

CHAPTER 8: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT

Introduction

- 8.1 This chapter aims to identify both the sensitivity of the site character and of views into this site and then assesses the potential effects of this mixed-use development.
- 8.2 In order to satisfy this objective two key sections have been set out as follows:
- Existing situation - This is an analysis of the existing situation within and surrounding the site. It draws upon information gathered during a desk study (refer to the Bibliography, at the end of this chapter, for a list of the documents used) and field survey work. In relation to the visual amenity section, the area of study (extent of visibility) is also identified and the visual receptors are selected and visited.
 - Impact of development - This part of the study describes the likely nature and scale of change to landscape character and visual amenity. The proposed development was studied and then compared with the baseline information to ascertain potential effects upon the landscape and views. Consideration was also given to the implications of landscape planning designations which seek to protect landscape quality and character.
- 8.3 Mitigation recommendations are then proposed and the residual impacts, based upon these interventions, are then calculated.
- 8.4 The application site is located on the south west edge of Boston and it is located approximately 2-3km from the centre of town. Boston is situated near the south-east coast of Lincolnshire, where the River Witham becomes the Haven on its journey to The Wash. The town is approximately 120 miles directly north of London and 32 miles south-east of Lincoln. It is a historic and attractive market town which is dominated by the 14th-century St. Botolph's Church whose 271ft high tower is a landmark for miles around.

Methodology

- 8.5 This landscape and visual amenity assessment was undertaken by qualified and experienced chartered landscape architects, based upon visits to the site and the surrounding area on the 1st and the 29th October 2013.
- 8.6 The process has been guided by the publication 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', produced jointly by the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Landscape Institute [1]. Full details of the methodology and the scoring process are included in Appendix 8.1 which includes Tables 8.1 to 8.6.
- 8.7 Landscape and visual assessments are separate, although linked, procedures. Landscape effects '**should consider how the proposal will affect the elements that make up the landscape, its aesthetic and perceptual aspects, its distinctive character and key characteristics that contribute to this.**' Visual effects '**deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity**' [1]. This document separates these elements into two distinct sections so that the differences can be clearly appreciated.
- 8.8 The methodology also responds to the nature, scale and location of this project in regards to the development.
- 8.9 A distinction has been made in this landscape and visual impact assessment between the 'study area' and the 'application site'. The 'application site' is as shown by the red line boundary in figures 8.22 – 8.24.
- 8.10 The visual assessment considers the visual amenity of the application site and the surrounding area and identifies potentially sensitive visual receptors and the approximate visibility of the development. The 'study area' is defined as the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and it is '**the area in which a proposed development may have an influence or effect of visual amenity**' [1].
- 8.11 The character of the application site is also examined in relation to the character of a wider area, which is set out and described in Natural England's national character area assessment and Boston Borough Council's landscape character assessment.

8.12 The figures are located at the end of this chapter and they comprise of the following illustrations:

- General photographs were taken as a record and also to illustrate character and visual amenity. These photographs are presented within the document, and they illustrate the features and collective character of the site and its surroundings and views from identified viewpoints.
- Plans have been produced, using Ordnance Survey maps as a base, to show viewpoints locations (figure 8.22), landscape character (figure 8.22), landscape character areas (figure 8.23), and the local landscape designations (figure 8.24).
- A ZTV plan was produced using LSS. This software uses Land-Form PANORAMA 50m grid DTM and 1:25,000 scale OS Street View maps to produce the terrain model for the area. The site area was applied to the model and the ZTV calculated from this information.

8.13 The ZTV plan only shows the screen effect of the landform. It does not take into account the visible barriers such as vegetation and buildings, so it has only been used to select viewpoints in the first instance which have then been visited to confirm impacts. Boston is situated within a very flat landscape and so the ZTV encompasses a vast area. Site survey work has shown that in reality the visual envelope is much smaller due to the screen effect of buildings and vegetation.

Planning Policy Context

Development Plan

8.14 There are currently two plans in place to guide decisions on planning applications in Boston and the surrounding areas. These are the saved policies of the Boston Borough Local Plan (April 1999), and the Boston Borough Interim Plan (Non-Statutory Development Control Policy) (Feb 2006). The landscape designations and related policies that exist as part of, or adjacent to the site, are shown on Figure 8.24 – Landscape Designations.

These designations are as follows:

Policy CO1 – Development in the Countryside

- 8.15 The policy provides the following guidance: **'The Borough Council wishes to conserve the character of the countryside, protect the best and most versatile agricultural land, avoid the high costs of servicing new development in scattered locations and prevent the coalescence of settlements'** [5].
- 8.16 This policy ensures that development in the countryside is **'strictly controlled'** [5] within the area. The site is located to the south of Boston, between the town and the village of Wyberton. The policy seeks to prevent the coalescence of Boston with surrounding towns
- 8.17 The development within the application site will not conflict with the objectives of this policy as the site is located between existing housing developments that have already expanded the village of Wyberton to merge with the southern edge of Boston. Therefore any development will appear as infilling rather than expansion into the countryside or coalescence of conurbations.

G1 – Amenity

- 8.18 The policy states **'Planning permission will only be granted for development which will not substantially harm the amenities of other nearby land users or residents, or the general character of the area because of its nature, scale, density, layout, appearance or level of traffic generation.'** [5]
- 8.19 This policy ensures that development is controlled so that any proposed uses are not **'incompatible with an area's character'** [5]. The site is located to the south of Boston, between the Skirbeck Quarter of Boston and the village of Wyberton. It forms an area of green space between the existing housing developments and the A16 road that runs through the site. This Policy seeks to limit any possible **'harmful effect upon the amenities'** [5] of the local area, the population and on the character of the surrounding areas.

8.20 The character of the area will change but existing features are limited and there are already many urban detractors. The spaciousness and views will be diminished, but this is confined to the site and its immediate surroundings only. The development within the application site will not conflict with the objectives of this policy as the site is mainly surrounded by an urban environment, with urban detractors already present within the site. Mitigation on the south east boundary will provide a buffer between development and the countryside.

G2 – Wildlife and Landscape Resources

8.21 The policy states '**Planning permission will not be granted for proposals which will have a significant adverse impact upon existing landscape, wildlife and vegetation resources**' [5].

