to the proposed residential development on Land to the east of Glen Hill Lodge, Glen Parva, Leicestershire.

- 1.2 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will analyse the landscape character and visual context of the local area, introduce the principle of development and assess the ability of the landscape setting and visual environment to accommodate change. A number of plans and photographs have been prepared to illustrate the character and visual context of the site and its setting. These plans form part of the document and should be read in conjunction with it. The site location is shown in Appendix A (Site and Setting).

2.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the proposed scheme has been conducted in line with the “Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment” (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013, and “Landscape Character Assessment, Guidance for England and Scotland” (LCA) published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish National Heritage 2002. These documents do not provide a prescriptive approach to assessment but identify principles and good practice. The methodology for this assessment is described in the following section.
- 2.2 The LVIA is a tool used to identify and assess the significance and effects of changes resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.
- 2.3 By its very nature a landscape impact assessment requires both objective and subjective judgements. As with any subjective decision care must be taken to ensure the relevant principles are applied consistently throughout the assessment. The division between objective and subjective elements should also be clearly defined.
- 2.4 The GLVIA states:

“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of existing communities and future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). It is broadly agreed that it involves finding an appropriate balance between economic, social and environmental matters, and that protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment is an important part of this.”

- 2.5 The GLVIA also states

“When the interrelationship between people and the landscape is considered, this introduces related but very different considerations, notably the views that people have and their visual amenity – meaning the overall pleasantness of the views they enjoy of their surroundings.”

Reflecting this distinction the two components of an LVIA are:

- *“Assessment of landscape effects: assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;*
 - *Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.”*
- 2.6 An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource. The concern here is with how the proposal will affect the elements that make up the landscape, the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape and its distinctive character.
- 2.7 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. The concern here is with assessing how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the content and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape and/or introduction of new elements.
- 2.8 Each effect on landscape receptors and visual effects identified needs to be assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced, and its duration and reversibility.

Assessment and Design are an iterative process

- 2.9 The assessment and design process have been influenced by the appropriate elements of a BS:5837 (2012) tree survey, long range views and general topography. This integrated approach has been followed during the development of this scheme.

Mitigation

- 2.10 Measures which are proposed to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects (or to avoid, reduce and if possible remedy identified effects), including landscape and visual effects.
- 2.11 In practice enhancement is not specifically related to mitigation of adverse landscape and visual effects but means any proposals that seek to improve the landscape and/or visual amenity of the proposed development site and its wider setting beyond its baseline condition.

2.12 Mitigation measures are generally more effective if they are designed as an integral part of the iterative process of project planning and design. Therefore mitigation is, wherever possible, considered right from the point of project inception, when alternative designs or site options are being considered. It can be used to adapt and modify the development to take account of constraints and opportunities, and achieve the optimum environmental fit as part of an environmentally integrated design.

2.13 In the context of landscape and visual assessment, the following terms are used:

Landscape Character

2.14 The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular type of landscape, and how this is perceived by people. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement. It creates the particular sense of place of different areas of the landscape.

Sensitivity or capacity of the landscape resource

2.15 There is no standard methodology for the quantification of the magnitude of effects. However, it is generally based on the scale or degree of change to the landscape resource, the nature of the effect and its duration.

Sensitivity of visual receptors

2.16 The Sensitivity of visual receptors and views will be dependent on:

- The location and context of the viewpoints;
- The expectation and occupation or activity of the receptors.

Scale or magnitude of visual effects

2.17 In the evaluation of the effects on views and the visual amenity of the identified receptors, the magnitude or scale of visual change is described by reference to:

- The scale of change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;

- The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture;
- The duration and nature of the effect, whether temporary or permanent, intermittent or continuous, etc.;
- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development;
- The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible.

LANDSCAPE IMPACT

2.18 For this assessment the following criteria applies:

Landscape sensitivity or capacity

High Landscape areas with particularly distinctive or positive characters or with valued landscape features. The areas may be sensitive to relatively small changes.

Medium Landscape areas with reasonably positive character, but with evidence of alteration or degradation of the character or features. Potentially tolerant of some change.

Low Landscape areas with a weak character or relatively few features of value, potentially tolerant of significant change.

Magnitude of Landscape Change

High adverse Total loss of or major alteration to the key characteristics or features of the landscape area.

Medium adverse Partial loss of or alteration to the key characteristics or features of the landscape area.

Low adverse Minor loss of or alteration to the key characteristics or features of the landscape area.

No change Very minor loss or change to the landscape characteristics or features of the area, compensated by landscape improvements or enhancements.

Low beneficial Minor improvements to the key landscape characteristics or features, or improvements resulting from removal of inappropriate land uses or features.

Medium beneficial Notable improvements to the key landscape characteristics or features, or improvements resulting from removal of inappropriate land uses or features.

High beneficial Major landscape improvements, through the creation of a new landscape structure, or the removal of large scale inappropriate features.

2.19 Overall landscape impact is determined by combining the sensitivity of the landscape resource with the magnitude of landscape change. Professional judgement is used to determine the overall significance of impact based on these two elements.

2.20 Overall significance is classified by High, Moderate, Low or Negligible and the effects can be adverse or beneficial.

VISUAL IMPACT

2.21 For this assessment the following criteria applies:

Visual Sensitivity

High	Occupiers of residential properties with views affected by the development. Users of outdoor recreational facilities including rights of way where interest may be focused on the landscape
Medium	Users of outdoor recreational facilities where the view is less important to the activities (e.g. sports pitches). People at work places.
Low	People traveling through the area in cars or on trains, or people at places of work with limited views potentially affected by the development (e.g. Industrial sites).

Visual Magnitude of Change

High Adverse	Where the scheme would cause a significant deterioration in the view.
Medium Adverse	Where the scheme would cause a noticeable deterioration in the view.
Low Adverse	Where the scheme overall would cause a minor deterioration in the view.
No change	Where the scheme overall would not form a noticeable deterioration or improvement in the view.
Low Beneficial	Where the scheme would cause a minor improvement in the view.
Medium Beneficial	Where the scheme would cause a noticeable improvement in the view.
High Beneficial	Where the scheme would cause a significant improvement to the view.

- 2.22 Overall visual impact is determined by combining the sensitivity of the receptor with the magnitude of visual change. Professional judgement is used to determine the overall significance of impact based on these two elements.
- 2.23 Overall significance is classified by High, Moderate, Low or Negligible and the effects can be adverse or beneficial.

Nature of Impact

- 2.24 To assess the nature of the impact as a result of the proposals, it is appropriate to consider the impact of the proposed residential development upon the existing landscape character and visual environment within which the site is set.
- 2.25 The visual assessment identified a number of potentially sensitive receptors, most situated immediately adjacent to the site boundaries or from long range views located predominantly to the west and south.
- 2.26 The public footpaths adjacent to the northern and eastern boundary, and vantage points from public rights of way to the west of the site were assessed as potentially sensitive receptors. Existing residential properties to the south-east, south and north posed additional areas of potential sensitivity to the developments visual impact. The retention of the majority of the existing vegetation within the proposed landscape treatment will likely help to reduce the impact of the proposed development in the wider landscape context to the north and east.
- 2.27 Receptors on the south-eastern, southern and western boundaries with views of undeveloped pasture and overgrown field boundary hedges will be impacted upon by views of new residential dwellings.
- 2.28 Long distance views across the river valley particularly to the south and west of the site will likely be impacted upon by the proposed development due to the exposed nature of the site.
- 2.29 Overall a beneficial long-term effect will be generated by the proposed landscape treatment. The public open spaces will provide additional depth to boundary treatments. The site connects directly to the Guthlaxton Trail for sustainable transport alternatives, providing connectivity to the heart of Leicester. A public right of way runs parallel to the northern and eastern boundary enabling easy access to the surrounding countryside and local amenities for pedestrians.

3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 This section provides a summary of the planning policies of relevance to the landscape and visual amenity, including national through to local policies.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – Guidance

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the guidelines for future planning applications and replaces the Planning Policy Statement (PPSs). Instilled within the core of the planning framework is the presumption in favour of Sustainable Development with regards to growth and development. Paragraph 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework states the following;

“At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

- *local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;*
- *Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change.*
- *Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and,*
- *Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date.”*

- 3.3 In line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the formulation of the residential development will include Sustainable Development principles at its core. (In particular, in landscape terms the provision of public open space has been designed to aid integration of the proposed development into the existing landscape.) Areas within the open space have been designed to include species that complement and enhance the local flora and be attractive to existing fauna.

- 3.4 Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These include:

- *“always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
 - *take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*
 - *contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework;*
 - *encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.”*
- 3.5 Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.
- 3.6 It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.
- 3.7 Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal’s economic, social and environmental benefits).

Local Plan

The Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy)

Purpose of the Local Plan (Core Strategy)

Blaby District Council has produced a Core Strategy (CS) as part of its Local Plan for the District. The CS will set out the spatial plan for the District up to 2029. The document will supersede some of the policies of the Blaby District Local Plan 1999 (See Appendix A for details) and will become the 'strategy' which will guide development in Blaby District when the East Midlands Regional Plan is abolished through the 'Localism Act'.

Policy CS2 - Design of New Development

3.8 Strategic objectives:

- *“To improve the design quality of all new developments in the District including the need to design out crime;*
- *To protect the important areas of the District’s natural environment (species and habitats), landscape and geology and to improve biodiversity, wildlife habitats and corridors through the design of new developments and the management of existing areas by working with partners; and*
- *To preserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the District, recognising its contribution to local distinctiveness and to seek design solutions which preserve and enhance heritage assets where they are impacted by development.*

3.9 *In order to secure a high quality environment, all new development should respect distinctive local character and should contribute to creating places of a high architectural and urban design quality, contributing to a better quality of life for the local community.*

3.10 *Design should be appropriate in its context and should take any opportunities available to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. Development proposals should demonstrate that they have taken account of local patterns of development, landscape and other features and views and are sympathetic to their surroundings through urban design, landscaping (including tree planting), architecture and architectural detailing. At the same time, the Council will support innovative design that is appropriate in its context.*

- 3.11 High quality places, which are safe and socially inclusive, will be required through the application of good design principles including layout, street design, scale, materials, natural surveillance, orientation, and sustainable construction.**
- 3.12 New development should create safe environments where crime and disorder or fear of crime does not undermine quality of life.**
- 3.13 The design of new development should take account of, and provide opportunities to enhance, the natural and historic environment, including improvements to Green Infrastructure and opportunities to promote biodiversity.**
- 3.14 Consideration needs to be given to the access and mobility needs of people (including, but not limited to, elderly people and disabled people) so that barriers to access can be overcome for the benefit of the entire community. This should be considered in the design of new developments from the outset. This will contribute to the creation of mixed communities. In addition, developments should be designed with full consideration of the principles of permeability, legibility and connectivity.”**

Policy CS14 - Green Infrastructure (GI)

3.15 Strategic objectives:

- *“To deliver the infrastructure, services and facilities required to meet the needs of the population of the District of Blaby, including those arising from growth, and to make services accessible to all;*
- *To maximise sport and recreation opportunities;*
- *To improve the design quality of all new developments in the District including the need to design out crime;*
- *To protect the important areas of the District’s natural environment (species and habitats), landscape and geology and to improve biodiversity, wildlife habitats and corridors through the design of new developments and the management of existing areas by working with partners;*
- *To preserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the District, recognising its contribution to local distinctiveness and to seek design solutions which preserve and enhance heritage assets where they are impacted by development.*

- *To minimise the risk of flooding (and other hazards) to property, infrastructure and people; and*
- *To deliver the transport needs of the District and to encourage and develop the use of more sustainable forms of transport (including walking, cycling, other forms of non-motorised transport and public transport).*

3.16 Blaby District Council and its partners will seek to protect existing, and provide new, ‘networks of multi-functional green spaces’. This network will comprise public and privately owned land. Green Infrastructure can include formal open spaces for sport and recreation, green areas that can be used for informal recreation, areas that are valuable for their biodiversity (flora and fauna and network links), areas that are of cultural importance (heritage assets and their settings), areas that maintain natural and ecological processes (such as floodplains) and other areas that contribute to the health and quality of life of communities.

