

# **Landscape and Visual Appraisal**

for

Land between

Haverhill Road and Hinton Way

Stapleford

Cambridgeshire

on behalf of

Axis Land Partnerships

**March 2020**

Quality Control  
Landscape and Visual Appraisal  
for  
Land between Haverhill Road and Hinton Way, Stapleford, Cambridgeshire  
on behalf of  
Axis Land Partnerships

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The Landscape Partnership is registered with the Landscape Institute, the Royal Town Planning Institute, and is a member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared on behalf of Axis Land Partnerships by The Landscape Partnership (TLP) to assess the effects of an outline planning application comprising a proposed retirement village together with a semi-natural green space on land between Haverhill Road and Hinton Road, Stapleford, Cambridgeshire. This report considers the effects of this change on the local landscape character, features of the Site and changes to views.
- 1.2 The Site is located to the north-east of the village of Stapleford which lies south-east of Cambridge. (see Figure 01 in Appendix 3). The planning authority is South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC).
- 1.3 This LVA provides a description of: the existing landscape and settlement context, the features within the Site and immediate vicinity and the presence and nature of views. The assessment considers the scope of proposed works, the effects on the local character and visual receptors and the mitigation proposals to offset any adverse effects.
- 1.4 For the purpose of this assessment the Site has been evaluated as two component parts, the retirement village – hereinafter referred to as Area A and the landscape semi-natural park – hereinafter referred to as Area B. These two areas are shown on the supporting Figures 01-06.
- 1.5 In defining 'landscape' reference is made to the adopted definition agreed by the European Landscape Convention (Florence: Council of Europe 2000), which states that the landscape is '*an area, as perceived by people whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*'.

## 2 METHODOLOGY AND ASSUMPTIONS

- 2.1 In order to understand how landscape features, landscape character and views would be affected, this assessment is based on the approach provided within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA)<sup>1</sup>. The GLVIA are primarily provided for schemes that require an EIA. However, there is recognition that the approach can also be used for schemes which do not require an EIA and are typically smaller in scale such as for this Site. For such schemes the process is referred to in GLVIA3 (para 1.11) as an 'appraisal'. For this reason, this document is termed a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) rather than a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).

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<sup>1</sup> Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, The Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, April 2013

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- 2.2 The approach assesses both landscape and visual matters separately. The GLVIA states at paragraph 1.17 that, *'Identifying significant effects stresses the need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its likely changes. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that it is appropriate and proportional. This does not mean that effects should be ignored or their importance minimised but that the assessment should be tailored to the particular circumstances of each case. This applies to 'appraisals' of landscape and visual impacts outside the formal requirements of EIA as well as those that are part of a formal assessment.'*
- 2.3 The detailed application of the GLVIA Guidelines, the criteria and categories used, and the assumptions and limitations applied for this project are set out in Appendix 1, Methodology. The assessment approach determines the significance of the changes to the landscape and views, should the proposed development proceed. This is achieved by first understanding the relative sensitivity of the character of the landscape and the view being experienced and then combining this with the magnitude or extent of change that would result from the proposed development. Changes can be experienced as an adverse, beneficial or neutral influence. Other considerations are also taken into account such as seasonal variation, direct or indirect effects and comparison of effects in the first year following completion and after a period of time once any proposed planting has established. For this study a second assessment date of Year 15 from completion has been used. Changes would also be incremental between Year 1 up to Year 15 and this is noted where relevant.
- 2.4 The appraisal has been prepared following two site visits by the author of this report, first in August 2019 when the vegetation was in full leaf and second in January 2020 when the vegetation was not in leaf. Comparative photographs from public locations A- M in both summer and winter are provided in Appendix 4 and views from private locations within the site dated August 2019. An additional set of photographs in a larger format is provided in accordance with the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 (published Sept 2019) to Type 1 – Annotated Viewpoint Photograph for locations A-M (See Appendix 5). The weather on both site visits was dry and sunny with good visibility.
- 2.5 Consultation with SCDC's Landscape Architect, Carol Newell was carried out between the initial and second site visit to ensure the local authority were satisfied with the approach to be taken on visualizations to be used in the LVA including the locations for viewpoints to illustrate the scheme. Following the consultation two additional locations (Viewpoints L and M) were included from Hinton Way, together with a further view within Stapleford from Haverhill Road (Viewpoint G). The extent of the visual envelope was also refined following the additional site visit in January 2020.

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## Assumptions and Limitations

2.6 The following assumptions have been made in respect to the assessment of effects:

- The assessment Baseline year is 2020;
- The assessment is based on the Drawings listed in Section 6:
- The development would be a long term, permanent development;
- The proposed native tree and hedgerow planting would grow at a rate of approximately 450mm/year, based on the average expected growth rates for the selected species growing on the local soil type. Predicted growth is also based on the assumption that no growth will take place in the first year, as the plants adjust to their new growing environments;
- A receptor for a view from public rights of way, public open space and within a residential property is an adult standing with an eye height of 1.6m; and
- Visual effects are assessed on the basis of good visibility. Visual effects can be expected to vary e.g. poor visibility at times of low cloud, rainfall and dusk. At these times a reduction in visual clarity, colour and contrast would be experienced. Reduced visibility would limit the extent of view possible particularly from mid to long distance views. Consequently, the assessment of effects is based on the worst-case scenario, where the proposed development would be most visible.

## 3 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

### National Level

3.1 Natural England has divided England into 159 distinct National Character Areas (NCA) that define the landscape character at a national scale. The Site is located within National Character Area Character Area '87 East Anglian Chalk' which stretches from Letchworth Garden City in the south-west to Newmarket to the north-east. The boundary of NCA 87 follows to the urban edge of Cambridge as shown on Figure 01.

3.2 Key characteristics set out within NCA 87 of relevance to the Site and study area include:

- *The underlying and solid geology is dominated by Upper Cretaceous Chalk, a narrow continuation of the chalk ridge that runs south-west–north-east across southern England,*

*continuing in the Chilterns and along the eastern edge of The Wash. The chalk bedrock has given the NCA its nutrient-poor and shallow soils.*

- *Distinctive chalk rivers, the River Rhee and River Granta, flow in gentle river valleys in a diagonally north-west direction across the NCA.*
- *The rolling downland, mostly in arable production, has sparse tree cover but distinctive beech belts along long, straight roads. Certain high points have small beech copses or 'hanger', which are prominent and characteristic features in the open landscape. In the east there are pine belts.*
- *Remnant chalk grassland, including road verges, supports chalkland flora and vestigial populations of invertebrates, such as great pignut and the chalkhill blue butterfly.*
- *Archaeological features include Neolithic long barrows and bronze-age tumuli lining the route of the prehistoric Ickniel Way; iron-age hill forts, including that at Wandlebury;*
- *Settlement is focused in small towns and in villages. There are a number of expanding commuter villages located generally within valleys.*
- *The NCA is traversed by the Ickniel Way, an ancient route that is now a public right of way. Roads and lanes strike across the downs perpendicularly and follow historical tracks that originally brought livestock to their summer grazing. Today major roads and railways are prominent landscape characteristics of the NCA.*

