

2.108. See **Photosheets 1-12** for full descriptions of the viewpoint compositions.

Visual Receptors

2.109. Having conducted the site visit and analysed the views from the 12 locations the following view-points and receptors (people) have been identified as having the potential to be affected by the proposed development on the land south of Warren Lane, Long Ashton, others have scoped out due to lack of visibility of the proposal. It is also important to note that the sensitivity of the receptor would be moderated by distance.

- Recreational users of footpaths to the north of the site along LA12/28/30 (Viewpoint 2)
- Recreational users of footpaths to the north of the site along LA12/29/10 (Viewpoint 3)
- Residents along the Long Ashton settlement edge, particularly along Warren Lane to the east
- Recreational users along Weston Road to the south (Viewpoints 6 and 8)
- Motorists along Weston Road to the south (indicative within Viewpoint 8)
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south of the site along LA12/7/30 (Viewpoint 9) and the Monarch's Way
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south of the site along LA13/27/10 (Viewpoint 10)
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south west of the site along LA3/6/20
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south west of the site along LA3/6/20
- Agricultural workers to the north, west and south of the site

Interim Conclusion – Visual Context

2.110. The site is visible in the context of the existing settlement edge to the west of Long Ashton. As demonstrated, the extent of views of the site is largely limited to local views from the south and west due to the effect of intervening vegetation, built form and topographical changes between the site and the viewer. The combination of adjacent built form in combination with vegetation in gardens and on the boundaries to the east together with different orientations effectively restrict views from this direction, albeit a low number of residents still have the potential for filtered views to the site.

2.111. Further afield views of the site are only achieved from elevated landform and are often filtered by the characteristic intervening vegetation and vegetation that is present on the elevated landform.

Section 3: Classification of Resources

Landscape Character and Landscape Resources

- 3.1. Understanding the landscape's sensitivity to change associated with the proposed development is an important consideration when addressing the suitability of development in relation to a receiving landscape.
- 3.2. The threshold and terminology referred to in this section is set out in **Appendix 4**. The classification of sensitivity of the landscape character and landscape resources is related to:
 - The susceptibility of the landscape;
 - The type of change proposed; and
 - The value placed on the landscape.

Landscape Susceptibility

- 3.3. This means the ability of the landscape type, in this locale to accommodate the development proposed without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation. In relation to the susceptibility, based on our experience as professional landscape practitioners, we apply the levels of susceptibility as high, medium and low.
- 3.4. High susceptibility. The landscape is such that changes in terms of the development proposed would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale and mass.
- 3.5. Medium susceptibility. The proposed development has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.
- 3.6. Low susceptibility. The development proposed is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale and mass.
- 3.7. Considering the character assessment in section 2, the susceptibility of the receiving landscape to accommodate the development is **Medium**. This reflects the context of the proposed development and the site's relationship to the existing settlement edge / built form present to varying degrees, on two sides of the site. Enhanced boundary planting, the sensitive placement of building heights and the use of appropriate materials all need to be considered and these matters are considered further below in relation to the proposed development and nature of change sections.

Landscape Value

- 3.8. The site is subject to a 'value' designation due to its position within a SAM. The site's overall landscape and visual value will be analysed in accordance with GLVIA3 Table 5.1. However, it should be noted that a valued landscape is not the same thing as a designated landscape. GLVIA 3, paragraph 5.26 states that:

'the fact that an area of landscape is not designated either nationally or locally does not mean that it does not have any value'

- 3.9. Having 'value' and being a 'valued landscape' are not inter-changeable terms. A landscape may have a degree of local value but that does not equate to possessing value sufficient to reach and surpass the necessary threshold to be 'valued' by a particular community at either a local or national scale.
- 3.10. A number of recent appeal court decisions and High Court Judgements have considered the issue of landscape value and it has been the case through these Appeals that in order for a landscape to be considered 'valued' it needs to be more than ordinary. This was explored in the 'Stroud' decision, in which they also recognise the use of Box 5.1 and subsequently upheld in the High Court by Mr Justice Ouseley. At the original appeal, it was recorded that:

'I accept that, currently, there is no agreed definition of valued as used in this paragraph. In the absence of any formal guidance on this point, I consider that to be valued would require the site to show some demonstrable physical attribute rather than just popularity. In the absence of any such designation, I find that paragraph 109 is not applicable to the appeal site. Similarly, I have studied footnote 9 to the NPPF but again note that it refers to land designated as an AONB which the appeal site is not.' (It is acknowledged that the NPPF reference has changed, but there is no evidence that in the revised NPPF Valued Landscapes are any different from those reflected in the original drafting of the national policy).