3.17 The Council will seek to improve and enhance the Green infrastructure network throughout the District using opportunities identified in available evidence including, but not limited to, exploring with partners improved access to:

- *the River Soar and River Sence corridors and Grand Union Canal.*
- *the Rothley Brook corridor.*
- *the network of Green Wedges that adjoin the urban areas.*

3.18 In accordance with the Blaby Town Centre Masterplan opportunities will be explored with partners to improve Bouskell Park (Blaby) as a recreational resource.

3.19 Opportunities to incorporate key landscape features such as woodlands, ponds, rivers and streams and the local topography should be used to create high quality design incorporating a wide range of high quality, functional and useful open spaces and links.

3.20 It is important that the subsequent maintenance of GI is considered at the earliest opportunity and that the bodies and resources responsible for its long term management and maintenance liabilities are identified.

3.21 Croft Hill, Fosse Meadows, Aston Firs / Burbage Common (adjacent to Hinckley and Bosworth administrative area), Fosse Way and disused railway lines (particularly around Countesthorpe)

will be retained as important recreation resources and valuable wildlife habitats.

3.22 In line with emerging national policy, this Council will explore the use of the emerging Local Green Space designation in identifying, for special protection, green areas of particular importance to local communities, and apply this where appropriate through the Allocations, Designations and Development Management DPD.

Sustainable Urban Extension

3.23 The growth proposed as part of a Sustainable Urban Extension west of Leicester provides an opportunity to plan for a green infrastructure network, serving the needs of new and existing communities by providing green links (for people and wildlife) from the urban area to the wider countryside.”

Policy CS15 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation

3.24 Strategic objectives:

- *“To deliver the infrastructure, services and facilities required to meet the needs of the population of the District of Blaby, including those arising from growth, and to make services accessible to all; and*
- *To maximise sport and recreation opportunities.*

3.25 Blaby District Council will seek to ensure that all residents have access to sufficient, high quality, accessible open space, sport and recreation facilities.

3.26 In order to achieve this, the following standards, which indicate the provision of open space sport and recreation per 1000 population in the District, will be used. For development likely to contain less than 1000 population, a pro-rata approach will be used. The figures in brackets indicate desirable access standards in distance (metres) or time (minutes):

- ***Parks and Recreation Grounds - 0.8 ha (800 m)***
- ***Outdoor Sports Space - 1.0 ha (480 m)***
- ***Children & Young people’s Space - 0.30 ha (Junior 450m / Youth 800m)***
- ***Informal Open Space - 0.5 ha (480m)***
- ***Natural Greenspace - 1.0 ha (960m)***
- ***Allotments - 0.3 ha (480m)***
- ***Sports Halls - 1 x 4-court hall per 13,984 Persons (10 minutes drive)***

- **Swimming Pools - 1 x 4- lane (25 metres) per 20,720 persons (10 minutes drive)**
- **Small halls/community venues - 1 per 2,500 persons (10 minutes drive)**

3.27 The above standards will be used to ensure that development proposals provide sufficient accessible open space, sport and recreation, taking into account any local deficiencies. New on-site provision or financial contributions to improve the quality of, or access to, existing open space, will be expected and commuted maintenance sums will be sought.

3.28 Existing open space, sport and recreation facilities will be protected, and where possible enhanced. Where development is proposed on existing open space, sport and recreation facilities, land should not be released, either in total or in part unless it can be demonstrated that:

- **it is surplus to requirements for its current play and open space function; and,**
- **it is not needed for another type of open space, sport and recreation facility; or,**
- **alternative provision of equivalent quantity, quality and accessibility, or better, can be provided in the local area.”**

Policy CS16 - Green Wedges

3.29 Strategic objectives:

- *“To maximise sport and recreation opportunities;*
- *To protect the important areas of the District’s natural environment (species and habitats), landscape and geology and to improve biodiversity, wildlife habitats and corridors through the design of new developments and the management of existing areas by working with partners;*
- *To preserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the District, recognising its contribution to local distinctiveness and to seek design solutions which preserve and enhance heritage assets where they are impacted by development.*
- *To minimise the risk of flooding (and other hazards) to property, infrastructure and people; and*
- *To deliver the transport needs of the District and to encourage and develop the use of more sustainable forms of transport*

(including walking, cycling, other forms of non-motorised transport and public transport).

3.30 Green Wedges are important strategic areas. They will be designated in order to:

- ***Prevent the merging of settlements;***
- ***Guide development form;***
- ***Provide a green lung into the urban areas; and***
- ***Provide a recreation resource.***

3.31 Green Wedges will be maintained in the following general locations:

(a) Between Blaby and Glen Parva (Sence Valley);

(b) Between Whetstone, Blaby and Countesthorpe;

(c) Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South);

(d) Between Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Kirby Fields and towards Ratby, Groby and Leicester;

***(e) Between Glenfield towards Beaumont Leys, Anstey and Groby;
And***

(f) From Elmesthorpe towards Barwell and Earl Shilton.

3.32 The need to retain Green Wedges will be balanced against the need to provide new development (including housing) in the most sustainable locations. The detailed boundaries of the existing Green Wedges will be formally reviewed through the Allocations, Designations and Development Management DPD.

3.33 In addition, opportunities to create new Green Wedges will be explored particularly in areas around the proposed Sustainable Urban Extension to the west of Leicester.

3.34 Along with its partners the Council will encourage the active management of land that promotes environmental improvements, recreational facilities (other than built development) and improved access within Green Wedges.

3.35 Uses that are appropriately located in Green Wedges include: agriculture (including allotments and horticulture – not garden centres); outdoor recreation (where associated buildings are small

in scale); forestry; footpaths, bridleways and cycleways; and, burial grounds.

3.36 *In circumstances where the development would not be harmful to the functions of Green Wedges, the following uses will be allowed: wind turbines (and other renewable energy facilities that are not within buildings); park and ride schemes; transport infrastructure (including new roads); and mineral extraction.*

Land use or development in Green Wedges should:

- a) retain the open and undeveloped character of the Green Wedge;***
- b) retain and create green networks between the countryside and open spaces within the urban areas; and***
- c) retain and enhance public access to the Green Wedge, especially for recreation.”***

Policy CS19 - Bio-diversity and geo-diversity

3.37 Strategic objectives:

- “To improve the design quality of all new developments in the District including the need to design out crime; and***
- To protect the important areas of the District’s natural environment (species and habitats), landscape and geology and to improve biodiversity, wildlife habitats and corridors through the design of new developments and the management of existing areas by working with partners.***

3.38 *The District of Blaby has a number of sites of ecological and geological importance of national, regional and local level significance, which the Council will seek to safeguard and enhance.*

3.39 *Where a proposed development on land within or outside a SSSI is likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI (either individually or in combination with other developments), planning permission will not normally be granted. Where an adverse effect on the site’s notified special interest features is likely, an exception will only be made where the benefits of the development, at this site, clearly outweigh both the impacts that it is likely to have on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest and any broader impacts on the network of SSSIs. Conditions and / or*

planning obligations will be used to mitigate the harmful aspects of the development and where possible, to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the site's biodiversity or geological interest.

3.40 Other sites within the District (including Regionally Important Geological Sites, Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites and UK and local (Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland) Bio-diversity Action Plan sites etc), will be protected and enhanced (where appropriate). The Council will seek to resist proposed development on, or affecting such sites, where the development could be alternatively located in less biodiverse / geologically sensitive areas. Where there are no alternative sites available, the designated sites should be retained with appropriate buffering and mitigation measures put in place to avoid / reduce any adverse impacts resulting from the proposal. Where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be sought, including provision of replacement habitats.

3.41 The Council will work closely with national and local wildlife organisations, local communities and landowners in order to ensure the creation and designation of new wildlife sites and the identification, restoration, protection and enhancement of existing sites and new priority habitats, where appropriate opportunities arise. The Council will explore the potential for new 'Local Wildlife Sites' in association with major development.

3.42 The Council will seek to maintain / extend networks of natural habitats to link sites of biodiversity importance by avoiding or repairing the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats. These networks should be protected from development. Where development in these areas cannot be avoided, the networks of natural habitats should be strengthened by or integrated within the development. The Council recognises that networks cross Local Authority boundaries, so will work with partners to ensure their maintenance and enhancement.

3.43 In terms of species protection, the Council will protect those species which do not receive statutory protection under a range of legislative provisions, but have been identified as requiring conservation action as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity nationally. Any development proposals should ensure that these species and their habitats are protected from the adverse effects of development through the use of appropriate mitigation measures.

3.44 This Council recognises that previously developed land can be of significant biodiversity or geological interest. Where this is the case, the Council will aim to retain this interest and have it incorporated into any development of the site and / or adopt appropriate mitigation measures.

3.45 When considering development proposals of an appropriate type and scale, the Council will seek to ensure that opportunities to build in biodiversity or geological features are included as part of the design.

Sustainable Urban Extension

3.46 Opportunities to improve biodiversity will be explored as part of the SUE west of Leicester. Potential to improve the bio-diversity of Green corridors (particularly those adjacent to the Lubbesthorpe Brook and other water courses) and linkages to the open countryside to the west should be explored. The existing hedgerows and fox coverts on the site will provide further opportunities to provide green linkages. Several ponds and water features of existing or potential wildlife value and visual merit exist that need to be retained.”

4.0 BASELINE LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

National Character Area (Natural England)

4.1 Natural England's National Character Area (2012) places the site within Character Area 94 Leicestershire Vales. The entire study area lies within this National Character Area.