3.3 A number of Statements of Environmental Opportunity are provided for NCA 87 and those of relevance to the Site and study area include:

*SEO 1: Maintain sustainable but productive agricultural land use, while expanding and connecting the chalkland assemblage of semi-natural grasslands, for example by sensitive management of road verges and extending buffer strips along field margins, to benefit soil and water quality, reduce soil erosion, strengthen landscape character and enhance biodiversity and pollinator networks.*

*SEO 3: Conserve and promote the landscape character, geodiversity, historic environment and historical assets of the chalklands, including the open views of undulating chalkland, large rectilinear field pattern and linear ditches, strong equine association and the Ickniel Way prehistoric route. Improve opportunities to enhance people's enjoyment of the area while protecting levels of tranquillity.*

*SEO 4: Conserve the settlement character and create or enhance sustainable urban drainage systems and green infrastructure within existing and new developments, particularly in relation to*

*the urban fringe and growth areas such as south-east Cambridge, to provide recreation opportunities, increase soil and water quality and enhance landscape character.*

- 3.4 The value of the NCA 87 is considered to be Medium as is the susceptibility to Change from the proposed development with a corresponding Medium overall sensitivity to the change. However, it should be noted that the NCA covers an extensive area and there is limited coverage in the NCA text directly relating to the local character of the Site and its setting.

### **District Level**

- 3.5 At a district scale the Site is located within South Cambridgeshire District. However, the local authority has not produced a detailed landscape character assessment covering their whole area. TLP consider that the most detailed and appropriate study at the district scale is the **Cambridge Inner Green Belt Study<sup>2</sup>** (CIGBS) produced by LDA 2015 for both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. The report is supported by a number of accompanying figures<sup>3</sup>. The location of the relevant landscape character area boundaries is shown on Figure 03 to this report. The Site falls within the Chalk Hills Landscape Type and **3B Gog Magog Hills Landscape Character Area (LCA)**. Area A of the Site is located close to the edge of the LCA while Area B is set further within the LCA. The description for the Gog Magog Hills states at para 4.8.32.

*The Gog Magog Hills are a distinctive chalk ridge, which form an area of high ground to the south east of Cambridge. They are a series of rounded hills, capped with beech, lime and sycamore woodland on their summits. It is an open, elevated landscape with a strong sense of time-depth due to the Iron-Age hill fort at Wandlebury and the Roman road to Cambridge, which runs along the ridge. The majority of land is used for arable crop production, but recreation also contributes to the character of the area, which contains a Country Park, Nature Reserve, picnic site and a golf course.*

*There are several elevated views to Cambridge, which give this landscape character area a strong sense of place. The southern edge to Cambridge, with its ongoing development, is strongly apparent in these views, and the Western Claylands also contribute to the green landscape surrounding the city. The summit of Wandlebury is a memorable feature which contributes to the character of the landscape and enriches the setting of Cambridge. Settlement on the Gog Magogs is limited to scattered farms, because of the shortage of water on the chalk.*

- 3.6 It is considered that the value of the Gog Magog Hills LCA overall is Medium and with a High susceptibility to Change from a proposed retirement village development within the landscape type/area as a whole. This is due to the LCA being typically of undulating landform and with a

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/6596/a-cambridge-inner-green-belt-boundary-study\\_-main-report.pdf](https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/6596/a-cambridge-inner-green-belt-boundary-study_-main-report.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://files.cambridge.gov.uk/public/ldf/coredocs/rd-mc-030-part2.pdf>



relatively low density, although areas of woodland would provide some containment. This would give rise to a High overall sensitivity to the type of change. In contrast the sensitivity to change from arable to semi-natural grassland and trees/scrub is considered to be Low and would be more in keeping with objectives for landscape improvement.

- 3.7 To the south-east (beyond the Site boundary) the majority of Stapleford village and the lower lying land along the River Granta is located within the River Valleys Character Type and LCA 4B Granta Valley. The description for the Granta Valley states at para 4.8.39.

*The Granta Valley is situated to the south of Cambridge. It has the low-lying, gentle topography of the River Valley landscape type, but its character is distinguished by its wooded appearance and by the relatively built-up and suburban character of its villages. The woodland within the landscape gives it a relatively enclosed character, increases the "greenness" of the landscape setting, and screens views. This restricts views to the villages, as well as more distant views to Cambridge.*

*Settlement comprises a relatively large proportion of the land area. Many villages have developed along key routes into Cambridge, including the A10 and the A1301. The majority of these villages (which include Sawston, Shelford and Harston) have expanded through cluster or ribbon development, and this has led to a more suburban feel on the approaches to the city through this area.*

- 3.8 It is considered that the value of the Granta Valley LCA overall is Medium and with a Medium susceptibility to Change from a proposed retirement village development within the landscape type/area as a whole. This is due to the LCA being typically of limited topographical change and a more settled landscape where villages are present. This would give rise to a High overall sensitivity to the type of change. The sensitivity to change from arable to semi-natural grassland and trees/scrub is considered to be Low. However, the sensitivity of the Granta Valley LCA is less relevant since it is located outside the Site and any effects would be indirect.

- 3.9 The Cambridge Inner Green Belt study also includes a Visual Assessment (see section 4.10) 'with particular emphasis on the interrelationship between the city edge and the surrounding landscape. Key viewpoints are shown, including distant and proximal views, both level and elevated. ....The viewpoints marked are not intended to be exhaustive, but are considered to be the most significant. .... Also shown is the approximate area of the Green Belt from which Cambridge can be seen. There are potentially a small number of viewpoints from high land outside this area, but they are isolated points, and their views of the city are very distant.'

- 3.10 The visual assessment is illustrated by Figure 9 in the CIGBS. This shows that the site is located beyond the area from where the City of Cambridge and its key landmarks can be seen, being

contained by intervening rising ground and established woodland cover to the north. There are a number of viewpoints in the locality including from the Magog Down (see Photograph J in this report) where the landmarks in the city can be seen. However, the Site itself has no intervisibility with Cambridge or its landmarks. Instead the Site is associated with the wider rural setting and the villages and most notably Stapleford and the rural landscape to the south and south-east of the site.

- 3.11 The Cambridge Inner Green Belt Study also considers the Townscape and Landscape Role and function of the land in the Green Belt. The Site and its locality is identified as falling in the 'Outer rural areas of the Green Belt' (Figure 11 in the CIGBS).

