

Chapter 6: Landscape Character and Visual Resources

Land off Duke's Park, Woodbridge

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

November 2015

6.1 INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been carried out for the proposed development by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR). The purpose of this LVA study is to provide an assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposals detailed in the planning application (Drawing Refs; 6106-L-01) and Design and Access Statement (DAS).
- 6.1.2 FPCR are a multi-disciplinary environmental and design consultancy with over 50 years' experience of architecture, landscape, ecology, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and are frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public and Local Plan Inquiries.

Site Location

Context

- 6.1.3 The proposed site lies to the south of Woodbridge. Woodbridge is located along the Deben Estuary approximately 12km inland from the coast and approximately 7km north east of Ipswich. The tributary of the River Deben, Martlesham Creek lies to the south of the site where it connects with the River Fynn. Adjacent to the southern boundary of the site is the Woodbridge to Ipswich Railway Line that runs east to west.
- 6.1.4 The northern extent of the development site is defined by the urban edge of Woodbridge. The A12 runs north to south and forms a strong boundary along the western edge of Woodbridge, containing the existing development of Woodbridge. To the west of the development site the A12 bypasses the village of Martlesham to the south west. Adjacent to the north of the development site is Ipswich Road and Top Street. Ipswich Road heads north east into the centre of Woodbridge and west connecting into the A12. Top Street links into Ipswich Road adjacent to the northern boundary of the site and heads south connecting into Martlesham. The Woodbridge Town Football Club is located directly north of Ipswich Road set amongst wider sports fields. Floodlighting and an associated single storey building inform the grounds.
- 6.1.5 The Properties of Duke's Park are located adjacent to the north eastern boundary of the site. Properties are a mix of single and two storey detached properties of low density. The properties are low-lying set within the landscape, set back from the road and located centrally within large gardens. Gardens and boundaries are defined by mature trees, within wide grassed areas.
- 6.1.6 Sandy Lane located to the south of the site defines the boundary of the AONB, Suffolk Coast & Heaths. The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB extends to the east and south of the site encompassing the River Deben, the Martlesham Estuary, Sluice Wood, Church of St Mary and Rectory, Lumber Wood and settlements south along the River Deben valley to the east of Martlesham.

Site

- 6.1.7 Figure 6.1 shows the location and context of the site. The character of the site comprises of three agricultural/ pastoral fields, the landform of the site predominantly slopes down towards the south east corner of the site adjacent to Sandy Lane. A steep ridgeline of contours divides the site in two between the north and south, running east to west across the middle of the site. The north and north eastern boundaries of the site are defined by a mix of established hedgerows and tree planting, creating a buffer to Top Street and properties located along Duke's Park. The Woodbridge to Ipswich Railway Line lies adjacent to the southern site boundary. Properties located to the north of Martlesham along Top Street are located adjacent to the western boundary of the site.

6.2 METHODOLOGY

6.2.1 This LVA has been prepared based upon the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, third edition (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, in 2013.

6.2.2 In summary the GVLIA3 states:

“Landscape and Visual impact assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity.”

6.2.3 There are two components of LVIA:

- 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.

6.2.4 The components of this report include: baseline studies; description and details of the landscape proposals and mitigation measures to be adopted as part of the scheme; identification and description of likely effects arising from the proposed development; and an assessment of the significance of these effects.

6.2.5 In terms of baseline studies the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape in the area to be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline this includes an understanding of the area in which the development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

Assessment of Landscape Effects

6.2.6 GLVIA3 states that *“An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource”*. The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing landscape character assessments and by a description of the site and its context.

6.2.7 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:

- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
- Combined effects of these changes.

6.2.8 The characteristics of the existing landscape resource are considered in respect of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to the change arising from this development. The value of the existing landscape is also considered.

6.2.9 Each effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. In terms of size or scale, the judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or addition of new elements.

- 6.2.10 The overall landscape effect is determined by considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of effect on the landscape. Final conclusions on the overall landscape effects are drawn from the assessment components described.
- 6.2.11 This appraisal describes the nature of the landscape effects. The criteria used in the appraisal are set out in Appendix 6.1.

Assessment of Visual Effects

- 6.2.12 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity.
- 6.2.13 The first stage in the assessment is to map approximate visibility. This can be done by a computer Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), or by manual methods, using map study and field evaluation. A series of viewpoints are included within the assessment that are representative of views towards the site from surrounding visual receptors. Other views of the site are included where it supports the description and understanding of the site's landscape and visual characteristics.
- 6.2.14 The views also typically represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the development and different viewing experiences.
- 6.2.15 It is important to remember that visual receptors are all people. For each affected viewpoint the assessment considers both susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views. The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:
- Residents at home;
 - People engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape or particular views;
 - Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions, where views of surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;
 - Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area.
- 6.2.16 Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of susceptibility to change. Where travel involves recognised scenic routes awareness of views is likely to be particularly high.
- 6.2.17 Visual receptors likely to be less sensitive to change include:
- People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape;
 - People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings.
- 6.2.18 Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility.
- 6.2.19 In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:

- The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including 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 nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses.
- 6.2.20 The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:
- 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.
- 6.2.21 As with landscape effects, the duration of the effect could be short to long term or permanent and the same definitions apply. The criteria used in this appraisal are included at Appendix 6.1.

Overall Landscape and Visual Effects

- 6.2.22 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effects. This overall judgement involves a reasoned professional overview of the individual judgements against the criteria, to then make the overall judgement.
- 6.2.23 For this appraisal, the following descriptive thresholds have been used with regard to effects:-
- Major: An effect that will fundamentally change and be in direct contrast to the existing landscape or views;
 - Moderate: An effect that will markedly change the existing landscape or views but may retain or incorporate some characteristics/ features currently present;
 - Minor: An effect that will entail limited or localised change to the existing landscape/ views or will entail more noticeable localised change but including both adverse and beneficial effects and is likely to retain or incorporate some characteristics/ features currently present; and
 - Negligible: An effect that will be discernible yet of very limited change to the existing landscape or views.
- 6.2.24 Finally, a judgement is reached based on the assessment, whether an effect is significant or not. There is not a direct correlation however between the level of effect described in the assessment, and whether the effect is significant or not. As an example the change to a private view as a result of the development may be “major”, but as a change in view to a private residence this effect may not be deemed to be “significant” to the environmental impact assessment.

6.3 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012)

- 6.3.1 The NPPF crystallises the previous national guidance and reiterates the need for enhancing the quality of the built and natural environment. The NPPF seeks to deliver a framework to:

“contribute to the achievement of sustainable growth”.

- 6.3.2 Section 11 is concerned with *“Conserving and enhancing the natural environment”*. The NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the natural environment – protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and affording great weight to the protection of areas of natural and scenic beauty.

“The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...”

Section 6 considers the need to *“Deliver a wide choice of quality homes”*. The NPPF seeks to set out the need for a wide choice of homes in all areas to make accessible to all.

“Use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in this Framework, including identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period”.

Local Planning Policy

Suffolk Coastal District Council – Local Plan, Core Strategy & Development Management Policies

Suffolk Coastal District Core Strategy

- 6.3.3 The Suffolk Coastal District Core Strategy was adopted in 2013. The Core Strategy sets out the long term vision for the District to 2027. The following policies are relevant to design.

Strategic Policy SP15 – Landscape and Townscape

- 6.3.4 The policy of the Council will be to protect and enhance the various landscape character areas within the district either through opportunities linked to development or through other strategies.
- 6.3.5 In addition to the protected landscape of the AONB, the valleys and tributaries of the Rivers Alde, Blyth, Deben, Fynn, Hundred, Mill, Minsmere, Ore, Orwell and Yox, and the designated Parks and Gardens of Historic or Landscape Interest are considered to be particularly significant.
- 6.3.6 Many of the towns and villages in the district are of distinctive historical and architectural value, as well as landscape value and character, and the Council will seek to enhance and preserve these attributes and the quality of life in the generality of urban areas.