Key Characteristics:

- Elevation ranges from 47m above sea level to a maximum of 176m. The average elevation of the landscape is 105m above sea level.
- This large, complex and heterogeneous area comprises low-lying clay vales and river valleys extending between wold landscapes and other areas of higher ground, including the area referred to as High Cross Plateau in Warwickshire. In the north, the Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield and Charnwood rise quite steeply from the low-lying land west of Leicester. To the north-west there is a more gradual transition to the flat, glacial till dominated edge of the Mease/Sence Lowlands, while to the south of this there is an equally gradual transition to Dunsmore and Feldon.
- Mudstones underlie this area and give rise to productive clay soils across much of the area. The area has fertile soils along the river corridors owing to the conditions produced by the alluvial and glacial drift deposits. Farmed land can be found across the area as a result of the fertile soils.
- Woodlands are small and intermittent and are commonly spinneys, copses and game coverts. The majority of woodland is of broad-leaved type with Oak and Ash pre-dominating, and is found on heavier clay soils. Ancient woodlands, particularly the clay valleys, include oak, ash, field maple.
- There is a considerable variety in the distribution and extent of hedgerow and tree cover and density of hedgerows. Enclosure often with low hedges and variable densities of hedgerow trees are often in poor condition. Regular geometric patterns with straight hedgerows and roads amongst which sit the newly created farmsteads and field barns. Some loss of hedgerows due expansion of arable land / ageing hedgerow trees.

- Wildlife occurs throughout the area in a wide range of habitats found in both rural and urban areas. Farmed land is an important habitat and in common with much of lowland England, arable land and agriculturally improved pasture comprise a major proportion of the habitats now present within the NCA. These habitats give much of the character to the area and support a wide range of species, including some that have undergone dramatic declines such as skylark and grey partridge.
- Development is locally concentrated, such as around Lutterworth/Magna Park, at junctions along the M69, around Hinckley, as well as on the fringes of Leicester. Large villages are frequent and dominated by 19th and early 20th century brick buildings. They are linked by a dense network of minor roads. Separate villages can be seen clustered around tall church spires.

Blaby District Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment

Blaby, Countesthorpe and Whetstone Fringe

- 4.2 This character area is located south east of the centre of the district and incorporates several of its largest settlements including Blaby, Countesthorpe, Whetstone, and Cosby and the smaller village of Littlethorpe. The landscape is heavily influenced by settlement urban fringe.

Key Characteristics:

- Edges of Countesthorpe, Blaby, Whetstone and Cosby have strong urban fringe characteristics;
- Further south the character area becomes more rural and characterised by farming land;
- Strong linear woodland features such as the heavily wooded disused railway line run through the area;
- Several small and meandering stream corridors traverse the landscapes which influence the topography;
- Parkland characteristics in open space and golf courses adjacent to urban fringes;

- Fields are small to medium scale with a regular pattern and bounded by well-maintained tall hedgerows;
- New linear woodland planting along field margins and new open space.

Site Character

- 4.3 The site is located at the end of Cork Lane to the south-west of Glen Parva. It is currently being used as pasture for grazing cattle.
- 4.4 The northern boundary is defined by an overgrown and unmaintained field boundary. A public right of way abuts the northern site boundary and leads past the site, separating it from existing residential properties.
- 4.5 The western boundary is defined by a poorly managed / maintained field boundary and the former railway corridor. The hedge allows filtered views towards pastures for grazing and the Grand Union Canal further to the west. The former railway corridor extends beyond the northern and southern site boundary and is frequently being used by pedestrians.
- 4.6 The majority of the southern boundary is defined by steep slope grading down towards Navigation Drive. The slope itself is only covered by grass with no major vegetation inhabiting this area, allowing views up the slope. The south-western corner of the site contains a larger group of native shrubs and small to medium size trees, growing along the former railway corridor.
- 4.7 The eastern boundary is defined by semi-mature native shrubs and trees providing a substantial visual barrier. A public right of way for pedestrians and cyclists provides connectivity between New Bridge Road and Cork Lane and runs to the east of the site boundary.
- 4.8 The surrounding pattern of the site can be described as mixed. It is mainly defined by urban residential to the north and small to medium industrial and commercial units, predominantly found to the east. Whereas the south and west can be mainly classed as rural with patches of residential dwellings and commercial units. Further to that the pattern to the south and west also contains the river corridor, containing the River Sence and Grand Union Canal.

Topography

- 4.9 The proposed development site lies at the southern end of a ridgeline extending out eastwards into the Sence River Corridor. The majority of

the site drops gently westwards, with the highpoint located at 84 metres above sea level (AMSL), to the west of the existing site entrance. The levels drop from 84 metres in the east down to the western site boundary with varying levels from 75 to 68 metres sloping south.

- 4.10 The southern part of the site is the lowest point. Three quarters of the southern boundary is defined by a steep drop in levels, of 10 metres, with a 3 in 1 slope. The south-western part of the site has a gentler gradient in a south-west direction with the low point at 68 metres above sea level.
- 4.11 The surrounding landscape is defined by the river corridor of the Rivers Soar and Sence. The rivers have cut out a river valley over the centuries, marking the low points in the area. The site context is also defined by three distinct high points in the area: Enderby, Eyres Monsell and Blaby. The land slopes down from the highpoints, ranging from 100 to 80 metres, to the river corridor below at 60 to 55 metres. (See Appendix F).

Site & Setting

- 4.12 A detailed desktop study has been undertaken for the site. The baseline appraisal seeks to explore the site, its context and the policies affecting the planning and development of the site. This section provides a baseline analysis of the available information which has been gathered from the Local Planning Authority. FEC Drawing No. **5059 / SS.01 Rev.B** (Appendix A) detail the location and context of the site and policies.
- 4.13 The site is located at the end of Cork Lane to the south-west of Glen Parva. The site is currently being used as part of several interconnected fields, as pasture for grazing cattle.
- 4.14 The northern and southern site boundaries abut primarily residential areas. The residential buildings to the south on Navigation Drive being the more recent development in the area.
- 4.15 The eastern part of the site abuts an employment area containing small to medium size commercial and industrial units.
- 4.16 The proposed development site abuts the river corridor to the west, as highlighted on the Site and Setting plan. The river corridor is covered by Policy CS16 Green Wedge, restricting development beyond the western boundary.

- 4.17 The proposed development site benefits from an existing footpath network providing good connectivity to the amenities and services located to the north-east and the Green Wedge with the Grand Union Canal walk to the west.

- 4.18 The northern and southern boundary abuts existing residential dwellings.

5.0 SCHEME DESCRIPTION

- 5.1 The proposed residential development at Cork Lane, Glen Parva (**Appendix D, Masterplan 5059 / LM 04 Rev.C**) consists of 166 residential dwellings. The proposal is a natural infill to the south-western fringe of Glen Parva, to the east of the former railway corridor, overlooking the River Sence and Soar Valley.
- 5.2 The proposed development will be situated on a former pasture, which forms part of a ridge line, with views across the river valley. The northern and eastern site boundaries are defined by public rights of way, providing immediate connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists to the nearby amenities. Vehicular access will be provided via Cork Lane, located on the north-eastern corner of the site.
- 5.3 A tree lined avenue will lead to the core of the site, from which the development will radiate out to the development limits. Residential roads to the south and west, will provide framed views of the river valley.
- 5.4 The larger properties with a lower density are located along the southern and western development limit. These properties have views towards the river valley located to the south and west of the site.
- 5.5 The proposed public open space defines the western and southern site boundaries. The public open space located on the southern boundary will be set aside for ecological enhancements aimed at higher biodiversity. Additionally, the planting of trees on the slope would potentially reduce the impact of the development on the site context.
- 5.6 The attenuation feature will be located in the south-west corner of the site. This will allow for the creation of a wetland habitat, further improving the onsite biodiversity and potentially attracting wildlife.
- 5.7 A proposed play area and informal recreational space will be located further north, along the former railway track. This will allow easy access for future and existing residents. Additionally the proximity of the Guthlaxton Trail provides a cycle track to the centre of Leicester, providing connectivity and promotion sustainable transport.
- 5.8 Existing boundary vegetation, consisting of overgrown hedgerows and mature trees, defining the northern and eastern boundaries will be retained and in filled where possible and/or necessary.

6.0 DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS AND POTENTIAL EFFECTS

- 6.1 The proposed development has the potential to create a range of landscape and visual impacts. Potential effects have been recognised through the desk study and field evaluation phases of the landscape and visual impact assessment, the findings of which have fed back into the evolving scheme design as part of an iterative process.
- 6.2 Landscape impact could arise through the loss of landscape features or perceived changes to the landscape character area.
- 6.3 Visual impacts arise through the change to visual amenity. This could be experienced by occupiers of adjacent residential properties, other buildings; public rights of way and from outside the site but must be from public vantage points.
- 6.4 For this scheme, adverse landscape and visual impacts arise due to the change of land use to a residential development from the existing site use. Beneficial landscape effects are provided by the proposed landscape treatment, increase in biodiversity, improved connectivity and inclusion of public open space to the south and west of the site.
- 6.5 Mitigation measures have been developed as an integral part of the design process and of the development proposals. The proposed scheme aims to integrate the development into the existing landscape fabric, effectively mitigating any potential adverse landscape and visual impacts.

Mitigation and Enhancements

- 6.6 Landscaping of this site focuses on several factors, which arise from the overall scheme design and site location.
- 6.7 Firstly, the exposed location of the site, on top of a ridge line, on the south western settlement fringe of Glen Parva, overlooks the River Sence and Soar. The exposed development site requires diligence and extra care to provide a high quality landscape scheme, to mitigate and/or reduce any potential landscape and visual impact that could arise from the development.
- 6.8 The potential for overlooking of neighbouring properties, particularly to the south and the public rights of way running along the northern and eastern boundary of the site, places high importance on the boundary treatment. The boundary vegetation will be renewed with elements such

as hedgerow and shrub planting, as well as trees where required. Special emphasis will be placed on the southern boundary, which due to its topography will expose the proposed development to the adjacent residential dwellings, located around Navigation Drive.

- 6.9 The planting strategy for the southern slope has been inspired by the industrial feel and existing vegetation of Glen Parva. Tall poplar trees will help to break up the proposed built form, become a feature in themselves, and over time help to soften long distance views to the south of the site. Additional native tree planting will provide interest by providing a variety of shapes, colours and heights.
- 6.10 The western boundary vegetation will be retained and improved where necessary to restore fragmenting hedgerows and improve the hedgerow condition in this urban fringe area. The Proposed public open space abuts the western site boundary, which will provide additional opportunity to reduce the visual impact on the site context, by providing additional landscape treatments.
- 6.11 The northern boundary is defined by the off-site public footpath which runs along the entire length. The matured and overgrown hedge is located to the south of this public right of way. The existing boundary treatment will be maintained and improved by additional shrub and hedge planting where necessary to maintain the natural visual screen to the north.
- 6.12 As the eastern boundary is relatively short and fronts onto Cork Lane and a public right of way, providing a connection for cyclists and pedestrians to New Bridge Road. The treatment should reflect the existing character of the landscape along the eastern site boundary. A native hedge and native shrub planting should be appropriate to tie the site entrance in with the existing context of the eastern boundary.
- 6.13 The proposed public open space area provides room for ample landscape and ecological improvements to the site. This space will also act as a buffer zone between adjacent land and the site and provide a landscape feature along the southern and western site boundary. These areas provide space for shrub and tree planting, to improve the overall landscape value of the site and aid integration with the surrounding landscape. The introduction of a range of native and ornamental shrubs, hedges and trees will improve biodiversity and attract an abundance of wildlife to the site. Mature and semi-mature tree planting throughout the site will help to reduce the visibility of the proposed built form and reduce the impact of views from the south and west (e.g. Navigation Drive or Grand Union Canal).

