

# Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment



Land South of Warren Lane, Long Ashton  
2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021



Tyler  
Grange

TG Report No. 1478\_R06d\_LS\_CW

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## Plans & Photoviewpoints

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1478/P20a August 2021 JS/CP

Plan 2: Published Landscape Character  
1478/P21a August 2021 JS/CP

Plan 3: Local Landscape Character  
1478/P24a August 2021 JS/CP

Plan 4: Topography  
1478/P13a August 2021 JS/CP

Plan 5: Zone of Theoretical Visibility  
1478/P14a August 2021 JS/CP

Plan 6: Photoviewpoint Locations and Extent of Views  
1478/P22a August 2021 JS/CP

Photosheets 1-12  
1478/P23a August 2021 JS/CP



## Section 1: Introduction and Scope

- 1.1. Tyler Grange (TG) Group Limited has been appointed by the Long Ashton Land Company to undertake an assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects associated with residential development comprising of 35 dwellings on land adjacent to the western settlement boundary of Long Ashton (hereby referred to as the 'site'). This is an outline planning application.
- 1.2. The assessment contained within this report has been prepared by a Chartered Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and has been reviewed by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI). It was prepared between August 2019 and March 2020. It was revised to facilitate an updated layout in August 2021

### Pre-Application Consultation

- 1.3. Pre-application consultation with North Somerset Council (NSC) has taken place (**Appendix 1**). This concluded that planning permission would likely be refused for the draft Illustrative Site Layout submitted (**Appendix 2**). The landscape and visual matters highlighted in the response are summarised as follows:
  - Consideration to be given to local Landscape Character Assessments. Including the North Somerset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (March 2018) and Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018);
  - The interaction between the site and the existing settlement edge. The response states that *'the proposal is detached in nature from the village to the east'*. It also highlights there being no proposed connections between the site and Warren Lane;
  - Consideration will need to be given to perimeter landscape proposals and the provision of green spaces within the site; and
  - The sites location within a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) will need to be considered. It is important to note that all heritage matters will be considered by heritage consultants at Cotswold Archaeology within their technical reporting that accompanies this application. Matters relating to views will be assessed within this Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

### LVIA Scoping

- 1.4. Prior to undertaking any assessment work, Tyler Grange scoped the proposed photoviewpoints locations and scope of the assessment with North Somerset Council (NSC) in August 2019. The proposed photoviewpoint locations were overlaid on a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV). The locations have been chosen following a review of the ZTV which was produced on a bare earth assumption with GIS Terrain 5 data. All the viewpoints are on publicly accessible land except for the site-specific ones that occupy the clients land holding.
- 1.5. The proposed study area is restricted to a 2km area shown on the Proposed Photoviewpoint Locations overlaid on a ZTV (Drawing No. 1478/P15). Tyler Grange deem the extent of the study area to be appropriate given the scale of the proposal and the loss of detail in any view over a greater distance. The photoviewpoint locations have been chosen to be representative of a range of visual receptors including local residents, users of public rights of way, workers and road users. Distant



viewpoints have also been included so the wider landscape characteristics can be recorded within the assessment. The local viewpoints allow for views from a range of orientations and parts of the study area to be considered, this is to ensure a balanced and considered assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects arising from development on the site. Exact locations of the photoviewpoints will be verified in the field.

- 1.6. A written response was received from NSC at the beginning of September confirming that the Council were happy with the proposed photoviewpoints and the 2km study area. A copy of the LVIA Scoping and written response is provided at **Appendix 3**.

### **Undertaking the Landscape & Visual Assessment**

- 1.7. To assist the reader in understanding the purpose for undertaking landscape assessment work, the definition of 'landscape' as defined by the European Landscape Convention (ELC, 2000) is set out below.

*"Landscape" means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.*

- 1.8. This definition applies to all urban, peri-urban landscapes, towns, villages and rural areas. It applies to ordinary or degraded landscape as well as those that are outstanding or protected.
- 1.9. In the context of this definition the assessment process seeks to consider the effects in an objective and systematic manner whilst recognising the perceptual and therefore subjective response to the landscape. Whilst subjectivity can never be removed from the assessment process, by following a systematic and structured framework of assessment, a more robust assessment can be performed, and more rational and transparent conclusions drawn.

- 1.10. Furthermore, the LVIA process deals with the separate but interlinked issues of:

- **Landscape Character:** The effects of the proposed development upon discrete character areas and/or character types comprising features possessing a particular quality or merit; and
- **Visual Context:** The effects of the proposed development on views from visual receptors, and upon the amenity value of the views.

- 1.11. Landscape character is defined in the Landscape Institute's guidance ('Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) 2013) as:

*"A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse".*

- 1.12. Changes to the landscape character can arise as a result of:

- Changes to the fabric of the landscape including either the loss of key elements or introduction of new features which alter the distinct character of the landscape; and
- Changes which alter the way in which the landscape is perceived or appreciated.



1.13. Changes to views will occur where there is:

- Alteration of the view in terms of elements present and the overall composition;
- A change to the skyline; and/or
- There is a change to the distribution or dominance of features.

1.14. Such changes may or may not have a significant effect on the visual amenity of identified visual receptors.

### **Methodology**

1.15. The methodology and guidelines used in the preparation of this assessment have been developed from the following:

- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England, 2014; and
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), Third Edition, LI and IEMA, 2013.

1.16. The assessment process is set out in further detail below but involves the following steps:

- Baseline Appraisal
- Classification of Resources
- Assessment of Effects

### **Baseline Appraisal**

1.17. The baseline appraisal process is a crucial part of any assessment and includes:

- An overview of statutory plans and other data regarding relevant designations and landscape and visual related planning policies for the area;
- An assessment of the landscape character of the site and surroundings with reference to published works and checked and verified through fieldwork. This includes the classification of the landscape into units of distinct and recognisable character and land use at a site-specific level;
- Field work to determine the extent to which the site can be seen from the wider area, taking into account any significant vegetation or built form which restricts or limits the extent of visibility; and
- Identification of representative viewpoints and determination of likely visual receptors.