- 6.3.7 This strategy will extend to towns and villages where sites, gaps, gardens and spaces that make an important contribution to a particular location in their undeveloped form will be identified and protected where known; or more generally avoided where development in these locations would lead to coalescence. The location of such sites will be designated through the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies, Area Action Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plan Document. Until then those sites currently allocated under “saved” Policy AP28 in the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (incorporating 1st and 2nd Alterations) will continue to be protected.

Strategic Policy SP16 – Sport and Play

- 6.3.8 The appropriate provision, protection and enhancement of formal and informal sport and recreation facilities for all sectors of the community will be supported, particularly where shortfalls in local provision can be addressed and it accords with local requirements.
- 6.3.9 The standard to be used in the calculation of play space (both children’s play areas and sports pitches) will be the national standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population. Deficiencies have been identified in an audit of current provision, prepared in association with town and parish councils, and updated annually.
- 6.3.10 In respect of new housing proposed under Policies SP20 and SP21 and meeting future needs the Council will rely on the information contained in the relevant community infrastructure studies completed in 2009.

Strategic Policy SP20 – Eastern Ipswich Plan Area

- 6.3.11 The strategic approach to development in the Eastern Ipswich Plan Area can be divided into 3 sections – the area to be covered by the Martlesham, Newbourne & Waldringfield Area Action Plan; the main urban corridor of Kesgrave, Martlesham and Rushmere St Andrew; and the smaller settlements and countryside which surround these core areas.

The strategy for the Martlesham, Newbourne & Waldringfield Area Action Plan is one:

- That contains well-planned, sustainable new housing of a mix of size, type and tenure linked to existing and proposed employment;
- Where the planned direction of controlled growth is eastwards of the A12 to the south and east of Adastral Park;
- Where opportunities for new employment provision have been maximised, with major national and international companies sitting alongside smaller ones, particularly those associated with the strategically important hi-tech business at BT;
- Where the Martlesham Heath Business Campus including Adastral Park has been designated a Strategic Employment Area;
- Where development has been phased and scaled to ensure that new or upgraded transport, utility and other social and community provision is provided in advance of, or parallel to, new housing and employment provision;
- That has created its own distinctive identity with smaller readily distinguishable villages, neighbourhoods and communities within the larger area;

- Where public transport provision and foot and cycle paths have been upgraded and promoted to minimise the need to use private motor vehicles to access employment, schools and other key facilities;
- Where priority has been given to creating a safe and attractive environment, including the provision of advanced planting and landscaping to create new settlement boundaries that blend with the surrounding landscape and contribute to biodiversity and the ecological network;
- That includes the retention of designated Sandlings areas on the edge of Ipswich because of their historic and biodiversity interests;
- That preserves and enhances environmentally sensitive locations within the Eastern Ipswich Plan Area and its surroundings;
- That maximises opportunities to achieve access to green space, including the countryside; and
- The Council will require further proposals to be supported by an Appropriate Assessment to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. If the results of the Appropriate Assessment show that part of the Strategy cannot be delivered without adverse impacts on designated European sites which cannot be mitigated, then the proposals will only make provision for the level and location of development for which it can be concluded that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of a designated European nature conservation site.

Development Management Policy DM21 – Design: Aesthetics

6.3.12 Proposals that comprise poor visual design and layout, or otherwise seriously detract from the character of their surroundings will not be permitted. Development will be expected to establish a strong sense of place, using streetscenes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit. Accordingly, development will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- Proposals should relate well to the scale and character of their surroundings particularly in terms of their siting, height, massing and form;
- In areas of little or no varied townscape quality, the form, density and design of proposals should create a new composition and point of interest, which will provide a positive improvement in the standard of the built environment of the area generally;
- Alterations and extensions to existing buildings should normally respect the plan form, period, style, architectural characteristics and, where appropriate, the type and standard of detailing and finishes of the original building;
- In order for extensions to existing buildings to be acceptable, particularly on those that are considered to be architecturally and historically important (including vernacular architecture) and those located in sensitive locations, the extension shall be visually 'recessive' and its size and design shall be such that the original building will remain the more dominant feature on the site;
- Layouts should incorporate and protect existing site features of landscape, ecological, heritage or amenity value as well as enhance such features e.g. habitat creation; and

- Attention must be given to the form, scale, use, and landscape of the spaces between buildings and the boundary treatment of individual sites, particularly on the edge of settlements.
- 6.3.13 The District Council will support and strongly encourage the conservation of energy and the use of alternative and renewable sources of energy in the design and layout of proposals for new buildings and conversion of existing buildings, provided it would not seriously detract from the character of the area.
- 6.3.14 In considering residential development, the District Council will have regard to Supplementary Planning Documents that have been adopted.

Development Management Policy DM22 – Design: Function

- 6.3.15 Proposals should make provision for their functional requirements. Planning permission will be granted for new development if the following criteria are met:
- The design and layout of the development provides and maintains safe and convenient access for people with disabilities;
 - New development generally makes adequate provision for public transport, cars, cycling, garages, parking areas, access ways, footways, etc in a manner whereby such provision does not dominate or prejudice the overall quality of design and appearance;
 - Provision is made to enable access, turning and manoeuvring for emergency vehicles and the collection of waste; and
 - Proposals for development take into account the need for crime prevention. Particular attention will be paid to such features as secure design, natural surveillance, adequate lighting and visibility. Proposals aimed at reducing crime within existing development areas will be supported provided that they are not in conflict with the objectives of other plan policies.
- 6.3.16 The District Council will also support and strongly encourage water conservation measures such as grey water systems, permeable soakaways and water efficiency devices.

Development Management Policy DM23 – Residential Amenity

- 6.3.17 When considering the impact of new development on residential amenity, the Council will have regard to the following:
- Privacy/overlooking;
 - Outlook;
 - Access to daylight and sunlight;
 - Noise and disturbance;
 - The resulting physical relationship with other properties;
 - Light spillage, air quality and other forms of pollution; and
 - Safety and security.

- 6.3.18 Development will be acceptable where it would not cause an unacceptable loss of amenity to adjoining or future occupiers of the development.

Development Management Policy DM26 – Lighting

- 6.3.19 The District Council will seek to minimise light pollution. Applications for development requiring or likely to require external lighting should include details of lighting schemes. This should include position, height, aiming points, lighting levels and a polar luminance diagram. Applicants will need to satisfy the District Council that:
- The proposed lighting scheme is the minimum needed for security, working purposes, recreational or other use of the land;
 - It is designed so as to minimise pollution from glare and light spillage, particularly to residential and commercial areas, areas of nature conservation importance, and areas whose open and landscape qualities would be affected; and
 - There will be no glare or light spillage onto highways which could dazzle, distract or disorientate road users using them.
- 6.3.20 In order to prevent unnecessary intrusion into the countryside, or the effect on residential amenity, the District Council may seek to control the days and times of use of lighting (excluding street lighting).

