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# **Landscape Assessment**

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**Land at Church Road, Aslacton  
Norfolk  
NR15 2JH**

**for**

**Brown & Co**

**03 September 2018**



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**Client**

Brown & Co  
The Atrium  
St George's Street  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR3 1AB

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**Landscape Assessment**

**Land at Church Road**

**Aslacton, Norfolk**

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**Planning authority**

South Norfolk Council  
South Norfolk House  
Cygnet Stratton  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- A Landscape Assessment has been prepared in support of a planning application for the creation of a small residential estate on land at Church Road, Aslacton, Norfolk (“the site”).
- The development will cover a ground area of approximately 1.6 hectares within the larger field enclosure of approximately 17 hectares. The proposals are at outline stage and no details have been made available. The site is likely to be accessed from Church Road carriageway.
- The larger field enclosure is currently bound by hedgerows and some trees, although there are long lengths of open boundary. At the time of survey, the field had been recently ploughed. The site occupies the southern section of the larger field enclosure and is an irregular shape following the settlement edge to the west. The southern boundary is on Church Road and is open with no enclosure. To the west the site lies adjacent gardens of properties on a cul de sac off Church Road, a low hawthorn (*Crataegus spp.*) and privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*) hedgerow forms the boundary. To the east the site is bounded by Muir Lane, which has an open boundary to the southern edge and as the lane heads north in a sunken section, it is lined by a mixed hedgerow of hawthorn, blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) field maple (*Acer campestre*), elm (*Ulmus spp.*), some dead elm, dogrose (*Rosa spp.*) hedgerow and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) trees. The northern edge is open to the larger field enclosure.
- The site is on the settlement boundary of village of **Aslacton (A)**, a largely 20<sup>th</sup> century infill between **Church Farmhouse (1)** and **St. Michaels Church (8)**. The village of **Great Moulton (B)** is approximately 1km to the southeast and the hamlet of **Pottergate Street (C)** lies 700m to the north. Other settlements are over 1km from the site boundaries. The surrounding landscape is rural, with a mixture of small, medium and large arable fields, with some pasture and infrequent farmsteads, dwellings and hamlets.
- The closest Public Right of Way (“PRoW”) lies on the western boundary (**Footpath 1**). PRoWs are relatively frequent within the surrounding landscape and a nationally recognised route lies to the north, the ‘Tas Valley Way’.
- The site does not lie within a designated landscape.
- Nationally, the site is part of the National Character Area (“NCA”) 83, ‘South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands’. The landscape is described as a ‘plateau ... incised by numerous small-scale wooded river valleys’ (NCA 83: 3).

- The site is within the ‘Tas Tributary Farmland’ landscape character area as assessed by South Norfolk District in their Landscape Character Assessment (“LCA”) of 2001 (updated in 2012). It is described as ‘*open, gently undulating to flat and sloping landscape incised by shallow tributary valleys*’ (LCA 2001: 37).
- There are some Grade I and grade II listed structures within 2km of the site. The closest listed property is **Church Farmhouse (1)** 90m to the southeast. Grade I listed **St. Michael’s Church (8)** and other structures are not visible from the proposed site.
- The assessment of the effects of the proposals on the landscape character found that there would be a minimal effect on the district level landscape character, with the historic field pattern patterns and ancient woodland elements being a key characteristic that is sensitive to change.
- For the site itself, there would be a limited effect on landscape receptors, as all landscape elements on site will be retained. There will be a loss of open ground within the larger field enclosure, however the boundary vegetation will be retained and enhanced.
- With regard to the visual effects of the proposals upon local receptors, the closest properties, **Boundary Villa (2)** and **Gothic House (3)** will both experience a visual change from an open field to a managed residential estate. **Footpath 1** will also experience a visual change from an open field to a built environment for a short section of the PRoW. the approach to the village from the east will become more enclosed.
- Mitigation planting is proposed as follows:
  - New boundary trees and hedgerows to the northern, western and eastern boundaries of the development area;
  - An open green space to the south eastern corner to maintain the approach to the village and a wide landscaped verge to the PRoW.
- The overall effects of the scheme are considered to be long-term in duration. Considering the small size of the site, the low density of the proposals to be accommodated, and the utilisation of existing landscape elements, the landscape effects of the proposal are considered to be acceptable. Considering the lack of visual relationship between the site and receptors within the wider landscape, and the addition of the proposed mitigation planting, it is considered that the visual effects are also acceptable.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Greenlight Environmental Consultancy Limited has been commissioned by Brown & Co. to carry out a Landscape Assessment of a proposed small residential on land at Church Road, Aslacton, Norfolk. The county town of Norwich is approximately 17km to the northeast.
- 1.2 The larger field enclosure is situated to the north of Church Road and extends north to **Pottergate Street (C)**. There are non-continuous hedgerows and hedgerow trees to the eastern and western boundaries along the sunken lanes, Muir Lane and Pottergate Street. The site itself lies to the southern edge of the larger field enclosure and is open to the south; adjoins the settlement edge of **Aslacton (A)** to the west; is open to the larger field to the north and partially enclosed to the east. The larger field was freshly ploughed at the time of survey.
- 1.3 The proposed project involves a change of use to a residential estate including a small public open space (“POS”) and retaining the PRoW to the western boundary. The estate will require a single access road which is likely to be located from Church Road to the south. The proposals do not require the removal of hedgerows or trees (Appendix 1).
- 1.4 This report provides a landscape assessment of the site within the context of the surrounding area. It outlines the existing baseline situation for topography, vegetation cover and land uses, published landscape character studies, landscape and other relevant designations, and the current visibility of the site.
- 1.5 The existing baseline situation and the proposals for the development are then analysed against the proposed mitigation treatment to minimise the visual impact.
- 1.6 The approach to the report is in accordance with current guidance (see Section 2.1 below).

## **2**     **METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1**   **Relevant guidance**

This appraisal has been undertaken with reference to guidance as outlined in the following publications:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) – Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013.
- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment October 2014 Christine Tudor, Natural England
- Landscape Character Assessment - Guidance for England and Scotland – Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage 2002.
- The Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment - Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment 2004.

### **2.2**   **Methodology**

2.2.1 The methodology used for this assessment is assimilated from the guidance listed above, however this report is neither a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment or Landscape Character Assessment.

2.2.2 A desktop review of published data, such as landscape character assessments, OS maps and landscape planning policies, has been carried out. This identified potential landscape and visual receptors that could be affected by the proposals. A field survey visit was carried out on 14 August 2018 to confirm the findings of the desktop review.

2.2.3 This landscape assessment is informed by local and national policy; national character areas and existing regional and local LCAs, and how the site shares that identified landscape character, and additionally the site's relationship to statutory designations. It will include a site description from field survey and the effect on landscape elements and views and this will inform the possible mitigation of those effects.

2.3.4 In the case of this scheme, no pre-application advice has been sought from South Norfolk Council.

### **2.3 Limitations of the assessment**

2.3.1 This assessment is based on views from publicly accessible locations. Where impact to private views is noted it has been estimated.

2.3.2 The viewpoints identified in this assessment are illustrative and represent the potential impact of the proposals from a range of receptors e.g. dwellings, commercial properties, rights of way, roads etc. This report does not necessarily identify all locations from where the site is potentially visible.

2.3.3 It is important to note that this assessment was carried out during summer, and therefore the 'in leaf' vegetation considerably contributes to the screening of the development, as it will do for approximately seven months of the year between April and November.



### **3 SITE CONTEXT**

#### **3.1 Overview**

3.1.1 This section sets out the context of the site within the surrounding area. It outlines the location, nearby settlements, topography, vegetation cover, existing rights of way, published landscape assessments, landscape and other relevant designations and planning policy, at national and local levels.

3.1.2 Annotated photographs are included throughout the report. The site context and location plan is included as Fig. 1 in section 3.2 'Location and Boundaries' below. Viewpoints are annotated at Fig. 2.

3.1.3 For all quoted distances from the site, unless otherwise stated, the measured distance is the approximate distance in kilometres from the closest boundary of the site compound to the closest boundary of the location being discussed, measured in a straight line.

#### **3.2 Location and Boundaries**

3.2.1 The site is located in the county of Norfolk at Grid reference TM 16006 91143, the nearest postcode is NR15 2JH. The closest settlement is the village of **Aslacton (A)**, on the site's western boundary. The large village of **Long Stratton** is approximately 3km to the northeast and is served by South Norfolk Council buildings, a supermarket, primary schools and a high school. The site area is relatively undeveloped and rural, although the majority of the village of Aslacton is 20<sup>th</sup> century infill development. There are frequent individual farmsteads and small settlements within the surrounding landscape.

3.2.2 The site is located 16km to the north of the A143, which links the East Anglian coast at great Yarmouth to Haverhill, and the M11. The A11 is 16km to the west which links to the A14 and M11 in the southwest. The Great Eastern Mainline railway lies 420m to the east of the site, the nearest station is at Diss, 11km to the south.

3.2.3 The site is part of a larger field enclosure and Muir Lane forms the eastern boundary; Church Road and rear gardens of properties off Church Road form the southern boundary and the western boundary is along Pottergate Street. Land falls to the north towards the course of the River Tas (**Viewpoint e**) and a hedgerow and tree lined field boundary. The site lies occupies the south eastern portion of the site.