### **Local Context**

- 3.12 At a local level, the Site can be further understood in the context of the immediate character around the Site. This level of information is not provided in the LCAs which assess the character at a larger district scale. Figure 03 is an aerial photograph of the local study area which illustrates the context and Viewpoints A-M also the character and land use of the local area.
- 3.13 The landform rises from the Granta Valley to the south which is generally located below the 20m contour up to the Gog Magog Chalk Hills to the north where the maximum elevation is c 74m AOD at Magog Down and Wandlebury Ring. There are intervening areas of higher ground and chalk hills near the Site e.g. at Fox Hill above the 50m contour and Clarke's Hill above the 45m contour.
- 3.14 Land use in the locality includes a number of large rectilinear arable fields which extend onto both the chalk landscape that rises up to the north-east and within the Granta Valley to the south-east. A number of the arable fields are bounded by native hedges which are typically clipped at c 1.5-2.5m in height. There are few hedgerow trees. A number of other fields boundaries are unmarked with no hedges which creates a larger and more open scale to the landscape e.g. to the south-east of Haverhill Road. The arable fields typically extend up to the edge of the village with few smaller scale paddocks.
- 3.15 Woodland and tree cover is concentrated around the chalk hills as typified at Wandlebury, Fox Hill and Clarke's Hill. These include shelter belts and hilltop copses. In the case of Fox Hill and Clarke's Hill the tree cover is also associated with a few large properties set in mature grounds e.g. Middlefield, Hillstead and The Uplands. These include a number of large tree avenues and established gardens.
- 3.16 Stapleford lies to the west of the Site with the village edge typically having a soft vegetated edge as a result of numerous trees and hedges in rear gardens backing onto the adjacent open countryside and arable landscape.


- 3.17 The settlement of Stapleford primarily comprises residential development. The village runs seamlessly into the adjoining settlement of Great Shelford to the north-west. Stapleford includes a number of individual detached properties both within the historic core of the village e.g. along Mingle Lane and Gog Magog Way and also as linear ribbon development e.g. along Hinton Way. There are also areas of suburban cul de sac development set back from the village edge.
- 3.18 Stapleford Cemetery is located in a detached position from the village accessed along a narrow single-track road. There are a number of trees around the perimeter of the cemetery which contain and filter open views to the arable landscape beyond.
- 3.19 In terms of rights of way there are few public footpaths and bridleways in the locality (see Figures 05 and 06). The two routes of note in the study area are: Bridleway Stapleford 2 that extends east of Bury Farm towards Babraham village some 3-4km to the east. The other main route is Footpath Stapleford 3 which runs from Haverhill Road near Gog Magog Cottages diagonally north-east across Magog Down. Magog Down also has wider public accessibility. It is noted there is a £3 charge to use the car park at Magog Down.
- 3.20 It is considered that the value of the local context is Medium and with a Medium susceptibility to Change from a proposed retirement village development within the landscape type/area as a whole. This is due to Area A of the Site being adjacent to an existing village and in a location where suburban and village settlement has historically extended along the roads leading out of the villages. Area A is also located on a lower lying slope as is the rest of Stapleford. This would give rise to a Medium sensitivity to the type of change. The sensitivity to change from arable to semi-natural grassland and trees/scrub on Area B is considered to be Low.

### **The Site**

- 3.21 The Site is approximately 25 ha in size and is located to the north-east of Stapleford. The Site comprises the majority of a large rectilinear 'L' shaped agricultural field. There are two access points into the field secured by way of metal field gates at Hinton Way to the west and Gog Magog Way to the south.
- 3.22 The land use is currently under arable cropping. The evidence of historic aerial photographs on Google Earth is that this use dates back to at least 2000.

### **Landscape Value**

- 3.23 The Site is not designated for any landscape reason. However, it is worth considering its relative value, albeit at a local undesignated level. This has been carried out using the criteria listed in Box 5.1 of the GLVIA3.

- 3.24 **Landscape Quality (condition)** – This criterion relates to the physical state of the landscape and the intactness and condition of the individual features. The majority of the site has a functional open arable character with some perimeter hedging. The land is currently in regular cultivation and cropping being typical of the arable landscape. The Site is considered to of Medium quality and condition.
- 3.25 **Scenic quality** – The Site has limited features that would give rise to scenic quality in its own right. The most attractive feature is the rising and undulating chalk topography and in particular of Area B and how this leads up towards the Gog Magog Hills. The scenic quality of the Site overall is considered to be Medium.
- 3.26 **Rarity and representativeness** – The Site is considered to be representative of the district scale landscape character area of the Gog Mago Chalk Hills by forming part of the arable landscape and lower slopes of the hills. However, the site does not contain any of the more distinctive features listed for the character area.
- 3.27 **Conservation Interest** – There are no designated heritage features of note affecting the Site. The wildlife interest is largely limited as the Site is cultivated for arable cropping with only perimeter hedges offering much biodiversity interest or habitat linkages. As a result conservation interest is considered to be Low.
- 3.28 **Recreation Value** - there is no public access across or on the Site. As a result recreation value is considered to be Low.
- 3.29 **Perceptual aspects** – This criterion in the GLVIA relates to experience of wildness and tranquillity. The Site is not particularly or wild. However, it does form part of the open chalk landscape to the east of Stapleford which leads up to the wooded chalk hills. Perceptual aspects are considered to be Medium to Low being relatively higher for the steeper slopes in Area B and less for the lower lying land of Area A closer to the edge of Stapleford. 
- 3.30 **Associations** – there are no known association with writers or artists in relation to the Site.
- 3.31 Based on the above considerations, it is considered that the Site has a Medium/Low landscape value, with Area B being of relatively higher value at Medium on account of the undulating and higher landform and Area A being Low value. The Site is not considered to be 'valued landscape' in accord with Paragraph 170 of the NPPF. There are few demonstratable features on the Site that would raise the Site above the ordinary and no designations or evidence of public value.

### Summary of landscape character sensitivity

**Table 3.1: Summary of Landscape Character Sensitivity – Area A (Retirement Village Area)**

Landscape Character Area unit	Landscape Value	Susceptibility to Change to retirement village	Overall Landscape Sensitivity
Site Level (Area A)	Low	Medium	Low
Local Level	Medium	Medium	Medium
District Scale: Gog Magog Chalk Hills	Medium	High	High
District Scale: Granta Valley	Medium	Medium	Medium
National Scale: NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk	Medium	Medium	Medium

Now medium

now medium

**Table 3.2: Summary of Landscape Character Sensitivity – Area B (Semi-natural Open Space Area)**

Landscape Character Area unit	Landscape Value	Susceptibility to Change to semi-natural public open space	Overall Landscape Sensitivity
Site Level (Area B)	Medium	Low	Low
Local Level	Medium	Low	Low
District Scale: Gog Magog Chalk Hills	Medium	Low	Low
District Scale: Granta Valley	Medium	Low	Low
National Scale: NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk	Medium	Low	Low

medium

medium

3.32 Area A within the Site is considered to be of relatively lower sensitivity than the local landscape and district character areas as a whole as it is located on lower lying ground and adjacent to the existing built edge of Stapleford. Stapleford has historically extended along both Haverhill Road and Hinton Way with development on Hinton Way extending up to the 30m contour. Area A is set below the 25m contour.

3.33 Area B within the Site has a relatively higher landscape value but is of low sensitivity to the proposed change for that area namely, to an area of semi-natural open space.

## Site Features

3.34 The component parts of the Site's character are described below in Table 3.1. Photographs 1 – 3, taken from private locations (see Appendix 4) also illustrate the character of the Site.