Development Management Policy DM32 – Sport and Play

- 6.3.21 Proposals for new facilities for sport and play will be considered in relation to the character of the location, the scale of the settlement, the impact on landscape and townscape, access provision, highway safety and residential amenity.
- 6.3.22 Proposals that involve the loss of existing sports facilities and playing space (youth and adult) whether public, private or a school facility will be judged against:
- The overall needs of the community;
 - Adopted standards of provision;
 - The availability of comparable facilities elsewhere;
 - The contribution which a facility makes to the character of an area; and
 - Its value for informal recreation.
- 6.3.23 Where the loss of the facility would result in a shortfall in provision or would exacerbate an already existing shortfall, an equivalent facility must be provided in a location agreed with the District Council and secured by a planning obligation, or other legal agreement.
- 6.3.24 Proposals for new residential development will be expected to provide or contribute towards indoor and outdoor sport and play space, including equipment and maintenance, where a local need has been identified. Contributions to off-site provision will be secured as part of the standard charges set in the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule. All changes came into effect on all planning decisions taken from 13th July 2015.

6.4 BASELINE CONDITIONS

Landscape Character

National Character

6.4.1 National Character Area (NCA) profiles have prepared by Natural England for the 159 NCA`s defined across England. These NCA profiles include a description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscape, how the landscape has changed over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, and a broad analysis of each area's characteristics. Figure 6.2 illustrates the NCA`s and other defined character areas within the context of the site.

6.4.2 At this very broad landscape scale, the site, lies within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 82 'Suffolk Coast and Heaths'. Extracts from the profile of this NCA are included at Appendix 6.2. This NCA stretches from Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft to the north, taking in the coastal towns of Southwold, Aldeburgh to the east and Felixstowe and Harwich to the south east and south respectively. Ipswich, Woodbridge, Saxmundham and Beccles define the western extent and therefore the LCA covers a very extensive landscape tract. The site is located to the southern extent of Woodbridge, to the south of Ipswich Road and Top Street and to the north of Sandy Lane. Under Key Characteristics the NCA description includes the following references;

- A predominantly low-lying landscape with some areas along the coastal plain below or at sea level. Changes in relief are slight, but enough to distinguish the Sandlings, sandy rolling 'upland' between estuaries.
- A dynamic coast, shaped by long, sweeping bays, cut by the series of more sheltered estuaries. The shoreline is defined by shingle beaches and structures, sea defence features and in places low, soft crumbling cliffs.
- Rivers flow west - east forming intimate, twisting alluvial valleys. Estuaries support internationally important salt marshes and intertidal flats with large numbers of waders and wildfowl, while their open waters are busy with pleasure and commercial craft.
- Expansive coastal level grazing marshes divided by drainage dykes contain internationally important reedbeds and fens. Many are managed as nature reserves owing to their rich biodiversity, which includes a nationally important concentration of breeding bittern.
- Fragments of internationally important lowland heathland support nightjar, woodlark, adder and silver-studded blue butterfly. Views across the dry farmland and heathlands are open and extensive, except where enclosed by woodland.
- Farm woodlands, plantations and field boundary trees provide a treed character with substantial coniferous forests (Rendlesham, Tunstall and Dunwich) in the core of the NCA. Ancient broadleaved woodland and parkland wood pasture cloak the southern river valley and estuary slopes. The coastal levels are largely devoid of trees.
- Public access is extensive both on the land and on the rivers. The sense of tranquillity and wildness is integral to the distinctiveness of the NCA, inspiring many writers, artists and naturalists, and supports the area's popularity as a recreation and tourist destination.

- 6.4.3 The description also states the following additional opportunities;
- Creating new multifunctional landscapes and habitats and extending at appropriate scales existing networks that are in character with the area and contribute to biodiversity through green infrastructure Planning.
 - Conserving and appropriately managing the area's sense of place within the built environment and using this understanding, and the area's traditional settlement patterns, to plan for and inspire new Development.
 - Ensuring that high-quality green infrastructure is considered in all new build projects, encouraging developers and planners to consider this aspect at the outset of scheme design with the aim of promoting space for wildlife and outdoor recreation.
 - Promoting the use of traditional building materials in building restoration or new development, where this would be appropriate to enhance the local character.
- 6.4.4 The Natural England document provides a very broad assessment and appreciation covering a significant landscape tract. In this respect it does not provide details directly relevant to the site or its immediate surroundings, other than to establish the underlying characteristics of the wider landscape. A more detailed and site relevant landscape character assessment is contained within the countywide assessment as outlined below.

Regional Landscape Character

The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (2011)

- 6.4.5 The site is split between two different Landscape Character Areas. The northern extent of the site is located within the Landscape Character Area; Urban and the southern extent of the site is located solely within the Landscape Character Area; Romney Valley Farmlands and Furze as defined within the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment (2011) (refer to Figure 6.2).

Urban: Landscape Character Area

- 6.4.6 The Urban Landscape Character Area comprises the higher ground within the site defined by steep contours that run east to west through the middle of the site. As part of the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment no study of Urban Character is available and has not been characterised.

Rolling Valley Farmlands and Furze: Landscape Character Area

- 6.4.7 The extent of the Rolling Farmlands and Furze extends north to the middle of the eastern boundary of the proposed site adjacent to the existing properties of Duke's Hill, occupying the lower extents of the site. The landscape character area extends approximately 1.2km east towards the River Deben and Kyson Point. Sandy Lane defines the boundary of the landscape character area adjacent to the south of the site. The Landscape Character Area follows the River Fynn Valley approximately 7.5km to the west towards Witnesham. The Rolling Farmlands and Furze landscape character is characterised by;

- Valleys with prominent river terraces of sandy soil
- Small areas of gorse heathland in a clayland setting
- Straight boundaries associated with late enclosure
- Co-axial Field Systems
- Mixed hedgerows of hawthorn, dogwood and blackthorn with oak, ash and field maple
- Fragmentary cover of woodland
- Sand and gravel extraction
- Golf Course
- Focus for larger settlements.

Local Landscape Character

- 6.4.8 This combines the above review of published information on landscape character with a detailed field survey to assess the landscape resource, visual amenity and the key qualities that define consistent areas of landscape character in the local area. The study area has been broken down into the following character areas (refer to Figure 6.5).

Character Area 1 – Agricultural / Pastoral Fields

- 6.4.9 The site lies within this area and is characterised as open, comprising of three agricultural/pastoral fields. The landform of the site predominantly slopes down towards the south east towards Sandy Lane. A steep ridgeline of contours divides the centre of the character area between the north and south. This divide broadly follows the dividing line between the Urban and Rolling Valley Farmlands and Furze character areas as defined within the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment, running east to west through the middle of the site. The north and north eastern boundaries of the site are defined by a mix of established hedgerows and tree planting, creating a buffer to Top Street and properties located along Duke's Park.
- 6.4.10 Ipswich Road lies adjacent to the north of the site before connecting to Top Street and heads south connecting into Martlesham. Properties located to the north of Martlesham along Top Street are located adjacent to the western boundary of the site.
- 6.4.11 The character area overall is considered of **medium** sensitivity to change.

Character Area 2 – Duke's Park, Woodbridge

- 6.4.12 The northern extent of the development site is defined by the urban edge of Woodbridge. Adjacent to the north of the development site is Ipswich Road and Top Street. Ipswich Road heads north east into the centre of Woodbridge and west connecting into the A12. Top Street links into Ipswich Road adjacent to the northern boundary of the site and heads south connecting into Martlesham. The Woodbridge Town Football Club is located directly north of Ipswich Road set amongst wider sports fields. Floodlighting and an associated single storey building inform the grounds.
- 6.4.13 The Properties of Duke's Park are located adjacent to the north eastern boundary of the site. Properties are a mix of single and two storey detached properties of low density. The properties are low-lying set within the landscape, set back from the road and located centrally within large gardens. Gardens and boundaries are defined by mature trees, within wide grassed areas.
- 6.4.14 The character area overall is considered of **medium** sensitivity to change.