7.0 LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL

- 7.1 Careful consideration has been given to the design and location of the proposed development, on the former landfill site in Glen Parva, to ensure that the proposed development would be successfully integrated and absorbed into the site context, and that the impact of this development on the existing landscape character and visual amenity would not result in significant adverse impacts.

Effect on Landscape Features

- 7.2 The proposals for the site include the retention of the majority of the existing boundary vegetation; along the northern, western and eastern boundaries.
- 7.3 There are no high quality trees located on the proposed development site, which would require retention. There will be a limited tree loss along the eastern boundary and a potential reduction in width for the northern boundary hedge.
- 7.4 Through the review of the Proposed Landscape Masterplan, it has also been demonstrated that it would be possible to improve and expand upon the existing boundary vegetation. The retention and integration of the existing vegetation create greater, more meaningful areas of public open space and provide a degree of maturity.
- 7.5 The landscape proposals for the proposed development site include the planting of additional trees, which will be predominantly native species, and which will mitigate the loss of existing trees, and will replace predominantly low category trees which have a limited long-term contribution to the landscape and visual amenity with trees that will have a longer-term contribution to the landscape framework and visual amenity of both the proposed development, and the site context.
- 7.6 There are no public rights of way crossing the current site. The proposed residential development will create and provide potential routes through the development site, connecting with areas of public open space to the north and public rights of way. This will also provide to the potential to connect to the Guthlaxton Trail which passes to the north of the site.

8.0 VISUAL APPRAISAL

- 8.1 For the Visual Impact Assessment 27 representative views have been identified, of which 9 are Site Appraisal viewpoints and 18 are Site Context viewpoints (see Appendix G – Photographic Record).

Site Appraisal Viewpoints

- 8.2 The following 9 photographs have been taken onsite to provide the appropriate appraisal and context of the proposed development site. The implementation of the development will have impacts on the Landscape and Views.

8.3 Photograph Nos. A (located South-West corner of site , looking NE)

The viewpoint illustrates the character of the former landfill site in Glen Parva, from the South West corner of the proposed development site. The site is quite open with uninterrupted views across the site. The landform is gently rising towards the centre of the site. The current site use is a pasture for grazing cattle. Partial views of tree canapés can be seen of mature specimens located on the northern and eastern site boundary. A fairly recently constructed residential development is located to the south of the site. The level differences become apparent on the right hand side of the viewpoint.

8.4 Photograph Nos. B (located on western site boundary, looking SE)

The viewpoint illustrates the level changes across the site, as seen from the western site boundary. The drop in levels to the south of the site, where the recently constructed residential development is located, becomes apparent. The undulating landform contains views within the site, but with the lack of onsite vegetation the views from the outside will not be contained.

8.5 Photograph Nos. C (located in North-West corner of site, looking NE)

The photograph depicts the continuation of the former railway corridor to the north-east, which defines the western site boundary. The young vegetation buffer on the right contains views to the adjacent public open space and residential area beyond.

8.6 Photograph Nos. D (located half way on Northern boundary, looking S)

The viewpoint illustrates the onsite level changes. The landform slopes up to a central position, preventing long distance views from the central location on the northern boundary. There are clear long distance views, illustrating the high power lines and spire of Saint Peter's church. The

residential development to the south of the proposed development is not visible from this location.

8.7 Photograph Nos. E (located on Northern boundary, west of site entrance, looking SE)

The viewpoint illustrates the mature vegetation located along the northern part of the eastern boundary. A disused and crumbling brick structure is located adjacent to the site entrance. A phone mast is located further to the right, in a prominent position. The middle ground highlights the semi mature boundary vegetation, containing an unmanaged field boundary and maturing tree stock. Glimpsed views into the site are possible from the public footpath further to the east, however, they will be of a more transient nature.

8.8 Photograph Nos. F (located in South-East corner of site, looking NW)

The viewpoint is located is the South-Eastern corner of the site, facing north. The photograph illustrates the level changes towards the North-East corner. The partial views of the existing northern boundary vegetation can be seen, as well as glimpsed views on the most southern property on Cork Lane. The existing boundary treatment along the northern boundary offers occasional glimpses into the site.

8.9 Photograph Nos. G (located in South-East corner of site, looking SW)

The views point is located in the South-East corner of the site, adjacent to Photograph F, facing south-west. The lack of existing vegetation and local topography allow for long distance views to the surrounding countryside. The existing residential area to the south of the site can be viewed with ease, as there is no a visual restriction or obstructions.

8.10 Photograph Nos. H (located in South-West corner of site, looking E)

The viewpoint illustrates the level change along the majority of the southern site boundary. The wooden fence line demarcates the southern site boundary, to the residential dwellings. The lack of vegetation and openness of the site allows for uninterrupted views, but also exposes it to the surrounding area. Only partial views of the eastern boundary vegetation and mobile phone mast are possible, due to change in levels. The existing residential dwellings to the south of the site are exposed to any potential development due to a lack of screening.

8.11 Photograph Nos. I (located in South-West corner of site, looking SW)

The viewpoint is located adjacent to the viewpoint H, in the South-West corner of the site, facing south. The view illustrates the southern

boundary adjacent to the Grand Union Canal. The existing vegetation and localised level changes do not allow views outside the site.

Site Context Viewpoints

8.12 Photograph Nos. 1 (located approx. 775m to the West on Old Church Road, looking SE)

The photograph illustrates the view from Old Church Road, adjacent to the recently completed residential development to the west of the site. The existing vegetation in the fore- and middle ground does not allow views of the site in the distance. The overall character of the view would not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium to High;
- Magnitude of change: Neutral;
- Overall significance: Neutral in Year 1 and Year 15.

8.13 Photograph Nos. 2 (located approx. 910m to the West at the entrance to Jubilee Park, looking E)

The viewpoint illustrates part of Jubilee Park located on the western bank of the River Soar. The view to the proposed development site is framed by mature trees to either side. However, the vegetation in the middle and background prevents views towards the site. The overall character of the view would not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: High;
- Magnitude of change: Neutral;
- Overall significance: Neutral in Year 1 and Year 15.

8.14 Photograph Nos. 3 (located approx. 813m to the West, in Jubilee Park on the western bank of the River Soar, looking E)

The photograph illustrates the view from Jubilee Park, adjacent to the river bank, looking across the flood plain and pastures, separated by field boundary hedges. The ground gradually slopes up to the proposed development site on top of the ridge line. Parts of the site can be seen from this location, which is marked by the mobile phone mast located on the western boundary. The proposed development would be seen from this viewpoint and would potentially change the character of the view.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: High;

- Magnitude of change: Medium adverse;
- Overall significance: Medium adverse in year 1 and low adverse at Year 15.

8.15 Photograph Nos. 4 (located approx. 948m to the South-West on Blaby Road (B582), looking NE)

The photograph illustrates the view from the bridge on Blaby Road, crossing the railway lines. The local recycling yard and sewer treatment station is located in the foreground along with the rail tracks. The proposed development site itself is located in the background of the view. The pasture with the northern and eastern boundary vegetation can be seen. The lack of existing onsite vegetation allows views of the site in the distance. The overall character of the view would change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Low;
- Magnitude of change: Low adverse;
- Overall significance: Low adverse in Year 1 and Neutral at Year 15.

8.16 Photograph Nos. 5 (located approx. 480m to the South on Foulds Lane, looking NW)

The photograph illustrates the view from Foulds Road, adjacent to the active railway line to the south of the site. The close board fence and mature vegetation in the foreground do not allow views to and beyond the railway line. The overall character of the view would not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Low to Medium;
- Magnitude of change: Neutral;
- Overall significance: Neutral in Year 1 and Year 15.

8.17 Photograph Nos. 6 (located approx. 522m to the South-East on Leicester Road, looking NW)

The photograph illustrates the view from Leicester Road, immediately to the north of the railway line. The existing dwellings and vegetation in the middle ground obscure direct views to the site. The openness of the pasture in the foreground and the localised topography allow glimpsed views of the site proposed development site. The proposed development would be seen from this viewpoint and would potentially change the character of the view.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Low to Medium;
- Magnitude of change: Medium adverse;
- Overall significance: Medium adverse in Year 1 and low adverse / neutral in Year 15.

8.18 Photograph Nos. 7 (located approx. 335m to the South on Public Right of Way, looking NW)

The photograph illustrates the view from a public right of way to the south of New Bridge Road, adjacent to pastures. The existing field boundary hedge in the foreground prevents direct views towards the site. Potential glimpses of the site are unlikely, in its current undeveloped state. The overall character of the view would not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: High;
- Magnitude of change: Neutral;
- Overall significance: Neutral in Year 1 and Year 15.

8.19 Photograph Nos. 8 (located approx. 170m to the South on New Bridge Road, looking N)

The photograph illustrates the view from a permissive access at the end of New Bridge Street, facing towards the site. The recently built development on Navigation Drive occupies the middle ground of the photograph. Due to the height and density of the residential development views of the site are obscured. In its current state, it is not possible to see the proposed development site. However, there is the potential of glimpsed views of the rooftops of the proposed development in the future. The overall character of the view would potentially not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium to High;
- Magnitude of change: Low adverse to Neutral;
- Overall significance: Low adverse in Year 1 and neutral in Year 15.

8.20 Photograph Nos. 9 (located approx. 50m to the South-West on the former railway track, to the south of Grand Union Canal), looking NE)

The photograph is taken on the southern site of the former railway bridge, crossing the Grand Union Canal, to the south-west of the site. It illustrates the in place security measures and the maturity of the self-seeded vegetation. The matured vegetation in the fore and background does not allow views of the proposed development site. The overall character of the view would not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium;
- Magnitude of change: Neutral;
- Overall significance: Neutral in Year 1 and Year 15.

8.21 Photograph Nos. 10 (located approx. 105m to the South-West on Grand Union Canal bridge (No. 100), looking NE)

The photograph illustrates the view from a canal bridge (No. 100) towards the site. The Grand Union Canal can be seen on the right in the photograph. The canal bank vegetation in the foreground restricts the views towards the site. The middle ground is highlighted by a boundary hedge, outlining the western site boundary. Glimpsed views of the site can be seen through the boundary hedge. The overall character of the view would change as the western boundary hedge, in the middle ground of the photograph, would not contain views of the proposed dwellings.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium to High;
- Magnitude of change: Medium adverse;
- Overall significance: Medium adverse in Year 1 and Low adverse in Year 15.

