Land at Northstowe, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire

Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment

Prepared on behalf of:
JB Planning Associates Limited and
The Fairfield Partnership

By
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Landscape Consultants

Ref: 2388-RE-02-GH

Date: September 2012
LAND AT NORTHSTOWE, LONGSTANTON, CAMBRIDGESHIRE
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Scope and Purpose of Report

1.1 This document has been prepared by Allen Pyke Associates, a consultancy specialising in landscape and visual impact assessment and design. The practice has been commissioned by JB Planning Associates Ltd to assess the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposals for a mixed-use residential and employment development on land adjacent to the allocated development site for the new town of Northstowe, which lies to the south of the village of Willingham in Cambridgeshire.

1.2 The landholding lies within a rural landscape immediately to the north of the Cambridgeshire Guided Bus (CGB) route, which defines the edge of the site from the allocated Northstowe urban extension site to the south.

Assessment Methodology and Extent of Study Area

1.3 A desktop study and site visit were carried out in August 2012 to verify the baseline conditions, council policies and confirm the key visual receptor locations around the site. The results have been used to establish both the capacity of the site to accommodate new development and the magnitude of change the scheme might bring about in order to determine the significance of the effects created by the proposals.

1.4 The assessment has been carried out using the standard guidance given in


**Desk Study**

1.7 The following documents were used in the review of published data:

**South Cambridgeshire District Council Documents:**

• Local Development Framework (Adopted 2007-2010)

**Character Assessments:**


• The Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands Character Area 88 – Countryside Agency/Natural England (1999)

• The Fens Character Area 46 – Countryside Agency/Natural England (1999)

• Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines: Area 8 Fenland – Cambridgeshire County Council (1991)

**Other Documents:**

• Ordnance Survey, 1:50,000 Explorer Series Map 154, Cambridge and Newmarket

• National Planning Policy Framework

**Field Survey Work**

1.8 The site inspections were used to:

• Identified the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

• Establish and photograph key visual receptors in and around the site

• Appraise the attributes of the surrounding landscape (quality, condition, value)

**Landscape and Visual Limitations**

1.9 The landscape assessment covers an extensive zone of visual influence and cannot include every receptor viewpoint. The 18 viewpoints included in this document are taken from readily accessible and recognisable public vantage points. They provide a good visual coverage of the area from which the site can be seen and are considered to cover a range of typical receptor types.
1.10 For some receptors assumptions have been made about views either because of the time of year the field study was undertaken, for instance, the seasonal impact of deciduous vegetation obscuring views, or because views from private properties, particularly upper storey windows, could not be obtained. In such instances, an assessment has been undertaken from the nearest appropriate vantage point and a judgement made on the likely ‘worst case’ position.
2 ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING BASELINE CONDITIONS

Site, Setting & Character

2.1 The site is located between a cluster of villages including Longstanton, Oakington, Willingham and Rampton that lie in East Cambridgeshire, seven miles to the north of the city of Cambridge. The surrounding countryside generally consists of arable farming.

2.2 The area is well connected to the wider road network with the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon only 2.5 miles to the south. There is also the CGB route, linking Cambridge and St Ives. A number of public rights of way (PROW) link the local settlements, with Reynolds Drove running through the south east part of the site to connect Longstanton with Rampton.

Site Description

2.3 The site lies within a broadly flat landscape with subtle rises up to 15mAOD to the south and west of the site. The highest part of the site is at 9mAOD along the northern boundary with Rampton Road. The site then slopes to the southern boundary at 5mAOD. The total area of the site is 202 hectares.

2.4 The landholding consists primarily of arable agricultural land with scattered pockets of pasture containing an extensive network of small and medium sized irregular fields defined by ditches and/or hedgerows. The northern boundary is defined by a 2m high hedgerow along Station Road and a coppice of trees in the centre of the northern boundary with a field access track. The western boundary runs beside the B1050 with associated housing and farm properties. The southern boundary is contiguous with the CGB route and eastern boundary is defined by 1.5m high hedgerows alongside low lying arable fields towards Oakington Road. The site boundary hedgerows vary in quality. The primary species include; common and midland hawthorn, blackthorn, elder and bramble. There are also significant amount of plum forming the 3-4m high hedgerows along Reynolds Drove, especially on the Northstowe site.

2.5 A feature of the landscape is the numerous tree shelter belts often reaching heights of 15-20m. Trees are an important visual element, that restrict views into and out of the site. They are mainly found to the edges of the site in the field boundary vegetation or shelterbelts. Shelter-belts of conifer and Poplar trees are located around some of the
farmsteads located in the western part of the site and can be seen from up to 10km away from elevated ground close to the village of Haddenham. Individual oaks, ash and willow can be found to the eastern part of the site in hedgerows or small clumps. There are also thickets of younger trees on the southern boundary adjacent to the CGB and on the northern boundary adjacent to Station Road.

2.6 Drainage across the low lying land is managed through a network of ditches that help maintain productivity of the agricultural land. The drains are not prominent landscape elements but provide suitable environments for willow and poplar to grow which in turn restricts views across some parts of the site.

Legislative Framework, Landscape Planning Policies & Designations

2.7 In March 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework was published as part of Government reforms to the planning system. National policy documents were revoked and local planning authorities were required to produce up to date ‘Local Plans’ and give emphasis to promoting sustainable growth when determining planning applications.

2.8 The Government has also signalled its intention to revoke Regional Plans, although its is not known when this will happen. Regional Plans remain part of the statutory development plan, and relevant for plan-making at this time, although planning decisions may have regard to their revocation.

2.9 The National Planning Policy Framework March 2012 includes a number of relevant policy statements which are outlined below:

- Paragraphs 9-19 refer to Sustainable Development
- Paragraphs 125-141 refer to Historic Assets within the landscape
- Paragraphs 158-163 refer to Housing and Business Developments
- Paragraphs 165-168 refer to the Natural Environment
- Paragraphs 169-170 refer to the Historic Environment

2.10 The South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework (LDF, Adopted 2007-2010) forms the current suite of local policy documents for the district. All policies within this document remain material considerations for planning decisions, although the LDF will be replaced by the new South Cambridgeshire
Local Plan in due course. This assessment has been prepared with regard to this current local policy guidance.

2.11 The adopted South Cambridgeshire Core Strategy contains a number of documents and policies aimed at guiding developers with their proposals and the planners with their decisions. The main policies relating to the site and this landscape assessment are included below:

- **Development Control Policies (DPD)** – NE/4 Landscape Character Areas, DP/2 Design of New Development, CH/1 Historic Landscapes, CH/4 Development within the curtilage or setting of a listed building, CH/5 Conservation Areas, CH/7 Important Countryside Frontages.

- **Northstowe Area Action Plan (AAP 2007)** – NS/12 Landscape Principles, NS/13 Landscape Treatment of the Edges of Northstowe, NS/14 Landscaping within Northstowe, NS/15 Linking Northstowe to its Surroundings


2.12 The area around the site is not the subject of any statutory landscape designations and lies beyond the north western perimeter of the Cambridge Green Belt. A number of Conservation areas have been designated within the historic centres of the villages and include a number of Listed Buildings that are indicated in Appendix 4. These have not been reviewed as part of this high level assessment but would form part of subsequent more detailed assessments when a detailed masterplan has been designed. At these stage these historic elements have just been identified.