Character Area 3 – Suffolk Coast & Heaths

- 6.4.15 Sandy Lane and the Woodbridge to Ipswich Railway Line lie adjacent to the south eastern and southern site boundary defining the boundary of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Suffolk Coast & Heaths. The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB extends to the east and south of the site encompassing the River Deben, the Martlesham Estuary, Sluice Wood, Church of St Mary and Rectory, Lumber Wood and settlements south along the River Deben valley to the east of Martlesham. The Deben Estuary Special Protection Area is located approximately 350m directly to the south. The Deben Estuary Special Protection Area encompasses Martlesham Creek heading east towards the River Deben.
- 6.4.16 The character area overall is considered of **medium** sensitivity to change.

Character Area 4 – A12 and Seckford Hall

- 6.4.17 This character area is defined by a number of road junctions that connect into the A12 and south to Martlesham. The A12 runs north to south and forms a strong boundary along the western edge of Woodbridge, containing the existing development of Woodbridge. The Suffolk Coastal District Council Special Landscape Area (SLA) is located approximately 200m directly to the west. The SLA encompasses Seckford Hall, The River Fynn Valley and areas to the west of Woodbridge. West of the A12 lies the Grade II* Listed Building Seckford Hall. To the west of the development site the A12 bypasses the village of Martlesham to the south west.
- 6.4.18 The character area overall is considered of **medium** sensitivity to change.

Landscape Designations

- 6.4.19 This section considers only the relevant landscape designations and strategies in the context of the landscape and visual issues of the site (refer to figure 6.3).

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- 6.4.20 There are no AONBs located within the site. The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB is located immediately to the south of the proposed application site, beyond the railway embankment and Sandy Lane. The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB encompasses Martlesham Creek heading east towards the River Deben and south encompassing Sluice and Lumber Wood, e.g. National Parks, AONBs, Special Landscape Areas, AGLVs etc. Figure 6.3 illustrates to location of the landscape designations.

Ramsar

- 6.4.21 There are no Ramsars located within or immediately adjacent to the site. The Deben Estuary Ramsar is located approximately 450m directly to the south. The Deben Estuary Ramsar encompasses Martlesham Creek heading east towards the River Deben.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

- 6.4.22 There are no SSSIs located within or immediately adjacent to the site. The Deben Estuary SSSIs located approximately 450m directly to the south. The Deben Estuary SSSI encompasses Martlesham Creek heading east towards the River Deben.

Special Protection Area (SPA)

- 6.4.23 There are no Special Protection Areas located within or immediately adjacent to the site. The Deben Estuary Special Protection Area is located approximately 350m directly to the south. The Deben Estuary Special Protection Area encompasses Martlesham Creek heading east towards the River Deben.

Special Landscape Area (SLA)

- 6.4.24 There are no SLA located within or immediately adjacent to the site. The Suffolk Coastal District Council SLA is located approximately 200m directly to the west. The SLA encompasses Seckford Hall, The River Fynn Valley and areas to the west of Woodbridge.

Listed Buildings

- 6.4.25 There are no Listed Buildings located within the immediate site. The nearest listed building is the Grade II Listed Building No.1 Top Street located adjacent to the site to the western boundary along Top Street. The Grade II Listed Buildings of Creek Farm and Sluice Farmhouse are located approximately 0.1km to the south located along Sandy Lane. The Grade II* Listed Building Seckford Hall is located approximately 0.5km to the north west.

Scheduled Monuments

- 6.4.26 There are no Scheduled Monuments located within or surrounding the immediate site. The nearest Scheduled Monument is the Bowl barrow in Portal Avenue located approximately 2km to the south west located within the centre of Martlesham.

Long Distance Footpaths

- 6.4.27 There are no long distance footpaths located within or immediately adjacent to the site. The long distance footpath the Fynn Valley Walk is located approximately 0.5km to the south of the site, located along the northern embankment of Martlesham Creek.

Topography

- 6.4.28 The following should be read in conjunction with Figure 6.4.Context - Landform

Context – Landform

- 6.4.29 The following should be read in conjunction with **Figure 6.4.Context - Landform**
- 6.4.30 The centre of Woodbridge is located at approximately 35-40m AOD approximately 1.8km to the north of the proposed site. The historic core and conservation area of Woodbridge lies along the eastern edge of Woodbridge adjacent to and overlooking the River Deben, located at approximately 05-35m AOD. The existing properties of Duke's Hill are located adjacent to the north eastern boundary of the development site and are located at approximately 25-30m AOD. The landform of Duke's Hill falls to the south. Duke's Hill is located along the northern embankment of the Martlesham Creek Valley. Duke's Hill and Broom Hill form the southern extent of Woodbridge culminating at Kyson Point at the head of Martlesham Creek, where it joins the River Deben.
- 6.4.31 Martlesham Creek and the River Fynn are located at approximately 0-5m AOD 450m directly to the south of the development site. The landform rises steeply beyond the southern embankment of the Martlesham Creek, rising to approximately 20m AOD adjacent to The Old Rectory and the Church of St Mary approximately 1km to the south. The village of Martlesham is located at approximately 5-10m AOD approximately 1km to the south west. The River Fynn valley corridor is located at approximately 0-5m AOD and it defines the landscape to the west. It is flanked to the north and south by high valley sides that weave in and out defining the valley corridor. The landform is typical of the 'Valleys with Prominent River Terraces of Sandy Soil' as defined within the Rolling Valley Farmlands & Furze within the Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment.

Site - Landform

- 6.4.32 The northern edge of the proposed site is defined by Ipswich Road and Top Street. The northern extent of the site adjacent to Ipswich Road and Top Street is located at approximately 25-30m AOD. The landform of the site is divided between the north and the south by steep contours that run east to west through the middle of the site at approximately 15-20m AOD. The changes in levels create a steep ridgeline across the middle of the site.
- 6.4.33 The landform falls to the south eastern corner of the proposed site. The site's lowest point is adjacent to Sandy Lane and the railway line, located at approximately 8m AOD. The Woodbridge to Ipswich Railway Line runs adjacent to the southern boundary of the development site running east to west. To the western boundary the steep contours within the site create a raised plateau behind the existing properties of Top Street, located at approximately 20m AOD. The railway line is located at approximately 12-13m AOD in an elevated position with embankments on either side of the track.

6.5 POTENTIAL EFFECTS

- 6.5.1 The Project without mitigating measures could consist of houses built across the northern and southern sections of the site up to the boundary edges. There would be no landscape buffer planting to the south, through the middle of the site, along the site boundary edges or structure planting within the site.
- 6.5.2 Without the above mitigating measures the Project would have **major adverse effects** on the surrounding character areas, in particular, on the setting of The Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, The Deben Estuary Special Protection Area and The Suffolk Coastal District Council Special Landscape Area. The project would also have **moderate adverse effects** on visual receptors from houses along Duke's Park, Woodbridge to the east and the rear of properties along Top Street, Martlesham to the west.

6.6 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- 6.6.1 The development provides a total of 7.70 hectares for residential development, providing up to 215 dwellings. The development will provide a wide range of housing from small units to larger units offering a mix of market housing from first time homes to larger family homes. The housing mix will reflect that which currently exists within Woodbridge.
- 6.6.2 The proposed residential area will include directly associated uses, including access roads within the site, street trees, private garden space, car parking areas, incidental open space and landscaping together with equipped children's play which will be set within an area of public open space. The public open space will include significant public open space that will run through the site from east to west.
- 6.6.3 The proposals have been developed in conjunction with FPCRs ecologists and arboriculturalists to ensure that wildlife corridors and existing habitats are retained and enhanced.

6.7 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

Landscape Effects

Construction and Operational Effects

- 6.7.1 This Chapter assesses the likely significant effects that would arise from the Project during the construction and operational phase. The operational phase is the full development in place after completion. The landscape appraisal has been carried out through an understanding of local landscape designations and landscape character, to assess the likely significance of effects. The full Landscape Effects Table (LET) is included at Appendix 6.3.