- 3.11. Mr Justice Ouseley has since summarised his views on the Stroud decision in CEG v SSCLG. Within this he makes clear that he was not seeking to set a principle whereby sites without 'demonstrably physical attributes' could not be valued landscapes. He stresses the need to look at the wider landscape, not just the red-line site boundary. It is also confirmed again that Box 5.1 in the GLVIA3 is a 'useful tool'.

- 3.12. In addition to this at the same hearing it was contested by Mr James Strachan QC and confirmed by Mr Justice Ouseley that:

'Where the development plan landscape policies were as comprehensive as the framework required in (para 109), were consistent with it, and up to date, there was no scope for (para 109) to provide some additional policy of development control, beyond the role ascribed by (para 14), so as to mean that the harm that breached local plan policies could be added to the same harm described as a breach of the framework policy in (para 109). To do so would be illogical double-counting. This was because the purposes of paragraph 14 with 109 of the framework in relation to landscape had been fulfilled.' (Again, it is acknowledged that the NPPF reference has changed, but there is no evidence that in the revised NPPF Valued Landscapes are any different from those reflected in the original drafting of the national policy).

- 3.13. More recently in August 2019, appeal Inspector V Louis in the case of Natland Mill Beck Lane, Kendal considered that in the terms of paragraph 170 of the Framework and whether the site can be considered a 'valued landscape', the term landscape necessarily implies something on a larger scale whereby a site would form a constituent and integral part of the wider panoramic landscape beyond. In this case the site does not form a constituent or integral part of the wider panoramic landscape.

- 3.14. In order to determine whether the landscape of the site itself and its immediate surroundings are valued, the GLVIA3 approach has been adopted within this LVIA. GLVIA3 Box 5.1 states that the

following factors are relevant in the assessment process when identifying the degree to which the landscape of the application site is valued:

Landscape Quality (condition): *A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements;*

Scenic Quality: *The term used to describe landscapes which appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses);*

Rarity: *The presence of rare features and elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type;*

Representativeness: *Whether the landscape contains a particular character, and/or features and elements, which are considered particularly important examples;*

Conservation interests: *The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of a landscape as well as having value in their own right;*

Recreation value: *Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important;*

Perceptual aspects: *A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities and/or tranquillity; and*

Associations: *Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or event in history that contribute to perceptions of natural beauty of the area."*

- 3.15. For each of these considerations there is a range from 'good' through 'ordinary' to 'poor' in terms of the landscape's performance against these criteria. In **Table TG1** below these issues are considered in relation to the site.

Table TG1 Landscape Value

Criteria	Observations/Comments
Landscape Quality	<p>The site is influenced by residential built form to the south and east.</p> <p>The site is formed by part of a single arable field. Its location amongst numerous identified character features is unremarkable. There is a high quantum of boundary vegetation present to the north and east. The south and west boundaries are relatively open with little vegetation present, an uncharacteristic stone wall is also present to the southern boundary. The field is subject to standard agricultural management.</p> <p>Overall, the site is of ordinary quality due to the range and perceived value of identified features present.</p>
Scenic Quality	<p>The site has a distinct sense of place as being on the edge of settlement with development to the east and partially to the south. The field is ploughed as arable farmland. This is uncharacteristic of the pastoral agricultural landscape to the north, south and west. The rising topography to the north and south provide pleasant features and change in the landscape. The hedgerows to the north and east provide a soft edge to these orientations.</p> <p>Views out of the site are generally focused on the elevated landform to the north and south. Locally the Long Ashton settlement edge has an urbanising effect on views to the south and east while views to the north and west are of further agricultural fields.</p> <p>As a result of these matters the scenic quality is ordinary.</p>
Rarity	<p>The landscape of the site is consistent of the wider agricultural resource, although its use as arable land is at odds with the surrounding characteristic pastoral landscape. The features present are typical and not rare locally or at a broader scale.</p> <p>The landscape is ordinary in this respect.</p>
Representativeness	<p>Whilst the site possesses locally typical features such as sloping landform, hedgerow field boundaries and agricultural land use these are not considered to be especially important as features as they are well represented locally.</p> <p>The site is ordinary in this regard.</p>
Conservation Interests	<p>Refer to the Tyler Grange Ecological Appraisal. Bat habitat is of most importance and the retention of the existing boundary vegetation would accommodate this.</p> <p>Refer to the Cotswold Archaeology Heritage Report. The site is located within a SAM designation. The site was originally omitted from this area but was added sometime after 2015.</p> <p>Overall, the conservation interests of the site are good.</p>
Recreational Value	<p>There are no PRoW present on the site and there is no public access. A public footpath is present to the north east of the site and this provides connectivity to the wider network.</p> <p>The site is of poor recreational value to the local community.</p>