**Landscape Character**

2.13 Landscape character assessment forms part of the criteria-led approach to appraising sites and their suitability for development. Government bodies and local authorities have undertaken a well-established hierarchy of character assessments to establish the distinct national landscape character types and specific character areas at county and local levels.

2.14 National character types are defined by the Countryside Agency (now Natural England) publication ‘Countryside Character, Volume 6: East of England’. In this document,
Longstanton and the site are located on the edges between Character Area No.88 'Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands' and No.46 'The Fens'.

The key characteristics of the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands area include:

- Gently undulating topography and plateau areas, divided by broad shallow valleys.
- Predominantly an open and intensive arable landscape. Fields bounded by either open ditches or sparse closely trimmed hedges both containing variable number and quality of hedgerow trees.
- Settlement pattern clusters around major road and rail corridors (A1 and M1) many with raw built edges. Smaller, dispersed settlements elsewhere. Village edge grasslands an important feature.
- Generally a diversity of building materials, including brick, thatch and stone.
- Medieval earthworks including deserted villages the major feature of visible archaeology.

The key characteristics of The Fens area include:

- Large-scale, flat, open landscape with extensive vistas to level horizons and huge skies.
- A hierarchy of rivers, drains and ditches provide a strong influence throughout the area.
- Modestly elevated ‘islands’ within fens provide isolated higher ground for most settlement. A higher proportion of grassland, tree cover and hedgerows are associated with these areas.
- Peaty Fens drained in 17th century comprise large rectilinear fields of black soil. A geometric road and drainage pattern with major high-level drains, washes and associated pumping stations. Roads and rail links often on elevated banks.
- Woodland cover sparse. Occasional avenues to roads, elsewhere isolated field trees have marked significance. Shelter belts include poplar, willow and leylandii hedges around farmsteads. Numerous orchards.
- Built forms exhibit strong influence ranging from historic cathedrals and churches, to large agricultural and industrial structures. Domestic architecture displays combination of elegant Georgian brick houses and bland 20th century bungalows.
- Rich and varied intensive agricultural land use including wide range of arable, root crops, bulbs, vegetables and livestock.

2.15 At a regional level the Landscape East consultancy produced a region-wide East of England Landscape Framework in 2010. The site falls within the Lowland Village Farmlands
character area. This is a well settled, low lying landscape which is often crossed by major river corridors. The high density of settlement, intensive agriculture and major transport infrastructure mean that it is often a busy, rural landscape. Sparse woodland cover gives rise to an open character and extensive views. It is a productive, intensively farmed agricultural landscape, with patches of wet woodland, reedbed and wet grassland along river valleys and in damp, low-lying hollows. Almost 10% of these sites are afforded some degree of designated protection. Arable land use predominates with some areas of pasture and orchards. Groups of trees, often around farmsteads and occasional small plantations. Medium to large scale, regular field pattern, defined by well trimmed hedgerows. Field systems include a mix of rectilinear and sinuous patterns, reflecting the process of planned surveyor enclosure from common fields. A dense, largely nucleated, rural settlement pattern composed of small towns, villages and outlying farmsteads.

2.16 At a county level Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) carried out a Landscape Character Assessment which identified 9 unique landscape character areas within Cambridgeshire. The aim of the assessment was to ensure that design and management in the countryside was more responsive to place; and that different landscapes should be sustained in different parts of the county. The site falls within the Character Area 3: Western Claylands. The assessment summarises this area as ‘of large-scale arable farmland with open fields, sparse trimmed hedgerows and watercourses often cleared of bankside vegetation. There are individual woods which are of importance in visual and nature conservation terms, but they tend to be isolated incidents in an area dominated by arable farmland. The landscape of this part of Cambridgeshire has been greatly affected by modern agricultural practices. Increased mechanisation has led to the removal of hedgerows and amalgamation of fields. Many of the remaining hedges are ‘gappy’ and trimmed almost out of existence by regular cutting. Marginal land has been brought into production by drainage and other soil improvements. Larger farm units have created a need for large storage buildings, which can be prominent in the landscape. Small villages and hamlets are scattered throughout the area, usually in sheltered places with existing trees. Small grass paddocks typically occur on the edges of the villages. Church spires and towers enliven the skyline.’
Local Landscape/Townscape Character

2.17 To inform this assessment the character of the immediate area within and around the site has been further divided into three broad types. The definitions used for Sensitivity and Capacity are in Appendix 5.

Fig. 2: Local Landscape Character Areas

i. Edge of Fenland Countryside

The character area is formed of large scale irregular open fields with heavily trimmed hedgerows and/or ditches with the occasional tree shelter belt which enclose the landscape and form the horizon. There are also a few trees set in the hedgerow field boundaries. The hedgerows are generally defunct and/or gappy in most instances due to the constant trimming. Isolated farms scatter the landscape with 2 storey houses and assorted outbuildings – usually with associated tree belts. The ditches are a significant though not prominent element in the landscape that can only be identified by the
meandering hedge lines that following the natural streams and straight banks of man-made ditches. There are few water bodies but where present are small and are often defined by tree coppices. Paddocks are to be found to the edges of the villages. The CGB slices through the landscape on the route of a disused railway line and the buses are a distinctive feature as they cross an otherwise tranquil landscape. The site lies within this character area.

**Character Sensitivity - Low**

**Capacity for Change – Medium/Low**

ii. South Cambridgeshire Villages

The local village are small in scale and have evolved around the road network either at cross roads or, as at Willingham, as a linear development along the B1050. The majority of the residential properties in this area are 2 storeys and vary in design with the style and materials being reflected by the age of individual properties. There are small areas of post war developments which start to show some consistency in style, however many of the residential properties have been extended and show varying types of personalisation. In recent years significant new development has occurred around some settlements – including the new 2 and 2.5 storey estate development on the north western edge of Longstanton. There is limited employment land use within the villages.

A distinctive feature of all the villages is the extensive mature vegetation around the edges of the settlements, which hides the built form from the more open surrounding countryside. The tops of the taller houses and church spires are generally the only buildings visible. The roads curve into the settlements so views along the roads to the surrounding countryside are not possible either.

**Character Sensitivity - Medium**

**Capacity for Change – Medium**

iii. The Allocated Northstowe Barracks

The disused Barracks form a brownfield site to the south of the study area between the villages of Longstanton and Oakington. This flat area is dominated by the large amount of plantation and tree shelter belt planting across the whole site but particularly forming the edges of this character area. The fields adjacent to the CGB are more open and are currently used as pasture for cattle and sheep. This character area is more enclosed than
the surrounding landscape with hedgerows and large blocks of mature vegetation restricting views to and from the area.

Once the allocated Northstowe settlement is built the development will have a substantial impact on the character of the area, the effects on views to and from the surrounding countryside and the context for the proposals under consideration in this assessment for the land immediately to the north of the CGB.