## Classification of Resources

- 1.18. **Appendix 4** contains the threshold and definitions of the terms used in this process.
- 1.19. This stage seeks to classify the landscape resources in terms of their individual or collective sensitivity to change. This is dependent on:
- The susceptibility of the landscape;
  - The type of change proposed; and
  - The value placed on the landscape.
- 1.20. As a general rule those landscape resources which make a notable contribution to the character and cannot be replaced or substituted will be of high sensitivity, those resources which are replaceable or contribute little to the overall character of the landscape will be of low sensitivity.
- 1.21. The classification of the representative viewpoints in terms of their sensitivity to change and the sensitivity of the visual receptors will be dependent on:
- The location and context of the viewpoint;
  - The expectations and occupation or activity of the receptors; and
  - The importance of the view.
- 1.22. Those receptors that are classified as being of high sensitivity to change may include users of public rights of way or nearby residents, those of low sensitivity to change may include people in their place of work or travelling through the landscape in cars, trains or other modes of transport.
- 1.23. In order to assist in understanding the application of sensitivity to landscape and visual receptors, the tables at **Appendix 4** set out a number of Assessment Criteria. These allow for the separate consideration of both value and susceptibility factors in order to establish a balanced assessment.

## Assessment of Effects

- 1.24. The assessment of effects is undertaken in the knowledge of the scheme proposals and the existing baseline situation.
- 1.25. The importance of any landscape and visual effect is a function of the sensitivity of the affected landscape resources and visual receptors (see above) against the magnitude of change that they would experience.
- 1.26. The magnitude of effect lies along a continuum from high, where there is a prominent and notable change to the landscape character or view, to low where the change is barely perceptible.
- 1.27. The consideration of further mitigation with the aim where possible, of avoiding, reducing or offsetting important adverse landscape or visual effects is determined during the course of the assessment where this can be addressed through a suitably worded condition.

- 1.28. The evaluation of landscape and visual effects following mitigation, are known as residual impacts.
- 1.29. The assessment of the nature of the landscape and visual effects depends on the degree to which the development:
- Complements, respects and fits into the existing scale, landform and pattern of the landscape context;
  - Enables enhancement, restoration or retention of the landscape character and visual amenity and delivers policy aspirations; and
  - Affects strategic and important views in addition to the visual context of receptors.
- 1.30. For the purposes of this report, the term 'impact' refers to the causation of change and 'effects' are the results of the changes on the landscape and visual context.

*Level of Effect Criteria*

- 1.31. Best practice guidelines stipulate that the level of any landscape related impact should be evaluated, both during the construction works and following completion of the development. As such, the assessment of potential and residual effects is based upon the thresholds as contained at **Appendix 4**.
- 1.32. It is also important to note that the latest GLVIA (3rd Edition) places greater emphasis on professional judgement and the supporting narrative and less emphasis on a formulaic, mechanistic approach; a transparent assessment process should be evident.



## Section 2: Baseline Appraisal

### Landscape Policy Context

- 2.1. This subsection should be read in conjunction with **Plan 1: Landscape Planning Context**.

*National Planning Policy Framework 2021*

- 2.2. The National Planning Policy Framework<sup>2F</sup> (NPPF) was published on 24th July 2018 and updated on the February 2019 and July 2021. It outlines the Government's planning policies for England, setting out how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions and any development would need to accord with the following planning provisions.
- 2.3. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11). For decision-taking, a development that accords with a current development plan should be approved without delay; and, where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless:
- "i. The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*  
*ii. Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole."*
- 2.4. Footnote 7 provides examples of the protected areas or assets of particular importance that the NPPF policies refer to, these include land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- 2.5. Paragraph 20 refers to strategic policies that should set out a strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for housing, infrastructure for transport, community facilities and conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes, and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 2.6. The importance of promoting healthy and safe communities is also considered within the Revised NPPF. In support of this, it states that access to *"a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities"*. To facilitate this Paragraph 98 considers the importance of public rights of way, stating that *"planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access. Local authorities should seek opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails."*
- 2.7. Paragraph 119 states that policies and decisions should *"promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions"*.
- 2.8. In addition to this, Paragraph 120(a) states that planning policies and decisions should *"encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed-use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside."*

- 2.9. Chapter 12: Achieving Well-Designed Places sets out the criteria needed within a Local Plan to enable good design, which is a “key aspect of sustainable development” that *“creates better places in which to live and work and helps make the development acceptable to communities”*. Paragraph 130(a-f) states that planning policies and decisions *“should ensure that developments...are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation...”*
- 2.10. Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment specifies how planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.
- 2.11. Paragraph 176 states that *“great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty”* in landscapes with the highest status of protection, National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

#### *Planning Practice Guidance*

- 2.12. Whilst National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is to be updated, it does not preclude development. It considers that the creation of new residential neighbourhoods can, through sensitive design, be deemed acceptable even where it results in a loss of open countryside. Those categories within the NPPG that are of relevance to landscape and visual matters in relation to this site are set out below.

#### **Design: Process and Tools (October 2019)**

- 2.13. The NPPG states that well-designed places can be achieved by taking a proactive and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process. The guidance sets out processes and tools that can be used through the planning system. The guidance is to be read alongside the National Design Guide with landscape forming an integral part of the design process.
- 2.14. Hard and soft landscape are identified as key components of good design. In considering context, it is necessary for development to understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context which includes landscape character and can include public open spaces.

#### **Natural Environment**

- 2.15. This section of the NPPG was most recently updated in July 2019, particularly in relation to Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity Net Gain and how the built environment can be enhanced by landscape features as well as Green Infrastructure.
- 2.16. Paragraph 036 of the NPPG relates to how planning policies can conserve and enhance landscapes and states as follows

*“The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside. Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed. Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures, such*

*as appropriate design principles and visual screening, where necessary. The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully.”*

#### *Local Planning Context*

#### **North Somerset Core Strategy (updated January 2017)**

2.17. The North Somerset Core Strategy Key Diagram shows that the site is located at Long Ashton, a defined Service Village within North Somerset’s Green Belt.