8.22 This policy aims to ensure that '**existing landscape and wildlife resources (if any) should...be incorporated into development proposals**' [5]. The site is located adjacent to the urban fringe of Boston town. It has a strong pattern of drainage ditches that form field boundaries alongside boundary hedgerows and trees, This policy seeks to conserve these characteristic landscape and wildlife features so that '**decisions made today do not deny future generations the best of today's environment**' [5].

8.23 The development within the application site will not conflict with the objectives of this policy. Drainage ditches and existing vegetation are to be largely retained and incorporated into the future development proposals. An area of public open space will be created at the south western side of the site and this will encompass ecological enhancements.

Policy R1 – Protection of Existing Recreational Open Space

8.24 The policy states: '**In identifying and protecting the main public and private recreational open spaces, the Council recognises their importance in relation to the general health and welfare of the community...The Policy therefore aims to protect community recreation provision**' [5].

8.25 At the south east corner of the site (to the west of the A16), there is an area of recreational open space consisting of playing fields and a park like area with some play equipment. This area is separated from the site by a mature hedgerow. It is proposed that Towns Drain is realigned and moved further north, as shown on the masterplan, to allow for the potential expansion of Wyberton Playing Fields Association.

8.26 The development within the application site will not conflict with the objectives of this policy as the existing playing fields will be retained. The recreational open space will also be extended along the southern boundary of the site.

Other Material Considerations

The National Planning Policy Framework

8.27 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 replacing Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG). Sustainable development is a target in which the environment can play a key role.

'Contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.'

8.28 The overarching emphasis on sustainable development sets out principles which Local Planning Authorities must reflect in local policy. The following paragraph from the NPPF are most relevant to landscape and the proposal site location.

- Paragraph 58 - Requiring Good Design: The NPPF places an emphasis on good design as a key factor to providing sustainable development. It sets out a list of design objectives.
- **'Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:**
- **will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;**

- **establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;**
- **optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses (including incorporation of green and other public space as part of developments) and support local facilities and transport networks;**
- **respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation;**
- **create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and**
- **are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.'**

8.29 Generally the application development will not conflict with the objectives of this document as the layout and design respond to the landscape character and visual amenity of the area. It provides a mix of uses and it provides facilities which will be of benefit to the community. As the proposals continue to be developed a high standard of design should be employed throughout.

Public Rights Of Way

8.30 In addition to the local landscape designations, there are also statutory designations that apply to the site, such as public rights of way. Lincolnshire County Council have produced a document that sets out a 'Vision for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan in Lincolnshire' [7]. The aim of this document is '**to have an integrated network of rights of way that is relevant for today's needs, bringing added benefits to residents and visitors by supporting wider interests including sustainable transport, rural economy & tourism, health benefits and quality of life issues.**' [7]

8.31 The wider area has a limited number of public rights of way across this landscape. The Lincolnshire Countryside Access and Rights of Way Improvement Plan states that '**Public rights of way are becoming an increasingly important means by**

which people can gain access to the countryside. They are a significant part of our heritage and in modern society they have become a major recreational resource' [7]. There is only one public footpath close to the application site and it is located to the east of the site between the eastern boundary and Tytton Hall. This route runs north to south and links the Skirbeck Quarter of Boston in the north to the village of Frampton in the south.

- 8.32 Currently **'the rights of way network is fragmented'** [7]. Therefore the existing public rights of way around the application site has the potential to be enhanced and used as an opportunity to create green links and accessible areas across the landscape. Further links will be accommodated within the development to also promote pedestrian movement.
- 8.33 Development within the application site will not conflict with the objectives of this designation if the existing public right of way is retained. The views towards the development will be screened with existing and proposed planting in order to maintain a consistent user experience along this section of the route. The network of footpaths within the site will also improve the current situation allowing public access throughout the majority of the site.

SHLAA Sites

- 8.34 Currently there is also the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (May 2013) in place, which is produced by the South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee. The Committee is a partnership of Boston Borough, South Holland District and Lincolnshire County Councils who are **'working together to create a single Local Plan for the area of South Holland and Boston Borough'** [7]. A key component of this plan is the allocation of sites for future housing.
- 8.35 The site encompasses two designated SHLAA sites from the South East Lincolnshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) draft findings (September 2012). They are Wyb002 and Wyb009 (see figure 8.21). Wyb009 encompasses the site to the west of the A16 (character area 1a) and is recommended in the document as **'developable'** [6]. The site Wyb002 encompasses the eastern-most field of the site located to the east of the A16.

Wyb002 - 10.83 hectares. 325 dwellings.

8.36 This area is classified as being **'undevelopable'** as it **'has little relationship to the town's existing built-up area, and would extend development into an area with a strongly rural character, to the detriment of that character'** [6].

8.37 This whole area does appear to protrude into countryside and it is situated close to the parkland landscape at Tytton Hall. The application development will be focused alongside the A16 and it will consist of the community stadium and adjacent car parking. The proposals are confined to one field only and boundary planting will be enhanced as part of the scheme.

8.38 Wyb009 - 20.91 hectares. 627 dwellings.

8.39 This area is classified as being **'developable (11-15)'** as the **'scale is appropriate to the town's range of services. Development would not significantly harm the character of the wider area, since the site does not have an open countryside character - it's appearance is dominated by the surrounding development'** [6].

8.40 This assessment will confirm this classification. The area is natural urban infill, surrounded on three sides by housing and the fourth side by the A16. The landscape character within the site has been diminished by the removal of field boundaries and addition of pylons.

Existing Situation

Landscape Character

8.41 Landscape character is defined as a distinct and recognisable pattern of elements that occur consistently in a particular type of landscape. Patterns in the landscape, activity or tranquillity, heritage and cultural associations, vegetation, land use and connectivity combine together to create landscape character. It is important this is considered so that an understanding of the site and its surroundings can be achieved.