**Character Sensitivity - Low**

**Capacity for Change – Medium**

**Visual Assessment**

2.18 The Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) is the area from which the site can be seen and is governed by the topography and other physical features. The site position on low flat ground restricts views from the neighbouring landscape, which is reduced further by the hedgerows, tree shelter belts and other mature tree plantations. In summer months the existing vegetation around the settlements and wider countryside limits views into and out of the site. In winter the loss of leaves on boundary hedgerows and shelter belts does allow wider filtered views that gives the whole rural landscape a more open aspect.

2.19 Direct views of the site are possible from various locations, particularly Rampton Road, B1050, CGB and associated cycle route, Reynolds Drive public right of way (PROW), Rampton Drift PROW, private properties and allotments to the edge of Willingham and the northern edge of the area allocated for the Northstowe urban extension. There are also glimpsed views of the site from sections of Rampton Road towards Cottenham, Oakington Road, and the B1050.

2.20 Mature vegetation hides the surrounding settlements and creates a green transitional zone that blends in with the farmland hedgerows and tree shelter belts. The enclosed nature of these villages mean that only properties around the perimeter of adjacent settlements have filtered views of the site.

2.21 Views of the site from villages further away such as Over, Cottenham and Histon are not possible due to intervening vegetation. There are some restricted long views through gaps in the surrounding vegetation into the fenland countryside.

**Development at Northstowe**
2.22 The proposed Northstowe scheme will extend development beyond the existing area occupied by the barracks into the fields beside the CGB route. The scheme proposals include buffer and reinforcement planting along the boundary with the CGB but there will remain a degree of intervisibility between the new urban extension, the site and the villages to the north. Once Northstowe is built the development will change the landscape character and consequential visual perception of the area. The Northstowe settlement will screen existing views of the site from the villages of Longstanton and Oakington. From many receptor viewpoints to the north of the CGB route any future development on the site would be seen in the context of the built form of Northstowe.

Visual Receptors plan in Appendix 4.

2.23 The distance of the receptors and their respective views to the site is categorised as follows:

- Close – Up to 1km from the proposed development site;
- Distant – between 1km and 2km from the proposed development site; and
- Very distant – more than 2km from the proposed development site.

2.24 The Receptors are described below, (Sensitivity and Capacity are defined in Appendix 5):

Receptor 1 – Residents of properties to the southern edge of Willingham extending along the eastern edge of the B1050

Viewpoint 1- Boundary treatment to properties on the eastern side of the B1050
All properties face towards the site. Most of the properties have tall mature vegetation (on average) up to 10m high which restrict views throughout most of the year. However in winter, filter views maybe possible. The properties have long plots of land with the vegetation to the end. This vegetation varies from 1.5m high clipped hedgerows to 25m high tree shelterbelts of poplars.

**Receptor distance from site - Close**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**  
**Capacity for Change – Medium**

**Receptor 2 – Residents of properties King Street and Cuckoo Lane, Rampton**

The existing mature vegetation which wraps around the edge of Rampton will restrict views from most of the properties. Properties to the east of King Street would have no views and the properties to the west are single storey so are unlikely to have views.
Properties on Cuckoo Lane close to Rampton Car Breakers are likely to have filtered views through the 3m high hedgerow on Cuckoo Lane shown above.

**Receptor distance from site - Close**

**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**

**Capacity for Change – Medium**

**Receptor 3 – Residents of North Fen Farm**

Viewpoint 3 – Rampton Road looking south west with North Fen Farm to left of image

Existing tree and shrub vegetation approximately 15m high around the farm restricts views of most of the site. Some filtered views might be possible as the vegetation is not consistent. There is limited intervening vegetation from outside the farm house boundary and therefore glimpsed views could be possible.

**Receptor distance from site - Distant**

**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**

**Capacity for Change – Medium**

**Receptor 4 – Residents of properties of Westwick Village, Lambs Cross and Cuckoo Farms**

Viewpoint 4 – From Oakington Road towards Cuckoo Farm and the site over the horizon
There would be no views from Westwick due to intervening vegetation growing along Beck Brook between the properties and the site. Lambs farm is located behind the hedge bound Rampton Drift PROW which restricts views across the fields towards the site. This hedgerow is defunct and approximately 2.5m high. Views from Cuckoo Farm are likely to be possible due to its slightly elevated position and lack of intervening vegetation although the shelterbelts around the farm may restrict some views. The barns are visible from site and form part of the horizon with the shelter belts.

**Receptor distance from site - Distant**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity - High**  
**Capacity for Change - Medium**

**Receptor 5 – Residents of properties in Oakington**

The existing plantation located on the edge of the Barracks site completely screens all views towards the site from these northern properties of Oakington. (The image shows the scattered trees of the barracks beyond the plantation).

**Receptor distance from site - Distant**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**  
**Capacity for Change – High**
Receptor 6 – Residents of properties in Rampton Drift

The properties are surrounded by mature boundary planting of trees and shrubs with 3m high hedgerows to the fields and the PROW. The vegetation isn’t continuous and views towards the CGB are currently possible. However once Northstowe is built this settlement would dominate all views and the site would not be visible.

Receptor distance from site - Close
Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High
Capacity for Change – High

Viewpoint 7 – Looking south from the CGB across the Northstowe site towards Longstanton

Longstanton is surrounded by a dense belt of mature trees which completely screens the properties from the CGB. Only the church spire is visible from the CGB and Rampton Road which implies that there are no views of the site during the summer and possibly filtered views in the winter due to the lack of leaves. Once Northstowe is built this
settlement would dominate all views and the site would not be visible in the winter or summer.

**Receptor distance from site - Distant**

**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**

**Capacity for Change – High**

**Receptor 8 – Users of Rampton Drove PROW**

Viewpoint 8 – Looking north into site along Rampton Drove from the CGB

This part of the PROW cuts through the narrowest part of the site. It is bound on the east by a 3m high hedgerow filtering views to the eastern part of the site but there are open views to the rest of the site to the west without restriction.

**Receptor distance from site - Close**

**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**

**Capacity for Change – Low**

**Receptor 9 – Users of Cuckoo Drift PROW**

Viewpoint 9 – Looking west towards the site four fields away from Cuckoo Drift PROW

The PROW consists of a track with a wooden post and wire fence along all of it providing views across the fields on both sides. There are occasional lengths of hedgerow up to 4m
tall which filter views from the track. Direct views of the whole site are not possible due to intervening hedgerows and trees however parts of the site are in direct view.

**Receptor distance from site - Close**
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**
**Capacity for Change – Medium**

**Receptor 10 – Users of Haven Drove PROW and residents of The Fox**

Viewpoint 10 – No photograph

The PROW runs south towards the northern boundary of the site but at the junction with Rampton Road views are well screened by the existing coniferous planting associated with The Fox property on the corner of Rampton road. The conifers and existing planting in the paddocks on the inside of the bend restrict all views towards the site. There would be no views from The Fox.

Users approaching the junction from the north would have views of the northern part of the site due to the lack of trackside vegetation and then the 1.5m high site boundary hedgerow.