<p>Perceptual Aspects</p>	<p>The site is not an area which provides an opportunity to enjoy the landscape or the wider context as there is no public access or PRow network present.</p> <p>Being on the settlement edge of Long Ashton and adjacent to Weston Road provides disturbance to the tranquillity of the site.</p> <p>Perceptual aspects of the site are poor.</p>
<p>Associations</p>	<p>The site is located within a SAM identified as 'Roman settlement, part of an associated field system and earlier Iron Age settlement remains at Gatcombe Farm'. There is not landscape or visual perception of this within the site. Refer to the Cotswold Archaeology Heritage Report for further information.</p> <p>This aspect is considered to be ordinary.</p>

3.16. In terms of landscape value, it is considered that there is nothing within the site itself that would make this land as a whole more than **ordinary** and valued no higher than of local importance.

Landscape Sensitivity

3.17. With reference to the sensitivity criteria set out in Appendix 4, combining the susceptibility and value of the landscape, and taking into account the condition and character of the site, the landscape sensitivity for each of the landscape receptors are summarised below:

- Published Landscape Character Areas J5 Land Yeo and Kenn Rolling Valley Farmland and E5 Tickenham Ridges and Combes. Sensitivity is considered to be **medium** to change.
- The site-specific character, landscape features and elements (arable field, hedgerow and trees and sloping topography). Sensitivity is considered to be medium as these characteristic features are of local importance and contribute to the overall local character of the area. They are also located within a SAM designation. These features have a **medium** sensitivity to change.

Visual Resources

3.18. Understanding the visual sensitivity to change associated with the proposed development is an important consideration when addressing the suitability of development in relation to the receiving visual context.

3.19. The threshold and terminology referred to in this section is set out in **Appendix 4**. The classification of sensitivity of the receptors is related to:

- The visual susceptibility of the receptors, and
- The value placed on these views by the receptor.

Visual Receptors

3.20. As identified within the visual baseline appraisal, the following people have been identified as having the potential to be affected by the proposed development:

- Recreational users of footpaths to the north of the site along LA12/28/30 (Viewpoint 2)

- Recreational users of footpaths to the north of the site along LA12/29/10 (Viewpoint 3)
- Residents along the Long Ashton settlement edge, particularly along Warren Lane to the east
- Recreational users along Weston Road to the south (Viewpoints 6 and 8)
- Motorists along Weston Road to the south (indicative within Viewpoint 8)
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south of the site along LA12/7/30 (Viewpoint 9) and the Monarch's Way
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south of the site along LA13/27/10 (Viewpoint 10)
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south west of the site along LA3/6/20
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south west of the site along LA3/6/20
- Agricultural workers to the north, west and south of the site

Visual/Susceptibility

- 3.21. The susceptibility of the visual receptor to changes in views and visual amenity is dependent on the occupation or activity of the people experiencing the view and the extent to which their attention is focussed of the view they are experiencing.
- 3.22. The visual receptors susceptible to change are:
- Recreational users of footpaths to the north of the site along LA12/28/30 (Viewpoint 2) are in close proximity to the site and will usually focus their attention or interest on the landscape. The visual composition of views experienced following development will be in consistent with the baseline situation in terms of the existing built settlement edge to the west and does not significantly alter the existing composition of the view. **High** susceptibility.
 - Recreational users of footpaths to the north of the site along LA12/29/10 (Viewpoint 3) are in immediate proximity to the site and will usually focus their attention or interest on the landscape. The visual composition of views experienced following development will be in consistent with the baseline situation in terms of the existing built settlement edge to the west and will not significantly alter the existing composition of the view due to the existing hedge-row boundary along Warren Lane. **High** susceptibility.
 - Residents along the Long Ashton settlement edge, particularly along Warren Lane to the east are in close proximity to the site. Due to the change in local topography and levels at which residences are built at along Warren Lane some residents will experience no change to the visual composition following completion of development due to intervening boundary vegetation to the east of the site whilst others will see the introduction of residential development in place of an arable field. The introduction of residential development is not a discordant element and is considered consistent with the residential context along the settlement edge of Long Ashton. **High** susceptibility for residents with views from occupied ground floor rooms during daylight hours and **medium** susceptibility for residents with views from first floor rooms which are unoccupied during daylight hours.