Landscape Character Effects

Demolition and Construction Effects

- 6.7.2 During the construction phase, some short term reversible adverse effects upon the landscape will occur. Anticipated effects will primarily be caused by:-
- Site clearance and set up of compound area;
 - Removal of sections of hedgerow required for works associated with access construction;
 - New junction arrangements at Ipswich Road and Top Street to facilitate the site access;
 - New highway works;
 - Construction traffic, including HGVs and staff cars travelling to and from site;
 - Demolition of the existing outhouses and farmsteads off Top Street;
 - Views of construction machinery;
 - Lighting associated with construction and security;
 - Building works, infrastructure and planting of structural landscape areas; and
 - Service connections including connection to and phasing of East Anglia One Offshore Windfarm route.
- 6.7.3 All construction works will be carried out in full accordance with best practice procedures to minimise and protect, as far as practicable, potentially adverse effects upon the local landscape character.
- 6.7.4 The landscape effects during construction is assessed as being of a transient nature and, given that the timescales involved will be relatively short, this is considered to be of limited significance overall. Inevitably there will be some disruption to the site landscape and its immediate environs during this phase of works however it will be localised and limited in extent, resulting in a **major/moderate** adverse landscape effect overall.
- 6.7.5 Minimal existing vegetation will be removed as part of the development and all retained hedgerows and hedgerow trees will be protected throughout the construction period. Overall landscape effects resulting from this phase of works will be localised and limited in extent.

Operational Effects (full development in place)

- 6.7.6 The baseline landscape analysis concludes that the proposed development will be located on a greenfield site largely adjacent to an area of predominantly urban character to the north. The application site has few particularly sensitive elements and is not recognised by any highly sensitive national designation such as 'National Park' or 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'. Resultant direct effects upon the landscape fabric of the site are therefore considered to be of localised and limited significance. The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB is located immediately to the south of the proposed application site, beyond the railway embankment and Sandy Lane. Resultant direct effects upon the landscape fabric to the south are considered localised and **high/moderate**. Effects upon the landscape character are summarised below.
- 6.7.7 The proposed development will be located within the 'Suffolk Coast and Heaths' Landscape Character Area, identified for its distinct landscape character at a national scale. The scale of the change the application site would undergo in comparison with the size of the overall character area is **low**. The application site is heavily influenced by the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB and the Deben Estuary Special Protection Area to the south. Therefore the overall effect is considered to be high, however the visual influence of the proposed development is limited to short sections of PRoW and Long Distance Footpaths located directly to the south. The visual influence is limited by the intervening landform, existing vegetation and the existing infrastructure on the edge of the valley basin. Taking this into account together with the enclosed nature of the site, the development will not be an obvious component within the wider landscape with views limited directly to the south and is considered to result in a **low** magnitude of change across the wider landscape character area leading to a **minor** landscape effect overall on completion.
- 6.7.8 At a local scale, the proposed development will be located within both the 'Urban' and *the 'Rolling Valley Farmlands and Furze'* character areas of The Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment. These character areas are considered to have a **high/medium** susceptibility to the proposed development which will result in a **medium** magnitude of change across the character areas. This presents a **moderate** landscape effect in the short term across an area no greater than 0.5km from the location of the proposed development to the immediate south. Beyond 0.5km visibility of the development is significantly reduced and potential views are limited. Where potential glimpsed views are possible the scale of the development will be reduced making it a much less obvious characteristic within the landscape.
- 6.7.9 In terms of the site itself and its immediate context the landscape effects will be limited. The proposed built development will be located adjacent to the existing residential edge of Woodbridge. Although the replacement of the existing fields with new housing will have a notable effect on the site, the proposed structural landscape planting through the middle of the site, covering 8.4% of the total site area together with public open space, retained tree and hedgerow planting to the site's perimeter, will help to balance the overall change across the site landscape. There will be a **major/moderate** magnitude of change within the site landscape leading to a **moderate adverse** landscape effect overall.

- 6.7.10 Upon completion, the proposed development will not result in any discernible effects upon the local landscape character overall. While the proposed housing may result in a **major/moderate** adverse effect in the short term, the benefits provided by the proposed framework of green infrastructure along with the retention and enhancement of existing tree and hedgerow planting is considered to offset this.

Visual Effects

- 6.7.11 The full Visual Effects Table (VET) is included at Appendix 6.4.

Viewpoint 1

- 6.7.12 The view south east from a PRow located on higher ground adjacent to the eastern boundary of Seckford Hall and Golf Club. The proposed site is located to the right of the view, beyond the A12 and the intervening vegetation. The floodlighting and fencing surrounding the Woodbridge Town Football Club are prominent in the view. The Woodbridge Town Football Club is located upon higher ground to the north of the development site.
- 6.7.13 The A12 runs north to south in front of the Football Ground. The A12 is sunken in the landscape bordered by embankments that are defined by established trees. Occasional glimpsed views can be gained of the top of the lighting columns that delineate the A12. Distant glimpsed views south can be gained of high ground located within The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB. Potential views from Seckford Hall would be negligible due to the existing contours and intervening vegetation. The existing contours and intervening vegetation result in negligible views towards the site from this PRow.
- 6.7.14 The receptors are considered of **medium** sensitivity. There will be **negligible** effects during the construction and operational phases.

Viewpoint 2

- 6.7.15 View south from the junction of the Ipswich Road and Top Street junction. Boundary embankment planting adjacent to the northern boundary of the development site is prominent in the view. Views beyond to the development site are **negligible** due to changes in landform and through intervening vegetation. Views would be predominantly transient in nature.
- 6.7.16 The vehicular receptors on Top Street are considered of **low** sensitivity. Effects are considered to be **negligible** during the construction and operational phases.

Viewpoint 3

- 6.7.17 View from Broom Hill south west towards Martlesham Creek, Sluice Wood and west towards the site. Direct views can be gained south west towards the Martlesham Creek Boatyard and Sluice Wood beyond. Views east towards the site are obscured by intervening vegetation upon Broom Hill containing views to the south west.
- 6.7.18 The receptors are considered of **moderate** sensitivity. Effects are considered to be **negligible** during the construction and operational phases.

Viewpoint 4

- 6.7.19 View south west along the PRoW (E-573 005/0) crossing over the Woodbridge to Ipswich Railway Line. The railway line and woodland located to the left of the view defines the northern boundary of The Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB. Views south west are contained by mature boundary planting located upon embankments bordering the railway line, creating a narrow channel of view. Glimpsed views can be gained of Creek Farm and outhouses set amongst woodland. Distant views beyond can be gained of woodland cover surrounding Martlesham.
- 6.7.20 The receptors are considered of **medium** sensitivity. Effects are considered to be **negligible** during the construction and operational phases.

Viewpoint 5

- 6.7.21 View west from within the AONB located along the Long Distance Fynn Valley Walk adjacent to Kyson Point along the northern embankment of the Martlesham Creek. Open views looking along and across the Martlesham Creek are possible. Clear views of Lumber Wood and Sluice Wood are evident on the southern embankment, while views of the Church of St Mary and Rectory to the south are obscured by intervening woodland. Reedbed and marsh inform the immediate views along the PRoW while distant views west are heavily wooded. Views are contained to the south and west looking down and along the Martlesham Creek. Any potential views towards the site are **negligible** and are obscured by intervening vegetation.
- 6.7.22 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Effects are considered to be **negligible** during the construction and operational phases.