- 3.2.4 The eastern boundary of the site is an open grass verge from the junction of Church Road and Muir Lane. Heading north, the lane dips and lies below the surrounding fields. Along this section of the boundary is a well-managed, mixed species hedgerow of blackthorn, elm (some dead), hazel, field maple and bramble are interspersed with ash trees. Some of the ash trees have dieback in the crowns (**Viewpoint c**). Additionally, the hedgerow to the east of Muir Lane is well managed although there are gaps in each hedgerow.
- 3.2.5 On the southern boundary is an open grass verge with no marked edge (**Viewpoint a**). On the southern edge of Church Road the frontage of **Boundary Villa (2)** is lined by trees including horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) and cherry (*Prunus spp.*) and a managed hedgerow of hawthorn. Further to the east is a disused scrapyard that has planning permission for 15 dwellings (ASL 1) and is enclosed by cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), conifer and elder (*Sambucus nigra*).
- 3.2.6 To the west the site lies on the settlement boundary of **Aslacton (A)**. The hedge line backs onto gardens of properties on the cul de sac from Church Road, the main route through **Aslacton (A)**. The boundary is marked by a hedgerow of hawthorn and privet with some dogrose (*Rosa canina*) (**Viewpoints b**). The hedgerow is well managed at a relatively low height allowing open views into the cul de sac, where there are five semi-detached bungalows.
- 3.2.7 To the north the site is open onto the larger field enclosure and the site's position on rising ground from the south creates open vistas to the north and surrounding landscape (**Viewpoint e**).
- 3.2.8 Within the site, the ground is recently ploughed with some remnant cereal crop, with a grass verge to the southeast and southern boundary (**Viewpoint a**). To the east across the carriageway of Muir Lane are large arable fields. To the south is the disused scrapyard which is part of the larger pasture field enclosed by hedgerows and trees. The settlement of **Aslacton (A)** extends to the west to **St. Michael's Church (8)**, mainly along Church Road extending to The Street to the southwest. Further to the west are large pasture fields. To the north as land falls towards the valley of the Tas River, there are patches of woodland. The Tas River, flowing northeast is lined by tree groups and small pasture fields, as are tributaries to the north and east.

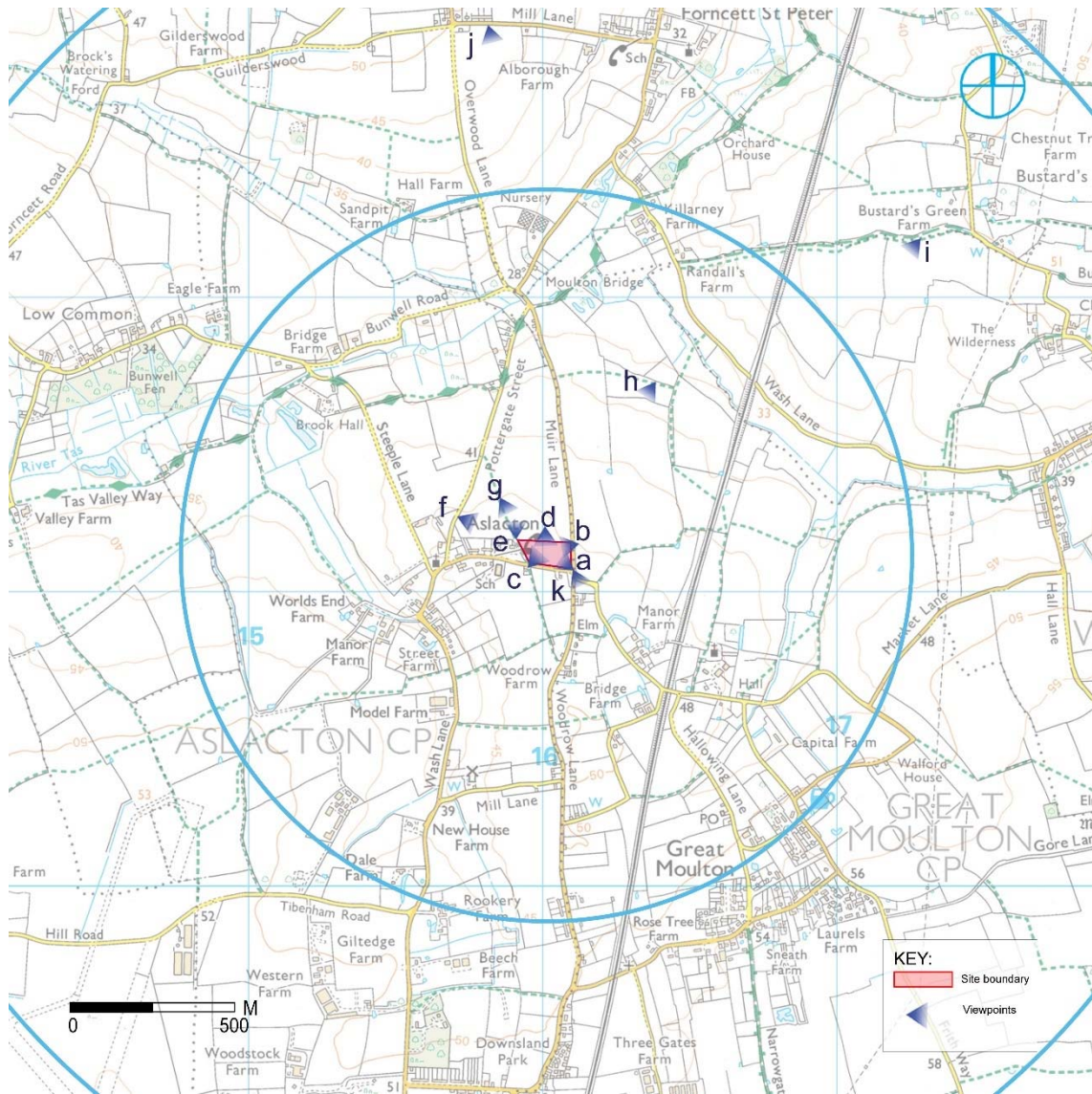
3.2.9 In regards to historical designations, to the southeast **Church Farmhouse (1)** is grade II listed and lies within a mature garden. To the west there is **St. Michaels' Church (8)** a grade I listed building set in an enclosed graveyard and **The Homestead (7)**, a grade II listed dwelling that was formerly a public house.

3.2.10 Within the wider landscape, the site lies 1km northwest of the settlement edge of **Great Moulton (B)** a village mainly developed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century from scattered dwellings. **Pottergate Street (C)** is a small hamlet 700m to the north, with a ribbon of cottages along the street.

3.2.11 The site measures approximately 1.6 hectares and is contained within a field enclosure of 17 hectares. There is currently no formal access point. The land is classified as Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' under the Agricultural Land Classification (Natural England Agricultural Land Classification website, date accessed 16 August 2018).



**Figure 1:** Satellite map showing the location of the site outlined in red (based on Google map accessed August 2018).



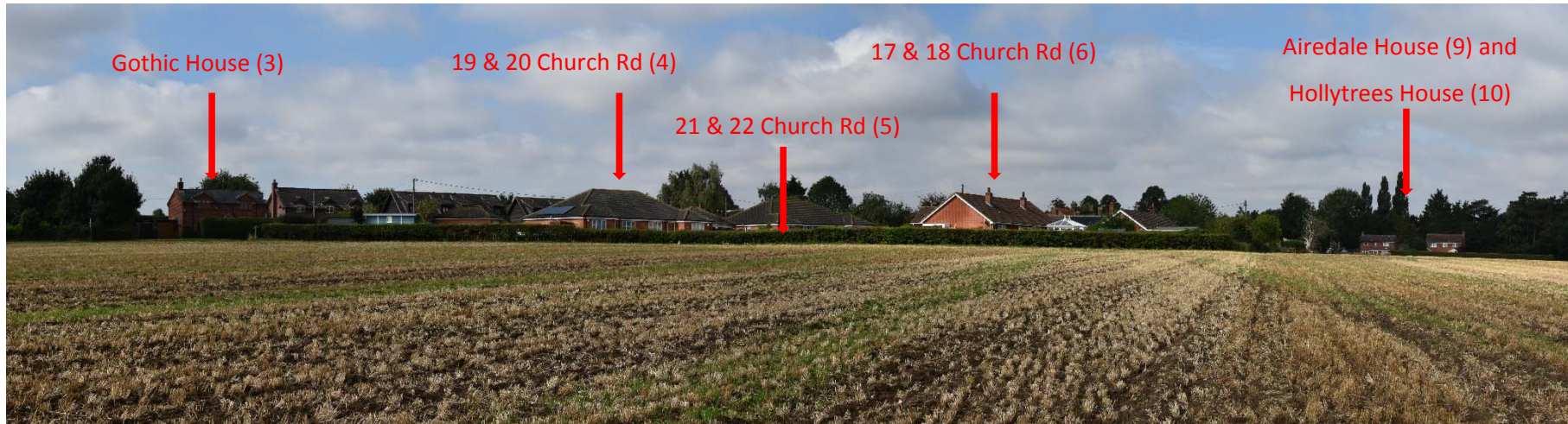
**Figure 2:** Map showing the locations of viewpoints. (OS Map provided by [www.centremaps/live.com](http://www.centremaps/live.com) at scale 1:25,000)





**Viewpoint a:** View towards the northwest from the junction of Church Road and Muir Lane. The site is open on the south eastern corner and along the southern boundary. The view is representative of the views of the users of the two carriageways. The interior of the site is rough freshly ploughed ground with remnant cereal crop at the time of survey. Views from the grade II listed **Church Farmhouse (1)** to the southeast of the site will be partial and the eastern edge of the site will be glimpsed through mature vegetation.