2.18. Policies relevant to landscape and visual issues are summarised below.

#### *Policy CS5 – Landscape and the Historic Environment:*

2.19. This policy states the following relevant to landscape; *‘the character, distinctiveness, diversity and quality of North Somerset’s landscape and townscape will be protected and enhanced by the careful, sensitive management and design of development. Close regard will be paid to the character of National Character Areas in North Somerset and particularly that of the 11 landscape types and 31 landscape character areas identified in the North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment.’*

2.20. This policy also states the following in respect of the historic environment *‘the council will conserve the historic environment of North Somerset, having regard to the significance of heritage assets such as conservation areas, listed buildings, buildings of local significance, scheduled monuments, other archaeological sites, registered and other historic parks and gardens.’*

#### *Policy CS6 – North Somerset’s Green Belt:*

This policy states that *‘within North Somerset the boundaries of the Bristol-Bath Green Belt will remain unchanged during the plan period’.*

#### *Policy CS9 – Green Infrastructure:*

2.21. This policy states the following (as relevant); *‘the existing network of green infrastructure will be safeguarded, improved and enhanced by further provision, linking in to existing provision where appropriate, ensuring it is a multi-functional, accessible network which promotes healthy lifestyles, maintains and improves biodiversity and landscape character and contributes to climate change objectives. Priority will be given to:*

- *The protection and planting of trees in woodlands and urban areas, particularly native trees, for public amenity and climate change mitigation and benefits to biodiversity, health and recreation;*
- *The protection and enhancement of biodiversity;*
- *The continued development of a network of green spaces, water bodies, paths and cycleways and bridleways in and around the urban areas, recognising the value of sustainable drainage systems for green infrastructure; and*
- *The management, maintenance, upgrading and extension of the public rights of way network including improved connectivity to areas of green infrastructure within and outside North Somerset.*

*Policy CS12 – Achieving High Quality Design and Place-Making:*

- 2.22. This policy states that *‘North Somerset Council is committed to achieving high quality buildings and places across all of North Somerset. High quality architecture and urban design will be sought from development demonstrating a robust design process to generate solutions that have clearly considered the existing context, and contribute to social, economic and environmental sustainability. As part of a comprehensive place-making strategy new development should function well, supporting sustainable land uses and seek to improve the image of the area. Poor design standards in individual buildings and larger schemes are not acceptable. Proposals of all scales will be required to demonstrate sensitivity to the existing local character already established in an area and should take the opportunity to enhance the sense of place and local identity through a well thought out design. Where the existing design characteristics are not considered of a high quality, new development should actively aim to enhance the area through good design. Schemes must be based on a thorough site appraisal’.*

*Policy CS32 – Service Villages*

- 2.23. The policy clarifies that new development within or adjoining the settlement boundaries of Service Villages, including Long Ashton, which enhances the overall sustainability of the settlement will be supported where it addresses a series of criteria including:

- *It results in a form, design and scale of development which is high quality, respects and enhances the local character, contributes to place making and the reinforcement of local distinctiveness, and can be readily assimilated into the village, and*
- *It results in high quality sustainable schemes which is appropriate to its context and makes a positive contribution to the local environment and landscape setting;*

- 2.24. The policy also states that sites outside the settlement boundaries in excess of about 25 dwellings must be brought forward as allocations through Local Plans or Neighbourhood Plans.

**North Somerset Development Management Policies Sites and Policies Plan Part 1 (adopted July 2016)**

*Policy DM9 – Trees and Woodlands:*

- 2.25. This policy states the following (as relevant) *‘development proposals affecting trees should:*
- *Demonstrate that the retention, protection and enhancement of tree canopy cover has been considered throughout the design and development process;*
  - *Achieve high quality design by demonstrating that the long-term retention of appropriate trees is realistic, and that the trees are viewed as an asset by new occupants rather than as an issue of conflict. The future growth of the tree canopy and roots should be fully accounted for when designing:*
    - *The location, spacing and orientation of buildings, gardens and green spaces;*
    - *The location of underground services;*
    - *The relative positions of trees and windows for light;*
    - *Specific issues relating to tree species e.g. Aphid honey dew, fruit drop, density of canopy, leaves and needles; and*
    - *Future management requirements and accessibility*

- *Provide high quality physical protection of retained trees, which includes working methods that will be clearly communicated and understood by all site staff;*
- *Include, where practical, the introduction of appropriate new tree planting and woodland creation as an integral part of the design and landscaping of new developments, using native species of local origin wherever possible; and*
- *Ensure the engineering requirements to accommodate tree planting and future tree growth in relation to building foundation design are complied with'*

*Policy DM10 – Landscape:*

2.26. This policy states the following (as relevant); *'all development proposals should:*

- *Be carefully integrated into the natural, built and historic environment, aiming to establish a strong sense of place, respond to local character, and reflect the identity of local surroundings, whilst minimising landscape impact;*
- *Respect the tranquillity of an area;*
- *Include appropriate landscaping and boundary treatments in the scheme;*
- *Conserve and enhance natural or semi-natural vegetation characteristic of the area;*
- *Respect the character of the historic landscape including features such as field patterns, watercourses, drainage ditches, stone walls and hedgerows; and*
- *Where outdoor lighting is proposed adopt a lighting scheme which minimises obtrusive light and where dark skies are an important feature of the area.*

2.27. *Where some harm to the local landscape character is unavoidable, but a development is otherwise deemed beneficial, then positive mitigation measures should be secured by a landscape condition or planning agreement (section 106), involving works on or off-site as necessary.'*

*DM12 – Development within the Green Belt:*

2.28. This policy states that *'the extent of the North Somerset Green Belt is shown on the Policies Map. Inappropriate development is, by definition harmful to the green belt and will not be approved except in very special circumstances'*.

*DM19 – Green Infrastructure:*

2.29. This policy states as follows *'large-scale proposals in locations where there is a lack of green infrastructure or opportunities to create or improve green networks, will be required to contribute to the quality of the environment, through the creation of high quality well designed and accessible green infrastructure. Proposals will, where appropriate, ensure that green infrastructure is:*

- *Multi-functional;*
- *Part of a connected green infrastructure network;*
- *Able to maximise the opportunity to respond to climate change;*
- *Designed to enable the community to actively use green infrastructure for sports and play, and as an outdoor education resource, as well as passive recreation;*
- *Able to promote community cohesion; and*
- *Designed to promote and enhance local diversity and distinctiveness.*

2.30. *Green infrastructure should be provided in line with the phasing and scale of development. Where it is not possible, practical or desirable for green infrastructure provision to be made on site then*

*financial contributions will be sought. Contributions will vary depending on the existing provisions in the locality and whether the requirement is for new provision or for upgrades to existing provision. Provision for maintenance will also be required, likely to involve commuted sums if the green infrastructure is to be adopted by North Somerset Council proposals should seek to incorporate important sites and linkages in the layout and design of the development.'*