**Receptor distance from site - Close**
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**
**Capacity for Change – Medium**

**Receptor 11 – Users of CGB Park and Ride**

Viewpoint 11 – Looking north into site from the edge of the car park

Views into the site are open and direct with most of the site visible apart from the south east corner. There is currently no vegetation screening. Once Northstowe is built this settlement would dominate all views to the east of the receptor (right of photograph) and this would screen more of the site in the south eastern corner.

**Receptor distance from site – Close**
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – Medium**
**Capacity for Change – Medium/Low**
Receptor 12 – Road users on the B1050

Viewpoint 12 – Looking east into site from road

Generally the road is well screened from the site in Willingham with only the occasional glimpse view into the site as represented in the photograph. The boundary of the site runs along the back of the properties facing the road for the most part and these properties restrict all views into the site. There are two locations where the boundary borders the road and these provide direct views into the site. In both locations the site is seen in the context of surrounding properties along the road within in the village.

To the south of the CGB there are no roadside properties to the east and so views across the park and ride car park are possible although filtered due to road side vegetation and scattered trees in the golf course.

Receptor distance from site - Close
Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – Medium
Capacity for Change – Medium/Low

Receptor 13 – Road users on Rampton Road between Willingham and Rampton

Viewpoint 13 – Looking south into the site from Rampton Road
The road runs along the northern boundary of the site with a hedgerow 1.5m high on average running along the boundary line with occasional trees set in it. This is gappy in places and provides glimpsed views into the site.

**Receptor distance from site - Close**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – Medium**  
**Capacity for Change – Low**

**Receptor 14 – Road users on Rampton Road between Rampton and Cottenham**

Viewpoint 14 – Looking south west towards the site from Rampton road

The road is lined with chestnut trees to the south which break up the views into the fields. Views to the south east corner of the site may be possible although there are numerous intervening hedgerows of up to 3m in height on the fields boundaries between this receptor and the site.

**Receptor distance from site – Very Distant**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – Medium**  
**Capacity for Change – Medium/Low**

**Receptor 15 – Road users on Oakington Road**

Viewpoint 15 – Looking west from the road toward Cuckoo Farm
Views of the site would not be possible from this receptor due to the rising and falling topography and intervening vegetation. The road is generally bound with a hedgerow up to 3m high and trees. Sections which open up to the adjacent fields are then enclosed by the opposite field boundary vegetation.

**Receptor distance from site – Very Distant**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – Medium**  
**Capacity for Change – High**

**Receptor 16 – Road users on Longstanton Road**

No views are possible from this location due to the very dense plantation which encompasses the southern boundary to the Barracks site.

**Receptor distance from site – Very Distant**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – Medium**  
**Capacity for Change – High**

**Receptor 17 – Users on the CGB**

Viewpoint 16 – Looking north towards the Barracks site

Viewpoint 17 – Looking north into the site
Open and direct views across the whole of the site are possible from the CGB. The existing plantation to the south of the site provides screening but doesn’t completely hide the site.

**Receptor distance from site - Close**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – Medium**  
**Capacity for Change – Medium**

**Receptor 18 – Residents on A1123, Haddenham**

Viewpoint 18 – Looking south towards the site with Madingley hills on the horizon

Views from this location are expansive towards Madingley hills on the horizon. The flat landscape between the site and this location includes numerous large tree shelter belts, hedgerows and individual trees. The arable fields of the site are not possible to distinguish at the time of the assessment. Built forms are not common in the view due to the mature vegetation screening of trees surrounding them. For example the spires of Willingham and Longstanton are just about perceivable.

**Receptor distance from site – Very Distant**  
**Receptor/Viewpoint Visual Sensitivity – High**  
**Capacity for Change – High**
Table 1: Summary Table of Character Area Sensitivity and Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Character Area</th>
<th>Sensitivity</th>
<th>Capacity to accept change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Edge of Fenland Countryside</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium/Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>South Cambridgeshire Villages</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The Allocated Northstowe Barracks</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 2: Summary Table of Viewpoint Sensitivity and Capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Viewpoint</th>
<th>Receptor</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Receptor Sensitivity</th>
<th>Capacity to accept change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Residents of Willingham</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Residents of Rampton</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Residents at North Fen Farm</td>
<td>Distant</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Residents of Westwick, Lambs Cross and Cuckoo Farms</td>
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<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Residents of Oakington</td>
<td>Distant</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Residents of Rampton Drift</td>
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<td>High</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Residents of Longstanton</td>
<td>Distant</td>
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<td>High</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Users of Rampton Drrove PROW</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Users of Cuckoo Drift PROW</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Users of Haven Drrove PROW and the residents of The Fox</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Users of CGB Park and Ride</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium/Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Road users on the B1050</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium/Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Road users on Rampton Road between Willingham and Rampton</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Road users on Rampton Road between Rampton and Cottenham</td>
<td>Very Distant</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium/Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Road users on Oakington Road</td>
<td>Very Distant</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Road users on Longstanton Road</td>
<td>Very Distant</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>CGB users</td>
<td>Close</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium/Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Residents on the A1123, Haddenham</td>
<td>Very Distant</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Site Sensitivity and Capacity

2.25 The site does not lie within any statutory landscape designation and is located on the edge of a distinct, flat fenland character area where slight topographical variations and substantial blocks of vegetation contain and compartmentalise the landscape. Settlement can be integrated into this rural setting without detriment to the wider character of the area. The features of the character area give the site a moderate sensitivity and good capacity to accommodate new development sympathetic to the local setting. Development has been accepted on the adjacent Northstowe site where the implications of development on the site and surrounding landscape are broadly similar.

2.26 The gently undulating landscape and blocks of vegetation limit views across the fenland countryside. The site, though consisting of predominantly open fields, is also well contained by existing hedgerows, woodland thickets and tall tree shelterbelts. Views from surrounding receptors, particularly around the edges of existing and proposed settlements are generally well screened or only glimpsed through existing vegetation giving the site a high capacity to accommodate development. Most key views towards the site are from the north where in future views will also be seen in the context of the Northstowe urban extension.
3. SCHEME PROPOSALS

3.1 The proposed development by JB Planning represents a form of development which has been designed specifically to overcome the weaknesses identified in the current proposals for the allocated site at Northstowe. Principally, this involves a large new allocation for employment land, to bring the jobs to homes ratio up to around 1:1 across both Northstowe and this site, the standard required by the Government’s Eco Town standard.

The schedule of development for the site is therefore set out as:

- Residential      60 Ha
- Employment       40 Ha
- Education        3 Ha
- Town and local centres 2 Ha
- Public open space 9 Ha
- Infrastructure and Landscaping 88 Ha

3.2 Different types of employment development is proposed, including high value manufacturing and hybrid office/manufacturing developments which would take the form of 2 to 3 storeys in height. The site would also allow for a low density of residential development at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare. This would provide more housing with gardens suitable for families, and executive housing of which would be a maximum of 2 to 3 storeys.

3.3 The settlement layout is not dissimilar to the structure of the current proposals for Northstowe with a main access route running through the site linking the B1050 to Rampton Road. This would be a multi-functional infrastructure route including vehicle, cycle and pedestrian access, SUDS and amenity space. The built form would be generally split with employment landuse to the west and residential to the east. The existing park and ride site would expand across the CGB and a further link across the Guided Busway to Northstowe would be provided.