Looking: NW 300°	Approximate elevation: 46m	Approximate distance to site: -	Estimated field of View: 75°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 09.53



**Viewpoint b:** View to the west and the boundary with the settlement of **Aslacton (A)**. **Gothic House (3)**, on the southern edge of Church Road overlooks the site. The bungalows on the cul de sac on the northern edge of Church Road also have oblique views over the site however these properties are orientated to the northeast. There is a well-managed hedgerow along the western edge of the site. **Airedale House (9)** and **Hollytrees House (10)** on Pottergate Street are orientated to the east and will have views across the northern edge of the site.

Looking: WSW 256°	Approximate elevation: 47m	Approximate distance to site: -	Estimated field of View: 55°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 10.01



**Viewpoint c:** Looking northeast from the southwestern corner of the site and the start of **Footpath 1**. The southern boundary is open however the eastern boundary with Muir Lane is hedge and tree lined and as the lane heads north, the carriageway becomes sunken, reducing views.

Looking: ENE 61°	Approximate elevation: 47m	Approximate distance to site: 5m	Estimated field of View: 80°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 09.56





**Viewpoint d:** View of the southern edge of the site from the northern boundary. The trees within the garden of **Church Farmhouse (1)** can be seen however the house is screened by vegetation in the garden of **Boundary Villa (2)** which has open views to the north and over the site. **Gothic House (3)** also has views to the north and across the site.

Looking: S 180°	Approximate elevation: 47m	Approximate distance to site: -	Estimated field of View: 80°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 10.00



**Viewpoint e:** View of the north western edge of the site looking north towards **Pottergate Street (C)** which lies in the valley floor of the River Tas, mostly obscured by landform. Some rooflines of properties can be seen from the site. As ground rises to the north beyond the River Tas to Mill Road at **Forncett St. Peter (D)** some properties are orientated to the south and have views of the site over a distance of 1.7km. Views from the north are more open on higher ground however the site is enclosed to the south by tree lined fields and properties.

Looking: N 358°	Approximate elevation: 47m	Approximate distance to site: -	Estimated field of View: 60°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 9.59



**Viewpoint f:** View from Pottergate Street adjacent **Hollytrees House (10)**. The settlement edge of **Aslacton (A)** on the cul de sac from Church Road is visible and the proposals will extend this settlement edge to Muir Lane in the east.

Looking: ESE 118°	Approximate elevation: 46m	Approximate distance to site: 200m	Estimated field of View: 60°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 10.26





**Viewpoint g:** View towards the site from the PRow **Footpath 1** to the northwest within the larger field enclosure. The northern edge of **Aslacton (A)** is visible and this edge will be extended to the east. The proposed northern boundary of the site should include hedgerow and tree planting to soften the new building line.

Looking: SSE 150°	Approximate elevation: 44m	Approximate distance to site: 175m	Estimated field of View: 80°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 10.28



**Viewpoint h:** View towards the site from **Footpath 4**. The site will be discernible through the trees on the eastern boundary however the trees would soften the effect of the extended settlement edge. Views from the east in public locations such as **Footpath 2** and **Footpath 3** are limited due to undulating landform and tree lined field enclosures. Views from **Footpath 4** quickly disappear as the path heads east into the adjoining field enclosure.

Looking: SWW 205°	Approximate elevation: 35m	Approximate distance to site: 575m	Estimated field of View: 55°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 10.49



**Viewpoint i:** View towards the site from **Footpath 5** to the northeast of the site. Most of the view of the site is obscured by trees and properties within **Aslacton (A)** are already within the wider landscape view.

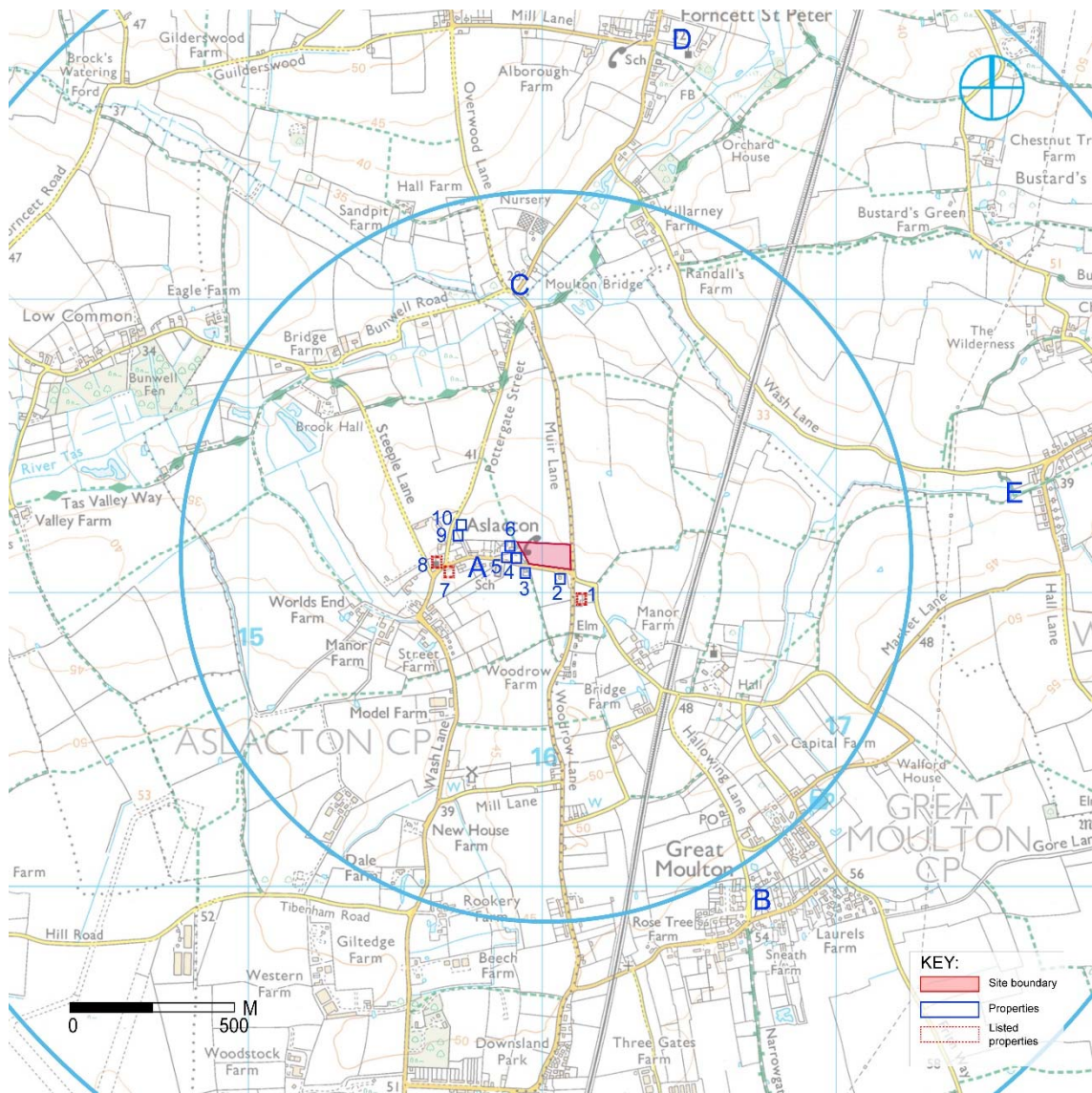
Looking: SW 231°	Approximate elevation: 40m	Approximate distance to site: 1.5km	Estimated field of View: 60°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 11.06





**Viewpoint j:** View towards the site from Mill Road at **Forngett St. Peter (D)** to the north. Most of the site is obscured by trees. The settlement edge of **Aslacton (A)** will be extended to the east.

Looking: S 177°	Approximate elevation: 49m	Approximate distance to site: 1.7km	Estimated field of View: 60°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 11.35



**Figure 3:** Map showing the locations of settlements and properties. Listed buildings are noted in red, with other noted properties indicated in blue, each numbered. Settlements are denoted by letter (OS Map provided by [www.centremapslive.com](http://www.centremapslive.com) at scale 1:25,000).

### 3.3 Settlement

3.3.1 Distances in this section are approximate. Properties and settlements have been mapped and approximate distances measured from the closest boundary of the site, to the closest development boundary of the village, town, group of properties or property in a straight line unless otherwise stated. The main settlements around the site are marked for completeness. Figure 3 shows the locations of the settlements (marked with letters), and the dwellings, other



properties or groups thereof (marked with numbers). Dwellings and settlements within the study area include:

3.3.2 To the southeast, **Church Farmhouse (1)** lies within a mature garden and is orientated to the north. The house is accessed from Woodrow Lane. The building line is approximately 80m from the site boundary. The dwelling is partially screened by garden trees and the boundary hedgerows at the dwelling, however first floor windows overlook the site (**Viewpoint k**). Views are limited to the eastern edge of the site due to intervening trees at **Boundary Villa (2)**. The house is grade II listed however there is little landscape connection between the house and the site, due to the narrowness and limited views where both sites are barely seen together from public locations such as Muir Lane. Mitigation could include an open green space on the south eastern corner of the site, setting back the building line from the line of sight along Muir Lane heading north. The setting of the listed dwelling is not considered to be degraded by the proposed development.