*DM32 – High Quality Design and Place-Making:*

2.31. This policy states the following (as relevant); *'the design of new development should contribute to the creation of high quality, distinctive, functional and sustainable places where opportunities for physical activity and recreation are maximised. The design and planning of development proposals should demonstrate sensitivity to the local character, and the setting, and enhance the area taking into consideration the existing context. Design solutions should seek to enhance local distinctiveness and contribute to the creation of a sense of place and identity. Proposals which cause unacceptable harm to the character or appearance of the area will not be permitted. In determining whether the design is acceptable account will be taken of whether:*

- The siting, soft and hard landscaping, levels, Density, form, scale, height, massing, detailing, colour, and materials are appropriate and respect the characteristics of the site and surroundings and are appropriate to its use and position within the landscape and/or town-scape; and*
- Where relevant, recommendations of a Design Review Panel have been taken into consideration.*

2.32. The following will also apply as appropriate:

- Proposals for lighting schemes should not be obtrusive. They should not have a demonstrably harmful impact on the living conditions of neighbours, significantly increase sky glow, cause glare or light trespass or impact on biodiversity.*

*Where relevant development proposals should have regard to the design and other related features set out in Supplementary Planning Documents and other guidance.'*

### **Long Ashton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2013-2033 (May 2015)**

2.33. The site lies within the area covered by the plan.

2.34. The vision for Long Ashton states as follows *'Long Ashton develops as a sustainable community retaining its semi-rural, separate, village character while promoting local business, community facilities and sustainable energy. The parish, including Leigh Woods, will continue to contribute to the leisure and recreation of local people and the wider area of Bristol and North Somerset.'*

*Policy LC6 - Allotments*

2.35. Any new development of 10 or more dwellings shall provide space for allotments to serve the development on the same site or on easily accessible land within the parish. The allotments area shall be 250m<sup>2</sup> for each 10 dwellings.



### *Policy ENV2 – Protection of Trees and Woodland*

- 2.36. This policy states that *‘development that damages or results in the loss of ancient trees or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value will not normally be permitted. Development proposals must be designed to retain trees and ancient trees or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value. Development proposals for sites including mature trees (i.e. 600mm girth or greater) should be accompanied by a tree survey that establishes the health and longevity of any affected trees and a long-term maintenance plan.’*

### *Policy ENV3 – Maintain and Enhance Public Rights of Way (PRoW)*

- 2.37. This policy states that *‘the current footpath and bridle way network is to be retained and maintained. Where practicable, and without loss of character, enhanced to provide access for all. Opportunities to enhance the network will be investigated in any relevant development. Any development proposals will be required to retain existing rights of way and where appropriate to the scale and location of the development, improvements will be required to enhance the PRoW network.’*

### *Policy ENV5: Areas of Value to Nature or Landscape*

- 2.38. Whilst this policy is focussed on development conserving and enhancing the wildlife, biodiversity and historic assets of the village, Map 7 shows that Ashton Hill Plantation (including Cooks Wood, Shipley Brake George’s Hill Plantation) and Fenn’s Wood to the north of the site along the top of the valley are identified areas of local ecological or landscape value.
- 2.39. The justification of this policy is complementary to Policy ENV2 which identifies that wooded ridge is a defining feature of the village and should be retained. Trees form an important and valued feature in the village and should be retained. The justification of Policy ENV5 aims to ensure that the landscape character is maintained. The woods lie on a ridge to the north and west of the settlement and provide a visual backdrop to the village.

### *Policy LHN2 – Sympathetic Village Design*

2.40. This policy states *‘all new development in the parish will be expected to comply with principles set out in the Village Design Statement’*. New buildings should be in a compatible style to the immediate surrounding area and reflect the varied nature of properties in Long Ashton.

### **Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

#### *Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018)*

- 2.41. This SPD replaced the preceding Landscape Character Assessment that was adopted in 2005.
- 2.42. The document is considered in more detail in the Landscape Character section, when assessing the landscape character of the site and its context.

#### *Biodiversity and Trees (December 2005)*

- 2.43. This SPD supplements local policies and proposals relating to biodiversity. replaced the preceding Landscape Character Assessment that was adopted in 2005.

- 2.44. Of relevance to this report are the aspirations for the protection and retention of existing vegetation and trees within sites. This is for biodiversity, landscape and visual gain.

#### *Emerging Local Planning Context*

- 2.45. It is understood that the Council withdraw from the sub regional West of England Joint Spatial Plan (WoE JSP) on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and now intend to prepare a new Local Plan to cover the period 2023 – 2038. The Council are in the early stages of preparation with a current consultation period on the pre-commencement document which is an initiation document setting out the proposed scope and programme for the new Local Plan.
- 2.46. Based on the current timescales, an Issues and Options consultation document is proposed for May – June 2020, a draft plan in January 2021 followed by a pre-submission plan in September 2021 and intended submission to the Secretary of State in December 2021. It is unlikely that adoption of the new Local Plan will be until January 2023.

#### **Designations**

- 2.47. No landscape related designations exist within the site or within the local study area.

#### *Green Belt*

- 2.48. The site is located within the Green Belt. The designation of an area as Green Belt is not based on any landscape quality or value criteria and is used as a spatial planning tool. The appropriateness of the sites removal from the Green Belt will be considered within the planning statement and is not considered any further within this LVIA.

#### *Scheduled Ancient Monument*

- 2.49. The site is identified as a SAM due to its location near Roman archaeological interests. The site is a recent addition to the SAM and it not included within the SAM map shown within the Long Ashton Neighbourhood Plan, May 2015 version.
- 2.50. The accompanying heritage report by Cotswold Archaeology will assess the impact on this heritage designation.

#### *Public Rights of Way*

- 2.51. As shown on Plan 1, there are no PRow within the site. The nearest is to the north of the site and is referenced as LA12/29/10.

#### *Interim Conclusion: Planning Policy*

- 2.52. The site is located in a protected area, in this case Green Belt and a Scheduled Ancient Monument, as defined in national policy and reflected in the local policy. The site is not located in a designated landscape of international, national or of local importance. It is adjacent to the western settlement edge of Long Ashton, a defined Service Village, where new development will be supported where it enhances the overall sustainability of the settlements as outlined by Policy CS32.