Viewpoint 6

- 6.7.23 View west along the Long Distance Fynn Valley Walk footpath route. The long distance footpath is located along the northern embankment of the Martlesham river valley bordered by the river embankment and surrounded by a mix of reedbed, marsh and woodland planting. The embankment of the Woodbridge to Ipswich railway line is evident in the view with glimpsed ridgeline views of the buildings of Creek Farm beyond woodland possible. Narrow and constrained views into the northern extent of the site are possible through breaks in the intervening vegetation. Peripheral views can be gained of the rear gardens of properties located upon Broom Hill to the right of the view. A mix of scrub and intermittent shrub planting defines the valley basin breaking up possible distant views beyond. The Boatyard is a prominent feature along the southern embankment of the Martlesham Creek.
- 6.7.24 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Effects are considered to be **minor adverse** during the construction and operational phases.

Viewpoint 7

- 6.7.25 View north west along the Long Distance Fynn Valley Walk footpath route. The long distance footpath is located within the centre of the Martlesham river valley bordered by the river embankment and a mix of reedbed and marsh. The view north west is heavily wooded with individual, groups and blocks of woodland breaking up the view. Where breaks in the woodland cover appear there are glimpsed views of a number of buildings and structures set within the landscape. Oblique views of the properties of Broom Hill, Creek Farm and Sluice Farm are possible as well as views of the Sewage Works. Narrow and constrained views into the northern extent of the site are possible through breaks in the intervening vegetation.
- 6.7.26 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Visual effects will be **moderate** adverse during the construction and operational phase and will remain **moderate** adverse in the long term.

Viewpoint 8

- 6.7.27 View north along the PRow adjacent to the Sewage Works located to the north of the Martlesham Creek and the Long Distance Footpath. The rear façade of Sluice Farm House is in full view located within the centre of the viewpoint. A number of Sluice Farm outhouses can also be viewed to the left of the view through intervening trees and vegetation. Higher ground set within the development site is evident located beyond Sluice Farm.
- 6.7.28 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Visual effects will be **major/moderate** adverse during the construction and operational phase and will remain **moderate** adverse in the long term.

Viewpoint 9

- 6.7.29 View north along the Long Distance Fynn Valley Walk footpath route within the valley basin of Martlesham Creek. The long distance footpath is located adjacent to the Martlesham Creek, bordered by the river embankment and a mix of reedbed and marsh.
- 6.7.30 The valley basin is open and dominated by a mix of fields, reedbed and marsh. The view north of the valley sides is heavily wooded with individual, groups and blocks of woodland breaking up the view. Glimpsed views of existing settlements set along the valley side and on the edge of the valley basin are evident. Glimpsed views can be gained of properties located upon Broom Hill, Crane Close and along Top Street on the valley sides. The edge of the valley basin is informed by the buildings of Creek Farm, Sluice Farm, commercial units along Sandy Lane, the Sewage Works and the railway line. These existing settlements form a prominent feature in the view, creating a strong built form to the edge of the valley basin. Direct views can be gained of segments of the northern extent of the application site through breaks in the intervening vegetation.
- 6.7.31 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Visual effects will be **major/moderate** adverse during the construction and operational phase and will remain **moderate** adverse in the long term.

Viewpoint 10

- 6.7.32 View north west located adjacent to the boundary of the Church of St Mary. The view north west is heavily wooded with individual, groups and blocks of woodland breaking up the view. Where breaks in the woodland cover appear there are glimpsed views of a number of buildings and structures set within the landscape. Oblique views of the properties of Crane Close and Creek Farm are possible. Narrow and constrained views into the northern extent of the site are possible through breaks in the intervening vegetation.
- 6.7.33 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Visual effects will be **moderate** adverse during the construction and operational phase and will become **minor** adverse in the long term.

Viewpoint 11

- 6.7.34 View north west along the PRow adjacent to Sluice Wood, located along the southern embankment of Martlesham Creek. The view north west is heavily wooded with individual, groups and blocks of woodland breaking up the view. Where breaks in the woodland cover appear there are glimpsed views of a number of buildings and structures set within the landscape. Oblique views of the properties of Creek Farm and Sluice Farm are possible as well as views of the railway line and the sewage works. Narrow and constrained views into the northern extent of the site are possible through breaks in the intervening vegetation.
- 6.7.35 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Visual effects will be **moderate** adverse during the construction and operational phase and will become **minor** adverse in the long term.

Viewpoint 12

- 6.7.36 View north west along the PRow along the southern embankment of Martlesham Creek. The view north west is oblique and intermittent through intervening vegetation. Views across Martlesham Creek are heavily wooded with individual, groups and blocks of woodland breaking up the view. Where breaks in the woodland cover appear there are minor glimpsed views of a number of buildings and structures set within the landscape. Oblique views of Sluice Farm are possible. Minor narrow and constrained views into the northern extent of the site are possible through occasional breaks in the intervening vegetation.
- 6.7.37 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Visual effects will be **minor** adverse during the construction and operational phase and will remain **minor** adverse in the long term.

Viewpoint 13

- 6.7.38 View north located from within Martlesham Recreation Ground. The view north is dominated by the rear of the commercial units located along Sandy Lane. Oblique views can be gained to Sluice Farm to the east of the site. The view is dominated by shrub, hedgerow and tree planting located along Sandy Lane. Views can be gained of woodland surrounding Duke's Hill and narrow oblique views can be gained towards the ridgeline within the centre of the application site.
- 6.7.39 The receptors are considered of **moderate** sensitivity. Visual effects will be **minor** adverse during the construction and **negligible** during operational phase and will remain **negligible**.

Viewpoint 14

- 6.7.40 View north from along Main road adjacent to the bridge over the River Fynn. The view is dominated by Main Road that adjoins Top Street to the north. The boundaries of the road are dominated by established boundary hedgerow and tree planting that contains views to the north. Glimpsed narrow views can be gained towards a narrow section to the north of the application site, views would be predominantly transient.
- 6.7.41 The receptors are considered of **low** sensitivity. Effects are considered to be **minor adverse** during the construction and operational phases and will remain **minor adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 15

- 6.7.42 View north located along Sandy lane, south of the Railway Line. The view is dominated by the railway line embankment, defined by a mix of scrub and individual trees. Glimpsed views can be gained on the top of the ridgeline that runs through the middle of the application site, views would be predominantly transient in nature.
- 6.7.43 The receptors are considered of **low** sensitivity. Effects are considered to be **minor** during the construction and operational phases and will remain **minor** adverse in the long term.

Viewpoint 16

- 6.7.44 The view east from Top Street is defined by the setting of No.1 Top Street and the adjacent properties. Top Street winds its way around the north and western boundary of the site. The internal elevated landform of the site to the rear of the existing buildings located along Top Street is evident. The site boundary is defined by an established boundary hedgerow with occasional tree cover.
- 6.7.45 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. Effects are considered to be **moderate** during the construction and operational phases and will become **negligible** in the long term.

Viewpoint 17

- 6.7.46 View east located from along the PRow to the west of the site. The landform is undulating with the elevated ground that defines the middle of the application site prominent but narrow in view. Intervening established tree and hedgerow cover dominates the wider view. The evergreen tree planting located around the junction of the A12 dominates and obscures further views to wider parts of the site.
- 6.7.47 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **moderate** adverse and will become **negligible** in the long term.

Viewpoint 18

- 6.7.48 View east from along the A12. The A12 is located in an elevated position within the surrounding landscape. The landform is undulating with the elevated ground that defines the middle of the application site prominent but narrow in view. Intervening established tree and hedgerow cover dominates the wider view. The evergreen tree planting located around the junction of the A12 dominates and obscures further views to wider parts of the site. Any potential views would be transient in nature.
- 6.7.49 The receptors are considered of **minor** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **negligible** adverse and will remain **negligible** in the long term.