Existing Character Assessments

- 8.42 Natural England have produced the Character Map of England which groups the English Landscape into distinct character areas and types that share common features and qualities. The site lies in Character Area 46, The Fens [2]. The area is notable for **'its large-scale, flat, open landscape with extensive vistas to level horizons. The level, open topography shapes the impression of huge skies which convey a strong sense of place, tranquillity and inspiration.'** The landscape is described as a **'distinctive, historic and human-influenced wetland... lying to the west of the Wash estuary'** [2].
- 8.43 The **'land boundary of the Fens is typically drawn along a series of catchwater drains, dykes, canalised rivers and lodes...The rivers and their associated network of ditches and dykes provide ecological networks and functional links'** [2] across the landscape.
- 8.44 A key feature of this landscape is that **'woodland cover is sparse, notably a few small woodland blocks, occasional avenues alongside roads, isolated field trees and shelterbelts of poplar, willow and occasionally leylandii hedges...various alders, notable grey alder, are also used in shelterbelts'** [2].
- 8.45 Settlement patterns and typical building materials are also discussed. The document states that **'Domestic architecture mostly dates from after 1750 and comprises a mix of late Georgian-style brick houses and 20th century bungalows'** [2]. Key vernacular characteristics include a **'traditional building style of brick and slate-roofed farmhouses and brick-pantile workers' cottages...Local building materials include reed for thatching and clay for bricks, with its variations in colour and texture'** [2].
- 8.46 In 2009, ECUS were appointed to carry out a landscape character assessment of the District on behalf of Boston Borough Council [3]. The study includes comments from consultees; a discussion of relevant national and local planning context and a summary detailing the formative influences on the landscape character.

- 8.47 The comments from consultees identified key landscape features which **'were mentioned frequently as being highly appreciated and valued within Boston's landscapes include watercourses, sea banks, trees, heritage features, Bicker windfarm, and views and patterns within the landscape'** [3]. Views in the landscape are also highly important including the **'framed view of St Botolph's church in Boston, otherwise known as 'Boston Stump'** along with more general **'Open views with wide horizons and big skies, in particular over the fenlands'** [3].
- 8.48 Watercourses are an important characteristic of the landscape in this area, the report from the landscape character assessment states that they **'were described as making an important contribution to the unique character within Boston's landscapes and particularly in creating a sense of place'** [3].
- 8.49 Trees in the landscape are also **'mentioned frequently as being highly valued, but their context was also considered to be important...some consultees highlighted that trees could have a negative impact on the open character in fen areas where they were thought to be uncharacteristic and affect the open views in Boston's landscapes'** [3]. This is characteristic of this area as generally groups of trees are concentrated around settlements and major transport links across the landscape. There is also concern raised regarding **'the loss of mature trees from towns and villages and the further loss of woodland, hedgerows and wild flowers on roadside verges'** [3].
- 8.50 The document divides the landscape into four areas of similar character (A-D). The site is located in area B Settled Fens Landscape Character Type [3]. The assessment further divides into nine distinct areas. The landscape character type that encompasses the site is B1 - Bicker to Wyberton Settled Fens which **'is located to the west of Boston town'** and **'lies between the Reclaimed Saltmarsh towards the coast and the Reclaimed Fen which is inland'** [3].
- 8.51 The landscape is described as **'generally flat ...Views are generally open with big skies and wide horizons'** [3]. A key characteristic of this area is that it **'allows long distance views interrupted only by settlements and associated shelterbelts and trees. Other vertical elements such as traditional windmills,**

church towers and spires, and poplar trees stand out in these views' [3]. The document states that although the landscape is mainly flat with long distance views, **'settlements and their associated trees and shelterbelts provide some localised visual enclosure'** [3] which limits views in some areas.

8.52 Vegetation is limited across this landscape character type; **'Trees are confined to settlements and shelterbelts, occasional hedgerows and small blocks of mixed woodland'** [3].

8.53 The landscape has **'an irregular, organic pattern formed by winding roads and watercourses...Where the pattern is larger scale the fields tends to be geometric whereas in the smaller scale areas they remain more irregular and organic'** [3]. Land use in this area is mainly agricultural, **'predominantly arable farming with some horticulture and associated glasshouses, large packing sheds and food processing plants. Occasional fields of pasture remain'** [3]. As a result of this there is a strong characteristic of clearly defined field boundaries creating **'a strong pattern of relatively large scale, winding roads infilled by a geometric field pattern of predominantly arable fields. The diverse mix of crops grown here include wheat, beet, brassicas, potatoes and maize'** [3].

8.54 The settlement pattern consists of **'widely spread villages with farmsteads and dwellings scattered in between. There are also occasional field buildings...Generally the style and age of buildings are mixed throughout the area. This is also reflected within and on the outskirts of and within villages with incremental housing developments'** [3]. There are also a number of **'urban features'** and detractors in the landscape, which includes **'several rows of large scale pylons which converge on the town'** [3]. These form a major vertical feature in the landscape and are visible from long distances as the surrounding area is so flat. Another key characteristic within the landscape is that **'the remaining urban edge of Boston is mostly well defined by residential housing developments that back onto arable agricultural land'** [3]. This demonstrates that although the area appears to be rural in nature, there are a number of urban features and characteristics within the landscape. The assessment states that **'Wyberton also extends out into intact farmland and due to infill housing**

developments appears to be merging with Boston Town' [3]. The study area is representative of this description as it is located on the very edge of the town, situated on the eastern side of Wyberton, which also adjoins the southern side of Boston.

8.55 Lincolnshire County Council and English Heritage produced a document in 2011 as part of the 'Historic Landscape Characterisation Project for Lincolnshire - The Historic Character of the County of Lincolnshire – Character Zone WSH6' [4]. This details the historic landscape characteristics of the area, including the site. It describes the '**predominantly agricultural**' nature of the character zone as the '**greater part of this area is made up of arable fields, which are used to cultivate a variety of food and cash crops**' [4]. Due to its agricultural nature, the landscape has a strong, distinct pattern of field boundaries and enclosure which has developed over time, due to the '**more irregular field boundary morphology**' [4] it is distinguished from other zones in the Wash. Although this zone has '**experienced considerable field boundary loss, resulting in an increased enclosure size that has dissipated the earlier field morphologies**' it retains this characteristic as an important feature of the landscape.