- 2.53. It is clear, that the proposal will need to have regard to the existing landscape character and respect the historic environment as required by both national policy and guidance and local development plan policies CS5 and DM10. Policies CS9 and DM19 seek to safeguard, improve and enhance Green Infrastructure as part of the proposal. This also includes protection and planting of trees in urban areas and in areas of public amenity which is reflected in Policy DM9 and Policy ENV2 which look to retain, protect and enhance tree canopy cover where possible but also encourages the introduction of appropriate tree planting as part of the design and landscaping of new proposals.
- 2.54. High quality design is a key theme which runs through national and local planning policy. The design and planning of development proposals should take account of local character, and the setting, and enhance the area within this context. Details of soft and hard landscaping together with their surroundings and whether they are appropriate will be considered as part of the design process as outlined in policies CS12, DM32 and be sympathetic to village design as required by neighbourhood plan policy LHN2.
- 2.55. In addition, where practicable neighbourhood plan policy ENV3 seeks to enhance the PRow network and neighbourhood plan policy LC6 requires new developments for 10 or more dwellings to include space of allotments.

### **Landscape Character**

- 2.56. The characterisation process is a non-value judgement process; therefore, classifying landscapes into distinct areas does not suggest that one character is more sensitive than another or valued by people more or less.
- 2.57. The landscape character appraisal process reviews the wider landscape character type at a national level and then explores more detail character features at a district/local level, before analysing site-specific land use that informs local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- 2.58. This subsection should be read in conjunction with **Plan 2: Published Landscape Character** and **Plan 3: Local Landscape Character**.
- 2.59. This LVIA considers the local, site specific character, features and context as identified by TG through fieldwork, and informed by a review of published assessments and designations to inform an understanding of the value and susceptibility of the landscape to accommodate change associated with residential development when identifying the sensitivity of the site and associated features to the proposals. This sets out the context at a scale appropriate to the proposals.

### *National Character*

- 2.60. For the purpose of assessing the effects of development, National Character Areas (NCAs) are relevant; however, they are very broad and set out the key characteristics of large geographical areas. Whilst NCAs do not provide an appreciation of the site-specific issues which need to be taken into account in the determination process, a number of the identified characteristics are discernible in relation to the wider landscape surrounding the site, however they lack detail at a local level.
- 2.61. The site lies within **NCA 118: Bristol, Avon Valleys and Ridges** published by Natural England. A full list of the key characteristics is set out below, those of relevance to the site and study area are highlighted:

- **Low-lying, shallow vales that contrast sharply with high, open downland ridges as the varied landform reflects the complex underlying geology, comprised of Carboniferous limestones with sandstones, silts and conglomerates, together with muds, clays and alluvium. Coal Measures are also present;**
- *The River Avon cuts a steep-sided valley through the area from the east, forming the 2.5km long, c.100m high gorge at Bristol. It is joined by the Frome at the centre of Bristol and Chew near Keynsham. Other streams and rivers in the south-east flow eastwards to join the Avon outside the NCA, and the Yeo on the south-western edge flows directly to the sea;*
- *Water supply for Bristol and the surrounding area provided by Chew Valley Lake, Blagdon Lake, and the smaller Chew Magna Reservoir and the reservoirs at Barrow Gurney. These reservoirs also impound river flow, while releasing a set minimum flow downstream at all times;*
- *A wide range of soil types, from brown earths on Limestone outcrops to poorly draining gleys on clays, which reflects the underlying influence of the complex geology;*
- *The most extensive areas of woodland lie between Congresbury and the Avon Gorge and on the Failand Ridge. These are internationally significant, containing rare endemic white-beam species. **Elsewhere, woodlands are smaller and fragmented and mainly confined to steeper land; the majority are broadleaf;***
- **Agriculture is predominantly livestock rearing, with arable in the flatter land to the north-east, with larger field sizes and infrequent hedgerow trees. Valleys and steeper slopes in the south-east tend to have irregular fields and overgrown, species-rich hedges;**
- *A diverse landscape important for greater and lesser horseshoe bats. Grasslands of high conservation interest remain on the wetter valley bottoms and dry downland slopes. Chew Valley Lake Special Protection Area (SPA) and Blagdon Lake SSSI support large numbers of wildfowl, plants and invertebrates, and are surrounded by species-rich lowland meadow;*
- *A long, historic timeline, with important fossil features visible in geological exposures, Neolithic long barrows and stone circles, iron-age hill forts and historic associations with Bristol's port and parkland and creating important landscape features;*
- **Settlements dating from the medieval period, clustered around springheads of the Cotswold scarp or along the springline of the Mendips. In the vales they are scattered, linked by a complex network of lanes, with linear mining villages superimposed. Settlement becomes especially dense in the south-east, with many villages enlarged as commuter settlements;**
- *Older village buildings, gentry houses and mansions of local ashlar, which includes pale yellow Jurassic oolitic limestones and grey Carboniferous and Lias limestones. Red or brown sandstone is used in the north, and Pennant Sandstone at Nailsea 'Flats' in the south-west;*
- *Bristol and its commercial, industrial and residential areas; major roads (M4 and M5 motorways); the airfields (Filton and Bristol); and reservoirs, which occupy a substantial area around Bristol. There is considerable commercial development around Cribbs Causeway, Aztec West and Abbey Wood; and*

- *The City of Bristol itself, which is a popular destination for overseas and domestic visitors and is one of the most affluent cities in the UK, providing employment for settlements in the NCA and beyond.*