6.8 RESIDUAL EFFECTS

- 6.8.1 This Chapter provides a description and assessment of the scale and significance of any effects that will remain after the proposed mitigation/design measures are applied.

Viewpoint 1-5

- 6.8.2 There will be no inter-visibility from these viewpoints and consequently the visual impacts are considered to be **negligible** and will remain **negligible** in the long term.

Viewpoint 6

- 6.8.3 Any potential views would be minor and concentrated upon the central public open space, with views towards the corridor of Green Infrastructure running through the middle of the site.
- 6.8.4 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **minor adverse** and will remain **minor adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 7

- 6.8.5 Where there are narrow and constrained views into the north of the site, proposed housing will be set back and defined by the central corridor of Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space within the centre of the site filtering any potential views from the Long Distance Footpath. Any potential view will be seen in the context of existing properties located on the valley side. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space.
- 6.8.6 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **moderate** and will become **minor/moderate adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 8

- 6.8.7 Views towards high and middle ground located within the centre of the site beyond Sluice Farm. Proposed housing within the north of the site will be set back and behind the central corridor of Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space running through the centre of the site, allowing for glimpsed views of ridgelines. Proposed housing to the southern extent of the site will be screened by Green Infrastructure along the southern boundary of the site, allowing for partial views. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space. Partial views will be gained of the southern extent of development to the north of the railway line.
- 6.8.8 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **high/moderate adverse** and will become **moderate adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 9

- 6.8.9 This viewpoint represents pedestrian users of the long distance footpath within Martlesham Creek. The proposals sit nestled within an existing landscape structure with established woodland blocks lining the valley. Glimpsed views of proposed housing to the southern extent of the site will be partially visible to the rear of the railway line, developable area will be viewed within the context of existing buildings located on the edge of the valley basin. The Public Open Space and Green Infrastructure located within the centre of the site will be prominent in view. After the first 10 years of operation, the **landscape** will have reached maturity and will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space through the middle of the site. Partial views will be gained of development to the north eastern extent of the proposed development beyond the Public Open Space.
- 6.8.10 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **high/moderate** and will **become moderate adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 10

- 6.8.11 Any potential views would be focused open the corridor of central Public Open Space, with views towards the Green Infrastructure running through the middle of the site. Proposed housing would be seen in the context of existing properties off Crane Close to the north. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space.
- 6.8.12 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **moderate** and will become **minor adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 11

- 6.8.13 Any potential views would be minor and concentrated upon the central Public Open Space, with views towards the corridor of Green Infrastructure running through the middle of the site. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the Green Infrastructure and Public Open Space.
- 6.8.14 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **moderate** and will become **minor adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 12

- 6.8.15 Any potential views would be minor and concentrated upon the central Public Open Space, with views towards the corridor of Green Infrastructure running through the middle of the site. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the Green Infrastructure.
- 6.8.16 The receptors are considered of **high** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **minor** and will become **minor adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 13

- 6.8.17 Any potential views would be minor and concentrated upon the central public open space and defined ridgeline through the middle of the site. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the green infrastructure.
- 6.8.18 The receptors are considered of **moderate** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **minor** and will become **minor/adverse** in the long term.

Viewpoint 14

- 6.8.19 Views would be concentrated upon areas of proposed woodland planting located to the west of the site, views would predominantly be transient. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the green infrastructure.
- 6.8.20 The receptors are considered of **low** sensitivity. The initial visual impacts are considered to be **minor** and will remain **minor** in the long term.

Viewpoint 15

- 6.8.21 Glimpsed views can be gained of the top of the ridgeline that runs through the middle of the application site, views would be predominantly transient in nature. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the green infrastructure.
- 6.8.22 The initial visual impacts are considered to be **moderate** and will become **negligible** in the long term.

Viewpoint 16

- 6.8.23 Glimpsed views can be gained of the elevated ridgeline at the western extent of the site. Any potential views would be concentrated upon the proposed Green Infrastructure woodland blocks located within the public open space. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the green infrastructure.
- 6.8.24 The initial visual impacts are considered to be **moderate** and will become **negligible** in the long term.

Viewpoint 17

- 6.8.25 Views can be gained of the elevated ridgeline at the western extent of the site. Any potential views would be concentrated upon the proposed Green Infrastructure woodland blocks located within the Public Open Space. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the Green Infrastructure.
- 6.8.26 The initial visual impacts are considered to be **moderate** and will become **negligible** in the long term.

Viewpoint 18

- 6.8.27 Views can be gained of the elevated ridgeline at the western extent of the site. Any potential views would be concentrated upon the proposed Green Infrastructure woodland blocks located within the Public Open Space. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects with views concentrated upon the Green Infrastructure.
- 6.8.28 There will be no inter-visibility from this viewpoint and consequently the visual impacts are considered to be **negligible** and will remain **negligible** in the long term.

Residual Landscape Character Effects

Character Area 1 – Agricultural / Pastoral Fields

- 6.8.29 The proposals within the character area retain, enhance and correspond to the existing landscape elements such as trees, hedgerows and woodland. The proposals take advantage of the existing site topography with developable area concentrated to the northern and southern extents. The levels are subsumed within the public open space, within the centre of the site. There is currently no footpath access into or across the site, proposals will create footpath links across the site and links to public rights of way to the west and out into the wider landscape.
- 6.8.30 As the proposals near the operational phase, effects on the character area will lessen as the houses, public open space and green infrastructure are completed. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and therefore will provide mitigating effects. The new houses and mature landscape scheme will be defined by the public open space running through the centre of the site which will help blend the development into the landscape, and lower potential effects on the character area.
- 6.8.31 The residual effects on this character area as landscape planting has matured after 10 years are considered to be **moderate adverse**.

Character Area 2 – Duke's Park, Woodbridge

- 6.8.32 Properties off Duke's Park are located within a well treed setting. The retention of existing field boundaries and hedgerows along the eastern boundary along with the proposed public open space will minimise the impact on the setting of properties of Duke's Park. Ipswich Road and Top Street are set back and sunken within the landscape to the north of the site. The northern site boundary is defined by a densely planted boundary. The residual effects on this landscape character area as landscape planting has matured after 10 years considered are to be **minor adverse**.

Character Area 3 – Suffolk Coast & Heaths

- 6.8.33 The character area is defined by The Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB and the Deben Estuary SLA to the south. The visual influence upon the AONB and the SLA is limited to short sections of PRow and Long Distance Footpaths directly to the south due to intervening landform, existing vegetation and the existing infrastructure on the edge of the valley basin.
- 6.8.34 As the proposals near the operational phase, effects on the character will reduce as the houses, public open space and green infrastructure are completed. After the first 10 years of operation, the landscape will have reached maturity and the new landscape across the centre of the site will provide mitigating effects. The new houses and mature landscape scheme will be defined by the public open space running through the centre of the site which will help blend the development into the landscape, and lower potential effects on the character area.
- 6.8.35 The residual effects on this character area as landscape planting has matured after 10 years are considered to be **moderate adverse**.

Character Area 4 – A12 and Seckford Hall

- 6.8.36 The character area is defined by The Suffolk Coastal District Council SLA to the west. The SLA encompasses the Grade II* Listed Building Seckford Hall, the River Fynn Valley and areas to the west of Woodbridge including the A12.
- 6.8.37 There will be only minor inter-visibility with this character area and consequently there will be **no change** on the residual effects.