**Viewpoint k:** View towards **Church Farmhouse (1)** from the road junction of Muir Lane and Church Road on the south eastern edge of the site at **Aslacton (A)**. Only the eastern boundary of the site is partially visible from first floor windows of the property. There are few public locations where the listed building and the site are within the same view.

Looking: SSE 157°	Approx. elevation: 46m	Approx. distance to site: -	Est. field of View: 33°
Focal length: 50mm	Camera height: 1500mm	Date: 14.08.2018	Time: 09.53

3.3.3 **Boundary Villa (2)** is a small, detached bungalow, the building line of which is 20m from the site on the southern edge of Church Road. There are boundary trees, including a large horse chestnut and cherry, with some semi-mature specimens and a hedgerow of hawthorn along the frontage (**Viewpoint d**). The living areas of the bungalow are likely to overlook the site, and the layout should take into account the quality of outlook for the bungalow. To the west of the bungalow the land was previously used as a scrap yard and presently has planning permission for fifteen homes, currently housing allocation ASL 1 by South Norfolk District Council (Planning Reference 2006/0171) (South Norfolk District Council’ planning portal, accessed 30<sup>th</sup> August 2018). The site is enclosed by a mature evergreen hedgerow of cherry laurel and conifer to its

northern boundary. Although the proposed layout is subject to change, only two dwellings are orientated to the north and are likely to have views over the site.

- 3.3.4 To the west of **Boundary Villa (2)** and the land allocated for housing is **Gothic House (3)**. The detached dwelling is approximately 15m to the southwest of the site (**Viewpoint d**). The first floor windows are orientated to the north and overlook the site and the views are likely to be open to the new development which will be seen in the context of properties on the cul de sac off Church Road (**Viewpoint c**). Properties to the west of Gothic House along the southern edge of Church Road will experience glimpsed views of the site beyond the building line of dwellings on the cul de sac off Church Road.
- 3.3.5 To the west of the site boundary on the cul de sac from Church Road is a 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century development of semi-detached bungalows. **19 and 20 Church Road (4)** lies a few metres from the boundary of the site and is orientated to the north northeast (**Viewpoint b**). The well managed hedgerow does not obscure views from ground floor windows which are likely to be living areas of the bungalow. The development will be a change in the visual amenity from that of an open field to an enclosed housing estate. Mitigation should include a landscape gap between the new building line and existing dwellings along the route of the PRoW.
- 3.3.6 **21 and 22 Church Road (5)** is approximately 20m from the site's boundary and is also orientated to the north northeast (**Viewpoint b**). Current views from the dwelling are of the bungalows to the north and there will be oblique views of the site. Mitigation landscaping to the site's western boundary will lessen the visual effect of changes on site.
- 3.3.7 **17 and 18 Church Road (6)** are orientated to the north with views to the open countryside (**Viewpoint e**). There appears to be no windows overlooking the site and the changes on site will not affect views from within the property. There will be a sense of enclosure to the east.
- 3.3.8 **The Homestead (7)** is a grade II listed dwelling opposite **St. Michael's Church (8)**, that was previously a public house. It is approximately 280m west of the site. Properties within the settlement of **Aslacton (A)** screen the dwelling from the site.
- 3.3.9 **St. Michael's Church (8)** is a grade I listed structure approximately 980m to the west of the site. The church is set in a small graveyard enclosed by mature trees and has no visual relationship to the site. The proposals are at a scale that is unlikely to reduce the quality of the landscape setting of the church.

3.3.10 **Airedale House (9)** and **Hollytrees House (10)** are two large detached dwellings, approximately 100m to the west of the site (**Viewpoint b**). The dwellings extend the settlement edge of **Aslacton (A)** to the north of the bungalows on the cul de sac. The houses are accessed from Pottergate Street and their rear elevations are orientated to the east. There are views of the northern edge of the site from the first floor windows of the dwellings and the proposals are likely to be visible (**Viewpoint f**).

3.3.11 **Aslacton (A)** lies to the west of the site. Views of the site are limited by the built structures along Church Road. Views of the site are open only on the immediate site boundaries. The primary school is set back from the southern edge of Church Road and the playground is to the south with no open views north. The site is outside the development boundary of the village.

3.3.12 **Great Moulton (B)** lies approximately 1km to the southeast. Intervening tree lined fields and the route of the Great Eastern Mainline railway prevent views of the site.

3.3.13 **Pottergate Street (C)** is a small hamlet of cottages along the street approximately 700m to the north. The ground falls to the north of the site into the Tas River valley, obscuring views of the site along this sunken lane.

3.3.14 **Forngett St. Peter (D)** lies 1.7km to the north. The majority of the village lies along Aslacton Road on ground lower than the site with no views, however there is a line of dwellings on Mill Road directly north of the site that is visible from the site (**Viewpoint e**). The views of the site are partial where lines of poplars (*Populus spp.*) lie between the site and Mill Road (**Viewpoint j**).

3.3.15 To the east, approximately 1.6km from the site is the village of **Wacton (E)**. No views could be found from the village edge.

3.3.16 Other settlements under 2km from the site are unlikely to have views of the site due to the tree lined fields, carriageways and undulating landscape.

3.3.17 There are further listed buildings other than those discussed within the wider landscape however there is no visual or landscape relationship with the site to these properties or structures.

### **3.4 Topography**

3.4.1 The topography of the immediate area of the site is a gently undulating landscape with a fall to the north to the Tas River valley.

3.4.2 The site is relatively level at approximately 47m Above Ordnance Datum (“AOD”). There is a slight fall towards the east.

### **3.5 Geology**

3.5.1 The bedrock is Lewes Modular Chalk Formation, Seaford Chalk Formation, Newhaven Chalk Formation, Culver Chalk Formation and Portsdown Chalk Formation (undifferentiated) – Chalk, Lowestoft Formation – Diamicton superficial deposits were recorded (British Geological Survey website, date accessed 15 August 2018).

### **3.6 Water and drainage**

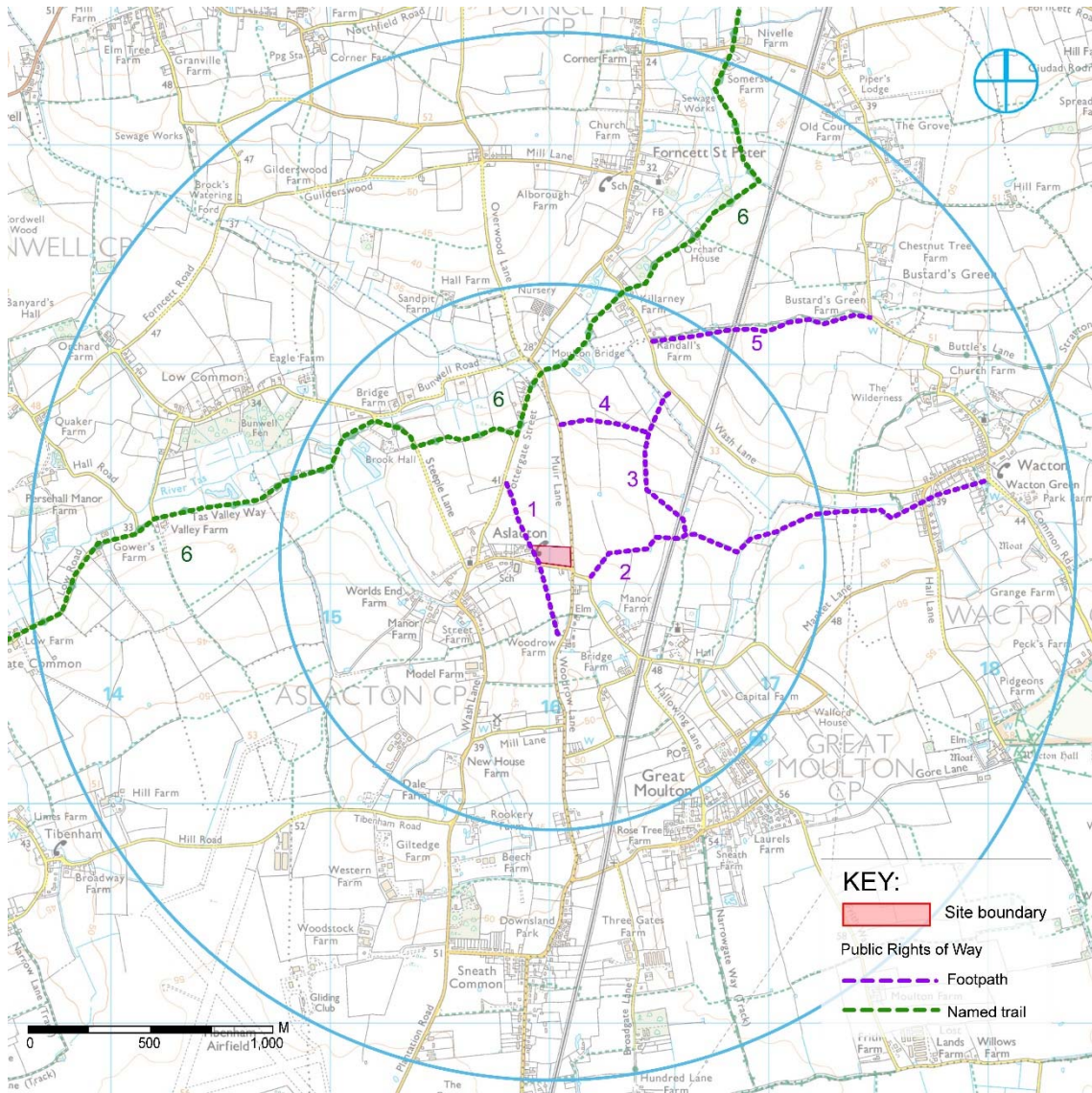
3.6.1 There are no visible water courses or ditches on the boundaries of the site or larger field enclosure.