### County Landscape Character

#### North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment (adopted September 2018)

- 2.64. At district scale NSC has prepared the 'North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment' (NSLCA) Adopted September 2018. The landscape associated with the site lies within Landscape Character Types (LCT) E: Limestone Ridges and Combes and J: Rolling Valley Farmland. The key characteristics of these broad character types are set out below, those of relevance to the site are highlighted in **bold**.
- 2.65. LCT E: Limestone Ridges and Combes
- Elevated ridges of carboniferous limestone, with lower flanks of Mercia Mudstone;
  - **Steep escarpment slopes forming a distinctive and visible topographic feature rising above, and creating the backdrop to, the low-lying areas of the district;**
  - Outstanding collection of historic monuments, earthworks (hillforts) along the scarp top plus local legends associated with the gorges/cleaves;
  - **Wooded, with large-scale mixed and deciduous plantations plus extensive areas of ancient woodland;**
  - Spring line settlement concentrated along roads following the foot of the escarpment ridge;
  - Hidden, deep wooded coombes/gorges extend into the scarp providing important historic routeways, and now steep, winding rural lanes;
  - Intimate, enclosed wooded landscape counterbalanced by occasional dramatic and surprising views out;
  - Small limestone quarries and workings – some now used as tip sites;
  - Archaeological landscapes comprise earthwork remains of later prehistoric sites; and
  - The field pattern is a mosaic of medieval and post medieval enclosure.
- 2.66. LCT J: Rolling Valley Farmland:
- Underlying Mercia Mudstone geology;
  - **Small to medium scale peaceful landscape, with a feeling of partial enclosure from the surrounding ridges;**
  - **Rolling landform formed by numerous rivers and tributaries;**
  - Presence of a variety of water bodies including rivers, streams, ponds, drainage ditches and reservoirs;
  - **Pastoral landscape with views to wooded ridges;**
  - **Fields bounded by thick hedges with hedgerow trees;**
  - Occasional belts and clumps of ancient woodland and more recent plantations;
  - Complex network of winding rural roads and deep sunken lanes;
  - Nucleated villages on higher ground and numerous isolated traditional stone and render farmsteads; and
  - An area of essentially early medieval and medieval settlement and enclosure.
- 2.67. A series of 'Landscape Guidelines' are provided for LCT E and J, several of which are of relevance to the site and potential future development implications, the published guidelines are as follows:

2.68. LCT E:

- *Conserve the peaceful and secluded nature of the wooded landscape;*
- *Promote sensitive, cyclical/rotational management of hedgerows;*
- *Encourage public access but retain sense of remoteness and minimise damage through wear and tear by careful design of routes and infrastructure;*
- *Maintain key local landscape features such as drystone walls;*
- *Minimise the impact of the urban edge and the encroachment of visually intrusive land uses through design guidance and appropriate land management;*
- *Encourage traditional methods of land management of pasture (sheep grazing) and woodland (coppice);*
- *There should be a presumption against arable in areas of archaeological sites and landscapes defined by earthworks; and*
- *To prevent poaching of earthworks light grazing management is recommended.*

2.69. LCT J:

- *Conserve the remote and rural nature of the pastoral landscape;*
- *Promote sensitive, cyclical/rotational management of ditches and hedgerows;*
- *Encourage traditional methods of land management;*
- *Minimise the impact of the urban edge and the encroachment of visually intrusive land uses through design guidance and appropriate land management;*
- *There should be a presumption against arable in areas of archaeological landscapes defined by earthworks; and*
- *To prevent poaching of earthworks light grazing management is recommended.*

2.70. At a more local scale the character assessment has subdivided the landscape types into smaller more detailed Landscape Character Areas (LCA). The site is identified within area E5: Tickenham Ridges and Combes and J5: Land Yeo and Kenn Rolling Valley Farmland. The key characteristics of these areas are listed below, those of most relevance to the landscape and visual elements of the site are in bold:

2.71. LCA E5: Tickenham Ridges and Combes:

- *Elevated ridges of Carboniferous Limestone and Mercia Mudstone;*
- ***Steep slopes forming a distinctive backdrop to the Land Yeo and Kenn Valleys and moors to the south;***
- *Intricate enclosed wooded slopes with contrasting wide views out to the open lowlands;*
- *Extensive areas of ancient broad-leaved woodland;*
- *Historic parklands with woodlands and parkland trees including ancient oak pollards at Ashton Court;*
- ***Settlement concentrated along roads following the foot of the escarpment ridge with some suburban interfill and ribbon development;***
- *Hidden combes with steep, winding rural lanes;*
- *Historic monuments and earthworks along the scarp top; and*
- *Small limestone quarries and workings.*

2.72. The character of the E5 area is described as 'strong' and its condition is considered to be 'good' due to the 'well maintained estates, farmland and woodland. A few elements of the historic estates

show signs of neglect, e.g. management of the stone walls'. The Landscape Guidelines' provided for this character area are as follows:

- *Conserve the peaceful and secluded nature of the wooded landscape;*
- *Encourage public access but retain sense of remoteness and minimise damage through wear and track by careful design of routes and infrastructure;*
- *Maintain key local landscape features including the estate walls, lodges, parkland trees and avenues;*
- *Seek appropriate management of marginal non-agricultural land use such as horse paddocks;*
- *Conserve the rural character of the winding lanes and limit upgrading by widening kerbing;*
- *Minimise the impact of the urban edge and the encroachment of visually intrusive land uses through design guidance and appropriate land management;*
- *Encourage traditional methods of land management;*
- *There should be presumption against arable in areas of archaeological sites and landscape defined by earthworks; and*
- *To prevent poaching of earthworks consider light grazing management.*

2.73. LCA J5: Land Yeo and Kenn Rolling Valley Farmland:

- **Gently undulating landform** based on Mercia Mudstone with Head and Alluvium;
- **Rural pastoral landscape set in a wide valley framed by wooded ridges;**
- **Intact hedgerow network with hedgerow trees of oak;**
- *Areas of historic parkland with mature parkland trees rising up to the lower slopes of the ridges;*
- **Frequent large villages such as Long Ashton, Backwell and Claverham with historic stone buildings at centre and modern infill;**
- *Network of winding rural roads with major road and railway passing along the valley floor edge; and*
- *Scattered stone farmsteads with stone outbuildings and walls.*

2.74. The character of the J5 area is described as 'moderate' and its condition is considered to be 'good' due to the 'large areas of intact pasture with thick hedgerows and hedgerow trees and small winding rural roads. Some elements of the landscape are declining such as the small farm orchards.' The Landscape Guidelines' provided for this character area are as follows:

- *Conserve the rural nature of the pastoral landscape;*
- *Continue with sensitive, cyclical/rotational management of hedgerows;*
- *Nurture new and existing hedgerow trees;*
- *Encourage traditional methods of land management;*
- *Promote active management and replanting of orchards using local fruit varieties;*
- *Minimise the impact of the urban edge and the encroachment of visually intrusive land uses through design and appropriate land management;*
- *There should be a presumption against arable in areas of archaeological landscape defined by earthworks and areas of historic parkland; and*
- *To prevent poaching of earthworks, light grazing management is recommended.*

## North Somerset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (March 2018)

2.75. Wardell Armstrong was commissioned by NSC to undertake a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of the area surrounding selected settlements within the district. The purpose of this assessment was to inform the site selection process for non-strategic growth and to ensure that the important characteristics of the North Somerset landscape are not unacceptably harmed.