- Recreational users along Weston Road to the south (Viewpoints 6 and 8) are in close proximity to the site and have the potential to focus their attention or interest on the landscape. The visual composition of views experienced following development will be consistent with the baseline situation in terms of the existing built settlement edge to the west and does not significantly alter the existing composition of the view. **High** susceptibility.
- Motorists along Weston Road to the south would experience a change in view albeit the proposal is located adjacent to the existing settlement edge and would be in harmony with the existing composition which includes residential properties along the northern side of Weston Road within the settlement boundary. Motorists attention should be on the road ahead and arriving at their destination safely. **Low** susceptibility;
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south of the site along LA12/7/30 and the Monarch's Way (Viewpoint 9) will typically focus their attention or interest on the landscape the site is seen from a distant viewpoint. The visual composition of views experienced following development will be in harmony with the existing built settlement edge and does not significantly alter the existing composition of the view. **Medium** susceptibility.
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south of the site along LA13/27/10 (Viewpoint 10) will typically focus their attention or interest is on the landscape. In this case the site is seen from a distant viewpoint and is only visible if looking north towards the site. The orientation of the footpath runs west to east across the landscape. The visual composition of views experienced following development will be in harmony with the existing built settlement edge and does not significantly alter the existing composition of the view. **Low** susceptibility
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south west of the site along LA3/3/20 (Viewpoint 11) experience views of the site from a distant location to the south west of the site. Whilst the user's attention or interest is typically focussed on the landscape, the development would be viewed in harmony with the existing settlement edge to the west of Long Ashton. **Low** susceptibility.
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south west of the site along LA3/6/20 (Viewpoint 12) experience views of the site from a distant location to the south west of the site. Whilst the user's attention or interest is typically focussed on the landscape, the development would be viewed in harmony with the existing settlement edge to the west of Long Ashton. **Low** susceptibility.
- Agricultural workers to the north, west and south of the site will typically be focussed on the work and whilst there would be a change in view it would be seen in harmony with the existing composition and settlement edge to the west of Long Ashton. **Low** susceptibility.

Visual Value

- 3.23. There are no strategically important views identified within adopted planning policy documentation.
- 3.24. Whilst there are no views that are protected by policy, people will value their views and visual amenity according to their activities and individual circumstances. A summary of the receptors considered by this assessment and the value associated with views is set out below:

- Views from Public Rights of Way (PRoW) in general are valuable to their experience but not recognised nationally as important or protected by policy and therefore the value of these views is considered to be **medium**.
- Residents along the settlement edge of Long Ashton will value their views and the visual experience as a backdrop to their day to day lives. Whilst the number of residents with views of the site is considered to be low, residents with views of the site are considered to be of **medium** value.
- Motorists and workers are primarily focused on the road ahead/arriving at their destination safely or focussed on their work or activity where the view and setting is not important or their primary focus. The value of these receptors is considered to be of **low** value.

Visual Sensitivity

3.25. With reference to the sensitivity criteria as set out in Appendix 4, combining susceptibility and the value attached to views of groups of people the visual sensitivity for each of the visual receptors are summarised below:

- Recreational users of footpaths to the north of the site along LA12/28/30 (Viewpoint 2): **High** sensitivity.
- Recreational users of footpaths to the north of the site along LA12/29/10 (Viewpoint 3): **High** sensitivity.
- Residents along the Long Ashton settlement edge, particularly along Warren Lane to the east: **High** sensitivity based on residents with ground floor views during daylight hours and **medium** sensitivity based on residents with views from first floor windows that are unoccupied during daylight hours
- Recreational users along Weston Road to the south (Viewpoints 6 and 8): **Medium** sensitivity.
- Motorists along Weston Road to the south: **Low** sensitivity.
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south of the site along LA12/7/30 (Viewpoint 9) and the Monarch's Way: **High** sensitivity.
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south of the site along LA13/27/10 (Viewpoint 10): **High** sensitivity.
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south west of the site along LA3/6/20: **High** sensitivity.
- Recreational users of footpaths to the south west of the site along LA3/6/20: **High** sensitivity.
- Agricultural workers to the north, west and south of the site: **Low** sensitivity.