3.6.2 The site is in Flood Zone 1 (land assessed as having a low probability of flooding) (Environment Agency website, date accessed 15 August 2018). The site lies on high ground 750m to the south of the flood zones associated with the Tas River to the north.

### **3.7 Public Highways**

3.7.1 The site is on the junction of Muir Lane and Church Road. There are open views from the eastern and southern boundaries into the site and the proposed development will be visible for road users at this point (**Viewpoint a**). Road users are likely to be local and slow moving due to the narrowness of the carriageways.

**3.8 Existing rights of way and access land**



**Figure 4:** Map showing the locations of PROWs within 2km of the site (OS Map provided by [www.centremapslive.com](http://www.centremapslive.com) at scale 1:25,000)

3.8.1 Public Rights of Way (“PROW”) have been mapped and approximate distances given within 2km of the site. Figure 4 shows the location of PROWs relevant to the site. There is one strategic nationally recognised long distance path, the ‘Tas Valley Way’ within 2km of the site.

3.8.2 In general, the use of the PROWs will vary according to their proximity to a settlement, and then according to the size of that settlement, such that the footpaths closest to the largest



settlements will be those most frequently used. There are numerous footpaths in the vicinity of the site.

3.8.3 **Footpath 1** is the closest PRoW. The footpath starts on Pottergate Street, 360m to the north of the site, heads south to the north western corner of the site and passes along the western boundary crossing Church Road, heading south to Woodrow Lane, 360m to the south. There are open views of the site from the north and alongside the site. However, from the south the tree lines on Church Road and field edges preclude views. Mitigation should include retaining the PRoW along the western boundary within a landscaped verge. The northern boundary should be tree and hedgerow lined to reduce the effect of new built elements in the view.

3.8.4 **Footpath 2** starts 100m to the east of the site on Carr Lane and heads east towards the village of **Wacton (E)**, 1.5km to the east. There are partial, open views at the start of the footpath, and the roofline of proposed dwellings will be visible in the context of existing settlement edge of **Aslacton (A)**. Views quickly become obscured as the PRoW enters tree lined field enclosures further east.

3.8.5 **Footpath 3** starts 500m to the west of the site beyond the railway line at a junction with **Footpath 2**. The PRoW heads north to Wash Lane connecting to **Footpath 4**. The path lies in tree lined fields on ground lower than the site and no views of the site are possible.

3.8.6 **Footpath 4** leaves Muir Lane 570m north of the site and heads east to connect with **Footpath 3**. Within the first field enclosure there are views that include the existing settlement edge of **Aslacton (A)** and the proposals on site are likely to be partially visible (**Viewpoint h**). Beyond the first field enclosure, the ground falls away and the tree lines obscure views of the site.

3.8.7 **Footpath 5** starts on Wash Lane on low ground 1km to the northeast of the site. The PRoW heads east to the hamlet of Bustards Green. As the footpath climbs onto higher ground beyond the railway line, partial views of the site come into view (**Viewpoint i**). Views are not continuous and glimpsed.

3.8.8 **Footpath 6** is the 'Tas Valley Way' a nationally recognised footpath that lies 615m to the north at its closest point. The PRoW lies within the valley floor of the Tas River and there no views of the site due to tree lines and land form.

3.8.9 Other PRoWs within 2km of the site are not considered likely to have views of the site.

### 3.9 Landscape and other designations

The proposed site is not within a national landscape designation.

### 3.10 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (“SSSIs”)

There are two SSSIs within 2km of the site including:

1. Aslacton Parish Land SSSI, a spring-line meadow, 540m to the northwest of the site;
2. Forncett Meadows SSSI, an unimproved meadow, 1.3km to the northeast of the site.

### 3.11 Special Area of Conservation (“SACs”)

There are no SACs within 2km of the site.

### 3.12 National Nature Reserves (“NNR”)

There are no SACs within 2km of the site.

### 3.13 Local Nature Reserve (“LNR”)

According the Norfolk County Council website there appears to be no LNRs within 2km of the site.

### 3.14 Green Belt

The site is not located in the Green Belt.

### 3.15 Listed buildings

There are numerous listed buildings or structures within 2km of the site. However, only one structure has a visual and landscape relationship to the site, **Church Farmhouse (1)**. Listed structures relevant to the site include:

1. **Church Farmhouse (1)**, grade II listed, 80m southeast of the site, list entry no. 1050317, National Grid reference TM 16142 90941.
2. **The Homestead (7)**, grade II listed, 265m west of the site, list entry no. 1170354, National Grid reference TM 15670 91079.
3. **St. Michael’s Church (8)**, grade I listed, 290m west of the site, list entry no. 1170344, National Grid reference TM 15634 91092



3.16 Scheduled Monuments

There are no Scheduled Monument within the 2km of the site.

3.17 Conservation areas

There are no Conservation Areas within 2km of the site.

3.18 Registered Parks and Gardens

There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within 2km of the site.

## **4. LANDSCAPE POLICY CONTEXT**

### **4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”)**

4.1.1 National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) sets out a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development. The framework outlines three mutually dependent dimensions or roles for the planning system:

- Economic - building a strong economy and supporting growth;
- Social - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities and creating a high quality built environment; and
- Environmental - protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

4.1.2 Under NPPF 11 ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment’; the planning system should enhance and protect the natural and local environment by: protecting valued landscapes, geological conservation and soils; recognising benefits of ecosystem services; minimising impact on biodiversity and provide net gains, and enhancing networks for biodiversity; preventing development contributing to soil, air, water and noise pollution and land instability; and, remediating contaminated land.

4.1.3 NPPF 12 ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’; In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should require applications to assess impact on heritage assets and their settings; sustain, enhance and use the heritage asset to boost their conservation; make a positive contribution to conservation in sustainable communities and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

4.1.4 The site lies within ‘Tas Tributary Farmland’ landscape character area, although there are no national landscape designations. Landscape considerations include ‘impact of new infill development on the existing/historic street pattern and existing vernacular character and pattern’. The proposals will seek to retain boundary features to all edges and provide a landscape scheme that improves screening of the site.

### **4.2 South Norfolk Council’s Joint Core Strategy (“JCS”)**

4.2.1 The Greater Norfolk Development Partnership’s Joint Core Strategy (JCS 2014) has been produced for Broadlands District Council, South Norfolk Council and Norwich City Council and was adopted in March 2011, and with amendments in January 2014. Policies relevant to landscape issues are reproduced below.

4.2.2 Policy 2 Promoting Good Design: Below are the points relevant to the site.

*'All development will be designed to the highest possible standards, creating a strong sense of place. In particular development proposals will respect local distinctiveness including as appropriate:*

- the historic hierarchy of the city, towns and villages, maintaining important strategic gaps;*
- the landscape setting of settlements including the urban/rural transition and the treatment of 'gateways';*
- the landscape character and historic environment, taking account of conservation area appraisals and including the wider countryside and the Broads area (JCS 2014: 35).*

### **4.3 South Norfolk Council's Development Management Policies ("DMP")**

4.3.1 South Norfolk Council's Local Plan Development Management Policies Document was adopted in October 2015. Policies relevant to landscape issues are reproduced below.