8.56 The landscape pattern is reinforced by the '**large scale drainage infrastructure**' which is mentioned as a key characteristic landscape feature that has developed over time, '**The zone is divided by large, straight embanked river channels, mainly canalised during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries**' [4].

8.57 Trees and vegetation define the character of the landscape in this area. '**Tree cover in the zone is sparse, comprising deciduous and non-deciduous, small scale, nineteenth and twentieth-century plantations located in field edges and corners, around settlements and as shelter belts around farmsteads**' [4]. This lack of vegetation within the area is a definite characteristic of this landscape type. The site is reflective of this characteristic as trees and hedgerows are mainly found in limited areas, adjacent to edges and boundaries of housing.

Landscape Character Areas

8.58 The site has been split into different character areas to illustrate the localised differences within the site and to define the different opportunities and constraints

that exist in each area. The location of each character area is shown in figure 8.23 - Landscape Character Areas. 1a is located to the west of the A16 and 1b is on the eastern side of the road.

8.59 These two areas are similar in character but vary in scale. Area 1a is much larger and more open whereas area 1b is smaller in scale with clearly defined field boundaries. However both sites are adjacent to existing housing developments and are agricultural fields with some sort of cereal crop growing. These character areas are defined by their relationship with the wider landscape, the fields are enclosed by vegetation or drainage ditches and are small in size (approximately 0.5 hectares), and they are also rectangular in shape and have a flat topography.

Character Area 1a - Urban Fringe Open Space:

(See Figures 8.1 & 8.2)

8.60 This character area is located within an open space between Wyberton village and the town of Boston. It contrasts with the surrounding landscape type. It is surrounded by housing on three sides and a major road (A16) to the east. There is also an area of recreational open space (playing fields) adjacent to the south east corner of the site.

8.61 Access to the area is limited, there are no public rights of way within the site. There is a vehicular entrance from Tytton Lane East between the curtilage of two houses.

8.62 This character area is made up of agricultural fields with a network of drainage ditches. There is limited vegetation, which gives the area an open feel. Boundary fencing and intermittent garden planting forms a degree of enclosure along the edge of the site although housing is still visible. Bordering the road to the east is a pavement with vegetation along either side, this forms a buffer between the site and the busy road environment.

8.63 There are no apparent heritage or cultural associations within this character area.

8.64 The sensitivity of this character is medium because although it is a green area that provides an open space within an urban setting it is surrounded by housing and an A-

road. The field boundary planting has been removed and electricity pylons run through the site. The land is agricultural farmland which is open in nature, compared to the dense urban form of the surrounding area, which is mainly housing. There are drainage ditches which should be preserved where possible as an integral part of this landscape potentially as part of a SUDS scheme. With recreational open space adjoining the area on the south east corner and housing along three sides, this area provides a visual and physical spaciousness to these areas.

Character Area 1b - Urban Fringe Open Space:

(See Figures 8.3 & 8.4)

- 8.65 This area consists of agricultural fields adjacent to a row of houses along Tytton Lane East to the north. It differs from character area 1a in that it is more enclosed as the field boundaries in this location are well defined by both mature hedgerows and drainage ditches. The hedgerows provide some enclosure to the area and screen much of the wider landscape. Along the northern boundary the houses have intermittent garden boundary vegetation and fencing which means that views north are partially screened.
- 8.66 Access to this area is limited, however there is a public footpath (WYB/2/1) that runs parallel to the eastern boundary of the site. This footpath lies between the site and Tytton Hall, which is a large, residential property surrounded by mature hedgerow and tree planting. This creates a semi-parkland character which is enhanced by the trees and hedgerow planting in this area.
- 8.67 This area is different in character to the surrounding landscape as it is less open than adjacent farmland because of its scale, extent of boundary vegetation and pattern of drainage ditches. Vegetation along the boundaries create a sense of enclosure.
- 8.68 There are no apparent heritage or cultural associations within this character area. There is a historic moat feature located past the village of Wyberton to the south east corner of the site, this is a designated English Heritage Scheduled Ancient Monument (No: 1018583) [8]. However, the relevant policy in the Boston local plan has not been

saved. It is also at a distance from the site boundary itself and therefore its setting is unlikely to be compromised by development.

8.69 The sensitivity of this landscape character area is medium. Due to the enclosed nature of this area, there are few connections with the wider landscape. However, there are views of existing urban detractors such as housing, industrial units and electricity pylons that are visible across the landscape and add to the urban infringement on a seemingly rural area. The A16 also has glimpsed views in the winter and traffic is noisy along this route. Long distance views out of the area are limited, although there are glimpsed views out of the site at entrance points, between garden vegetation and through gaps in the field boundary hedgerows.

Visual Amenity

8.70 Figure 8.22 - Viewpoint Locations, shows where each viewpoint is situated in relation to the site. There are sixteen viewpoints from which the application site is potentially visible. Figure 1 also shows viewpoints that were situated within the ZTV and therefore visited on site to confirm where the allocation site could not be seen, either because of undulating landform, built environment or screening vegetation.

8.71 A visual survey was carried out; the extent and nature of the views and the contribution made by the existing site was recorded. Any close and direct views of the site were recorded and then a wide variety of further views were selected within the visual envelope to demonstrate the effect on viewpoints from all directions surrounding the site.

8.72 The photographs are representative of the views experienced from each viewpoint; however, they should not be considered a substitute to visiting the viewpoint in the field. It is also noted that in some instances photographs could not be taken as access was unavailable and so locations as close as possible to the viewpoints were used instead.

Viewpoint 1, Tytton Lane East (looking south)

(See Figure 8.5)

- Type of receptor: Residents of houses on Tytton Lane East.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium/High.**
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint is located directly outside the application site and consists of a combination of bungalows and two storey houses. The properties back onto the site. Back garden boundaries are mixed with either trees, hedges, fences and outbuildings. The screen effect varies from filtered to open views.
- Views experienced are of flat, agricultural land in the foreground which has a very open character, and is occasionally broken up by small remnants of former hedgerows. To the south and west, the view is enclosed by a backdrop of two storey houses with occasional groups of mature trees. A line of pylons bisect the space, forming a dominant vertical feature. To the east it is possible to see a section of the busy A16 road. Otherwise this is screened by rows of mature trees and hedgerows along the road.