**Table 3.3: Site Features Sensitivity**

Site Feature	Description	Landscape Sensitivity: Value	Susceptibility to Change to retirement village (Area A) and semi-natural public open space (Area B)	Overall Landscape Sensitivity
<b>Landform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Site is broadly sloping from south-west at c 20 up to above the 40m contour to the north-east boundary. Both Haverhill Road and Hinton Way follow secondary valleys in the chalk landform.</li> <li>Area A is located at the lower lying part of the site with more gentle gradients at approximately 1 in 50 representing the transition into Stapleford village between 20-25m AOD.</li> <li>Area B is more representative of the steeper slopes of the chalk hills with gradients typically up to 1 in 15 and extending between between 25-46m AOD.</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)
<b>Vegetation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The majority of the Site is devoid of woody vegetation although the remnant of a shelterbelt is located in Area B south west of Hillstead.</li> <li>Clipped hedges with occasional trees are located to the perimeter including along Haverhill Road and Hinton Way.</li> <li>Some young narrow belts of trees follow the north-east boundary and there are some established trees in a number of the rear gardens of properties backing onto the site to the south-east corner.</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)
<b>Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing land use is for arable cropping.</li> </ul>	Medium	High (Area A)  Medium (Area B)	High (Area A)  Medium (Area B)

## 4 EXISTING VIEWS

- 4.1 A number of Representative Viewpoints (see Viewpoints A- M in Appendices 4 and 5) have been selected to illustrate the public views of the Site. The location of these photographs is shown on Figures 03, 05 and 06.
- 4.2 The location and receptor types are set out in Table 4.1 below. An evaluation of the visual sensitivity is also provided which has been assessed against the criteria in the Methodology provided in Appendix 1.

**Table 4.1: Local Views**

Viewpoint (Distance to Site m Area A and B)	Receptor Type	Location and description	Value of View	Susceptibility of Visual Receptor to Change to retirement village (Area A) and semi-natural public open space (Area B)	Overall Visual Sensitivity
<b>A</b> (15m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Gog Magog Way, Stapleford.</b> Views from edge of village with interface to open countryside. View into the south-west corner of Site along the existing farm access track. Limited view of Area A, partial view to Area B.	Low	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)
<b>B</b> (70m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Gog Magog Way/Chalk Hill, Stapleford.</b> Views into Chalk Hill residential development and framed/filtered view to rising ground of Area B and wooded horizon beyond. Limited view of Area A, partial view to Area B	Low	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)
<b>C</b> (75m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Haverhill Road/Stapleford.</b> Views from edge of village travelling north-east along Haverhill Road. Open views to east and existing residential development along Haverhill Road and Gog Magog Way form main focal features. Limited view of Areas A and B due to intervening built form and boundary hedges to Haverhill Road	Medium	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)

Viewpoint (Distance to Site m Area A and B)	Receptor Type	Location and description	Value of View	Susceptibility of Visual Receptor to Change to retirement village (Area A) and semi- natural public open space (Area B)	Overall Visual Sensitivity
<b>D</b> (30m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Haverhill Road/Stapleford.</b> Views from edge of village travelling north-east along Haverhill Road. Open views to east and up to elevated and treed Magog Down on skyline. Existing single storey residential development along Haverhill Road prominent to west. Areas A and B largely screened from view due to intervening built form and roadside boundary hedges to Haverhill Road.	Medium	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)
<b>E</b> (200m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Haverhill Road/Stapleford.</b> Views from Haverhill Road within village travelling north-east. Largely suburban in character but framed view to north up to Middlefield Cottage just beyond Site with wooded backdrop.  Limited view of to eastern edge of Areas A and B as part of framed view along Haverhill Road.	Low	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Low (Area A)  Very Low (Area B)
<b>F</b> (660m)	Visitor to cemetery	<b>Surfaced track to Stapleford Cemetery</b> View over clipped hedge to open fields to edge of village, varied residential houses to north-east edge of settlement and rising ground forming horizon beyond.  Partial views to Areas A and wider views to more elevated Area B from Viewpoint F and more intermittently within Cemetery due to presence of trees to the perimeter.	Medium	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)
<b>G</b> (10m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Haverhill Road/Stapleford.</b> Views from Haverhill Road approaching Site (Area A) and village travelling south-west. View largely contained by roadside hedges but glimpses to upper	Low	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Low (Area A)  Very Low (Area B)



Viewpoint (Distance to Site m Area A and B)	Receptor Type	Location and description	Value of View	Susceptibility of Visual Receptor to Change to retirement village (Area A) and semi- natural public open space (Area B)	Overall Visual Sensitivity
		sections of existing properties north on Gog Magog Way and Chalk Hill. Limited view of Areas A and B due to roadside hedges			
<b>H</b> (15m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Haverhill Road/Stapleford.</b> Views from Haverhill Road approaching Site (Area B) travelling south-west. View towards Site largely contained by roadside hedges but glimpses to upper sections of existing properties on Gog Magog Way and Chalk Hill. Open view to east of road. Very limited view of Areas A and B due to roadside hedges and trees.	Low	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Low (Area A)  Very Low (Area B)
<b>I</b> (350m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Haverhill Road/Stapleford.</b> Elevated views from Haverhill Road travelling south-west. View towards the Site are contained by roadside hedges and mature tree belts north of Site. Distant glimpses to upper sections of existing properties on Gog Magog Way and Chalk Hill. Open views to east of road. Very limited view of Areas A and B due to roadside hedges and trees.	Medium	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)
<b>J</b> (750m)	Walkers/ Recreation	<b>Magog Down open access land</b> Elevated panoramic views from Magog Down extending to south-west towards Stapleford and Granta Valley and also to the west towards Cambridge. The two distant views are separated by intervening wooded higher ground at Fox Hill. Open but distant views of Area A and the eastern part of Area B.	Medium /High	High (Area A)  Low (Area B)	High (Area A)  Low (Area B)
<b>K</b> (740m)	Walker/ Cyclist/	<b>Bridleway Stapleford 2</b> Open views over arable landscape from Bridleway Stapleford 2 within	Medium	Medium (Area A)	High (Area A)

Viewpoint (Distance to Site m Area A and B)	Receptor Type	Location and description	Value of View	Susceptibility of Visual Receptor to Change to retirement village (Area A) and semi-natural public open space (Area B)	Overall Visual Sensitivity
	Equestrian	Granta Valley. Views towards edge of Stapleford settlement to west and up towards rising ground of Gog Magog Chalk Hills with wooded skyline to the north.  Area A partly contained by roadside hedges and built edge of village. Area B more open to view as formed by rising ground.		Low (Area B)	Low (Area B)
<b>L</b> (10m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Hinton Way/Stapleford.</b> Views from road restricted and contained by high hedges.  No views of Area A due to intervening higher ground and hedges. Glimpse at single gap in hedge to edge of Area B	Low	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Low (Area A)  Very Low (Area B)
<b>M</b> (200m)	Motorist/ Pedestrian	<b>Hinton Way/Stapleford.</b> Views from road restricted and contained by high hedges and trees.  No views of Areas A or B due to intervening higher ground, hedges and mature trees.	Low	Medium (Area A)  Low (Area B)	Low (Area A)  Very Low (Area B)

4.3 The assessment of potential public viewpoints has identified that the Site has a relatively limited exposure to public views. Figure 06 shows the Zone of Visual Influence as informed by site visits to public locations and from walking on the site looking outwards.