4.3.2 DM1.1 Ensuring development management contributes to achieving sustainable development in South Norfolk:

*a) 'The Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development, together with a responsibility to meet objectively assessed needs identified in the Local Plan and other unforeseen development needs and opportunities emerging that are generally consistent with the Council's Vision and Objectives for the area.*

*b) The Council will work proactively where possible with applicants to find solutions so that development proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that jointly and simultaneously improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.*

*c) Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in adopted neighbourhood plans) will be approved without unnecessary delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise' (DMP 2015: 18).*

4.3.3 DM1.3 The sustainable location of new development:

*1) 'All new development should be located so that it positively contributes to the sustainable development of South Norfolk as led by the Local Plan. The Council will work with developers to promote and achieve proposals that are:*

- (a) Located on Allocated Sites or within the development boundaries of Settlements defined on the Policies Map, comprising the Norwich Fringe, Main Towns, Key Service Centres, Service Villages and Other Villages; and*
- (b) Of a scale proportionate to the level of growth planned in that location, and the role and function of the Settlement within which it is located, as defined in the Local Plan. 2) Permission for development in the Countryside outside of the defined development boundaries of Settlements will only be granted if:*
- c) Where specific Development Management Policies allow for development outside of development boundaries or*
- d) Otherwise demonstrates overriding benefits in terms of economic, social and environment dimensions as addressed in Policy 1.1.’ (DMP 2015: 25).*

#### 4.3.4 DM1.4 Environmental quality and local distinctiveness

- a) The Council will work with developers to promote and achieve high quality and positive environmental improvement from all development. All development proposals must demonstrate an understanding and evaluation of the important environmental assets including locally distinctive characteristics, and justify the design approach.*
- b) Designated assets will be protected in accordance with their natural and historic significance, as detailed in the Development Management Policies.*
- c) A net environmental improvement will always be sought and all proposals should avoid environmental harm or where this is not possible, adequately mitigate and compensate for the adverse environmental effects of development.*
- d) All development should take all reasonable opportunities to:*
  - i. Make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness;*
  - ii. Enhance biodiversity to achieve a net gain for nature;*
  - iii. To improve the resilience of ecosystems to environmental change including through the provision of improvements to enhance identified environmental sites; stepping stones and corridors;*
  - iv. Protect environmental and water resources and enhance their efficient use; v. Deliver the provision of essential infrastructure including water and wastewater network upgrades, waste facilities’, flood defences and green infrastructure;*
  - vi. Enhance, re-use and better reveal the significance of heritage assets; vii. Re-use buildings rather than demolish, recycle building materials and select materials to maximise environmental sustainability and minimise impact on scarce resources and environment;*
  - viii. Generate and utilise renewable energy in appropriate ways; and*

- ix. *Work with the characteristics of the location to ensure that the necessary mitigation measures are not disproportionate to the benefits of the scale of development proposed' (DMP 2015: 27-8).*

#### 4.3.5 Policy DM3.8 Design Principles:

- (1) *The Council will work with applicants to achieve high quality design and positive improvement from all development, protect and enhance the environment and existing locally distinctive character and encourage innovation; the Council will refuse development that fails to take the opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area and the way the area functions.*
- (2) *Major development should be masterplanned using an inclusive recognised process demonstrating how the whole scheme will be delivered and related to adjacent areas, including the programming of infrastructure requirements. A masterplan will also be required for sites of less than 500 dwellings in the case of large developments incorporated into a smaller settlement or on sites of particular complexity.*
- (3) *Dwellings should be designed so that internal spaces are suitable, adaptable and will be able to accommodate a range of residents over time.*
- (4) *Planning permission will be granted for development that has been designed to, where relevant to the proposed development: respect adjoining structures, spaces, routes and local landscape; provide an attractive, accessible and safe environment; and conform to the following criteria:*
- (a) *The scale, height, massing, form and appearance of development is designed with a satisfactory relationship of structures, spaces and routes within the site and a successful integration into the surroundings;*
  - (b) *The development is created with high standards of design, building materials, finishes and landscaping reflecting the use of distinctive local building traditions, materials and heritage assets where relevant; or innovative contemporary design solutions reflecting local context and reinforcing or creating local distinctiveness;*
  - (c) *Access is provided by routes and public spaces that meet different requirements of accessibility (including pedestrians, cyclists and people with mobility or sensory difficulties) without an unsatisfactory domination of traffic;*
  - (d) *A clear distinction is made between public and private spaces within the site; all public and private spaces to be suitable for their purpose, attractive, landscaped, safe; and with adequate lighting where provided that is carefully controlled to minimise overspill;*
  - (e) *Visually attractive frontages and hard & soft boundary treatments are created to adjoining streets and public areas, public spaces and the open countryside; all appropriate frontages to contain windows and doors that assist informal surveillance of the public realm by occupants of the site;*

- (f) Buildings and spaces are orientated to: gain benefit from sunlight and passive solar energy and wherever possible designed around a Sustainable Drainage system;*
- (g) The entire development is designed to reduce any actual or perceived opportunities for anti-social activity on the site and in the surrounding area;*
- (h) Landscaping of the development is designed to retain important existing natural features, reflect the surrounding landscape characteristics of the area and contribute to relevant objectives of the local Biodiversity Action Plan; and*
- (i) Convenient, safe and visually attractive areas are created for servicing buildings and parking of vehicles and cycles without dominating the development or surroundings' (DMP 2015: 78-9).*

#### 4.3.6 Policy DM 4.5 Landscape Character Areas and River Valleys

*'All development should respect, conserve and where possible, enhance the landscape character of its immediate and wider environment. Development proposals that would cause significant adverse impact on the distinctive landscape characteristics of an area will be refused. All development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken the following elements (from the 2001 South Norfolk Landscape Assessment as updated by the 2012 review) into account:*

- The key characteristics, assets, sensitivities and vulnerabilities;*
- The landscape strategy; and*
- Development considerations. Particular regard will be had to protecting the distinctive characteristics, special qualities and geographical extents of the identified Rural River Valleys and Valley Urban Fringe landscape character types' (DMP 2015: 113).*

*Gateways All development proposals on the approaches to defined Gateways (shown on the Proposal Map) shall reinforce and avoid undermining the significance of these Gateways as the visual points of the landscape and townscape change marking the 'arrival' at and 'departure' from the city of Norwich.*

#### 4.3.7 Policy DM 4.9 Incorporating landscape into design

*'Where appropriate, detailed development proposals must demonstrate a high quality of landscape design, implementation and management as an integral part of the new development. The provision for new planted features (such as tree belts, hedgerows, wild flowers and specimen trees) is expected to form part of development proposals from their outset and should provide an appropriate landscape setting for the scheme. 'Hard' landscape features (such*

as paving, kerb stones, street furniture, boundary treatments etc) will reflect and where possible enhance locally distinctive character and styles where relevant; or innovative contemporary solutions reflecting local context and reinforcing or creating local distinctiveness and the setting of the development. Landscape schemes will be required to respect the character and distinctiveness of the local landscape and should ensure that any land remodelling respects the local topographic character in terms of height, slope, angle and character. Landscape schemes should be clearly and properly specified' (DMP 2015: 121).

#### **4.4 Published Landscape Character Assessments/ Landscape Effects**

##### **National Character Areas**

4.4.1 The site is located within the **National Character Area Profile: 83 South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands ('NCA 83')**. The landscape of NCA 83 is described as '*plateau is incised by numerous small-scale wooded river valleys with complex slopes that in places are much unexpected for East Anglia. The underlying geology is chalk....*'. (NCA 83: 3). Additionally, the area is characterised by the river systems that flow through it, providing diverse wet land habitats. Key characteristics of local distinctiveness are '*Large plateau area of chalky glacial till that is generally flat or only gently undulating, and 'Views are frequently open, only sometimes confined by hedges and trees, with some woodland present'* with '*Scattered areas of ancient woodland, game copses, shelterbelts, valley floor plantation and carr woodland as well as hedgerow trees provide a treed landscape character, 'A mix of remnant medieval ancient countryside', 'Sinuous field boundaries are formed by deep ditches, some with hedgerows and hedgerow trees'* and a '*dispersed settlement pattern of small nucleated market towns with architectural variety and colour, loosely clustered villages and scattered hamlets*'. (NCA 83: 8 - 9).

4.4.2 Identified environmental opportunities relevant to the site include:

- '*Maintain and enhance the rural character of the landscape*',
- '*Encourage measures that conserve and enhance the characteristic historic settlement patterns*',
- '*Protect and enhance the area's ancient semi-natural woodlands, copses, river valley plantations and ancient boundaries including hedgerows and hedgerow trees*', and
- '*Improve opportunities for people to access, enjoy and understand rural and historic landscape assets*' (NCA 83: 19-23).

#### 4.4.3 Key habitats:

Fenland habitats and rich flower meadows associated with greens (NCA 83: 28-29).

#### 4.4.4 Settlement:

Settlement is described as within small hamlets and scattered farmsteads; settlements are often clustered around village greens or commons. There are numerous small market towns (NCA 83: 30).

#### 4.4.5 Historic features:

*Historically 'High Suffolk meant well treed however it has now come to mean high plateau. The landscape was well populated through the 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries and largely missed the changes brought on by industrialisation, therefore built elements and its rural and arable nature are well preserved' (NCA 83: 31).*

### 4.5 **Landscape Character Assessment (District level)**

#### 4.5.1 The South Norfolk Council's Landscape Character Assessment was produced in 2001 (LCA 2001).

The report places the site in the 'Tributary Farmland' character type. The landscape is described as transition between high plateau and river valley landscapes, it is a quiet, rural area.

Settlement is largely small nucleated villages, farmsteads. It is an arable landscape of medium to large cereal fields (LCA 2001: 21)

#### 4.5.2 The landscape character area is B1 'Tas Tributary Farmland' according to the South Norfolk Local Landscape Designation Review – Landscape Character Areas and River Valleys of the Norwich Policy Area (SNLLDR 2012).