Viewpoint 2(a), A16 Road and Highway footpath (looking west)

(See Figure 8.6)

- Type of receptor: Users of highway footpath and A16 road.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Low.**
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint is located directly outside the application site and consists of a highway footpath and A16 road. There are dense trees and hedgerow planting alongside the viewpoint, effectively screening views from some sections of the road and footpath.
- Remaining views towards the west experience flat, agricultural land in the foreground, which has an open character, although this is occasionally broken up by small remnants of former hedgerows. The view is enclosed by a backdrop of two storey houses and bungalows with back garden planting and intermittent groups of mature trees. A line of pylons bisect the space, forming a dominant vertical feature.

Viewpoint 2(b), A16 Road and Highway footpath (looking east)

(See Figure 8.7)

- Type of receptor: Users of highway footpath and A16 road.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Low**.
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint is located directly outside the application site and consists of a highway footpath and A16 road. There are dense trees and hedgerow planting alongside the viewpoint, effectively screening views from some sections of the road and footpath.
- Remaining views towards the east experience flat, agricultural land in the foreground, which has an open character, although this is occasionally broken up by small remnants of former hedgerows. Further views are enclosed by a backdrop of mature trees and hedgerows.

Viewpoint 3, Tytton Lane East (looking south)

(See Figure 8.8)

- Type of receptor: Residents of bungalows
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium**
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint is located directly outside the application site and consists of bungalows that back onto the site. Most of the views from back gardens are partially obscured by trees and hedges along the boundaries.
- The view is of flat, agricultural land in the foreground, which has an open character. This is bisected (north to south) by a mature hedgerow. The view is rural in character and enclosed by a backdrop of mature trees and hedgerows. A line of pylons bisect the horizon, just beyond the application site.

Viewpoint 4, Tytton Hall (looking west)

(See Figure 8.9)

- Type of receptor: Residents of Tytton Hall.

- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **High**.
- Description of existing view:
The viewpoint consists of a large 3 storey house, alongside additional converted outbuildings of 1 and 2 storeys high. The house is surrounded by hedges and tall mature trees.
- Where views are available they are of agricultural land in the foreground, with tall mature trees located in the adjacent field, giving the view a rural parkland character. The view is enclosed by a backdrop of tall mature hedgerow and trees. A line of pylons are visible to the south west, beyond the hedgerows.

Viewpoint 5, Sir Isaac Newton Drive (looking south)

(See Figure 8.10)

- Type of receptor: Residents of houses on Sir Isaac Newton Drive.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium**.
- Description of existing view:
The viewpoint consists of 2 storey houses, backing onto fields and allotments.
- The view is of either agricultural land or allotments in the foreground, with tall mature trees and hedgerows in the background, which screen any further views in the distance. There is a line of pylons visible in the middle ground and in winter it will be possible to glimpse views of existing houses on Tytton Lane East.

Viewpoint 6, Wyberton Low Road (looking west)

(See Figure 8.11)

- Type of receptor: Residents of houses and bungalows on Wyberton Low Road.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium**.
- Description of existing view:
The viewpoint consists of 2 storey houses and bungalows facing onto Wyberton Low Road, in the direction of the application site.
- The view is of the road with a tall mature hedgerow in the foreground. There are glimpsed views of a flat agricultural field, through occasional gaps in the hedgerow. Further views are enclosed by tall mature trees and hedgerows around Tytton Hall.

Viewpoint 7, Low Road and Public Right of Way (looking west)

(See Figure 8.12)

- Type of receptor: Residents of house on Low Road. Users of public right of way.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium** (Users of public right of way - Medium).
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of a 2 storey house that faces onto Low Road. Tall mature hedgerows and trees dominate the view on the opposite side of Low Road, however there are views towards the application site from first floor windows.
- Where views are available they are of flat agricultural land, with occasional tall mature trees located in the field, giving the view a rural parkland character. Further views north are enclosed by tall mature hedgerows and trees along the boundary of the application site.

Viewpoint 8, Low Road (looking north)

(See Figure 8.13)

- Type of receptor: Residents of properties on Low Road. Road users.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium** (Road users - Low).
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of two storey houses and bungalows, some of which face towards the site. Views are restricted to first floor windows by planting and trees in front gardens. Some properties have views towards the site from the back of the house or back garden. These views are mostly restricted to first floor windows due to planting in back gardens.
- The view is of flat, agricultural land in the foreground which has an open character, due to a lack of hedgerow along the road. The distant view is bisected by the busy A16 road and a line of pylons runs through the middle ground. Further views are restricted by mature trees and hedgerows, with intermittent views of buildings.

Viewpoint 9, Causeway (looking north)

(See Figure 8.14)

- Type of receptor: Residents of Causeway. Road users.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **High** (Road users - Low).
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of a row of two storey houses, facing towards the site. Front garden hedges and planting are generally maintained at a low height, allowing views from ground floor windows towards the application site.
- The view is of flat, agricultural land in the foreground which has an open character, due to a lack of hedgerow planting along the road boundary. The view is framed to the east and west by groups of tall mature trees and hedgerows. The middle ground is bisected by a line of pylons and the A16 road. The urban edge of Boston is visible in the distance, which includes views of residential properties, industrial units, cranes, intermittent trees and hedgerows. There is a clear view of St Botolph's Tower on the horizon.

Viewpoint 10, Low Road/Saundergate East Junction (looking north)

(See Figure 8.15)

- Type of receptor: Road users.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Low**.
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of a road with an open view due to a lack of roadside hedgerow planting.
- The view is of flat, agricultural land in the foreground with an open character. The view is framed to the east and west by groups of tall mature trees and hedgerows. Residential houses on Causeway are visible in the middle ground. The urban edge of Boston is visible in the distance, which includes views of industrial units, cranes, intermittent trees and hedgerows. There is a clear view of St Botolph's Tower on the horizon.