6.9 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 6.9.1 Cumulative environmental effects arising from the Project and other projects within the locality should be assessed where appropriate using the criteria as set out above.
- 6.9.2 In terms of cumulative effects, the following sites have been considered:
- Proposals for 95 houses including 32 affordable homes, a Community Building and Public Open Space , located at Woodbridge Town FC, adjacent to the north of the site (Pending)
 - East Anglia offshore Wind One Underground Cabling route between Bramford and Bawdsey (Approved)
 - Land south of Main Road, Martlesham C/10/1906, approximately 1.3km south (Approved)
 - Adastral Park (C/09/0555), Martlesham, approximately 2km south (Pending)
 - Land to the rear of Cedar House (DC/14/0715/OUT), approximately 2.4km to the north, House Pytches Road (Approved)
 - Land north of Woods Lane (DC/14/0991/OUT), approximately 2.9km to the north, Melton (Approved)
- 6.9.3 There will be no combined or sequential cumulative effects between the proposed and approved residential and mixed use developments outlined above due to the lack of inter-visibility and distances between the sites. Only the East Anglia One offshore Windfarm Cable route is considered of relevance of the cumulative sites passing directly through the proposed site. There is the potential for a cumulative **minor adverse** landscape and visual effect from this site, due to the route the offshore Windfarm Cable dependent of the timing of its construction.

6.10 STATEMENT OF EFFECTS

- 6.10.1 In landscape and visual respects, there are no significant or overriding issues that should preclude a well-planned and designed development scheme.

Landscape Character Effects

- 6.10.2 The site lies within a character area which is assessed to be of **moderate** sensitivity to change. Whilst built development would inevitably alter the physical fabric and character of the site, the high quality project will retain and enhance existing landscape features to result in a strong sense of place which links with the surrounding countryside. Land off Duke's Park lies within a character area considered to be of **moderate** sensitivity, but with minimal intervisibility with the site. The proposals will in time be successfully assimilated into the adjacent existing infrastructure on the edge of the valley basin and proposed residential areas and overall landscape effects are considered to be **moderate adverse**.

Visual Effects

Visual Amenity

- 6.10.3 The availability of open views into the application site are limited and broadly identified as being close to mid-range views from a few sensitive receptors at specific points close to the site's perimeter to the south and west. Localised changes in topography, intervening vegetation cover and existing built development and infrastructure restricts visibility of the site from the majority of the wider landscape.

Residential Settlements and Settlement Areas

- 6.10.4 The site's closest residential receptors are located to the west of the application site facing onto Top Street. These properties form the northern extent of Martlesham, including the Grade II Listed Building 1, Top Street. The rear of properties along Top Street that directly back onto the site will experience a minor/moderate adverse effect as the current open view will be replaced by that of new public open space, woodland planting and new housing. Proposed structural planting will help to screen rear ground and first floor views.
- 6.10.5 Properties not in the immediate surroundings that have glimpsed views towards the site heavily screened by existing intervening vegetation, would view the area in the context of the existing valley. The overall significant of visual effect for these residents would therefore be **minor/negligible**.
- 6.10.6 Visibility of the proposed development will be limited to residential houses closest to the site, predominantly those immediately bordering it; properties along Duke's Park. The majority of views will be from the rear ground floor level, there is the potential for some glimpsed rear ground level views to be experienced from a relatively small number of houses closest to the site and from within rear gardens through boundary woodland planting. Retained boundary and site vegetation along with new landscape planting within the public open space, along the access road and to the boundaries will mitigate any visual effects considered to be significant. There is little potential for more distant views from individual properties further from the site and the settlements of Martlesham within the wider landscape. Overall, once the development is completed and planting established the resultant visual effects are anticipated to be **moderate adverse**, becoming minor where properties are set further back from the site.

Road Users

- 6.10.7 The development would be predominantly well contained and only visible from short sections of Top Street, Sandy Lane and the A12. Any potential views experienced would be transient and brief in nature. The site is well contained and consequentially views from adjacent roads within the wider landscape not immediately surrounding the application site would be slight. Overall the significance of visual effect for road users is **negligible**.

Public Rights of Way (PROW) & Long Distance Footpaths

- 6.10.8 There are no PROW within the site, therefore there will be no direct effects located within the site. Users of the PROW and the long distance footpath Fynn Valley Walk to the south of the site boundary will experience a localised moderate change in view. Visual effects will be focused upon the proposed Green Infrastructure which will inform the development, creating an extension of the existing wooded valley character on the edge of the valley basin. Glimpsed views of the proposed development, would be seen in the context of the existing settlement pattern which is scattered along the valley side and the edge of the valley basin (refer to Figures 6.16 - 6.18), resulting in a localised moderate adverse effect. Users of the PROW immediately to the west of the site will experience a localised moderate effect. Overall the site is well contained and any potential views from PROW will be limited and localised to the south and west. No other significant views from PROW are expected to be effected. Views from PROW not in the immediate surroundings of the site are limited, due to landform and intervening vegetation. The overall resultant visual effects are expected to be **moderate adverse**.

Recreational Users

- 6.10.9 The Martlesham Creek and Martlesham Creek Boatyard are located to the south of the site within the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB. The overall significance of visual effect for these receptors would therefore be **major/adverse**.
- 6.10.10 The Martlesham Recreation Ground is located south of the site, to the south of Sandy Lane. The overall significance of visual effect for these receptors is expected to be **minor adverse**. There are no other specific recreational areas within the vicinity of the application site which would experience views of the new residential development.

Night Time Effects

It is expected that the development will follow the latest best practice guidance on lighting installations to minimise lighting emissions and pollution on the surrounding landscape and on the night time skies. Lighting from the development would be observed as a minor additional component within the urban area of Woodbridge as well as lighting effects from the properties to the north of Martlesham off Top Street to the west, which are already illuminated at night. Consideration will be given to lighting and any potential impact upon the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB, the Deben Estuary Special Protection Area and the Suffolk Coastal District Council Special Landscape Area. Overall, given the existing illumination of the local area, lighting effects on the night-time skies are not considered to result in a significant adverse effect and the assessment concludes that these effects would be **minor adverse**.

Winter Effects

- 6.10.11 Views during the winter period will increase due to leaf fall; however, the landscape mitigation planting mix has been designed to include evergreen species across the scheme which will create evergreen blocks which will maintain screening all year round.

6.11 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.11.1 This report has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd. It comprises of a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVIA) that has been undertaken by Chartered Members of the Landscape Institute. The proposal comprises of up to 215 dwellings, a proposed convenience store and associated public open space.
- 6.11.2 The application site is influenced by the Suffolk Coast & Heaths AONB, the Deben Estuary Special Protection Area located to the south and the SLA to the west of the site. The development will result in an obvious and permanent change to the character of the application site, however the visual influence of the Proposed Development is limited to short sections of PRoW and Long Distance Footpaths located directly to the south by the intervening landform, existing vegetation and existing infrastructure.
- 6.11.3 The proposal will maintain existing landscape features such as hedgerows and hedgerow trees to filter local views as well as the creation of the proposed public open space. The public open space will form a spine through the middle of the site, dividing up the development areas into small parcels. New areas of amenity space will be created, including parkland and woodland planting incorporating children's play and natural green space to cater for a range of recreational needs while providing opportunities for the enhancement and creation of wildlife habitats to improve local biodiversity. New structural landscape planting, in the form of tree cover and hedgerows throughout the development will help mitigate any potentially adverse visual effects that may result from the proposed scheme.
- 6.11.4 The proposed structural planting will ensure that a buffer is maintained adjacent to the properties located along Top Street to the west and the AONB to the south, this will ensure the quality and the character of the AONB, Martlesham, riverside and the Deben Estuary are maintained.
- 6.11.5 Therefore it is considered that the proposed development within the application site will result in an overall **moderate adverse** effect in terms of landscape and visual resources. Overall it is considered the development proposals demonstrate a well-considered approach to the landscape and context of the site and appropriate development of the site has the potential to successfully integrate into the local surroundings without any unacceptable landscape or visual effects.