#### 4.5.3 Key characteristics are:

- *'Open, gently undulating to flat and sloping landscape incised by shallow tributary valleys, the tributary streams of which are not prominent landscape features;*
- *Roman Pye Road (A140) is a significant historic feature, visible within the landscape and the reason for Long Stratton's location;*
- *Significant number of surviving greens, cohesive settlements of timber-framed buildings grouped around them, church/hall complexes and an extensive network of ancient trackways linking them together;*



- *Large open arable fields of cereal, sugarbeet and occasionally sweetcorn;*
- *Framed open views across the countryside and into adjacent character areas;*
- *Small blocks of deciduous woodland of high ecological and visual quality. These create wooded horizons which add variety to and create intimacy within the landscape;*
- *Damp grasslands of ecological importance located within the tributary valleys;*
- *Scattered remnant hedgerow trees, particularly oak sometimes including intact avenues lining the roads or marking former, denuded, field boundaries;*
- *Transportation corridors including main connecting roads and an extensive network of narrow lanes and byroads (many of which are ancient, within the east of the area);*
- *Network of recreational footpaths;*
- *Ditches, low banks and wide grass verges associated with the network of rural roads;*
- *Settlement characterised by a small number of large historic villages including the administrative centre of South Norfolk - Long Stratton - with smaller hamlets scattered farmhouses and agricultural buildings;*
- *Pockets of new residential infill development in Trowse and Long Stratton;*
- *Mixed vernacular of timber-frame, stepped and Dutch Gables, thatch and round-towered churches' (SNLLDR 2012: 14).*

#### 4.5.4 Key landscape sensitivities and vulnerabilities are:

- *'Further loss of vegetation structure including woodland and hedgerows from the landscape which would lead to a greater sense of openness and could tip the balance in favour of bleakness (for example the farms along Chequers Lane which once lined Tharston Common are now on the edge of Long Stratton's western expansion and have largely lost their rural setting);*
- *Loss of the network of greens which has eroded the historic integrity of the area;*
- *Infill development which results in erosion of historic character and integrity;*

- *Loss of historic buildings and the historic integrity and fabric of settlements such as Long Stratton;*
- *Gently sloping topography and open landscape making this area sensitive to intrusion by tall and large elements, including farm buildings and pylons;*
- *Potential for adverse effects upon views in the north of this character area to/from Norwich and the Bypass' (SNLLDR 2012: 14 -15).*

#### 4.5.5 Development considerations are:

- *'Respect the existing small-scale and dispersed historic settlement pattern and avoid developments that would affect the vernacular qualities of existing settlements (e.g.) urbanising influences upon the rural lanes) or would lead to impacts upon the character of settlement distribution;*
- *Maintain positive views of the Tas tributary Farmland from the Norwich Southern Bypass and to/from the City of Norwich;*
- *Consider the impact of any development upon the skyline and sense of openness of the character area;*
- *Consider the impact of new infill development on the existing/historic street pattern and existing vernacular character and pattern;*
- *Maintain positive views to/from Venta Icenorum in the Tas Valley;*
- *Consider the impacts of any development upon the nature of the current and desired physical relationship of Long Stratton to Norwich and upon Long Stratton's perceptual role as the geographical and administrative heart of South Norfolk. (SNLLDR 2012: 15).*

4.5.6 The development should ensure that the density of housing follows that of the village and include single storey and two storey dwellings. An open green is recommended to the south eastern edge to maintain an open approach to the village, and a landscape gap between the existing village western edge and the development. Proposals should include native species tree and hedgerow planting to external boundaries apart from the south eastern edge and to the interior of the site.

#### 4.6 Summary of site context

- 4.6.1 The proposed site is open to the south, east and north and bounded by a low hedgerow on the western boundary. There are some trees and hedgerows to the north eastern edge. The interior of the site is ploughed ground.
- 4.6.2 The site is to the east of the settlement boundary of **Aslacton (A)** which extends to the west. **Boundary Villa (2)** is the closest dwelling with open views of the site. The closest listed structure is **Church Farmhouse (1)** to the southeast which has limited intervisibility with the site.
- 4.6.3 The topography within the site is flat, within a landscape that is gently undulating with a fall to the valley in the north.
- 4.6.4 One PRow (**Footpath 1**) lies on the western boundary with numerous footpaths in the surrounding landscape, some with glimpsed views of the site.
- 4.6.5 Published Landscape Character Assessments include the National Character Assessment by Natural England, which places the proposed site in NCA 83: **South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands**. The character of the landscape of the study area was assessed in the South Norfolk Council's Landscape Character Assessment (2001). This places the proposed site in 'Tas Tributary Farmland' character area.

## 5 DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

5.1.1 The proposed 1.6 hectare development is at outline stage and the layout will be informed by this report. Access is recommended from Church Road to the south. The site occupies the southern portion of the larger field enclosure of approximately 17 hectares.

5.1.2 The development will consist of semi-detached bungalows and two storey dwellings and will require an access road, garages and landscaped areas.

5.1.3 All boundaries of the larger field enclosure will retain current vegetation and this will be reinforced by new planting of native species plants.

### 5.2 Mitigation

5.2.1 Mitigation is defined as the 'measures proposed to prevent, reduce and where possible offset any significant adverse effects (or to avoid, reduce and if possible remedy identified effects), including landscape and visual effects' (GLVIA3: 41).

### 5.3 Proposals for new landscape planting:

5.3.1 Tree lines are recommended to reduce any visual impact of the proposals. This includes a tree and hedgerow line on the northern edge of the development area to break up the effect of new built elements from views to the north. Additionally, a tree line along the western edge of the site, within a wide verge to accommodate the PRow and set new built elements back from the dwellings on the cul de sac off Church Road. Further planting is recommended to the eastern boundary to extend the hedge line south (see Appendix 1).

5.3.2 Standard tree planting of field maple (*Acer campestre*) and wild service tree (*Sorbus torminalis*), is recommended on the northern and western boundaries; and infill tree and hedgerow planting on the eastern edge is recommended (see Appendix 1).

5.3.3 Hedgerows should include species to reflect species within existing hedgerows, including hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and dog-rose (*Rosa canina*). Plants should be double staggered with no fewer than eight plants per linear metre and be grown to minimum 1.2m winter height.

5.3.4 A green space is recommended on the south eastern portion of the site to provide a sense of openness entering the village; and to limit the effect of the development on **Church Farmhouse**

**(1)** and **Boundary Villa (2)**. The green open space can also be utilised as attenuation of surface water run-off (see Appendix 1).

5.3.5 The PRoW **Footpath1** should be set within a wide landscaped verge which would also set the building line of the development away from properties on the cul de sac of Church Road. The verge should include tree planting and a hedgerow to define the new residential area (see Appendix 1).

5.3.6 No permanent external night lighting should be used and lighting for the facilities block should be timed, down lit and follow the Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines and the CIE 150:2003 Guide on the Limitation of the Effects of Obtrusive Light from Outdoor Lighting Installations to avoid effects on night skies.

#### **5.4 Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects on the Site and its Environs: Construction Stage**

5.4.1 It is recommended that existing and retained boundary vegetation be protected in accordance with “Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations” (BS5837:2012).

5.4.2 During installation of the proposals, the potential area from where the development would be visible would be slightly greater than the existing and operational zone. Use of construction lorries, cranes and other plant and equipment will be minimal, and will be contained to the site. Given the existing context it is considered that the effects during implementation would be moderate to existing visual receptors.

#### **5.5 Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects on the Site and its Environs: Operational Stage**

5.5.1 Little effect on visual amenity is likely to be experienced by residents within the village of **Aslacton (A)** due to limited views of the site, however road users will perceive a change. **Church Farmhouse (1)** will experience some change to the partial view from first floor windows. **Boundary Villa (2)** and **Gothic House (3)** will experience the most change to existing views, which should be mitigated by setting back the built edge of the new development.

5.5.2 **Footpath 1** will experience direct change to the existing view to the east for a short section of the PRoW. Creating a wide landscaped verge which sets back the building line from the footpath and existing dwellings on the cul de sac will reduce the effect of the development on walkers and residents. The wider landscape and views to the north for walkers and residents will not be affected by the proposals.

The proposals would see the extension of the settlement edge of Aslacton (A) to the east. Considering the extension of the development boundary to the south of the site to include ASL1 the visual effect of the proposals will be limited.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Based on an assessment of the landscape character area of the application site and its surroundings using the South Norfolk Council's Landscape Character Assessment, and regional, and local classifications and field study, the area is judged as able to accommodate the proposed change.
- 6.2 The landscape elements present on the proposed site are likely to change in character due to the introduction of new built elements however if care is taken to retain and enhance vegetation the wider character area will not be unduly changed by the development. There will be an introduction of new landscape elements in the form of housing estate dwellings to the immediate landscape. The new man-made elements will be visible; however, this is in the context of the existing village settlement. The proposals will not change the overall rural character of the area if the density of buildings matches that in existence and the dwellings should relate in style to existing dwellings on Church Road. The main change on site will be the loss of a section of open arable field, and the introduction of man-made surfaces and new dwellings with associated garages, within a managed landscape scheme.
- 6.3 The site is within the South Norfolk Council's LCA's character area 'Tas Tributary Farmlands', where the landscape concerns relevant to the site are *'impact of any development upon the skyline and sense of openness of the character area'* and *'infill development on the existing/historic street pattern and existing vernacular character and pattern'*.
- 6.4 It is judged that there would be a low level of change to the receiving landscape character beyond the site boundaries. This judgement is based on the strength of local vegetation cover, limited by the size and height of the development and the fact that it would still retain the landscape character of frequent small settlements within a rural, undulating landscape. Hedgerows and trees will be retained and enhanced, therefore adding to the quality of the wider landscape character.