8.22 Photograph Nos. 11 (located approx. 300m to the West on east bank of Grand Union Canal, looking E)

The photograph illustrates the view from the Grand Union Canal towards the proposed development site, located behind the boundary hedge to the east. The pasture in the foreground, currently used to graze cattle, allows clear views towards the field boundary hedge in the background. Glimpsed views of the recently built residential development on Navigation Drive can be seen through gaps in the hedge. The proposed development site is located further north (left) and

is situated on raised ground, allowing potential views of the development once completed. The overall character of the view would change, as there is a likelihood of glimpsed views of the development.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: High;
- Magnitude of change: Low to Medium adverse;
- Overall significance: Low to Medium adverse in Year 1 and Low adverse to Neutral in Year 15.

8.23 Photograph Nos. 12 (located approx. 190m to the West in a field adjacent to the site, looking E)

The photograph illustrates a view of the fields located to the west of the proposed site, currently being used as a pasture. The hedge in the middle ground restricts views towards the site. The field boundary hedge in the background marks the western site boundary. Glimpsed views of the site can be seen through the hedge. The overall character of the view would change adversely, as the field boundary hedge will no contain views of the proposed development.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium to High;
- Magnitude of change: Low adverse;
- Overall significance: Low adverse in Year 1 and Neutral in Year 15.

8.24 Photograph Nos. 13 (located approx. 275m to the North-West on Public Right of Way, adjacent to Lock 36, looking SE)

The photograph illustrates the view from a public right of way leading from Lock 36 on the Grand Union Canal to the northern corner of the proposed development site. The site is located uphill behind several rows of matured and unmaintained field boundaries. These field boundaries prevent direct views towards the proposed site. The overall character of the view would not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: High;
- Magnitude of change: Neutral;
- Overall significance: Neutral in Year 1 and Year 15.

8.25 Photograph Nos. 14 (located approx. 2m to the North on Public Right of Way adjacent to site boundary, looking SE)

The photograph illustrates the view from the public right of way running along the northern site boundary. The viewpoint is located on the northern corner of the site. The photograph highlights the level changes across the site, which prevents views past the proposed development site. The lack of vegetation in the foreground will allow full views of proposed development. Thus the overall character of the view would change adversely.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium to High;
- Magnitude of change: High adverse
- Overall significance: High adverse in Year 1 and Medium adverse in Year 15.

8.26 Photograph Nos. 15 (located approx. 215m to the North-East on Cork Lane, looking SW)

The photograph illustrates the view from Cork Lane, to the north of the site. The existing street trees and residential dwellings and the mature boundary vegetation in the background prevent direct views of the site. The overall character of the view would not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium to High;
- Magnitude of change: Neutral;
- Overall significance: Neutral in Year 1 and Year 15.

8.27 Photograph Nos. 16 (located approx. 115m to the North-East on Cork Lane, looking SW)

The photograph illustrates the view from Cork Lane, to the north of the site, looking towards the proposed site entrance. The existing residential dwellings to the west (right) restrict views towards the site. However, glimpsed views of the site are possible through the gaps in the boundary vegetation. The mature tree in central location in the background marks the approximate location of the proposed site entrance. The overall character of the view would not change adversely.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium to High;
- Magnitude of change: Low adverse;

- Overall significance: Low adverse in Year 1 and Neutral in Year 15.

8.28 Photograph Nos. 17 (located approx. 5m to the North on Cork Lane, looking NW)

The photograph illustrates the view Cork Lane along the northern site boundary, highlighting the public right of way and matured northern boundary vegetation. The photograph illustrates how the existing boundary vegetation, along the northern boundary, restricts views into the site. The overall character of the view would not change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium;
- Magnitude of change: Neutral;
- Overall significance: Neutral in Year 1 and Year 15.

8.29 Photograph Nos. 18 (located approx. 3m to the Sout-West on Blaby Road (B582), looking NE)

The photograph illustrates the view from Cork Lane, adjacent to the proposed site entrance, on the north eastern corner of the site. Improvised fencing and braches of vegetation in the foreground limit the view from this location. However, the middle and background can still be seen clearly, allowing long distance views to the west, across the river corridor. The onsite topography becomes apparent as it drops away allowing long distance views. The overall character of the view would change.

- Visual sensitivity of the receptor: Medium to High;
- Magnitude of change: High adverse;
- Overall significance: High adverse in Year 1 and Medium adverse in Year 15.

1.3 Summary

From a visual perspective, of the 18 site context photographs 10 are rated in the adverse categories. This represents 55% of the photographs taken (Appendix G – Photographic Record). Nine out of these 10 images are taken within a 250 metre radius from the site. This will result in a Medium adverse impact on local views to the east, south and west of the site. The impact for long distance view is confined to the west, south-west and south of the site. This results from the local

topography and carved out river corridor; allow uninterrupted long distance views towards the site. However, as the impacts might be adverse upon implementation, with an appropriate mitigation strategy the impact on the views will be reduced to low adverse / neutral within 15 years. The overall significance resulting from the completion of this development would likely be neutral/ low adverse.

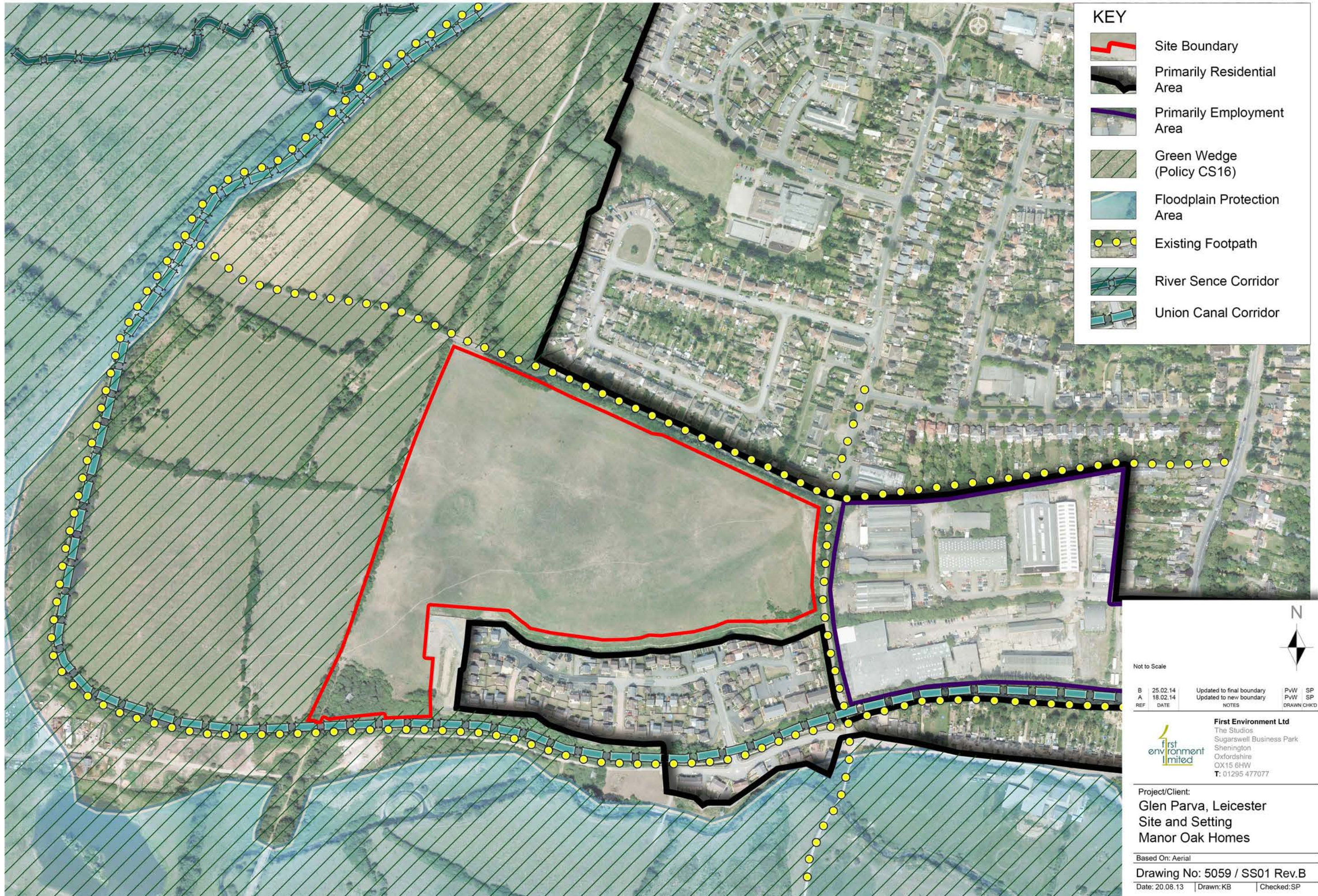
9.0 FINAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The preceding analysis has identified the extent of landscape and visual impact arising from the proposed development. The context of the area is influenced both in landscape and visual terms by residential, agricultural and recreational land uses.
- 9.2 The proposed site is located within a landscape that is covered by Natural England statutory designation Character Area 94, Leicestershire Vales.
- 9.3 The proposed development site abuts the river corridor to the west, as highlighted on the Site and Setting plan. The river corridor is covered by Policy CS16 Green Wedge, restricting development beyond the western boundary, as shown on the Site & Setting Plan in Appendix A.
- 9.4 The proposed development site benefits from an existing footpath network providing good connectivity to the amenity's and services located to the north-east and the Green Wedge with the Grand Union Canal walk to the west.
- 9.5 To assess the nature of the impact as a result of the proposals, it is appropriate to consider the impact of the proposed residential development upon the existing landscape character and visual environment within which the site is set.
- 9.6 The visual assessment identified a number of potentially sensitive receptors, most situated immediately adjacent to the site boundaries or long range views located predominantly to the west and south. To assess the nature of the impact as a result of the proposals, it is appropriate to consider the impact of the proposed residential development upon the existing landscape character and visual environment within which the site is set.
- 9.7 The visual assessment identified a number of potentially sensitive receptors, most situated immediately adjacent to the site boundaries or long range views located predominantly to the west and south.
- 9.8 The public footpaths adjacent to the northern and eastern boundary, and vantage points from public rights of way to the west of the site were assessed as potentially sensitive receptors. Existing residential properties to the south-east, south and north posed additional areas of potential sensitivity to the developments visual impact. The retention of the majority of the existing vegetation within the proposed landscape treatment will likely help to reduce the impact of the proposed development in the wider landscape context to the north and east.