Viewpoint 11, Millfield Lane East (looking north)

(See Figure 8.16)

- Type of receptor: Road users.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Low**.
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of a road with an open view due to a lack of hedgerow planting.
- The view is of flat, agricultural land in the foreground with an open character. Views to the east and west are restricted by blocks of tall mature trees and hedgerows. The urban edge of Boston is visible in the distance, which includes views of industrial units, cranes, intermittent trees and hedgerows. There is a clear view of St Botolph's Tower on the horizon.

Viewpoint 12, Saundergate Lane (East) (looking north)

(See Figure 8.17)

- Type of receptor: Residents of properties on Saundergate Lane (East).
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium**.
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of a row of residential properties, mostly bungalows and several two storey houses. The receptors experience either glimpsed or restricted views from the back of the properties due to planting, fences and outbuildings in back gardens.
- The view is of flat, agricultural land in the foreground. Residential houses on Causeway are visible in the middle ground. The view is framed to the east and west by groups of tall mature trees and hedgerows. The urban edge of Boston is visible in the distance, which includes views of industrial units, cranes, intermittent trees and hedgerows. There is a clear view of St Botolph's Tower on the horizon.

Viewpoint 13 Causeway/ Playing fields and Pavilion (Looking north)

(See Figure 8.18)

- Type of receptor: Residents of houses on Causeway. Users of the pavilion and playing fields.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium** (Pavilion and playing fields - Low).
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of two storey houses facing a one storey sports pavilion, with a car park, bowling green and playing fields. From the houses, the playing fields are visible behind the pavilion.
- Further views north are enclosed by tall hedgerow planting and trees along the field boundary. Views east are partially obscured by a tall chain link fence between the car park and the A16 Road. Further views east are enclosed by tall mature trees and hedgerows on the far side of the A16. Views north west are focused on residential housing. The view is bisected by a line of pylons that run through the application site.

Viewpoint 14, Clark Court (looking north)

(See Figure 8.19)

- Type of receptor: Residents of Clark Court
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **High**
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of two storey houses backing onto the application site. Most of the properties experience open or glimpsed views of the application site from ground floor windows, although for some, the view is restricted to first floor windows due to boundary vegetation in back gardens.
- The view is of flat, agricultural fields in the foreground. The view is bisected by a line of pylons. The views north and west are enclosed by residential properties. To the east, sections of the A16 road are visible, but further views east are screened by tall mature trees and hedgerows.

Viewpoint 15, London Road (looking east)

(See Figure 8.20)

- Type of receptor: Residents of houses on London Road.
- Sensitivity of viewpoint: **Medium.**
- Description of existing view:

The viewpoint consists of a row of residential properties backing onto the application site, consisting of a mix of predominantly two storey houses and bungalows. Views are restricted to first floor windows, due to trees, hedges or fences along the back garden boundaries.
- The view is of flat, agricultural fields in the foreground. The view south is bisected by a line of pylons, and enclosed by housing. To the east, sections of the A16 road are visible, but further views east are screened by tall mature trees and hedgerows. Views north are enclosed by housing.

Impact of Development

Landscape Character

Impact on Character

8.73 The character of the application site will change with development; arable farmland will become mixed-use development. This will appear as an extension to the existing urban fabric of Boston. Development within this area will change the character and introduce significant new buildings to this part of the town.

8.74 The scale and nature of the new community stadium for Boston United Football Club will provide the greatest impact on the landscape due to its size and location on the eastern side of the site (and the eastern side of the A16). This area is currently small-medium scale agricultural fields, enclosed by mature hedgerows and drainage ditches which are an important characteristic feature of the landscape in this location. The development will be contained within one field which allows for existing drains and

boundary planting to be retained and enhanced. Further planting will be incorporated into the proposed community stadium development scheme.

8.75 Development will also affect the site west of the A16 as it is currently agricultural in nature. However, it is bordered on three sides by fairly dense residential development, with the fourth side bordered by the busy A16 road, creating a natural infill site. There is intermittent boundary planting and fencing between the houses and the agricultural land. This landscape is large, open, agricultural fields with a rectangular shape and flat topography. The proposed development will urbanise this area, but its context is already dominated by the surrounding housing and busy road.

8.76 Drainage ditches criss-cross the site, which are remnants of former field boundaries. The larger 'towns drain' runs along the southern site boundary. This drain is a noticeable feature and so will be retained. This will be incorporated into a new green corridor that will then be enhanced with remodelling and ecological planting.

8.77 Existing hedgerows and groups of trees are located at the edge of the site and along the A16. Vegetation is an important part of the landscape character as the land is flat; these areas of trees provide localised enclosure. New trees and hedgerows will be positioned along the boundaries of the proposed development, along the A16 and also as part of the future green open space along the southern boundary.

Magnitude of change: **Medium.**

Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**

Effect significance: **Moderate adverse.**

Visual Amenity

Viewpoint 1, Tytton Lane East (looking south)

- Impact on view:

The views from this receptor will change as the application site will be visible, introducing built form to the foreground of the view. The open space and agricultural character will be replaced by development and all existing views will

be screened by the close proximity of new buildings. However, the change is tempered by the existing presence of pylons, the edge of housing and the A16.

- Magnitude of change: **Medium.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Moderate adverse.**

Viewpoint 2(a), A16 Road and Highway footpath (looking west)

- Impact on view:

The views available from this receptor towards the west will change as the application site will be visible, introducing built form to the foreground of the view. The open space will become urban development, although housing is already a feature of this view. The dominant view along the busy road corridor will remain the same.

- Magnitude of change: **Low.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Minor adverse.**

Viewpoint 2(b), A16 Road and Highway footpath (looking east)

- Impact on view:

The views available from this receptor towards the east will change as the application site will be visible, introducing built form to the foreground of the view. The open space will become urban development. The dominant view along the busy road corridor will remain the same.

- Magnitude of change: **Low.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Minor adverse.**

Viewpoint 3, Tytton Lane East (looking south)

- Impact on view:

The views from this receptor will change as the development will be visible, introducing built form to the foreground of the view. The open space and character will be replaced by a new stadium complex.