Section 4: The Proposal

- 4.1 The Proposal has been subject to pre-application consultation with NSC and following this response the evolution of the scheme has been landscape led with Tyler Grange undertaking initial landscape and visual analysis in September 2019. The following commentary sets out the amendments to the scheme since the pre-application advice, the initial landscape strategy recommended by Tyler Grange as part of the initial landscape and visual analysis, details of the proposal and mitigation measures.

Design Response to Pre-Application Advice

- 4.2 As outlined at paragraph 1.3 the proposal has been subject to pre-application advice. A full copy of the pre-application advice is provided at **Appendix 1** with the pre-application site plan provided at **Appendix 2**.
- 4.3 In response to the pre-application advice Tyler Grange can confirm that consideration has been given to the consideration of the local Landscape Character Assessments, including the North Somerset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (March 2018) and Landscape Character Assessment (September 2018) within the initial landscape and visual analysis undertaken and within this assessment. The baseline position is set out in Section 2 of this report with the assessment on landscape character included within Section 5.
- 4.4 Consideration has also been given to the relationship with the western settlement edge of Long Ashton, the perimeter landscape proposals and provision of the green spaces. The key amendments to the scheme since the pre-application advice include:
- The red line boundary has been amended and includes an area to the north east which now connects to Warren Lane and the PProW network to the north. This enables enhanced connectivity with the western settlement edge and through the site to Weston Road to the south;
 - Allotments and a rose garden are proposed to the north east section of the site keeping development off the most elevated parts of the site to limit visibility within the wider landscape to the south and south east (Viewpoints 9 and 10) . This also enhances GI provision on site;
 - Development is set back from the ecological/wildlife corridor to the east with additional planting along the pedestrian footpath to allow for the retention of a degree of openness and limit overlooking;
 - Removal of the SUD's feature within the south western corner of the site to include public open space which enhances GI provision and recreational opportunity for residents, and
 - Additional tree planting is provided along the western boundary and throughout the proposal to soften the visual appearance of the proposal from the wider landscape.
- 4.5 Heritage matters are considered by heritage consultants at Cotswold Archaeology within their technical report which accompanies this application.

Initial Landscape Strategy



4.6 The following landscape and visual points were identified for the site as part of the initial landscape and visual analysis and responds to the pre-application advice which are illustrated on the **Initial Landscape Strategy Plan** provided at **Appendix 5**:

- The north of the site is located upon elevated landform. Keeping development off the most elevated parts of the site will limit its visibility within the wider landscape.
- Within the north of the site, provision could be made for allotments, orchards or open space. This will enhance the GI provision within the site.
- The hedgerow along Warren Lane will be retained within the proposals. It will continue to provide ecological, landscape and visual benefit within the local landscape. The proposal will allow for a maintenance plan that would ensure the longevity of the hedgerow.
- Ecological survey has revealed this area as a corridor for bats. Development should be set back from the south east edge to accommodate this. In addition, it will limit overlooking between the existing and proposed dwellings and maintain privacy for residents.
- Street trees and planting should be implemented amongst the built form to soften the appearance of built form and break up the roofscape in distant views.
- The site is currently private. Creating public open space in the site would provide more recreational opportunities for local residents and would allow informal walks within the open space. This would extend the footpath network in the local area.
- Small planting groups to the south of the site will soften the view from the road. Development within the south of the site should front on to this open space and the road. This would be a continuation of the building pattern along Weston Road.
- Although the stone wall on the southern boundary is not identified as a characteristic feature within published landscape character assessments of the area it is a positive feature and should be retained within the proposals as a boundary treatment.
- The south west of the site is the lowest in elevation and naturally lends itself to the provision of SUDs in this area.
- The current post and wire fence field boundary to the west is uncharacteristic of the area and broken in places. To soften the edge of the development, a new hedgerow with additional tree species should be introduced to soften the appearance of built form and to break up and filter the roofscape of the site.

The Proposal

4.7 In order to identify and describe the effects that are likely to occur it is necessary to understand the change that may potentially affect the landscape and visual resources specifically. The following text therefore describes the development in those terms. The proposal is illustrated on the Proposed Landscape Strategy Plan (Dwg Ref. 1478/ P18b also included at **Appendix 5**) and the Proposed Site Layout Plan (see **Appendix 6** Dwg Ref. Illustrative Site Plan (21077-NP-XX-XX-DR-A-1003-1). The Proposed Site Layout Plan has incorporated the majority of the landscape recommendations recommended on the Initial Landscape Strategy Plan, albeit there is no SUDs provision made in the south west corner of the site.