2.76. Regarding land to the west of Long Ashton the following was recorded:

*'To the west of the village is a large SAM (Roman settlement, part of an associated field system and earlier Iron Age settlement remains at Gatcombe Farm'). The land in this location is also open and visually prominent, rising up to George's Hill Plantation. Owing to the above, this land is of high sensitivity'*

2.77. The sensitivity assessment concludes that all land to the west of Long Ashton is of high sensitivity. However, it is considered given the site is located on low lying land on the edge of Long Ashton and that it forms a small part of a wider land parcel considered to be of high sensitivity that the sensitivity of the site is less sensitive. In this instance, the sensitivity of the site is therefore considered to be of medium sensitivity. This is considered further in Section 5 of this assessment.

### *Observations from Fieldwork – Site Specific Character*

2.78. Having identified the key characteristics of the published character area that comprise the site and its local context, a brief summary is given below of how the site relates to the local landscape context. This allows the identification of which key characteristics and factors are of particular relevance to the site. This has then enabled the proposals to respond to the key attributes and sensitivities of the receiving landscape.

2.79. **Plan 3** illustrates the variety in character and the presence of key landscape features in the vicinity of the site. This is based on field observations made during site visits in September 2019 and March 2020. **Plan 4: Topography** illustrates the topography of the site and the wider context.

2.80. The site is currently agricultural in nature, it is influenced by its surroundings and the neighbouring settlement edge. Existing residential development is present beyond the eastern boundary and partially to the southern boundary. These characteristics associate the site as part of the Long Ashton settlement edge, which itself has a linear settlement pattern aligned along the local road and rail network.

2.81. The sloping local topography and the site's position near the bottom of a shallow valley create a sense of enclosure within the site. Characteristic wooded ridges are seen on the surrounding high ground. These characteristics are highlighted within the published landscape character assessments.

2.82. The site occupies part of a larger arable field. The shape and scale of this field has evidently been influenced by modern farming techniques and has likely evolved over time. Evidence of this is seen in the uncharacteristic post and rail fence on the western boundary. Beyond the north of the site the wider field is bound by a characteristic hedgerow, which is also present on the eastern boundary. The southern boundary is bound by a stone wall, which is not listed as a characteristic boundary treatment within published material but is a pleasant feature none the less. Beyond the southern boundary is Weston Road, this busy road would provide access to the site and introduces visual and auditory disturbance to the local area. Beyond the hedgerow to the east of the site is

Warren Lane, this is a single-track road and is enclosed by a combination of hedgerow and built form within Long Ashton.

2.83. As the plans confirm, the characteristics of the local area and associated with the site reflect a number of those recorded in the North Somerset Landscape Character Assessment. The notable features recorded as being present during visits to the site are:

- The site forms part of a larger arable field and surrounding agricultural network on the edge of Long Ashton;
- Land that slopes from a high point beyond the north of the site to a low point beyond the site boundary to the south;
- Mature vegetation comprising of hedgerows and trees is present to the northern and eastern boundaries. A number of good quality tree specimens are present on these boundaries. Vegetation on the southern and western boundaries is limited in quantum and of low quality; and
- Settlement and built form is a prominent feature of this area with both old and new development present in the local area to the east.

2.84. In accordance with best practice TG has conducted a local scale analysis of the landscape character which is set out on **Plan 3**.

2.85. At a local scale, the landscape shows a degree of variation, albeit consistent with the overarching and prevailing landscape character where the site is located on the edge of an established residential area. The local landscape receptors are summarised as follows:

#### **Undeveloped Landscape:**

2.86. *Arable Farmland* – Ploughed arable land covers the site; the site is formed by a section of a larger arable field. A wider network of pasture farmland is present to the north and west of the site. No public access is permitted within the site.

2.87. *Hedgerow and Trees* – Hedgerows with trees are present to the northern and eastern site boundaries. Trees are present within the hedgerows with some mature and vertically prominent examples present. The presence of these largely deciduous hedgerows and trees is a key characteristic of the local LCA.

2.88. *Sloping Landform* – The site occupies an area of sloping land that rises further in elevation to the north of the site and lower in elevation beyond the southern boundary. The shallow valley the site occupies is highlighted within the district Landscape Character Assessment.

#### **Developed Landscape:**

2.89. *Long Ashton Settlement Edge* – Built form is present along Warren Lane to the east of the site and extends beyond the north and south of the site. The existing settlement edge also partially wraps around the southern boundary of the site. These features have an urbanising effect on the landscape. The roofscape and built form present in the local area give the impression of a peri-urban landscape.

2.90. *Weston Road* – This is the main road through Long Ashton and is located along part of the southern boundary of the site. The linear nature of the road is apparent, and it extends beyond the eastern and western boundaries of the site. Roads by their nature connect settlements and can be a source of disturbance within the landscape.

#### *Interim conclusion – Landscape Character*

2.91. It is evident from field work that the character of the site is influenced by the open and sloping pastoral landscape to the north and west, as well as the arrangement of mature hedgerow boundaries and adjoining residential context of early to late 20<sup>th</sup> Century largely two storey dwellings and their domestic curtilage. Whilst the site itself is undeveloped, this is demonstrably a settled landscape at the Long Ashton settlement fringe.

2.92. The site does reflect published local landscape characteristics. As **Plan 2: Published Landscape Character** demonstrates the majority of the site is located within J5 Land Yeo and Kenn Rolling Valley Farmland LCA with the northern extremity of the site being located within E5 Tickenham Ridges and Combes LCA. In both instances, there are landscape guidelines which have been considered as part of the forthcoming proposal.

2.93. In respect of the site, the key landscape receptors are considered to include:

- Published Landscape Character Areas J5 Land Yeo and Kenn Rolling Valley Farmland and E5 Tickenham Ridges and Combes, and
- The site-specific character, landscape features and elements (arable field, hedgerow and trees and sloping topography).

#### **Visual Context and Visual Receptors**

2.94. Chapter 6 of GLVIA3 sets out how the visual baseline is established. The baseline for visual effects should establish the area in which the proposed development may be visible, those people who may experience views of the development, the viewpoints where they will be affected and the nature of the views at the viewpoints. This section considers these factors, with reference to a number of representative viewpoints from within the local landscape.