4.4 From within Stapleford the Site is variably visible from the rear of properties and gardens that face towards the site. There are partial views towards the Site from Viewpoint A on a short section of Gog Magog Way from parts of Haverhill Road and from Viewpoint F leading up to the cemetery. From these locations the views are largely towards the more elevated Area B, with Area A being largely concealed by hedges and other properties.

- 4.5 Views looking into the Site from Haverhill Road both leaving and approached Stapleford are largely contained by the tall roadside hedges as illustrated from Viewpoints D, G, H and I. This includes both Area A and B.
- 4.6 Views towards the Site from the south-east extend along Bridleway Stapleford 2 over a length of up to 1km from the village up to the isolated barn to the east. The Site is located to the right of the built edge of Stapleford following Haverhill Road. Area A is largely screened from view by the roadside hedges. The more elevated sloping ground of Area B is more clearly seen rising up towards the wooded area around Middlefield, Fox Hill and Hillstead as illustrated by Viewpoint K. As one moves east towards the isolated barn next to the Bridleway Area B is more screened by the intervening area of higher topography east of Haverhill Road.
- 4.7 There are elevated views from part of Magog Down with public accessibility. This does not include Footpath S3 where views are screened by intervening vegetation but includes the southern area to the south-west of the copse on Little Trees Hill as illustrated from Viewpoint J. This is the most elevated view towards the Site and includes both Area A and the western part of Area B as part of a view panorama to the south-west including Stapleford village which is relatively well contained within trees and vegetation, even in the winter months.
- 4.8 From the north-west along Hinton Way visibility of the Site is restricted by the roadside hedges and trees group as illustrated by Viewpoints L and M. Area A is entirely screened by the landform from these locations. The north-west edge Area B fronting towards Hinton Way is partly visible through a short break in the roadside hedge as illustrated from Viewpoint L.

#### ***Residential Views.***

- 4.9 The closest residential properties to the Site (Area A) are those within Stapleford to the north of Gog Magog Way, from Chalk Hill and a bungalow on Haverhill Road. These have established gardens that back onto the Site. Properties at Gog Magog Way have rear gardens typically 25m deep, while those at Chalk Hill are c 10m but includes a mature hedge tree belt adjacent to the Site. Other views from properties to the edge of Stapleford are mainly focused towards Area B with Area A being more screened by the above mentioned properties to the south of the Site.
- 4.10 The more isolated properties to the north of the Site include Middlefield Cottage which has an open aspect across Area B and then to Area A adjacent to Stapleford. Properties around The House on the Hill just north of the highest parts of Area B are also likely to have some views of the Site, largely Area B. However, this is difficult to verify without visiting them. The larger houses including: Middlefield, Hillstead and those at Fox Hill are more contained in mature woodland. Some have vistas to the south out to the countryside by none appear to align towards Area A.

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***Summary of existing views***

- 4.11 Therefore, in summary despite the open character of the Site and similar adjacent areas to the east of Haverhill Road there are few public views into the Site due to the undulating character of the land, presence of roadside hedges, surrounding woodland in the locality and the relatively limited number of public rights of way.

**5 DESIGNATIONS AND PLANNING POLICY**

- 5.1 Landscape related designations and spatial planning policies were identified through a desk-based study.

**Landscape Designations*****National Designations***

- 5.2 There are no national landscape designations directly affecting the Site or within the study area.

***Local Designations***

- 5.3 There are no specific local landscape designations based on quality or value directly affecting the Site or within the study area. Landscape policies are listed separately below.

**Heritage Designations**

- 5.4 There is a Conservation Area in Stapleford as shown on Figures 04 and 06 located within c 200m of the Site. However, due to the intervening properties and associated vegetation there is limited intervisibility between the Site (Area A) and the Conservation Area. This includes views from listed properties within the Conservation Area including Stapleford Hall (Grade II) and St Andrews Church (Grade II\*).
- 5.5 There are no listed buildings on or adjacent to the site. The listed buildings closest to the site are Middlefield (Grade II\*), set in a mature landscape grounds c. 125m to the north-east and Galewood/ Pinewood/ The Towers (Grade II) also set in mature grounds c 240m from the Site also to the north-east. Both properties are Edwardian houses in the arts and crafts style. There are no apparent views from the properties to the Site.
- 5.6 The Magog Down includes a Scheduled Monument, tumulus earthwork at Little Trees Hill from where the Site can be seen as illustrated by Viewpoint J. There is also a Schedule Monument comprising a large iron age ring fort, Wandlebury Ring located within the Wandlebury Country Park. There is no visibility of the Site from this monument.

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## Planning Policy

### **Green Belt**

- 5.7 The site is fully located with the Cambridge Green Belt (see Figure 04). The NPPF (Section 13) sets out the approach to Green Belt as follows:

*133. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.*

*134. Green Belt serves five purposes:*

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.*

- 5.8 The development of Area A of the Site would be contrary to Green Belt policy and in particular purpose 'c' above.

- 5.9 However, in addition to the proposed built development on Area A on the site there is considerable scope with this project to deliver extensive enhancements on Area B between Haverhill Road and Hinton Way. The land is currently in arable use but provides no public access and minimal biodiversity interest. Paragraph 141 of the NPPF states:

*Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.*

- 5.10 The proposals on Area B provide scope to make beneficial enhancements in terms of public access, visual amenity and biodiversity.

### **South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018**

- 5.11 There are number of policies of relevance to the site and locality including:

**Policy S/4 Green Belt**

## 5.12 Policy S/4 states:

*A Green Belt will be maintained around Cambridge that will define the extent of the urban area. The detailed boundaries of the Green Belt in South Cambridgeshire are defined on the Policies Map, which includes some minor revisions to the inner boundary of the Green Belt around Cambridge and to the boundaries around some inset villages. New development in the Green Belt will only be approved in accordance with Green Belt policy in the National Planning Policy Framework.*

**Policy CSF/5 (2f-m) Improved Landscaping**5.13 Policy CSF 5 as set out in the Local Plan includes the Cambridge Southern Fringe AAP which extends over all of the Site. The area involved is shown on Figure 04 and the policy states (NB the text underlined below is done for emphasis to its relevance in this project):

*A Countryside Enhancement Strategy will be prepared for the area bounded by the Cambridge City boundary, Babraham Road, Haverhill Road, and the edge of the built up area of Great Shelford and Stapleford. The Strategy will comprise:*

- f. New copses on suitable knolls, hilltops and scarp tops.*
- g. Management and creation of chalk grassland.*
- h. Management of existing shelter belts.*
- i. New mixed woodland and shelter belts.*
- j. Creation of a landscape corridor along Hobson's Brook.*
- k. Reinforcement and planting of new hedgerows.*
- l. Roadside planting.*
- m. New footpaths, cyclepaths and bridleways creating routes through the area and linking to Wandlebury Country Park / The Magog Down.*

## 5.14 The policy covers an area of open countryside extending from the built edge of Cambridge to the south-east of Cambridge up to Haverhill Road to the south-east. The area includes the whole Site (Areas A and B). The proposed development has the potential to make a significant contribution to the delivery of a number of the bullet points above including f, g, I, k, l and m.