- Magnitude of change: **High.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Moderate/Major adverse.**

Viewpoint 4, Tylton Hall (looking west)

- Impact on view:
The spacious and rural nature of the view of the skyline will change as the proposed stadium will be visible above the line of existing vegetation, particularly in winter.
- Magnitude of change: **High.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Major adverse.**

Viewpoint 5, Sir Isaac Newton Drive (looking south)

- Impact on view:
The view from this receptor will change because the proposed stadium is likely to be visible above the line of existing vegetation. It will become a recognisable new feature in the view, particularly in winter. However, this will be viewed in the context of housing in the foreground.
- Magnitude of change: **Medium**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Moderate adverse.**

Viewpoint 6, Wyberton Low Road (looking west)

- Impact on view:
The spacious and rural nature of the skyline will change as the proposed stadium will be visible above the line of existing vegetation, particularly in winter.
- Magnitude of change: **Low**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Minor/Moderate adverse.**

Viewpoint 7, Low Road and Public Right of Way (looking west)

- Impact on view:

The views from this receptor will change because the proposed stadium will be visible above the line of existing vegetation. The existing screening consists of predominantly deciduous species, which will lead to an increase in visibility of the application site in winter. However, views will mainly be experienced from first floor windows which are not primary receptors.

- Magnitude of change: **Low**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Minor/Moderate adverse.**

Viewpoint 8, Low Road (looking north)

- Impact on view:

The views from this receptor will change as some sections of the application site will be visible. The proposed stadium will be visible above the line of existing vegetation and this will change the scale and nature of the urban edge within this view. The existing screening around the application site consists of predominantly deciduous species, which will lead to an increase in visibility of the application site in winter.

- Magnitude of change: **Medium.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Moderate adverse** (The road will be **minor adverse**).

Viewpoint 9, Causeway (looking north)

- Impact on view:

The views from this receptor will change as the proposed stadium will be visible above the line of existing vegetation. However, this will be viewed in the context of the urban edge in the background. The existing screening around the application site consists of predominantly deciduous species, which will lead to an increase in visibility of the application site in winter.

- Magnitude of change: **Medium.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Moderate/Major Adverse** (The road will be **minor adverse**).

Viewpoint 10, Low Road/Saundergate East Junction (looking north)

- Impact on view:
The views from this receptor will change as the proposed stadium will be visible above the line of existing vegetation. However, this will be viewed in the context of the urban edge in the background. This will represent a minor change due to the distance from the viewpoint.
- Magnitude of change: **Low.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Minor adverse.**

Viewpoint 11, Millfield Lane East (looking north)

- Impact on view:
The views from this receptor will change as the proposed stadium will be visible above the line of existing vegetation. However, this will be viewed in the context of the urban edge in the background. This will represent a minor change due to the distance from the viewpoint.
- Magnitude of change: **Low.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Minor adverse.**

Viewpoint 12, Saundergate Lane (East) (looking north)

- Impact on view:
The views from this receptor will change as the proposed stadium will be visible above the line of existing vegetation. However, this will be viewed in the context of the urban edge in the background. This will represent a minor change due to the distance from the viewpoint.

- Magnitude of change: **Low.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Minor/Moderate adverse.**

Viewpoint 13, Causeway/ Playing fields and Pavilion (looking north)

- Impact on view:
The view from this receptor will change because the proposed stadium is likely to be visible above the line of existing vegetation. It will become a recognisable new feature in the view, particularly in winter. The residential development will be glimpsed, however, this will be viewed in the context of the pavilion in the foreground and housing in the background.
- Magnitude of change: **Low.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Minor adverse.**

Viewpoint 14, Clark Court (looking north)

- Impact on view:
New buildings on the application site will be visible and will significantly reduce the sense of openness experienced over the existing fields. The existing urban character apparent in the view will move closer to the viewpoint.
- Magnitude of change: **High.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**
- Effect significance: **Major adverse.**

Viewpoint 15, London Road (looking east)

- Impact on view:
New buildings on the application site will be visible and will significantly reduce the sense of openness experienced over the existing fields. The existing urban character apparent in the view will move closer to the viewpoint.
- Magnitude of change: **High.**
- Nature of Impact: **Adverse.**

- Effect significance: **Moderate/Major adverse.**

Mitigation Measures

8.79 A series of mitigation measures have been recommended, resulting from the assessment outcomes. Where appropriate, residual change due to this mitigation has then been identified; this will be the resulting effect significance once planting has been established.

Landscape Character

Potential mitigation

8.80 Existing vegetation should be retained within the application site, especially at the boundaries. Dense and mature hedgerows along the site boundary should be protected and enhanced. They form an effective screen against the open countryside to the south east and Tytton Hall to the east. Planting within the site should also serve to break up the urban edge and soften the development, where possible.

8.81 New planting could be introduced throughout the development to diversify existing species and provide dense screening where required.

8.82 There is a strong network of drainage ditches and waterways across the application site. There is a large, open drain running along the southern edge of the site, west of the A16. In its existing state, the drain system currently supports a low level of plant species (predominantly reeds), however, this could be enhanced with additional planting to vary the species and increase biodiversity on site. It will benefit from enhancements such as altering the shape of the banks to provide different levels of water.

8.83 The existing public right of way which runs alongside the eastern boundary of the application site should be maintained. Pedestrian links from Tytton Lane East to the link road and then to the proposed open space could also be provided, which will utilise gaps in the housing to form entry points (see figure 8.26). There are proposals

for a new link road, which will run from the west to the east. A proposed green corridor could run alongside the link road to encourage pedestrian movement.

8.84 From the A16 there are views towards the urban edge of Boston. As this is the main route into Boston from the south, a sense of arrival should be maintained by siting high quality frontages along the route and framing key views using planting along the boundary and within the site (see figure 8.25). There are long distance views to the two major landmarks in the area; the Water Tower and St Botolph's Church Tower or 'The Stump' as it is locally known. These are important vertical features within a very flat landscape and views towards these features, especially from the road, should be preserved and enhanced where possible.

- Residual change: **Minor adverse**.

Visual Amenity

Viewpoint 1, Tytton Lane East (looking south)

- Potential Mitigation:
There could also be a setback along the site boundary to the development to allow a degree of spaciousness to remain in the views.
- Residual change: **Minor adverse**.