- 4.8 The proposal is for the development of up to 35 residential dwellings at a maximum height of two and a half storeys with associated infrastructure and landscaping. The boundary vegetation to the east along the existing settlement edge and Warren Lane will be retained and enhanced within the proposal. Whilst not a defined characteristic feature within published assessments, three breaks will be provided along the southern boundary wall to provide vehicular access to the site off Weston Road.
- 4.9 A full description of the evolution of the proposal and a description of the development is contained in the Design and Access (DAS) and Planning Statement (PS) that support the proposed development. The following sets out the changes (impacts) that are predicted to occur as a result of the proposal which relate to the landscape and visual context.

Construction Phase

- 4.10 There will be a number of activities associated with the development of the site, and during the construction phase. They include the following temporary impacts relevant to the LVIA:
- Excavation and storage of spoil material;
 - Lighting of the construction site, as necessary during the winter months, subject to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and compliance with appropriate conditions;
 - Vehicles associated with the delivery of materials and staff, and movements within the site necessary for moving building materials;
 - Fencing of the site for health and safety purposes and to protect existing vegetation from construction activities;
 - Construction of infrastructure and new buildings;
 - Removal of some vegetation so as to implement the proposals, notably creating pedestrian access through the north eastern hedgerow; and
 - Implementation of new landscape proposals incorporating enhanced boundary planting; trees and shrub planting; facilitation of the cycle/pedestrian routes and footpath through the site; suitable area for infiltration basin, pumping station and public open space provision.

Development Phase

- 4.11 The completed development will result in a number of long-term effects. These will be:
- A change in land use from the existing agricultural use to residential built form with associated infrastructure, landscaping and a suitable area for an infiltration basin;
 - New highway access, internal streets, parking and associated pedestrian access;
 - Presence of street lighting associated with the development, subject to detailed design;
 - Green spaces for play and recreation;
 - Retained and managed trees and hedgerows; and

- New shrub and tree planting within the development area.

Mitigation Measures

- 4.12 Mitigation Measures are those measures proposed to prevent / avoid, reduce and where possible offset or remedy (or compensate for) any significant adverse landscape and visual effects.

Mitigation during Construction

- 4.13 The existing hedgerow and trees that are to be retained along the east boundary parallel to the settlement edge and adjacent to Warren Lane will be protected during construction activity. Measures will be implemented to ensure that the trees/hedgerows which will not be removed do not suffer direct damage through operations on site or indirect damage from spillages within the root zone or storage causing root compaction in accordance with BS 5837:2012 and the Habitats Regulation, 2010.
- 4.14 There is provision of areas of informal open space within the Proposed Development will be provided in order to ensure that new planting associated with these areas, including strategic landscaping to site boundaries provides landscape structure, as early as possible in the life-span of the Proposed Development.
- 4.15 New planting will be undertaken during the planting season (October to March) where possible. This will ensure systematic implementation of new planting and a means of ensuring that most successful outcome for plant establishment.

Mitigation Incorporated Within the Development

- 4.16 The scheme seeks to introduce up to two and half storey development to the site, this will reflect the scale of the existing residential edge and also be more effectively filtered in views through the existing mature hedgerow to the east.
- 4.17 Setting development back from existing boundary vegetation will ensure the future viability and longevity of boundary hedgerows in perpetuity. Providing informal open space to the south, together with allotments and a rose garden to the north will help to limit the visual appearance of the development when viewed from beyond the site boundary in the wider landscape/townscape. The proposed open space, allotments and rose garden provide valuable green infrastructure for the benefit of the new residents. Whilst the wildlife corridor to the east of the development will provide additional biodiversity benefits for in terms of GI and habitat retention and enhancement.
- 4.18 The new tree planting along the western boundary and throughout the proposal will soften the appearance of the new settlement edge and break up and filter the roofscape of the site.

Enhancement Measures

- 4.19 Enhancement measures are elements of the proposal that seek to improve the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the site and its wider setting, over and above its baseline condition. The enhancement measures include:
- 4.20 *Strengthened Western Boundary:* Removal of the uncharacteristic post and wire boundary with a new hedgerow and native tree species will form a strong and defensible physical boundary to the

west of the site. Once established, the new western boundary will reflect the existing vegetated boundary to the west of Long Ashton and will also be the interface between the new settlement edge and adjacent countryside.