#### *Visual Context*

2.95. In order to determine the extent of the area from which the development has the potential to be seen Geographic Information System (GIS) and Ordnance Survey Terrain data are modelled to create a topographical plan (refer to **Plan 4: Topography**) and this is followed by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping (refer to **Plan 5: Zone of Theoretical Visibility**).

2.96. The computer generated ZTV is created using bare earth OS 3D modelling data and does not take into consideration the screening effect of built form, trees and vegetation and how this may influence the visibility of the site and development upon it. It does however record visibility at a ridge height of 8m. Areas of teal on the plan have the potential for visibility. This information provides a starting point for the fieldwork in terms of determining the extent of visibility and the likely receptors. Within the scoped 2km study area, the ZTV indicates that the site has potential to be visible from the north, east, south and west of the site. Field verification is essential in establishing the extent of the actual views to the development.





- 2.97. Aside from the indicative ZTV, a range of views has been considered which include local/intermediate viewpoint locations which range from 0-1km and distant viewpoint locations which in this case range from 1-2km from the site. Where there are no views from a viewpoint location within the scoped study area this is also clearly shown in a different colour on **Plan 6: Photoviewpoint Locations and Extent of Views**. The field verification process enables the assessor to view the site and define the extent of views, so it only includes those locations from which the site is evident in views, excluding those that are barely discernible and taking into account vegetation and built form.
- 2.98. The local Public Rights of Way (PRoW) vary in quantum of vegetative cover. The footpath to the north east of the site is flanked by mature vegetation and any view from here will be filtered as a result. In summary, the extent of views are limited in extent to the site and its immediate environs to the north, south and west, and also to filtered distant views from elevated landform.
- 2.99. **North.** Distant views are screened by a combination of intervening built form within Long Ashton, vegetation and landform. The presence of vegetated field boundaries and hill tops is characteristic of the Rolling Valley Farmland LCT and the site occupies part of a single field surrounded by vegetation on its northern and eastern boundaries.
- 2.100. Local views of the site are achieved from the footpath network to the north. The footpaths are situated within a network of pasture fields, bounded by mature hedgerows or in the case of footpath LA12/29/10 it is located on an agricultural lane flanked by mature hedgerows. Views into the site are filtered by the mature hedgerow and trees along the northern site boundary. In views from the north east, built form within Long Ashton screens all views of the site area. The site does not extend further to the north than the existing settlement edge to the north east (**Photoviewpoints 1, 2, 3 and 5**).
- 2.101. **East.** Distant views from the east are limited to vantage points located to the south east due to the intervening built form and vegetation within Long Ashton. The site is seen beyond the existing built form and is seen within this urban context. The elevated ridgeline to the north of the site forms the skyline and backdrop to the view. It is possible for the most elevated northern part of the site to be viewed from a distant viewpoint location (Photoviewpoint 9) and therefore keeping development off the most elevated parts of the site would limit inter visibility within the wider landscape. In local views the mature vegetation along Warren Lane filters views into the site. Some residents along Warren Lane will see the proposed change within the site (**Photoviewpoints 4**).
- 2.102. **South.** Distant views from the south are heavily filtered by intervening vegetation present on the elevated landform. The focus of these views is on the elevated skyline formed by the opposite side of the valley that the site is located within. From the site boundary the sloping nature of the site can be seen, as can the prominent boundary vegetation present beyond the main body of the site to the northern and eastern boundaries (**Photoviewpoints 6, 10 and 11**). As noted above, keeping development off the most elevated part of the site would limit inter visibility within wider landscape (particularly from Photoviewpoints 10 and 11).
- 2.103. **West.** Distant views from the west are focused along the valley with the elevated landform to north and south apparent in the view. Undulating terrain is present within the valley and the site is screened from view by this changing topography and intervening vegetation.
- 2.104. From the elevated north and south west, views are filtered by the characteristic vegetated hill tops. In local views the site is seen in the foreground of the view with the existing settlement edge of

Long Ashton forming the backdrop to the view. The lack of characteristic hedgerow on the western site boundary allows open views across the site from this orientation (**Photoviewpoints 7, 8 and 12**).

### *Representative Viewpoints*

- 2.105. Typically, representative views of the site from a variety of receptors in the local area are determined on the basis of the first sieve GIS mapping and subsequent fieldwork. The identification of views is carried out from external spaces within the public domain, and not from buildings or private spaces.
- 2.106. The photographs included in this report have been taken using an SLR digital camera using a focal length equivalent to 50mm, they are intended to provide an indication of the composition of the view and extent of visibility, it is recognised that such views are best experienced in the field. The photographs were taken during March 2020 on a bright and cloudy day with moderate to good visibility. These photographs are shown in **Photosheets 1-12**. **As previously outlined**, the chosen viewpoints and extent of the study area (2km around the site) have been sent to the landscape department at NSC and have been confirmed as appropriate by Kevin Carlton (**Appendix 3**).
- 2.107. The 12 selected viewpoints are as follows:
- **Photoviewpoint 1:** Taken from footpath LA12/28/10 to the north west of the site, looking south west.
  - **Photoviewpoint 2:** Taken from footpath LA12/28/30 to the north of the site, looking south.
  - **Photoviewpoint 3:** Taken from the junction of footpath LA12/29/10 and Warren Lane to the north of the site, looking south west.
  - **Photoviewpoint 4:** Taken from Warren Lane to the east of the site, looking west.
  - **Photoviewpoint 5:** Taken from within a field to the north west of the site, this is a private view looking south east.
  - **Photoviewpoint 6:** Taken from Weston Road to the south of the site, looking north east.
  - **Photoviewpoint 7:** Taken from the car park of Gatcombe Farm Shop to the west of the site, looking east.
  - **Photoviewpoint 8:** Taken from Weston Road to the south west of the site, looking north east.
  - **Photoviewpoint 9:** Taken from footpath LA12/7/30 to the south east of the site, looking north west.
  - **Photoviewpoint 10:** Taken from footpath LA13/27/10 to the south of the site, looking north.
  - **Photoviewpoint 11:** Taken from footpath LA3/2/20 to the south west of the site, looking north east.
  - **Photoviewpoint 12:** Taken from footpath LA3/6/20 to the south west of the site, looking north east.