3.4 The inclusion of perimeter buffer zones separate the site from existing settlements to contain the proposed development, integrate the new built form into the surrounding landscape and reflect the character of the edges to the surrounding villages. The northern and eastern fields will remain as current. Existing hedgerows and ecological features within
the site boundary will be retained and enhanced to provide visual maturity and screening as well as enhancing biodiversity.

3.5 Ditches are to be retained and enhanced for SUDS and to form the framework for the green infrastructure permeating through the site. Footpath/cycleways throughout this green infrastructure could be used to increase connectivity within the development and the adjacent footpath network. The green framework would be used for amenity space and to enhance biodiversity through ecological corridors linking the existing tree belts and hedgerows with the wider significant vegetation.

3.6 Lighting associated with both the construction and operational phases of the proposed development shall be carefully designed by a lighting specialist in order to minimise the potential impact of light pollution at night, whilst being consistent with the requirements of site safety and security. Luminaires shall be chosen which are directional and minimise uplighting and skyglow.
4 EFFECTS OF SCHEME PROPOSALS

4.1 The effects of any development can be positive or negative and can change during both construction and after completion. Some impacts may only be temporary while others, following mitigation and maturing of planting, may remain. The sensitivity and capacity ratings established in the Baseline analysis are used in combination with the likely scale (‘Magnitude’) of each potential impact on character areas and visual receptors to determine the ‘Significance’ of the change and it’s ‘Direction’ – whether the effects are ‘Beneficial’ (positive) or ‘Adverse’ (negative). The terminology and criteria used for the assessment are set out in Appendix 3.

4.2 During construction, activities in and around the four surrounding villages, especially Longstanton and Willingham would be a notable element with a temporary negative impact on the local landscape characters and the immediate views from the adjacent villages, roads and countryside.

4.3 Once complete the proposed development would change the character of the site. The maintaining of the open arable fields with buffer planting to the northern and eastern parts of the site will help to assimilate the development into its setting. The existing hedgerows will be retained and enhanced in these areas allowing for immediate visual benefits when the scheme is first occupied. The overall effects of the perimeter buffer zone would not be fully appreciated until after 10 to 15 years, when the new trees begin to reach maturity. The following assessment establishes the likely effects and the significance of the scheme proposals on character areas and visual receptors during the Construction Phase and after both Year 1 and Year 15 of occupation.

4.4 Effects on Character Areas

i. Edge of Fenland Countryside
The site is located in this character area and would change to a semi-urban character more comparable with The Allocated Northstowe Barracks character area. However the form of the development, maintaining the edges with open fields, shelter belts, hedgerows and a perimeter buffer zone does align with the existing character area if not slightly increasing the enclosure. It would sit appropriately with the Northstowe development character area.
During the construction phase the site will take the form of a completely different character with cranes, vehicles, fencing and buildings emerging. This will enclose the landscape. However this must only be seen as a temporary measure and not a representation of the site in the longer term.

**Construction:**

**Magnitude of Change – Medium/High**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate Adverse**

**Year 1:**

**Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor Adverse**

**Year 15:**

**Magnitude of Change – Low**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor Adverse**

**ii. South Cambridgeshire Villages**

The existing character is likely to change significantly through the construction phase when increased construction traffic levels would be a noticeable element in the character area and uncharacteristic construction equipment would be visible such as cranes. Once built there would be less impact, as the new development would not be dissimilar to the form of this existing character area. Defining elements of this character area such as the enclosure of the built form by tree planting would be apparent in the new development. The main impact would be the new traffic junctions which are not characteristic of the villages apart from a single one at Longstanton. Traffic flows would also increase locally.

**Construction:**

**Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate adverse**

**Year 1:**

**Magnitude of Change – Low**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse**

**Year 15:**

**Magnitude of Change – Low**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse/Negligible**

**iii. The Allocated Northstowe Barracks**
The character of this site would have changed to built form before the development of The Fairfield Partnership land. Open space and planting would form a linear development along the CGB. This would help to screen the lower level construction activities but higher level activities including cranes would be readily visible thus impacting on the character area.

During the operational phase the development would sit appropriately with this character area due to the proposed links and green infrastructure planting would bind the two areas providing a stronger more defined character area. The site would now form part of this character area.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor Adverse

Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – No change
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor Beneficial

Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – No change
Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate Beneficial

4.5 Effects on Visual Receptors

Receptor 1 – Residents of properties to the southern edge of Willingham extending along the eastern edge of the B1050
This receptor would have filtered views of both the construction and operation periods of the site. The rear of the properties face the site but only the first floor windows provide views which decreases the magnitude of change. Mature garden planting of trees and shrubs with fencing in some instances reduces the views from the ground floor and the back gardens.

Properties to the north of this receptor would have increased screening of the site during the operational period as a significant perimeter buffer zone would establish to the edges of the built form. The properties along the B1050 could have more open views of the site and built form if Option A is adopted or greatly reduced views if Option B was adopted.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Medium
Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate adverse

Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse
Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Neutral/Negligible

Receptor 2 – Residents of properties King Street and Cuckoo Lane, Rampton
Views during the construction period of cranes maybe possible for the residents along King Street through the houses and garden tree planting. However during the operational phase the built form would be too low to be visible over the existing houses and intervening vegetation.
Properties on Cuckoo Lane would have filtered and open view of the construction period due to open arable fields with limited screening from existing hedgerows. During the operational period the built form would initially be visible above the existing vegetation but would assimilate into the proposed perimeter buffer zone within the first 15 years.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Medium
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse
Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse
Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Neutral/Negligible

Receptor 3 – Residents at North Fen Farm
Existing views are limited but any views, which exist during the construction period, would include the cranes and fencing due to the low intervening hedgerows between the receptor and the site. These views would become ever more limited through the operational phase as the perimeter buffer zone planting establishes to substantially block all views of the site.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse
Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse

Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Receptor 4 – Residents of Westwick Village, Lambs Cross and Cuckoo Farms

The residents of Westwick may be aware of the development through the construction phase as the cranes could be visible over the existing vegetation along Beck Brook. Residents in the two farms are likely to be aware of the development as filtered views would mean the fencing and cranes would be visible. However through the operational phase the site would start to assimilate into the existing landscape as the perimeter buffer zone establishes. Increased buses may be noticeable on the CGB.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse

Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible

Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Receptor 5 – Residents of Oakington

The residents of Oakington would not have views of the site at all due to the existing dense vegetation on the Barracks site and the construction of Northstowe. The only element of the proposed development which is likely to affect views of these properties might be the increase construction traffic in the short term and a slight increase in local road traffic and more buses on the CGB in the longer term. However this would be very limited due to the location of the houses.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – No change
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Receptor 6 – Residents of Rampton Drift
The houses would be surrounded by Northstowe. There may be some views during the construction phase; cranes above and between buildings and possibly construction traffic on the local roads. However once built the site would be hidden by Northstowe and blend together to appear to form one development.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Neutral/Negligible

Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Neutral/Negligible

Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Neutral/Negligible

Receptor 7 – Residents of Longstanton
The Northstowe development would dominate all views from the properties and only the cranes from the construction phase maybe visible. Construction traffic on the B1050 is likely to be visible unless the route does not run through the village. Through the operational phase there may be a discernible change in the amount of traffic on the local roads.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Neutral/Negligible

Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Neutral/Negligible

Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Neutral/Negligible

Receptor 8 – Users of Rampton Drive PROW
The development would result in the total loss of the existing views to the west of the PROW however the development would not be uncharacteristic in the context of Northstowe development. The view on this particular section of the PROW would completely change but not necessarily negatively as the access will form a secondary route from Northstowe and so the design could enhance the PROW. Views to the east of the route would be maintained.