- 4.21 *GI enhancements:* This includes the provision of allotments, a rose garden, areas of public open space and planting throughout the proposal which will enhance Green Infrastructure provision on site and link to the GI network in vicinity of the site.
- 4.22 *Recreational opportunities:* The allotments, rose garden and areas of public open space within the site will result in an enhancement to recreational opportunities for the local community and residents.
- 4.23 *High Quality Design:* The high quality design of properties and use of materials will be sympathetic to the local vernacular and the scale of existing development adjoining the site to assimilate the proposal with the existing settlement of Long Ashton and creating a sense of place and identity.
- 4.24 *PRoW Enhancement:* The footpath connection to Warren Lane to the north east will enable connectivity with the nearby PRoW network and will benefit new residents and the nearby community.
- 4.25 *Habitat Enhancement:* The set back of development from the eastern edge and provision of additional tree planting along the eastern corridor will retain and enhance the habitat for bats whilst also enhancing privacy for existing residents along the existing settlement edge and filter views of the proposal.
- 4.26 Overall, the retention and reinforcement of the vegetation on site wherever possible will strengthen the landscape structure, soften the appearance of the built edge and filter views of the site. The loss of trees and hedgerow to the northern boundary will be mitigated by the new green spaces and boundary enhancements that will ensure the retention of a soft edge to the settlement. In order to provide a good landscape fit, a robust GI strategy will include greater connectivity with the residential context through the provision of public access, beneficial wildlife/ecological corridor, structure planting and easy access to open spaces and new tree planting. Where trees are located close to buildings they will be of an upright form and will be planted in tree pits that are designed specifically for the situation.

Section 5: Assessment of Effects

- 5.1. The sensitivity of the various receptors is set out in Section 3 of this report. This sub section now considers the magnitude of change, based on the outline planning application proposed. Reference should be made to **Appendix 4** for the terms referred to in this section.
- 5.2. As recommended by professional guidance (GLVIA3) this report avoids the use of matrices and tables and sets out the assessment in a narrative format.

Magnitude of Landscape and Level of Effect

Landscape Character

- 5.3. In terms of landscape character, there will be a change to the site associated with the construction phase locally as physical and visible change will occur as a result of the storage of materials, plant movements and the construction of the built form. However, the change will affect a limited geographical area and will be experienced over a temporary period.
- 5.4. Whilst the landscape receptors are considered to comprise of the published Landscape Character Areas J5 Land Yeo and Kenn Rolling Valley Farmland and E5 Tickenham Ridges and Combes and site specific character, features and elements, it is necessary to address the findings of the North Somerset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (March 2018).
- 5.5. The findings of the North Somerset Landscape Sensitivity Assessment consider that all the land to the west of Long Ashton is of high sensitivity. It is acknowledged that the high sensitivity of this area has been related to the Scheduled Ancient Monument with brief reference to the Roman settlement, part of an associated field system and earlier Iron Age settlement remains at Gatcombe Farm. Yet there is limited commentary on landscape character.
- 5.6. The landscape sensitivity assessment does go on to consider that the land to the west of Long Ashton is open and visually prominent, rising up to George's Hill Plantation which contributes to its high sensitivity scoping. In considering the location of the site adjacent to the settlement edge, within an existing field boundary and on lower land development of the site it is considered development of the site would not result in the loss of views to George's Hill Plantation. The proposal would be viewed in the context of the existing settlement edge and its relationship between the settlement edge and George's Hill Plantation. Furthermore, the location of development to the west of Long Ashton on lower land would protect the adjacent land and would maintain the open views rising up to George's Hill Plantation.
- 5.7. In considering the magnitude of landscape and level of effect on the key landscape receptors the following findings are of note.
- 5.8. Published Landscape Character Areas J5 Land Yeo and Kenn Rolling Valley Farmland and E5 Tickenham Ridges and Combes:
 - **Medium** sensitivity this reflects that the majority of the site is located within LCA J5 Land Yeo and Kenn Rolling Valley Farmland which is described as having moderate character and to be in good condition. It also reflects the site location adjacent to the existing settlement edge to the west of Long Ashton.