- 9.9 Receptors on the south-eastern, southern and western boundaries with views of undeveloped pasture and overgrown field boundary hedges will be impacted upon by views of new residential dwellings.
- 9.10 Long distance views across the river valley particularly to the south and west of the site will likely be impacted upon by the proposed development due to the exposed nature of the site.
- 9.11 Overall a beneficial long-term effect will be generated by the proposed landscape treatment. The public open spaces will provide additional depth to boundary treatments. The site connects directly to the Guthlaxton Trail for sustainable transport alternatives, providing connectivity to the heart of Leicester. A public right of way runs parallel to the northern and eastern boundary enabling easy access to the surrounding countryside and local amenities for pedestrians.
- 9.12 In conclusion, the site development will potentially cause some adverse visual and landscape effects, however of the 18 site context photographs 10 are rated in the adverse categories. This represents 55% of the photographs taken (Appendix G – Photographic Record). Nine out of these 10 images are taken within a 250 metre radius from the site. This will result in a Medium adverse impact on local views to the east, south and west of the site. The impact for long distance view is confined to the west, south-west and south of the site. This results from the local topography and carved out river corridor; allow uninterrupted long distance views towards the site. However, as the impacts might be adverse upon implementation, with an appropriate mitigation strategy the impact on the views will be reduced to low adverse / neutral within 15 years. The overall significance resulting from the completion of this development would likely be neutral/ low adverse.

APPENDICES

Site & Setting



KEY

	Site Boundary
	Primarily Residential Area
	Primarily Employment Area
	Green Wedge (Policy CS16)
	Floodplain Protection Area
	Existing Footpath
	River Sence Corridor
	Union Canal Corridor



Not to Scale

B	25.02.14	Updated to final boundary	PWW	SP
A	18.02.14	Updated to new boundary	PWW	SP
REF	DATE	NOTES	DRAWN	CHKD

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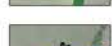










Project/Client:
Glen Parva, Leicester
Site and Setting
Manor Oak Homes

Based On: Aerial
Drawing No: 5059 / SS01 Rev.B
 Date: 20.08.13 | Drawn: KB | Checked: SP

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Opportunities & Constraints

KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Steep Slope
-  Opportunity for POS
-  Open Views Towards Green Open Space
-  Existing Dense Green Boundary
-  Existing Footpath
-  Dismantled Railway
-  River Sence Corridor
-  Union Canal Corridor
-  Main Vehicular Routes
-  Link Vehicular Routes
-  Potential for Pedestrian Link
-  Potential for Pedestrian Canal Crossing
-  Opportunity for Natural Buffer



Not to Scale

REF	DATE	NOTES	PWW	SP
B	18.02.14	Updated to new boundary line	PWW	SP
A	10.02.14	Updated to LPA's comments	PWW	SP

First Environment Ltd
 The Studios
 Sugarswell Business Park
 Sherington
 Oxfordshire
 OX15 6HW
 T: 01295 477077

Project/Client:
Glen Parva, Leicester
Opportunities and Constraints
Manor Oak Homes

Based On: Aerial
Drawing No: 5059 / OC02 Rev.B
 Date: 20.08.13 | Drawn: KB | Checked:

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Green Corridor

Vision for Blaby's green space strategy:

“ To provide green spaces that make a positive contribution to the quality and diversity of the local environment and to the health and well-being of our residents. Our green spaces can be used, valued and enjoyed by everyone.”

Action Plan

Provide - provide sufficient accessible green space to meet current and future demand

Improve - maintain and raise the quality of our green spaces

Connect - work in partnership to develop and manage continuous green networks for people and wildlife

Involve - work in partnership with the community and stakeholders to develop, manage and promote green spaces

Resource - ensure sufficient resources are available to develop, manage and maintain green spaces

Sustain - ensure that the management of our green spaces have a positive impact on people, the local economy and the environment

Conserve - ensure that green space biodiversity, landscape and natural heritage is protected and conserved

With the potential extension of the cycle route and the existence of Jubilee Park – an opportunity for an appropriate linkage incorporating a wildlife / biodiversity walk could be provided by the LPA.

Enderby Lawn Tennis Club

District Leisure and Golf Centre

Glen Hills Nature Reserve

The location of the proposed development site abuts an existing cycle route, the **Guthlaxton Trail**, leading from Leicester to Market Harborough.

Northfield Park

Bouskell Park

BLABY








There is potential to utilise the former railway corridor to extend the cycle and footpath across the Grand Union Canal, all the way to Whetstone.

There is a potential for improved connectivity between the eastern and western side of the river valley.

Safeguarding Green Space

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides against building on green spaces and the sites of sports and recreational buildings for non-recreational uses. The NPPF indicates that local communities can identify for special protection green areas of particular importance by designating land as Local Green Space. Green Wedges and Areas of Separation along with their detailed boundaries will be reviewed through the District Council's Allocations, Designations and Development Management Plan Document.

KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Green Wedge
-  Existing Park / Green Space
-  Existing Cycle Route
-  Potential Cycle Route Improvements
-  Disused Railway Corridor used as Cycle path
-  Disused Railway Corridor



The Guthlaxton Trail form part of the National Cycle Network which is supported by Sustrans.

Sustrans works with local authorities and transport bodies to develop strategies and visions for the delivery of ambitious but achievable cycling, walking and sustainable travel change.



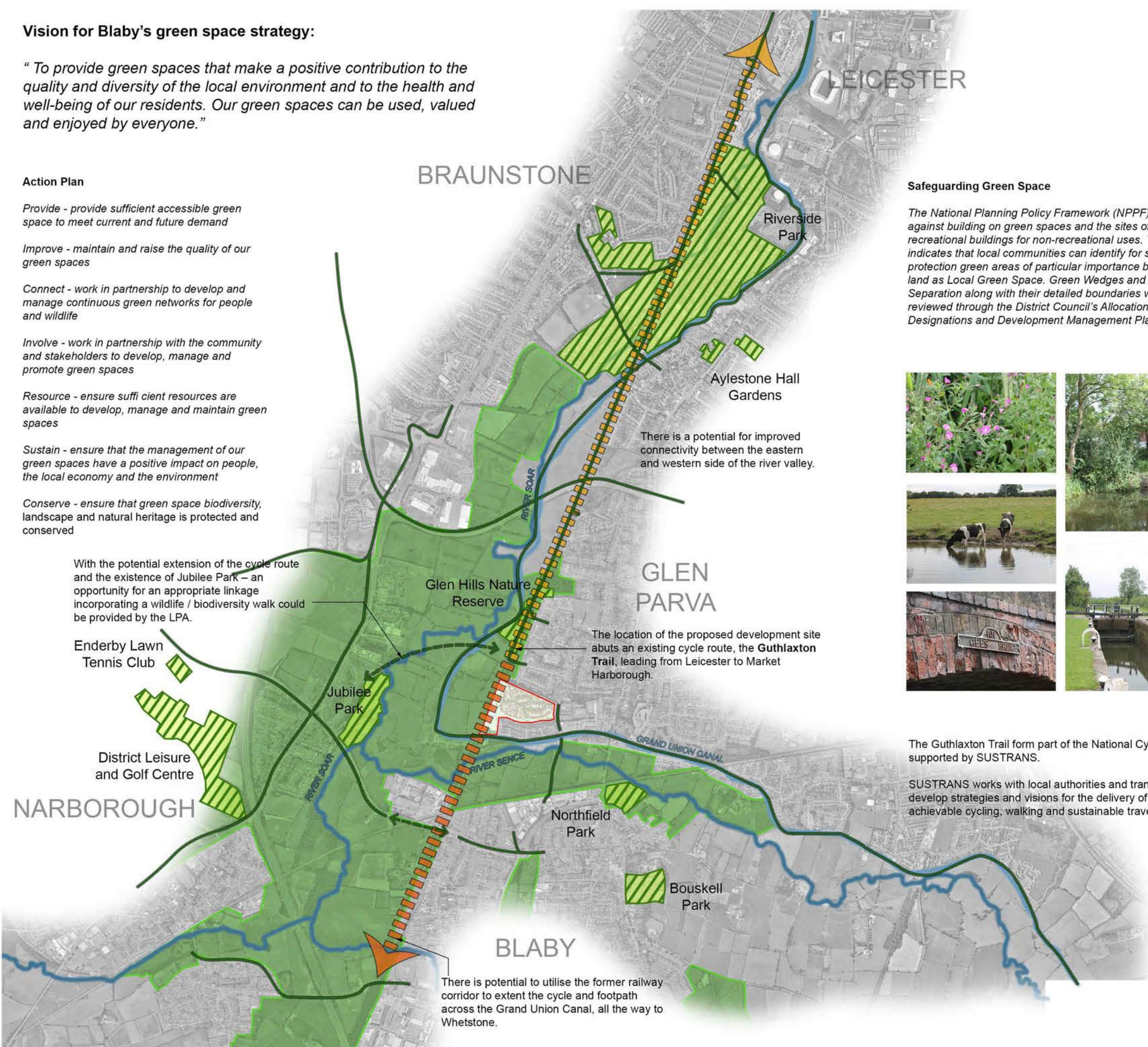
B	23.10.13	Updated to clients comments	PvW	SP
A	23.10.13	Updated to clients comments	PvW	SP
REF	DATE	NOTES	DRAWN	CHKD

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Project/Client:
**Glen Parva
 Green Wedge
 Manor Oak Homes**

Based On: Aerial
Drawing No: 5059.GC/03 Rev.B
 Date: 21.08.13 | Drawn: PvW | Checked: SP

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.



Landscape Masterplan

Public open space provides recreational ground for existing and future residents. Furthermore, it provides a transition space between the Green Wedge and proposed redevelopment.

Proposed pedestrian and cyclist connection to existing cycle route.

Proposed pedestrian and cyclist connection to existing cycle route.

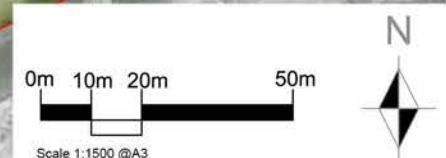
Extension of Guthlaxton Trail with potential to connect to Grand Union Canal and / or reinstate the former railway bridge for pedestrian / cyclist purposes, as long term goal.

Attenuation pond will provide the opportunity to improve onsite biodiversity, by providing appropriate wetland meadow and water tolerant trees.

Linear feature of poplar trees will reflect the local character and help to reduce the visual impact on the site context.

KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Proposed Tree
-  Wildflower Meadow
-  Existing Vegetation
-  Proposed Shrub
-  Wetland, Meadow
-  Grass
-  Proposed Hedge
-  Proposed Whips



Scale 1:1500 @A3

REF	DATE	NOTES	PW	SP
C	26.02.14	Updated to boundary amendments	PWW	SP
B	18.02.14	Updated to latest layout and boundary amendments	PWW	SP
A	05.02.14	Updated plan to clients comments	PWW	SP

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Project/Client:
Glen Parva
Landscape Masterplan
Manor Oak Homes

Based On: RGP 7779 0056 C
Drawing No: 5059 / LM.04 Rev.C
 Date: 09.12.13 | Drawn: PWW | Checked: SP

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.



Inspiration

Indicative Section



Framed Views

The proposed staggered planting of poplars will reduce the visual impact of the proposed development on the site context. Views towards the site will be "managed", by providing "channelled", framed or glimpsed views through the proposed boundary vegetation. This will potentially reduce the overall visual impact and aid the integration of the development into the site context.