**Construction:**

**Magnitude of Change** – High  
**Significance of Effects & Direction** – Moderate adverse  

**Year 1:**

**Magnitude of Change** – Medium/Low  
**Significance of Effects & Direction** – Minor adverse  

**Year 15:**

**Magnitude of Change** – Low  
**Significance of Effects & Direction** – Negligible/Minor Beneficial

**Receptor 9 – Users of Cuckoo Drift PROW (south of receptor 8)**

Direct views of the construction would be possible, although as the views are so wide the site would only form part of the view. Cranes, fencing and vehicle movements would all be visible in the distance. Once operational the perimeter buffer zone would start to establish in the middle ground of the view and provide screening to the site.

To the northern section of the PROW the new junction with Rampton road maybe discernable in the initial years following development. The existing pasture and paddocks help to break the views towards the proposed junction.

Views across to the east of the route would be maintained.

**Construction:**

**Magnitude of Change** – Low  
**Significance of Effects & Direction** – Minor adverse  

**Year 1:**

**Magnitude of Change** – Low/Negligible  
**Significance of Effects & Direction** – Negligible/Neutral  

**Year 15:**

**Magnitude of Change** – Negligible  
**Significance of Effects & Direction** – Negligible/Neutral

**Receptor 10 – Users of Haven Drove PROW and residents of Fox**
The site would be visible during the construction phase from the PROW as cranes, fencing and vehicle movements would appear over the existing hedgerows. Potentially there would be views of the built form at the start of the operational phase before the perimeter buffer zone has established to form a dense tall plantation style screen to the site. This would occur in the subsequent years to year 15. The views would not reduce in length due to the setting back of the development by 500m from Rampton road.

No views of the construction or operation on site would be visible from The Fox other than the new junction to Rampton Road.

The increase of traffic on Rampton road due to the new junction would also be a discernable feature throughout the operation phase.

Views to the north and west would be unchanged.

**Construction:**
- **Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low**
- **Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse**
  - Year 1:
  - **Magnitude of Change – Low**
  - **Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse**
  - Year 15:
  - **Magnitude of Change – Negligible**
  - **Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral**

**Receptor 11 – Users of CGB Park and Ride site**
The view into the site will be dominated by the development which will consist of the enlargement of the park and ride in the foreground. This would be perceived as an accepted view if one was in a park and ride and so reduce the magnitude of change. The view east along the CGB would change to built form enclosing and dramatically restricting the length of the view but would not be dissimilar to the Northstowe site. Increases in traffic would be noticeable from this location during construction and operational periods.

**Construction:**
- **Magnitude of Change – High**
- **Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate adverse**
  - Year 1:
  - **Magnitude of Change – Medium**
Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate adverse

Year 15:

Magnitude of Change – Low

Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse

Receptor 12 – Road users on the B1050
Views along the road are generally well screened by the existing properties and vegetation to the south. However where the site is adjacent to the road, close direct views of the construction and operational phases would be possible. The proposed junction allow the main access into the site would also become a very apparent feature along the road in both phases. During the operational phase there would be increased levels of traffic on the road.

Construction:

Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low

Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate Adverse

Year 1:

Magnitude of Change – Low

Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor Adverse

Year 15:

Magnitude of Change – Low/Negligible

Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse/Negligible

Receptor 13 – Road users on Rampton road between Willingham and Rampton
The views into the site would remain as glimpses however the cranes maybe visible on parts of the road. The open space in the fields adjacent to the road reduces the perception of the development and the proposed perimeter buffer zone to the field boundary approximately 500m away would eventually screen the site.

The proposed road junction for the main access road would impact on the road significantly, especially during the construction phase but would blend into the road network by year 15. Increased traffic flows would be a noticeable change during the construction phase and the beginnings of the operational phase.

Construction:

Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low

Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse

Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Low
Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse/Negligible
Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – Low/Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Receptor 14 – Road users on Rampton road between Rampton and Cottenham
Views during the construction phase would be unlikely due to the avenue of trees along the road and the distance from the site. Development is not taking place in the south east corner which could be visible from this location if cranes were erected here.

Construction traffic on the road maybe a feature depending on the route taken by the vehicles. During the operational phase increased road traffic associated with the new entrance on the other side of Rampton maybe perceivable.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Low/Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral
Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral
Year 15:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Receptor 15 – Road users on Oakington Road
Views of the development would be unlikely through all phases due to the location of the road. Traffic increases might be apparent on the roads as would the increase in buses on the CGB.

Construction:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral
Year 1:
Magnitude of Change – Negligible
Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral
Year 15:
**Magnitude of Change – Negligible**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral**

**Receptor 16 – Road users on Longstanton Road**
There would not be any views of the site through the construction or operational phase of the works. Traffic levels would increase potentially on the road as construction vehicles may use the route to the site and then residents would use the locals roads in the future.

**Construction:**

**Magnitude of Change – Negligible**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral**

**Year 1:**

**Magnitude of Change – Negligible**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral**

**Year 15:**

**Magnitude of Change – Negligible**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral**

**Receptor 17 – Cambridge Guided Bus users**
The long distance views to the north from the buses will be dominated by the proposed development, however it would not be dissimilar to the views to the south of Northstowe.

**Construction:**

**Magnitude of Change – Medium**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate adverse**

**Year 1:**

**Magnitude of Change – Medium/Low**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Moderate adverse**

**Year 15:**

**Magnitude of Change – Low**

**Significance of Effects & Direction – Minor adverse**

**Receptor 18 – Residents on A1123, Haddenham**
Cranes would be visible above the tree belts and potentially the movements of the construction vehicles. However these would only form a small part of this expansive view which already has aerials within it so the cranes would not be out of place. Once constructed the built form would be partially if not completely hidden within the existing
vegetation framework of the landscape. Over time it would blend completely into the landscape hidden as Willingham and Longstanton are through the proposed perimeter buffer zone to the north of the development.