- 6.5 The greatest effect on visual amenity is likely to be experienced immediately adjacent to the site only. Any more distant views of the proposed development beyond this are limited and if experienced, will be in the context of the existing settlement edge. It is therefore considered that there is little potential for the development to result in any significant effects on visual receptors beyond the immediate site boundaries.
- 6.6 Footpaths within the wider landscape are generally located within tree lined fields and the valley floor. Only within the immediate vicinity of the site are there views of the proposals, which includes **Footpath 1** that passes along the western edge.
- 6.7 The proposed mitigation planting is designed to mitigate the minor visual effects of the proposals with a secondary benefit of strengthening the biodiversity of the site. The proposals are as follows:
- Tree lines and hedgerows to the western, northern and partially along the eastern boundary;
  - A wide landscaped verge between the existing settlement edge and the development to accommodate the PRoW **Footpath 1** and existing views;
  - A village green/open space to the south eastern corner of the site to retain an open feel to the approach to the village and reduce landscape effects on listed dwelling **Church Farmhouse (1)**.
- 6.8 The new landscape features within the site will benefit from detailed landscaping proposals and an agreed programme of management, which would help to ensure their long-term viability within the landscape.
- 6.9 The village is mainly a result of 20<sup>th</sup> century infill and the historical core is not visible to the site. The proposals also follow the northern edge of the existing settlement boundary. Due the low density of the proposals to be accommodated and the existing, exposed settlement edge, the landscape and visual effects of the proposal are considered to be acceptable.

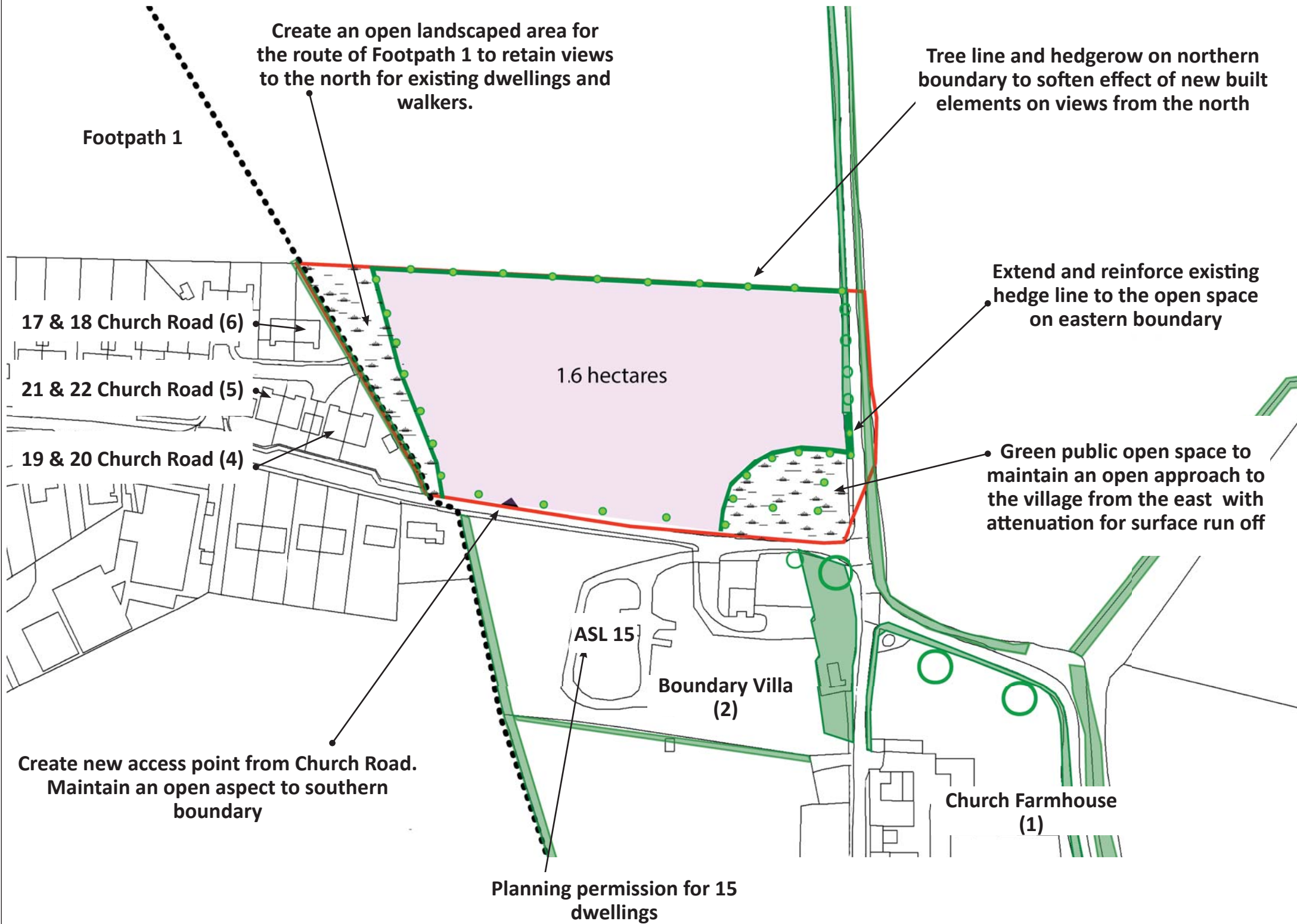
## **Appendix 1**



All new planting should be native species trees and hedgerow plants including:  
field maple, wild service tree, hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn and dogrose

KEY:

-  Existing tree
-  Existing woodland
-  Existing footpath
-  Proposed developable area
-  Proposed hedgerow
-  Proposed tree
-  Proposed entrance
-  Proposed open green space



Drawn JW	Checked ES
No. 1128 Church Rd site analysis	
Revision -	

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## **Appendix 2**

### **Methods for Visualisations**

#### **Introduction**

The photomontage methodology conforms to the latest Landscape Institute (LI) Advice Note 01/11 for Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment. This document outlines the process by which all photomontage images have been produced.

#### **Data Collection**

The viewpoints for photomontage are selected by a Landscape Architect, and agreed with the appropriate local authority prior to submission. Consideration to safety and legal access is also given when electing the viewpoint positions for the photomontages. The team conducting the site-work consists of both a photographer and a surveyor who will be responsible for the entire process from image capture to final photomontage. When collecting visual data, relevant control points within the photo are surveyed to a high level of accuracy to ensure that the proposed development accurately correlates to the photo.

#### **Equipment**

Relevant camera settings such as focal point are also noted in the document. These settings are selected in accordance with the LI guidance, and are set for the conditions at the time of the photo. When appropriate, surveying equipment is used to establish the position of the photo.

#### **Image Processing**

Each panoramic image is produced by the stitching together of a number of individual photographs using industry standard software. The images are then individually checked to ensure both that the original photographic quality is maintained and that the resulting image is clear and realistically stitched together. An overlap of 30% is applied for each image.

#### **Photomontage**

Industry standard image-handling software is used to produce the final photomontage image. The stitched image is the base for the photomontage viewpoint, with additional images captured from the survey or previous surveys introduced where relevant. As per the LI Advice Note, the photomontage

composition process includes the digital manipulation of these images. Final images are saved as .jpg format.

### **Presentation**

Industry standard drafting software is used to produce the final deliverable drawing. Both existing and proposed images are shown at the same size and scale, with all required details displayed in the title block of the drawing.

## APPENDIX 3

### Data sources:

Accessed between 13.08.2018 and 31.08.2018

An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/396192/landscape-character-assessment.pdf)

Bing maps: <https://www.bing.com/maps>

British Standards: BS5837:12 Trees in relation to design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations BSI Standards Ltd April 2012

Biodiversity 2020,

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69446/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69446/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf)

British Geological Survey: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

English Heritage listed buildings entries: <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/results.aspx>

Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning: <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/summary?easting=615997&northing=291129>

Google earth

Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013. *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge

Landscape Institute website: *Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment* -Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11 – 2011

Listed buildings: <http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/map>

Magic Map: <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Natural England Publications:

NCA Profile: 83 South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6106120561098752?category=587130>

Agricultural Land Classification Map Eastern Region:

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/127056?category=5954148537204736>

South Norfolk Council:

Joint Core Strategy – Greater Norwich Development Partnership, January 2014:  
[https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/JCS\\_Adopted\\_Version\\_Jan\\_2014.pdf](https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/JCS_Adopted_Version_Jan_2014.pdf)

Landscape Character Assessment, 2001: <https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/landscape-character-assessments>

South Norfolk Local Landscape Designations Review 2012; [https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Chris\\_Blandford\\_September\\_2012\\_Landscape\\_Designations\\_Review\\_Landscape\\_Character\\_NPA\\_River\\_Valleys.pdf](https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Chris_Blandford_September_2012_Landscape_Designations_Review_Landscape_Character_NPA_River_Valleys.pdf)

Development Management Policies October 2015: <https://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/adopted-south-norfolk-local-plan/development-management-policies>