- Magnitude of change during construction will be **temporary, moderate adverse**. This is because whilst the geographical extent of the area affected in relation to the wider local land character area and phase will be for a short duration, there will be a highly noticeable change and the introduction of uncharacteristic features associated with the construction activities and machinery on site. However, the resulting magnitude of change would be limited to the site area and immediate surrounds.
- Magnitude of change at the occupation phase will be **permanent, low adverse**. Whilst there would be an alteration in character from arable farmland to residential, the proposed residential development will affect the site and immediate setting only. There would be partial alteration to existing landscape elements to provide access to the site and the retention and reinforcement of the vegetation on site wherever possible will strengthen the landscape structure.
- The level of effect on the published character area during construction will be **temporary, minor adverse** given the localised and temporary nature of the change in response of the wider local landscape character area.
- The level of effect on the published character area during occupation will be **minor adverse** this is because whilst the development would cause permanent loss / alteration to the site from undeveloped to developed, the introduction of residential development adjacent to the existing settlement edge and residential built form is not uncharacteristic. The development of the site would see the introduction of up to 35 dwellings on a greenfield site. This will result in the loss of an undeveloped agricultural field on the edge of Long Ashton. Although the open area formed by the arable field will be lost to development, the retention of the boundary vegetation to the east (with the exception of the removal for access) and north, combined with the additional tree planting and landscaping will provide a soft edged development that maintains consistency with the existing townscape present to the east of the site.
- Furthermore, it would not affect the character or integrity of the wider published characters area but protect the wider countryside from development. The development is of a type and scale that respects the patterns of the landscape and townscape. The development is contained within the existing field pattern and will retain and enhance exiting vegetation whilst also delivering new vegetation along the western boundary. This in time will reflect the existing settlement edge to the west of Long Ashton once the vegetation matures.

5.9. The site-specific character, landscape features and elements (arable field, hedgerow and trees and sloping topography).

- **Medium** sensitivity this is on the basis that the site is not located within a designated landscape or valued for its landscape quality.
- Magnitude of change during construction will be **temporary, high adverse** this is because whilst the geographical extent of the area affected is limited and this phase will be short in duration, the scale of the change will be high with the alteration to site-specific character and limited landscape features and elements on site during construction.
- Magnitude of change during occupation will be **permanent, moderate beneficial** this is due to an alteration to the site-specific character, landscape features and elements. The proposal will result in the loss of an arable field to residential development but the nature of the development for residential is characteristic of the settlement edge location. The geographical extent of these changes is however limited to the site itself and mitigation is possible to

reduce the level of the magnitude change from being high to moderate. The proposal includes the retention and enhancement of landscape features which are considered beneficial to the receiving landscape.

- The level of effect on the site-specific character during construction will be temporary, and **moderate adverse**, however this is localised to the site and temporary in nature.
- The level of effect on the site specific character during occupation will be **moderate adverse** as the proposal would cause permanent loss of the arable field to residential at the settlement edge to the west of Long Ashton, however residential development is not characteristic of the surrounding landscape. There will be no discernible change to the topography as a result of the proposal and care will be taken to retain most of the existing hedgerow and trees. There will be further enhancements through the provision of new landscape planting within the site and along the site boundary to the west to reflect the existing landscaping along the western edge of Long Ashton.

Views

- 5.10. In terms of visual amenity, the construction activities that will be most visually intrusive will be for those using the public rights of way near the site and nearby residents. They will experience construction activities such as the removal of internal vegetation to deliver the new access road and construction activity related to the proposed dwellings. This change will affect a limited geographical area and will be experienced over a period of time. To be clear, the assessment relating to occupation is based on Year 15 with residual mitigation in place.
- 5.11. Recreational users of the footpath to the north of the site along LA12/28/30 (Viewpoint 2):
- **High** sensitivity as recreational users of the route have their attention focused on the landscape and their surroundings. The location of this footpath is approximately 250m to the north of the site with the site being visible beyond intervening vegetation down within a localised valley.
 - Magnitude of change during construction will be **temporary, moderate adverse**. The site forms a small component a wider open view across from one side of the valley to the other with the existing settlement of Long Ashton nestled in the valley to the west of the view. The site is located downhill beyond existing vegetation and whilst construction activity will be visible it is filtered by existing vegetation and likely to include the tops of cranes and scaffolding required to build the houses as development progresses. The geographical extent of the change is therefore partially screened and would result in minor alteration to the baseline view for a temporary period.
 - Magnitude of change at the occupation phase will be **permanent, low adverse**. Footpath LA12/28/30 crosses a pasture field to the north. The completed development will be partially visible beyond intervening vegetation and whilst it would be permanent it would be seen in the context of the existing settlement edge to the west of Long Ashton. Development is considered to result in a minor alteration to the baseline view.
 - The level of effect during construction will be **temporary, moderate to minor adverse** as the activities will be partially visible, but also partially screened, and viewed in the background of views within a context which will make them not overly noticeable, and affecting only a localised part of the footpath route geographically.