Construction:

Magnitude of Change – Low

Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Year 1:

Magnitude of Change – Negligible

Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Year 15:

Magnitude of Change – Negligible

Significance of Effects & Direction – Negligible/Neutral

Table 3: Summary Table of Effects on Character Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Character Area</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Magnitude of Change</td>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>Direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Edge of Fenland Countryside</td>
<td>Med/High</td>
<td>Mod</td>
<td>Adv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>South Cambridgeshire Villages</td>
<td>Med/Low</td>
<td>Mod</td>
<td>Adv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>The Allocated Northstowe Barracks</td>
<td>Med/Low</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Adv</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Magnitude of change        Significance                Direction

Neg = Negligible           Neut = Neutral               Neut = Neutral
Low = Low                  Minor = Minor                 Adv = Adverse
Med = Medium               Mod = Moderate                Bene = Beneficial
High = High                Sub = Substantial
Table 4 - Summary Table of Effects on Visual Receptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Visual Receptors</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Magnitude of</td>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>Direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Residents of Willingham</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>Mod</td>
<td>Adv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Residents of Rampton</td>
<td>Med</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Adv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Residents at North Fen Farm</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Adv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Residents of Westwick, Lambs Cross and Cuckoo Farms</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Adv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Residents of Oakington</td>
<td>Neg</td>
<td>Neg</td>
<td>Neu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Residents of Rampton Drift</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Neu</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Residents of Longstanton</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Neu</td>
<td>Neg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Users of Rampton Drove PROW</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Mod</td>
<td>Adv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Users of Cuckoo Drift PROW</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Min</td>
<td>Adv</td>
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<td>Users of Haven Drove PROW and residents of The Fox</td>
<td>Med/Low</td>
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<td>Adv</td>
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<td>Neg</td>
<td>Neu</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Road users on Oakington Road</td>
<td>Neg</td>
<td>Neg</td>
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<td>Road users on Longstanton Road</td>
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<td>Med</td>
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<td>Adv</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Residents on the A1123, Haddenham</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Neg</td>
<td>Neu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Magnitude of change: Neut = Neutral
Significance: Neg = Negligible, Neut = Neutral
Direction: Neg = Negative, Neu = Neutral, Neu = Neutral
5 \hspace{1cm} CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The location of the proposed development is on land to the north of the Allocated Northstowe Site between the villages of Longstanton, Oakington, Willingham and Rampton. The local planning authority is South Cambridgeshire District Council.

5.2 The site is not subject to any statutory landscape or ecological designations. The local authority does not have any policies protecting or identifying specific views to and from the site. The site is not included in any designation designed to conserve its appearance or character and the setting of the nearby Conservation Areas would not be directly affected by the proposed development. Likewise the Cambridge Green Belt would not be affected by this site.

5.3 The site is located on the edge of the distinct fenland landscape character area of Cambridgeshire where limited topographical variations and substantial blocks of vegetation contain the landscape generally hiding the existing settlements. The character area is assessed to have a moderate sensitivity with a good capacity to accommodate new development. The proposal will change the existing character of the site to form part of the Allocated Northstowe Barracks character area to the opposite side of the CGB. The effect on the site character area during the construction phase would be significant but this would only be a temporary effect. During the operational phase the site would change character and slightly improve the Allocated Northstowe Barracks character area whilst having a limited effect on the existing fenland character area.

5.4 The shelter belts and hedgerows spread across the undulating fenland landscape restricting views and enclosing the large predominately arable fields. The receptors surrounding the site mostly have restricted views due to the intervening vegetation which is particularly common around the edges of the existing settlements. The site has a high capacity to accommodate development. Most views looking south towards the site would be seen in context of the urban setting of Northstowe. The proposal would be similar in design to the layout and form of Northstowe with green corridors running through it and
large perimeter buffer zones which will enclose it. Four close receptors are deemed to have significant effects during the construction phase but due to the temporary period of time this is deemed to be acceptable. The extensive vegetation buffer zone to the outside of the development restricts views of the built form leading to no significant effects for the receptors during the operational phase apart from users of the CGB. The users would be seeing the site developed in the context of Northstowe and therefore it would not be assessed to have an uncharacteristic change in the longer term.

5.5 The proposed settlement on the site has been designed so that it is inwardly looking and in relation to Northstowe and therefore has buffer planting to the edges of the settlement helping it to blend into the surrounding countryside. This is an important landscape element noted in the Northstowe Area Action Plan 2007 and replicated in this design: “a characteristic which is common to most which assists with their assimilation into the countryside is a graduation from the edge of the settlements through lowering densities merging into a network of small fields on the countryside edge which gives way to the larger field structure which is typical of much of South Cambridgeshire.”
APPENDIX I

PROPOSED ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN: 716/600
Northstowe, Cambridgeshire
PROPOSED ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

716/600
Client: Fairfield Partnership
Scale: 1:20,000 @ A4
09/2012

Residential
Education
Local Centre
Employment
New Landscape Planting
Public Open Space
Open Landscape
Expanded car park for Park & Ride
APPENDIX 2

APPROXIMATE ZONE OF VISUAL INFLUENCE
The site is located on land to the north and east of the Cambridge Guided Bus (CGB) route, to the south and west of Rampton and south and east of Willingham. The site for the new town of Northstowe is located the opposite side of the CGB route. Arable fields surround the site generally.

The ZTV is restricted due to flat topography and intervening existing mature vegetation. The highest point in the study area is 15m AOD which drops to the lowest point at 5m AOD.

Direct views of the site are possible from various locations around the site, particularly Rampton Road, B1050, CGB and associated cycle route, Reynolds Drive public right of way (PROW), Rampton Drift PROW, private properties and allotments to the edge of Willingham.

Due to the enclosed nature of the surrounding villages the edge properties have filtered views of the site through the existing vegetation. There are also glimpse views of the site from sections of Rampton Road towards Cottenham, Oakington Road, B1050.

Once Northstowe is built properties along the northern part of the consented development will overlook the CGB route and the site and as well as changing the visual character of the landscape in this area. The Northstowe settlement will screen existing views of the site from the villages of Longstanton and Oakington and from many significant receptor viewpoints to the north of the CGB route any future develop on the site will be seen in context of Northstowe.

Views of the site from villages further away such as Over, Cottenham and Histon are not possible due to intervening vegetation. There are some restricted long views through gaps in the surrounding vegetation into the fenland countryside.
APPENDIX 3

CONSERVATION AREAS AND LISTED BUILDINGS
APPENDIX 4

VISUAL RECEPTORS
APPENDIX 5

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED FOR LANDSCAPE & VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The terms used by Allen Pyke Associates is an adaption of the Landscape Institute/IEMA LVIA guidance (2002) for the assessment of the following:

1. Baseline Conditions
   • Sensitivity of Landscape/Townscape Character
   • Sensitivity of Visual Receptors
   • Capacity to Accept Change

2. The Effects of the Scheme Proposals
   • Magnitude of Impact
   • Significance of the Impact

1. BASELINE CONDITIONS

The attributes of a character area are assessed in accordance with the table below and the terms used in the definitions of subsequent evaluation tables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements which create a sense of place including layout of built form, architectural styles, geology and soils, landform, land use and other human activity.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visual Receptor</td>
<td>Visual receptors include the residents, visitors, travellers through the area and other groups of viewers who are able to see the proposed development site from a specific viewpoint (footpaths, residential properties, recreational area etc).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
<td>The extent to which the elements that make up a character area are susceptible to the proposed changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
<td>Capacity is the degree to which a character area and visual receptor is able to accommodate change. Capacity may vary according to the type or nature of the proposed change.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sensitivity of Landscape/Townscape Character is defined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivity</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Where the valued elements that make up any part of the character area could not be replaced without substantial detriment to the overall character. They typically include areas of international/national or regional importance/ statutory designated landscapes/ world heritage sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Where the elements that make up a character area where some parts of the area could be restored and/or replaced without significant detriment to the overall character. They typically include regional or significant local designated landscapes or building conservation areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Where the elements that make up a character area are undistinguished but may or may not be of some local value and the character could be improved, restored or replaced. Typical areas include parks, recreation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
area, housing areas or land to be restored.