**Policy NH/14 Stapleford Conservation Area**

## 5.15 The Site is not adjacent to the Conservation Area and most of the area is separated by surrounding housing in Stapleford thus making the Conservation Area largely inward looking in character. However, there is a section of the northern boundary that lies adjacent to the open fields. This includes the northern boundary of the parish churchyard and the residential properties. However, all these features are set in large mature and well vegetated grounds/gardens and there is likely to be minimal visual interface with the site of any development on the site.

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**Policy NH/6 Green Infrastructure**

- 5.16 The Policy as stated below is also supported by a Green Infrastructure Strategy which provides an overarching green infrastructure strategy and network for Cambridgeshire. (NB the text underlined below is done for emphasis to its relevance in this project):

*1. The Council will aim to conserve and enhance green infrastructure within the district. Proposals that cause loss or harm to this network will not be permitted unless the need for and benefits of the development demonstrably and substantially outweigh any adverse impacts on the district's green infrastructure network.*

*2. The Council will encourage proposals which: a. Reinforce, link, buffer and create new green infrastructure; and b. Promote, manage and interpret green infrastructure and enhance public enjoyment of it.*

*3. The Council will support proposals which deliver the strategic green infrastructure network and priorities set out in the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy, and which deliver local green infrastructure.*

*4. All new developments will be required to contribute towards the enhancement of the green infrastructure network within the district. These contributions will include the establishment, enhancement and the on-going management costs.*

- 5.17 The proposed development of Area B has the potential to make a significant contribution towards achieving points 2, 3 and 4 and is likely to have minimal adverse effects on existing features.

**Policy NH/8: Mitigating the Impact of Development in and Adjoining the Green Belt**

- 5.18 The Policy states:

*1. Any development proposals within the Green Belt must be located and designed so that they do not have an adverse effect on the rural character and openness of the Green Belt.*

*2. Where development is permitted, landscaping conditions, together with a requirement that any planting is adequately maintained, will be attached to any planning permission in order to ensure that the impact on the Green Belt is mitigated.*

*3. Development on the edges of settlements which are surrounded by the Green Belt must include careful landscaping and design measures of a high quality and openness of the Green Belt.*

- 5.19 The proposed development would have an effect on the openness of the Green Belt but there is scope to provide suitable sympathetic landscape measures both to mitigate any adverse effects of the built development and to enable a wider positive contribution to be made to the local area.

## 6 PROPOSALS

- 6.1 The proposals are shown on the following drawings:

- Illustrative Masterplan with Countryside Park (plan ref J0027450\_005)
- Land Use and Height Parameter plan (plan ref J0027450\_008)
- Landscape Parameter plan (plan ref J0027450\_009)
- Access Movement Parameter plan (plan ref J0027450\_010)

- 6.2 Together these drawings provide the basis for the scheme that has been assessed as part of this LVA.

- 6.3 The proposals comprise two main components as follows:

### ***Retirement village***

- 6.4 A retirement village is proposed located to the lower lying south-east corner of the Site (within Area A) adjacent to Stapleford village and Haverhill Road. The north-east boundary of Area A is marked by the proposed alignment route of the proposed Cambridge Automated Metro (CAM) which would link Cambridge to Haverhill. The proposals for the retirement village are not dependent on the delivery of the CAM but equally are designed such that they would not compromise its construction.

- 6.5 The retirement village is likely to comprise a central care home of up to 110 bed spaces/rooms/units (both assisted care suites and care bedrooms), with associated facilities; and up to 110 retirement apartments and bungalows (providing a total floorspace of up to 17,825sq.m) in detached units at both two and one and a half storeys.

- 6.6 The heights and scale of the units within the development step down across the Site from the lower lying landform to south-west up the relatively higher north-east part of Area A. The main care home is therefore located to the lower ground and would be up to 12m in height. Two storey apartments are located to the centre of the Site at up to 8m heights. One and a half storey apartments and bungalows up to 7m height are located to the naturally higher parts of the site.

- 6.7 The landscape proposals for Area A would include:

- New structural woodland planting of native trees and shrubs to the north west and north east boundaries and along Haverhill Road. This would help to visually contain the new built



forms from: the approach to Stapleford from the north along Haverhill Road (Viewpoints G, H, I) as seen Magog Down (Viewpoint J), from Bridleway Stapleford 2 (Viewpoint K) to the south-east and from elevated views in Area B of the wider Site (Viewpoint 3). This would support objectives 'i' and 'l' of SCDC Policy CSF 5.

- Publicly accessible recreation routes into the Site from Gog Magog Way and the main vehicular access off Haverhill Road. Access would be for pedestrians by way of surfaced paths leading through and to the edge of the development area.
- Retention of the majority of the roadside hedgerow to Haverhill Road with any loss sufficient to provide vehicular access into the retirement village. Supplementary tree planting to take place within the Site to form a strong vegetated gateway into Stapleford.
- Properties backing onto the site at Chalk Hill and Gog Magog Way would be afforded suitable privacy with development set back from the boundary and by including SuDS features (on the lower lying ground) and landscaped areas between the development and adjacent properties.

### ***Open Space***

6.8 The larger part of the Site (Area B) which would extend between Haverhill Road and Hinton Way is proposed as a publicly accessible green space. This would comprise an area of semi-natural open space incorporating the following elements:

- Extensive areas of species rich chalk grassland which are a priority habitat. This would support the objective 'g' of SCDC Policy CSF 5.
- New copses, on the higher ground with e.g. beech, lime and sycamore trees to form a destination point and to frame panoramic views. This would support objective 'f' of SCDC Policy CSF 5.
- A network of recreation routes within the site and linking between the development Site, Haverhill Road and Hinton Way. This would support the objective 'm' of SCDC Policy CSF 5.
- Infilling of gappy hedges. This would support objective 'k' of SCDC Policy CSF 5.
- Properties on higher ground with existing open views to the south-west e.g. Middlefield Cottage and Hillstead should have their privacy and outlook largely unaffected by avoiding tall planting to the site boundary and discouraging pedestrian access near the properties.

- Retention of the majority of the roadside hedgerow to Haverhill Road with minimal loss sufficient to provide pedestrian access. Supplementary planting to take place within the site including some areas of native scrub.

## 7 EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES

7.1 The size and scale of change brought about by the proposed development on the local landscape character and the features of the Site have been assessed in accordance with the methodology provided in Appendix 1.