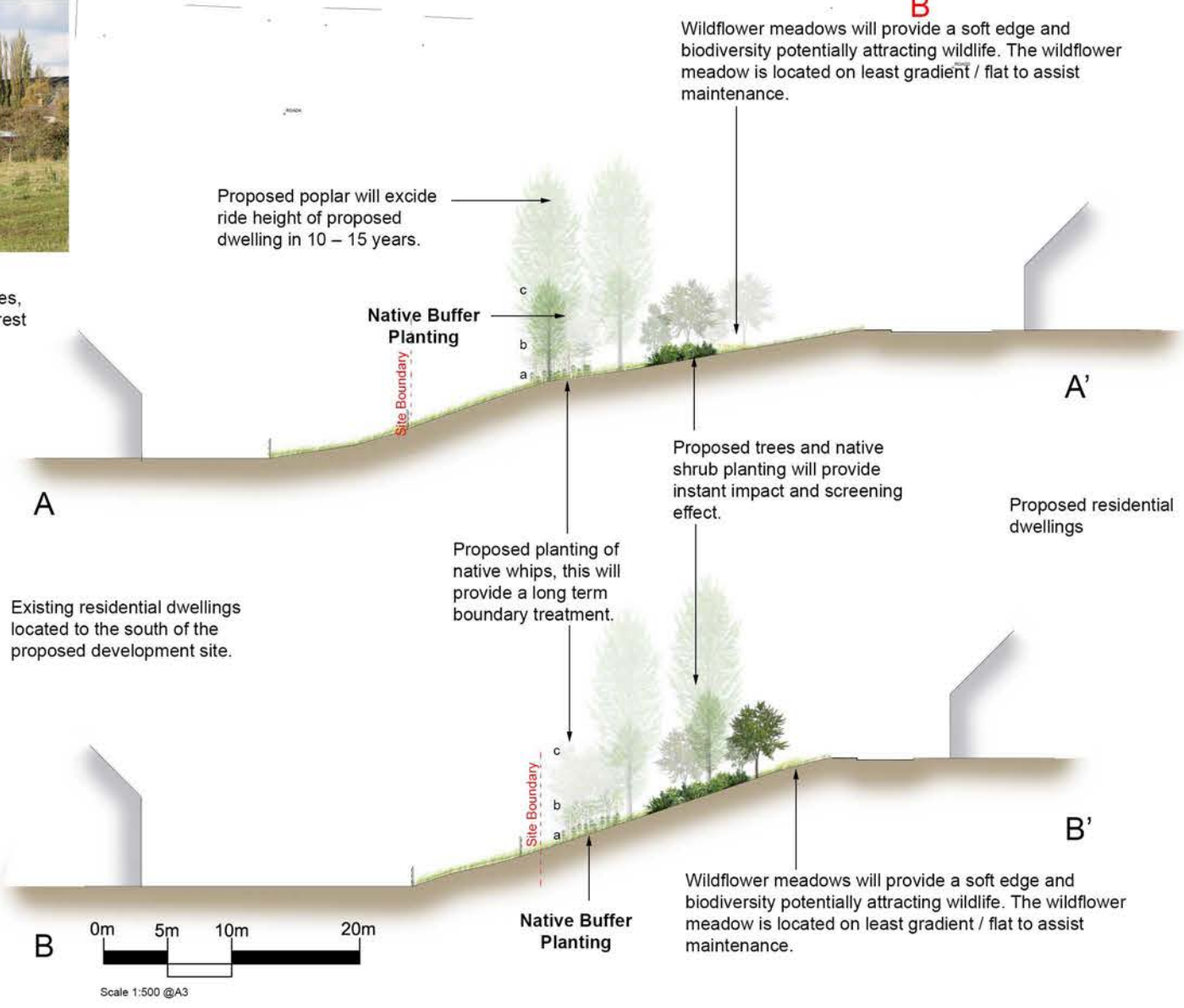
The planting strategy for the southern slope has been inspired by the industrial feel and existing vegetation of Glen Parva. Tall poplars help break up the built form, become a feature in themselves, and help to soften long distance views. Additional native tree planting with provide additional interest by providing a variety shapes form and height.

Potential Native Tree Species:
Acer campestre, Alnus glutinosa, Betula pendula, Betula pubescens, Carpinus betulus, Fraxinus excelsior, Populus tremula, Populus nigra agg., Prunus avium, Quercus robur, Sorbus aucuparia, Tilia cordata

Potential Native Shrub Species:
Cornus sanguinea, Crataegus monogyna, Ilex aquifolium, Ligustrum vulgare, Prunus spinosa, Rhamnus cathartica, Sambucus nigra

Potential Native Whip Species:
Acer campestre, Alnus glutinosa, Betula pendula, Betula pubescens, Carpinus betulus, Fraxinus excelsior, Prunus avium, Sorbus aucuparia

Native Buffer Planting
 a. Native whips will be planted at 60-90cm height in year one.
 b. Potential growth after 10 years. Native whips will have grown up to 3.0 – 3.5 metres in height.
 c. Potential growth after 25 years. Vegetation has matures and grown up to 5.0 – 7.5 metres in height.



Wildflower meadows will provide a soft edge and biodiversity potentially attracting wildlife. The wildflower meadow is located on least gradient / flat to assist maintenance.

Proposed poplar will excide ride height of proposed dwelling in 10 – 15 years.

Proposed trees and native shrub planting will provide instant impact and screening effect.

Proposed planting of native whips, this will provide a long term boundary treatment.

Wildflower meadows will provide a soft edge and biodiversity potentially attracting wildlife. The wildflower meadow is located on least gradient / flat to assist maintenance.

KEY

- Site Boundary
- Proposed Trees
- Existing Shrub
- Proposed Shrub
- Proposed Whips
- Wildflower Meadow
- Grass

REF	DATE	NOTES	P/W	SP
C	26.02.14	Updated to final boundary	P/W	SP
B	18.02.14	Updated to new layout and boundary	P/W	SP
A	06.11.13	Updated to clients comments	P/W	SP
				DRAWN CHKD

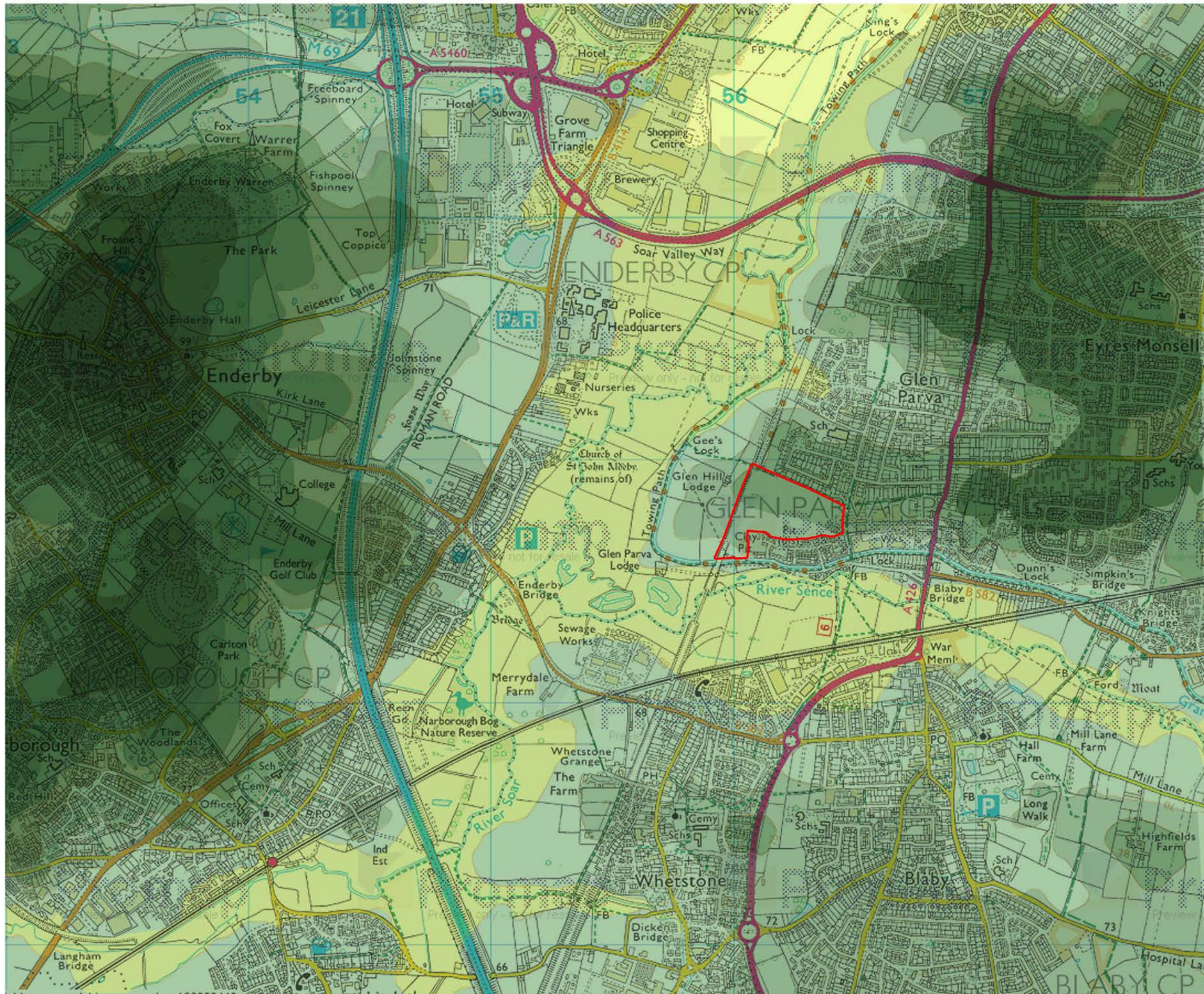
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Project/Client:
Glen Parva
Indicative Sections
Manor Oak Homes












Based On: RG+P 7779 06 C
Drawing No: 5059.SC.APX Rev.C
 Date: 02.10.13 | Drawn: P/W | Checked: SP

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Topography



KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  100m
-  95m
-  90m
-  85m
-  80m
-  75m
-  70m
-  65m
-  60m
-  55m



Not to Scale

A	18.02.14	Updated to new boundary outline	PVW	SP
REF	DATE	NOTES	DRAWN	CHKD



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Project/Client:
Glen Parva, Leicester
Topography Plan
Manor Oak Homes

Based On: OS Map
Drawing No: 5059 / TP APX Rev.A
 Date: 20.08.13 | Drawn: KB | Checked: SP

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.

Photographic Record



Key:

- Site Boundary
- Photograph Location



B	26.02.14	Updated to final site boundary	PWW	SP
A	18.02.14	Updated to revised site boundary	PWW	SP
REF	DATE	NOTES	DRAWN	CHKD

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Project/Client:
Glen Parva
 Photographic Location Plan - Winter
 Manor Oak Homes

Based On: Aerial
 Drawing No: 5059 / PL.W.APX Rev.B
 Date: 14.01.13 | Drawn: PvW | Checked: SP

Note: The original of this drawing was produced in colour - a monochrome copy should not be relied upon.