The sensitivity of a Visual Receptor is defined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivity of Receptor</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Residential properties, public footpaths, bridleways, public buildings. Areas of wilderness, landscapes of acknowledged importance or value. Note that if the views from these receptors is across low quality area e.g. industrial development, large scale warehousing, then the sensitivity of the receptor reduces to Medium sensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Retail and employment sites, sports and recreational facilities and road users.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Industrial sites, agricultural land and derelict sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The capacity to accept change is defined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Where the character/ visual receptor can accommodate substantial levels of change to the site conditions without any significant negative effects or where a change would greatly improve the character/view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Where the character/ visual receptor can accommodate a significant change to the site conditions without noticeable negative effect or where a change would improve the character/view.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Where the character/ visual receptor can only accommodate a small amount/ no change to the site conditions before detrimental or harmful effects to the character/view.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. THE EFFECTS OF THE SCHEME PROPOSALS

The magnitude of change is defined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magnitude</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Where the proposed scheme would result in the total loss or major alteration of the elements that make up the baseline character/view and/or introduce elements considered to be totally uncharacteristic in the particular setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Where the proposed scheme would result in the partial loss or alteration of one or more of the key elements that make up the baseline character/view and/or introduce elements that may be prominent but not necessarily uncharacteristic in the particular setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Where the proposed scheme would result in minor loss or alteration of one or more of the key elements that make up the baseline character/view and/or introduce elements that may not be uncharacteristic in the particular setting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negligible/ No change</td>
<td>Where the proposed scheme would result in very minor loss or alteration of one or more of the key elements that make up the baseline character/view and/or introduce elements that may not be uncharacteristic in the particular setting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE IMPACT ON THE CHARACTER AND VISUAL EFFECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significance /Impact</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Substantial adverse** | Where the scheme would cause a substantial negative change in the existing view and the new development would be the dominant visual element. The Proposal would do one or more of the following:  
• be at considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape;  
• result in a total loss or major alteration to the key attributes and their setting  
• disrupt a finely balanced or intact landscape;  
• cause a major deterioration to the contribution that the Site makes or has the potential to make to the local landscape character;  
• be visually intrusive and disrupt valued views of the area;  
• cause a major reduction in the current level of tranquillity;  
• introduce incongruous elements into the landscape;  
• be incapable of the full mitigation;  
• be in serious conflict with the local guidelines for landscape character areas.  
• be in serious conflict with the national/local policies for protecting the countryside/townscape. |
| **Moderate adverse** | Where the scheme would cause a significant negative change in the existing view and the new development would be one of a small number of elements in the overall setting. The Proposal would do one or more of the following:  
• be out of scale with the landscape, or at odds with the local pattern landform;  
• result in a partial loss of key attributes, or reduce or remove their setting;  
• cause a noticeable deterioration to the contribution that the Site makes or has the potential to make to the local landscape character;  
• be visually intrusive and adversely affect views into and across the area;  
• cause a noticeable reduction in the current level of tranquillity;  
• introduce prominent new elements that are not entirely characteristic;  
• be incapable of adequate mitigation;  
• be in conflict with the local guideline for landscape character areas.  
• be in conflict with the national/local policies for protecting the countryside/townscape. |
| **Minor adverse** | Where the scheme would cause a noticeable negative change in the existing view and the new development would be one of many elements in the overall setting. The Proposal would do one or more of the following:  
• not quite fit the landform and scale of the landscape;  
• result in a minor loss of the key/characteristic elements of features or their setting reduced;  
• cause a minor deterioration to the contribution that the Site makes or has to make to the local landscape character;  
• although not very visually intrusive, would adversely affect certain views into and across the area;  
• cause a minor reduction in the current level of tranquillity;  
• introduce noticeable new elements that are not entirely characteristic;  
• not fulfil local guidelines for landscape character areas;  
• conflict with the national/local authority policies for protecting the local character of the countryside/townscape. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Significance</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Neutral/negligible effect   | Where there is no discernible / minimal positive or negative change in the existing view. The Proposal would do one or more of the following;  
• complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape;  
• incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure that the scheme will blend in well with surrounding landscape;  
• avoid being visually intrusive;  
• have no adverse effect on the current level of tranquillity of the landscape;  
• maintain existing landscape character;  
• avoid conflict with national/local policies towards protecting of the countryside/townscape. |
| Minor beneficial            | Where the scheme would cause a noticeable positive change in the existing view and the new development would be one of many elements in the overall setting. The Proposal would do one or more of the following;  
• provide some mitigation for an existing adverse effect;  
• incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure they will blend in well with surrounding landscape;  
• assimilate well with the scale, landform and pattern of the existing landscape or townscape;  
• enable some sense of the place and scale to be introduced or restored though good design and well-designed planting and mitigation measures;  
• make some improvement to the contribution that the Site makes to the local existing landscape / townscape character;  
• be in line with local government guidelines for landscape/townscape character areas;  
• make a contribution to national/local policies towards protection of the countryside/townscape. |
| Moderate beneficial         | Where the scheme would cause a significant positive change in the existing view and the new development would be one of a small number of elements in the overall setting. The Proposal would provide an opportunity to enhance the landscape because they do one or more of the following;  
• provide some mitigation for an existing adverse effect;  
• incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure they will blend in well with surrounding landscape;  
• assimilate well with the scale, landform and pattern of the existing landscape or townscape;  
• enable a sense of the place and scale to be introduced or restored though good design and well-designed planting and mitigation measures;  
• make an improvement to the contribution that the Site makes to the local existing landscape / townscape character;  
• largely support objectives in the local guidelines for landscape / townscape character areas;  
• further national/local objectives to regenerate degraded countryside.  
• make a significant contribution to national/local policies towards protection of the countryside/townscape. |
| **Substantial beneficial** | Where the scheme would result in a substantial positive change in the existing view and the new development would be a positive feature within the overall setting. The Proposal would provide an opportunity to enhance the landscape because they do one or more of the following:
- provide mitigation for an existing adverse effect;
- incorporate measures for mitigation to ensure they will blend in well with surrounding landscape;
- assimilate wholly, with the scale, landform and pattern of the existing landscape or townscape;
- enable a strong sense of the place and scale to be introduced or restored through good design and well-designed planting and mitigation measures;
- make an improvement to the contribution that the Site makes to the local existing landscape / townscape character;
- support objectives in the local guidelines for landscape / townscape character areas;
- further national/local objectives to regenerate degraded countryside.
- make a significant contribution to national/local policies towards protection of the countryside/townscape. |