Viewpoint 2(a), A16 Road and Highway footpath (looking west)

- Potential Mitigation:
Existing planting to be augmented and gapped up to screen the site and soften the impact of the development.
- Residual change: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint 2(b), A16 Road and Highway footpath (looking east)

- Potential Mitigation:
Existing planting to be augmented and gapped up to screen the site and soften the impact of the development.
- Residual change: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint 3, Tytton Lane East (looking south)

- Potential Mitigation:
Planting along the site boundary will help to soften the impact of the development and partially screen the building. The stadium should be set back away from the housing as much as possible to allow for a degree of spaciousness and separation to be maintained.
- Residual change: **Moderate adverse.**

Viewpoint 4, Tytton Hall (looking west)

- Potential Mitigation:
Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary may help to soften the impact of the urban forms. Additional tree planting along the site boundary may filter views of the proposed development, the masterplan reflects this.
- Residual change: **Moderate adverse.**

Viewpoint 5, Sir Isaac Newton Drive (looking south)

- Potential Mitigation:
Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary may help to soften the impact of the development. Evergreen planting will further soften the impact in winter. Planting tall species of trees that will be of sufficient scale to soften the impact of the stadium will be recommended.
- Residual change: **Minor adverse.**

Viewpoint 6, Wyberton Low Road (looking west)

- Potential Mitigation:

Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary to further soften the impact of the development. Planting should include evergreen species to soften the impact in winter.

- Residual change: **Minor adverse**.

Viewpoint 7, Low Road and Public Right of Way (looking west)

- Potential Mitigation:

Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary to further soften the impact of the development. Planting should include evergreen species to soften the impact in winter.

- Residual change: **Minor adverse**.

Viewpoint 8, Low Road (looking north)

- Potential Mitigation:

Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary to further soften the impact of the development. Planting should include evergreen species to soften the impact in winter.

- Residual change: **Minor adverse**.

Viewpoint 9, Causeway (looking north)

- Potential Mitigation:

Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary to further soften the impact of the development. Planting should include evergreen species to soften the impact in winter.

- Residual change: **Minor adverse**.

Viewpoint 10, Low Road/Saundergate East Junction (looking north)

- Potential Mitigation:

Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary to further soften the impact of the development. Planting should include evergreen species

to soften the impact in winter. Where possible views towards St Botolph's Tower should be maintained.

- Residual change: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint 11, Millfield Lane East (looking north)

- Potential Mitigation:
- Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary to further soften the impact of the development. Planting should include evergreen species to soften the impact in winter.
- Residual change: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint 12, Saundergate Lane (East) (looking north)

- Potential Mitigation:
Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary to further soften the impact of the development. Planting should include evergreen species to soften the impact in winter. Where possible views towards St Botolph's Tower should be maintained.
- Residual change: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint 13, Causeway/ Playing fields and Pavilion (looking north)

- Potential Mitigation:
Planting to augment the existing hedgerows on the site boundary to further soften the impact of the development. Planting should include evergreen species to soften the impact in winter.
- Residual change: **Neutral**.

Viewpoint 14, Clark Court (looking north)

- Potential Mitigation:

Planting within the site will help to soften the impact of the development and screen new buildings. There could also be a setback to the development to allow a degree of spaciousness to remain in the views.

- Residual change: **Moderate adverse.**

Viewpoint 15, London Road (looking east)

- Potential Mitigation:
Planting within the site will help to soften the impact of the development and screen the new buildings. There could also be a setback to the development to allow a degree of spaciousness to remain in the views.
- Residual change: **Moderate adverse.**

Robustness of Analysis

8.85 This assessment has been carried out in accordance with Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. Consideration has been given to the seasonal differences in effects arising from the varying degree of screening and/or filtering of views by vegetation that will apply in summer and winter. Limitations of this assessment have occurred as it was carried out in October at a time when many tree and hedgerow species were still carrying a high percentage of leaf cover. The photographs taken for this assessment were not taken at a time to emphasise the maximum visibility scenario of the winter condition of vegetation. An informed professional judgement was made to assess whether seasonal variations will affect the views and visual amenity.

Summary and Conclusions

8.86 This assessment has identified key impacts on the landscape and visual amenity and recommended mitigation, which will reduce impacts.

Planning Policy Context

8.87 Development within the application site will not conflict with the landscape policies and material considerations in this area. The development will take place in an area that is suitable for development as it is adjacent to existing housing and the busy A16 road. However, measures should be put in place to prevent intrusion into the countryside and any further coalescence of settlements such as Boston and Wyberton. There is the potential to create a landscaped buffer zone to provide a transition between the application site and the wider landscape beyond and also to extend and enhance the network of rights of way across the site, green links, public amenity open space and recreational areas.

Landscape Character

8.88 Development within the application site will change the character and introduce buildings into to this urban fringe location. The character of the landscape within the application site will change from arable farmland to a mixed use development, including housing, retail and a new community stadium for Boston United Football Club.

8.89 The site itself is rural in nature comprising agricultural and grazed fields, however, its context is relatively urban, situated between housing and the A16. Character area 1a consists of large-scale fields surrounded by housing (on three sides) which acts as a constant reminder that the site is situated within the urban fabric. Within character area 1b the fields are smaller in scale and are enclosed by mature hedgerow planting along the boundaries, which screen most of the surrounding landscape beyond. However, there are existing urban detractors in the landscape, including electricity pylons, housing and the A16 road. Many of the characteristic watercourses, ditches and dykes will remain intact and continue to provide a feature within the landscape.

8.90 As the site is located on the urban edge of Boston, between the town and the rural landscape, there is the potential to improve this transitional landscape between urban edge and rural landscape through careful planning and design. The retention of key features and provision of new open space and planting will be a positive intervention.

Visual Amenity

- 8.91 It is concluded that although significant residual effects are recorded for viewpoints 3, 4, 14 and 15, these locations are directly adjacent to the application site, where the openness of views will be diminished and the scale of the stadium will be a marked change to the existing urban fabric. Viewpoints further away from the site experience insignificant residual change or no change.
- 8.92 Where possible, screen planting should be implemented within the new development, especially where it abuts residential areas. Evergreen species will provide year round cover and so should be included within the mix. The development should also be set back to maintain a feel of spaciousness within the views from these properties.

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