PHOTOGRAPH A



PHOTOGRAPH B



PHOTOGRAPH C



PHOTOGRAPH D



PHOTOGRAPH E



PHOTOGRAPH F



PHOTOGRAPH G



PHOTOGRAPH H



PHOTOGRAPH I



PHOTOGRAPH 1



PHOTOGRAPH 2



PHOTOGRAPH 3



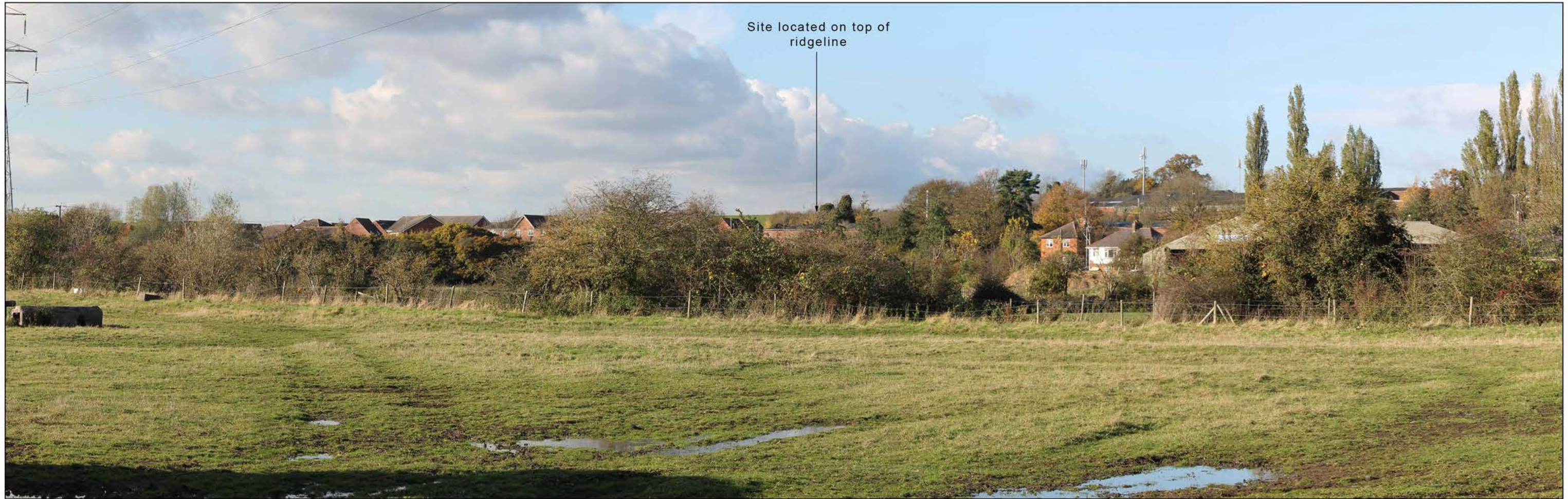
PHOTOGRAPH 4

Site located in the distance
behind foreground vegetation



PHOTOGRAPH 5

Site located on top of
ridgeline



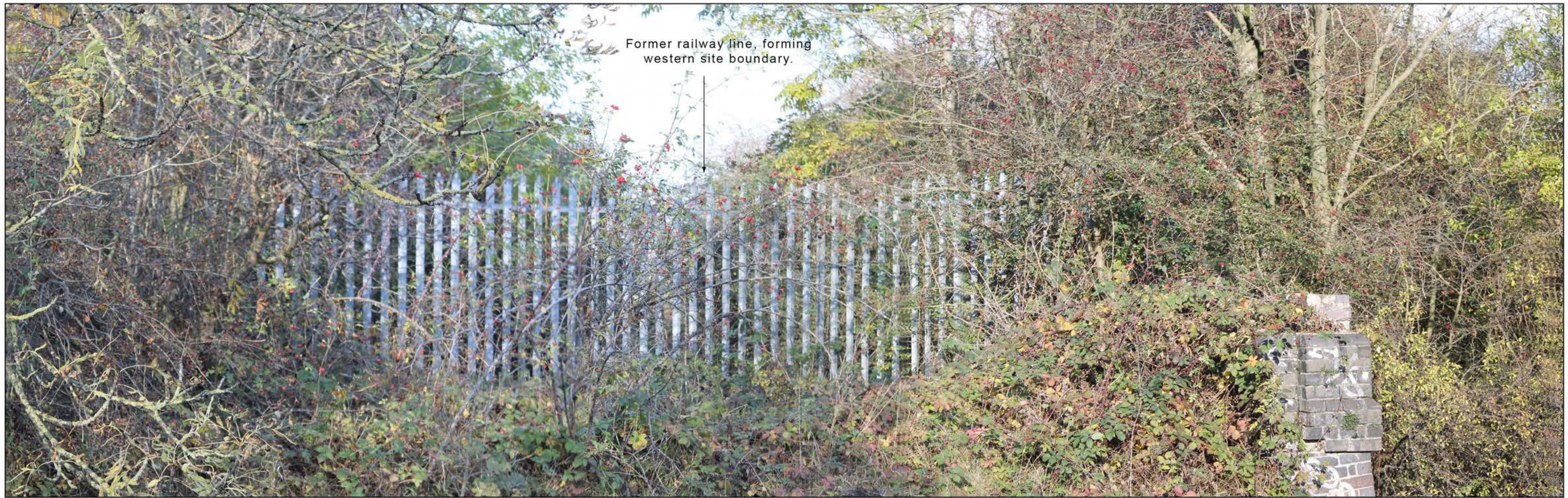
PHOTOGRAPH 6



PHOTOGRAPH 7



PHOTOGRAPH 8



PHOTOGRAPH 9



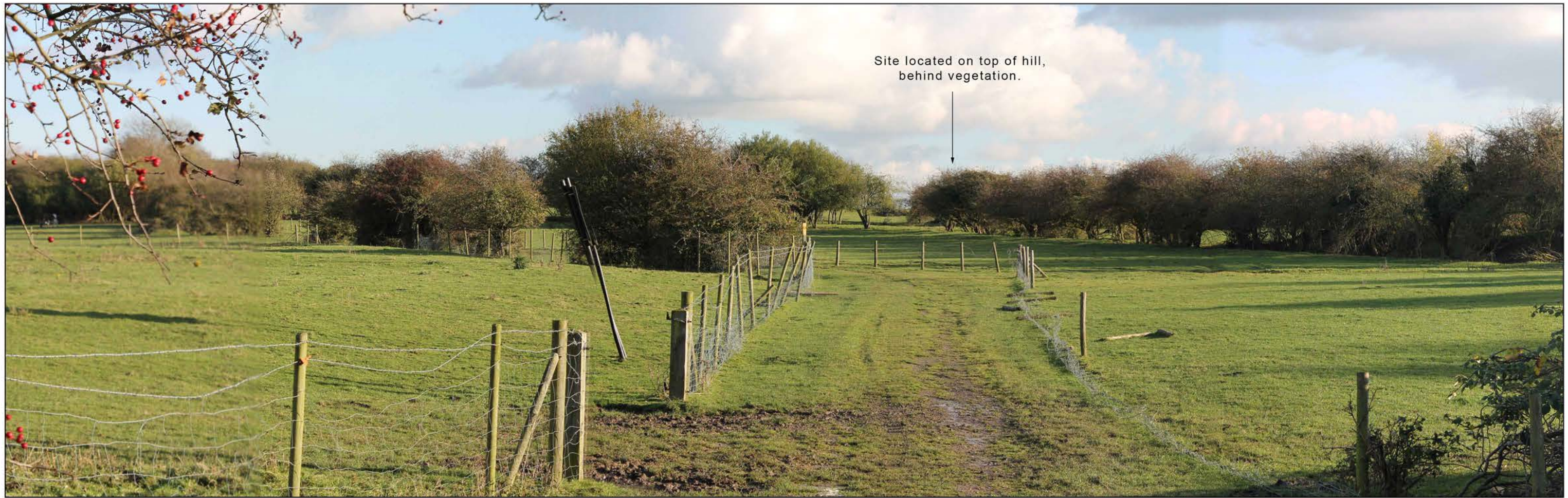
PHOTOGRAPH 10



PHOTOGRAPH 11



PHOTOGRAPH 12



PHOTOGRAPH 13



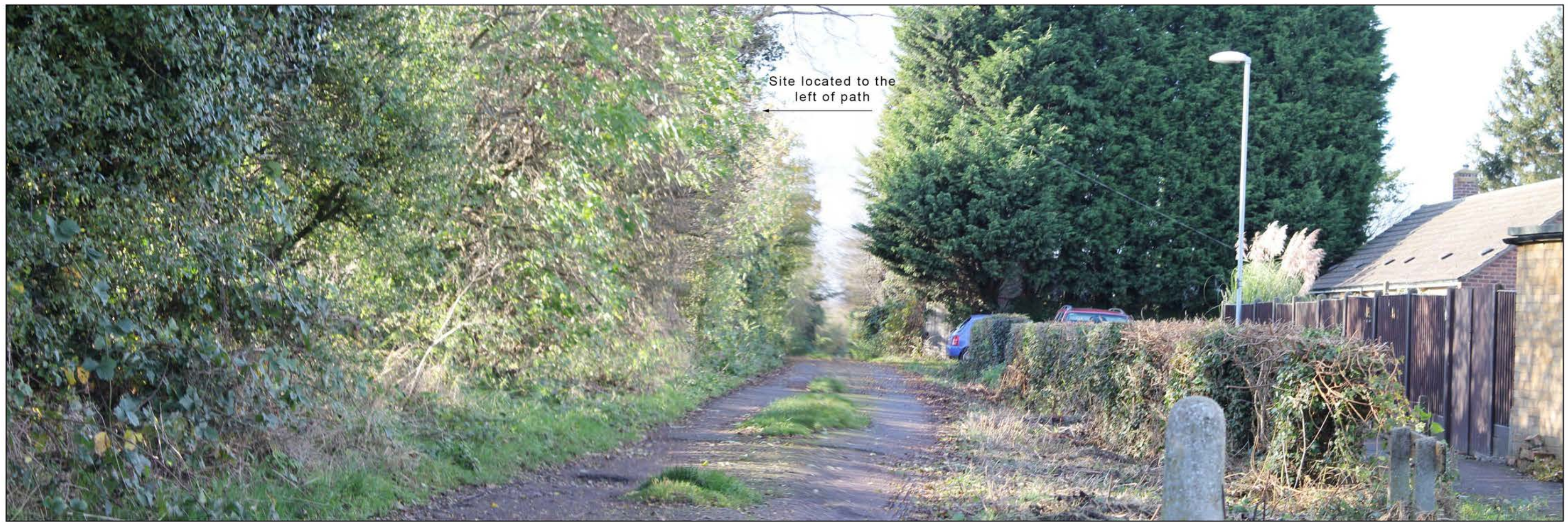
PHOTOGRAPH 14



PHOTOGRAPH 15



PHOTOGRAPH 16



PHOTOGRAPH 17



PHOTOGRAPH 18