### Landscape Character

7.2 The effect on the landscape character areas (from National to Site) and are set out below in Table 7.1:

**Table 7.1: Effect on Landscape Character**

Landscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance
<b>National level: NCA 87 East Anglian Chalk</b>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development would result in a highly localised change in relation to the NCA as a whole.</li> <li>None of the key characteristics of the LCA would be notably or adversely affected.</li> </ul>	Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	NEGLIGIBLE	Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	NEGLIGIBLE

Landscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance
<b>District level: Gog Magog Chalk Hills</b>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area A is located to the edge and on the lower slopes of the Gog Magog Chalk Hills LCA where it runs down to Stapleford village.</li> <li>The retirement village in Area A occupies a small part of the LCA. However, the LCA as a whole has limited development apart from larger individual houses set mature grounds and some stretches of ribbon development e.g. along Hinton Way.</li> <li>The development would introduce a relatively larger area of development into the LCA but on lower slopes and directly adjacent to the existing village edge which has a soft interface with the adjacent countryside.</li> <li>The proposals for Area B would replace a large monoculture arable field with a range of chalk habitats including wildflower meadows and hilltop tree groups. These changes would accord with the Policy CSF/5 with the Area Action Plan.</li> </ul>	Medium (Area A) Medium (Area B)	Low (Area A) Medium (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Medium (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) MODERATE NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>	Medium (Area A) Medium (Area B)	Low (Area A) Medium (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Medium (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) MODERATE BENEFICIAL (AREA B)</b>

Landscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance
<b>District Scale: Granta Valley</b>	Medium (Area A) - Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Site is located outside the LCA so any effects would be indirect and relate to the effects on character by way of views from the LCA towards the Site.</li> <li>There would be open views from the Granta Valley in the south-east looking north-west as illustrated by Viewpoint K. However, the open character of the valley to the south east would be unchanged.</li> <li>The remaining areas within the LCA are all within or close to the built edge of Stapleford which marks the edge of the Granta Valley. The boundary of the Granta Valley LCA is influenced as by the change from open area to a mature vegetated village edge as the precise change in topography. On this basis the proposed changes on Area A would be in keeping with this character and effectively result in drawing Area A more within the character of the Granta Valley LCA. This effect would increase by Year 15 as planting on the Site matures around the edge of Area A.</li> </ul>	Very Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Very Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Very Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>NEGLIGIBLE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Very Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Very Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Very Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>NEGLIGIBLE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>

Landscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance
<b>Local Scale</b> <b>(up to c 1000m from Site)</b> Medium (Area A) - Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area A is located to the edge and on the open lower slopes of the Chalk Hills LCA where it runs down to the settlement edge of Stapleford.</li> <li>The retirement village in Area A would represent a noticeable change to the open arable character beyond the edge of Stapleford at Year 1 and as an extension of the village to the north-east.</li> <li>The proposals for Area B would change from a large monoculture arable field to a range of chalk habitats including wildflower meadows and hilltop tree groups. These changes would result in net landscape and bio-diversity enhancements and be in accordance with the Policy CSF/5 with the Area Action Plan.</li> <li>From within the village and from the edge of Stapleford there are generally few public views and awareness of the Site. The main exceptions are in close proximity on Haverhill Road and from properties backing directly onto the Site.</li> <li>The planting proposals, including the structural planting to the north, east and west perimeters of Area A would establish to contain the retirement village over time and by Year 15 would effectively draw the development within Area A into being read as part of Stapleford village.</li> </ul>	High (Area A) Medium (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Medium/High (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium/High (Area A) Medium/High (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) MODERATE NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>	Medium (Area A) Medium (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Medium/High (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Medium/High (Area B)	<b>MODERATE NEUTRAL (AREA A) MODERATE/MAJOR BENEFICIAL (AREA B)</b>	

Landscape Character Area	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance
<b>Site</b>	Medium/Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There would be a complete change within Area A from arable to a retirement village resulting in a High magnitude of change. This would be typical for any similar residential development on a green field site.</li> <li>The landscape proposals to Area B would provide a scheme able to deliver landscape, bio-diversity and recreational benefits across a relatively large area compared with the Area A. Area B is more elevated and relates to the more prominent key characteristics of the Chalk Hills LCA.</li> <li>The planting proposals, including the structural planting to the north, east and west perimeters of Area A would assimilate the built structures in the retirement village over time and by Year 15 would relate the development within Area A to the adjacent Stapleford village.</li> <li>The maturing Area B by Year 15 would establish to create a Moderate/Major benefit to that part of the Site</li> </ul>	High (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) High (Area B)	<b>MAJOR /MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) MODERATE NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>	High (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) High (Area B)	<b>MODERATE NEUTRAL (AREA A) MODERATE/MAJOR BENEFICIAL (AREA B)</b>

**Summary and conclusions of effects on landscape character**

- 7.3 There are no national or local landscape designations affecting the Site.
- 7.4 The Site is not considered to be a 'valued landscape' as understood by paragraph 170a of the NPPF. There are no demonstratable features that raise the Site above the ordinary.
- 7.5 The effects would be Negligible at the **National scale** on NCA 87 East Anglian Chalklands. This is due to the combination of the relatively small scale of the development in comparison to the extensive scale of the NCA.
- 7.6 The effect at the **District Scale** of the host LCA, the Gog Magog Chalk Hills would initially be Moderate Adverse at Year 1 reducing to Minor Adverse at Year 15 for the proposed retirement village

- (Area A). In contrast there would be a Moderate Neutral effect in the semi-natural open space (Area B) at Year 1 increasing to Moderate Beneficial by Year 15 as the habitats and landscape features establish.
- 7.7 The effects on the adjacent Granta Valley LCA are indirect and considered to be Negligible at Year 1 and 15 and for Areas A and B relating more to visual linkages which are more appropriately described in the visual effects section.
- 7.8 At the more **Local Scale** (i.e. within c. 1,000m of the Site) the magnitude of change would increase to Moderate/High at Year 1 for Area A with a Moderate Adverse effect. The retirement village in Area A would represent a noticeable change to the open arable character beyond the edge of Stapleford at Year 1 and as an extension of the village to the north-east along Haverhill Road. The planting proposals, including the structural planting to the north, east and west perimeters would establish to contain the retirement village over time and by Year 15 would effectively draw the development located within Area A into being read as part of Stapleford village. This would reduce the landscape effects to Moderate Neutral as the planting establishes by Year 15. The landscape enhancements in Area B would result in a Moderate Neutral effect at Year 1 increasing to a Moderate/Major Beneficial effect at Year 15.
- 7.9 The effects of the proposals in Area B are assessed as Moderate Neutral in Year 1 improving to Moderate Beneficial by Year 15 on establishment. The proposals for Area B would change a large monoculture arable field to a range of chalk habitats including wildflower meadows and hilltop tree groups. These changes would result in net landscape and bio-diversity enhancements and be in accordance with the Policy CSF/5 with the Area Action Plan.
- 7.10 At the **Site scale** the magnitude of change on Area A increases to High resulting in a Major/Moderate Adverse effect at Year 1. The sensitivity of Area A at the Site scale is assessed as slightly lower at Medium/Low due to its proximity to Stapleford and lack of key characteristics typical of the LCA. By Year 15 the level of effect would reduce to Moderate Neutral as the structural planting establishes and the built form also matures into the village edge landscape just as previous developments to the edge of Stapleford have over previous decades. The landscape enhancements in Area B would result in a Moderate Neutral effect at Year 1 increasing to a Moderate/Major Beneficial effect at Year 15.

### Site Features

- 7.11 An assessment of the effects of the development on the Site features within the Site, was carried out for Year 1 and Year 15 in accordance with the Methodology at Appendix 1. The results are set out in Table 7.2 below.

**Table 7.2: Effect on Landscape Features**

Feature	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance
<b>Landform</b>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposals comprises limited changes to the natural topography.</li> <li>There would be some limited changes across Area A to the landform in order to provide formation levels for the housing and roads etc. However, it is intended that the existing natural gentle rise across Area A would be retained.</li> <li>There would be a localised change to creates SuDS features to the south of the site next to properties on Gog Magog Way.</li> <li>There would be no material changes to natural levels in Area B</li> </ul>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>MINOR (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>MINOR (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>
<b>Vegetation</b>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There would be minimal loss of vegetation on the Site. Most of the vegetation is located to the perimeter of the Site and would be retained.</li> <li>A short section of the boundary hedgerow on Haverhill Road would be lost to create the mina vehicular access to the Site.</li> <li>The planting proposals both within Area A (including the structure planting to the north, east and west) and tree groups and scrub on Area B would bring a substantive net enhancement.</li> </ul>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A ) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>MINOR (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Medium (Area A) Medium (Area B)	Medium (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A ) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Medium (Area B)	<b>MODERATE BENEFICIAL (AREA A) MODERATE BENEFICIAL (AREA B)</b>



Feature	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.inf.	Duration/Rev.	Magnitude	Significance
<b>Land Use</b>	High (Area A) Medium (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The arable land use over Area A would be lost to residential development comprising a retirement village with a mix of built form and hard and soft landscape. This would be a major change to the arable landscape in Year 1.</li> <li>By Year 15 the addition of the semi-mature structure planting and the establishing shared and private garden areas would offset the initial losses to provide a neutral nature of effect in Area A.</li> <li>Within Area B the change from arable to new semi-natural planting and informal recreational facilities e.g. paths, gates and benches would be a major but neutral effect.</li> <li>By Year 15 the open space will have matured to provides an attractive and bio-diverse green space with major benefits.</li> </ul>	High (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) High (Area B)	<b>MAJOR ADVERSE (AREA A) MAJOR NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>	High (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A) High (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) High (Area B)	<b>MAJOR NEUTRAL (AREA A) MAJOR BENEFICIAL (AREA B)</b>

**Summary and conclusions of effects on Site Features**

- 7.11 Development of the Site would result in limited change to topography. The Site slopes up from south to north across Area A and this change would be maintained with only localised earthworks to accommodate the proposed properties on the existing landform. The proposed building heights would step down travelling northwards to minimise the effect of built form on the skyline and help fit the dwellings into the natural topography.
- 7.12 There would be minimal loss of existing vegetation as this is largely comprises hedges and occasional trees to the site perimeter. A break in the roadside hedge on Haverhill Road would be required to access the Site and give forward visibility for traffic exiting the Site. The remainder of the hedge would be retained outside that which is required for Highway purposes.
- 7.13 There would be a complete change from the arable land-use. Area A would become a residential development with hard and soft landscape. Area B would be retained as undeveloped land but be managed for a range of semi-natural habitats with benefits for bio-diversity, landscape and informal recreation mainly for local residents.

## 8 EFFECTS ON VIEWS

- 8.1 The size and scale of change brought about by the proposed development on the views in the local and wider setting of the Site have been assessed based on the Methodology in Appendix 1.
- 8.2 In relation to the duration and reversibility, the proposed retirement village development (Area A) is considered to be a long-term development and is therefore scored as 'High' for receptors from all viewpoints. For Area B the duration and reversibility is scored Low as the change of use is fully reversible.
- 8.3 The assessment of the changes to the receptors at or near the representative viewpoints are set out in Table 8.1 below.

**Table 8.1: Effect on Views**

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
<b>A: Gog Magog Way / Chalk Hill</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ The proposed development in Area A would be essentially screened from view even at Year 1 winter by intervening vegetation and existing development at Chalk Hill. It is possible that the bungalows to the north-east corner may be visible.</li> <li>♦ A new pedestrian route from Gog Magog Way leading to the open space in Area B would be visible together with new planting along the north east boundary of Area A.</li> <li>♦ The new tree planting and wildflower seeding areas would be visible on Area B on the higher ground</li> </ul>	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) MINOR NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) MINOR NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
			<b>B: Gog Magog Way/Chalk Hill</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development in Area A would be largely screened from view even at Year 1 winter by intervening vegetation and existing development at Chalk Hill.</li> <li>Some of the two storey apartments and bungalows would be visible in the winter months at the end of Chalk Hill set back from the existing houses and trees (located at the end of the Chalk Hill cul-de-sac).</li> <li>The higher sections of Area B may be visible in the winter months on the higher ground.</li> <li>By Year 15 established vegetation at the end of Chalk Hill and new tree planting within the proposed development would further soften views of the proposed properties.</li> </ul>	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) MINOR NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>	Very Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)
<b>C: Haverhill Road</b>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development in Area A would be partly visible west of Haverhill Road. The two-storey care home would be set back beyond the existing houses and bungalows but visible as a new feature.</li> <li>The upper sections of the apartments closest to Haverhill Road would also be visible above retained hedges.</li> <li>New planting along the Haverhill Road frontage would develop to partly screen the new built forms by Year 15.</li> <li>The changes to Area B would be screened from view by Area A and retained roadside hedges.</li> <li>The open character east of Haverhill Road (albeit outside the Site) would be unchanged.</li> </ul>	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Moderate (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) MINOR NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Moderate (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) MINOR NEUTRAL (AREA B)</b>

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
			<b>D: Haverhill Road</b>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development in Area A would be readily visible west of Haverhill Road. The two-storey care home would be set back beyond the roadside hedge existing houses and bungalows but clearly visible as a new feature.</li> <li>The upper sections of the apartments closest to Haverhill Road would also be visible above retained hedges.</li> <li>New planting along the Haverhill Road Frontage would develop to partly screen the new built forms by Year 15.</li> <li>The changes to Area B would be screened from view by Area A and retained roadside hedges.</li> <li>The open character east of Haverhill Road (albeit outside the Site) would be unchanged.</li> </ul>	High (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium /High (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>MAJOR /MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)
<b>E: Haverhill Road</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development in Area A would be largely screened by existing intervening trees and houses. The two-storey care home would be mainly set back from view.</li> <li>The upper sections of the apartments closest to Haverhill Road would also be just be visible above retained hedges.</li> <li>The existing view of Middlefield Cottage to the north-east of the Area B would be retained.</li> <li>New planting along the Haverhill Road frontage would develop to partly screen the new built forms by Year 15 and also screen any glimpsed views to Area B.</li> <li>The changes to Area B would be screened from view by Area A and retained roadside hedges.</li> </ul>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
<b>F: Stapleford Cemetery</b>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development in Area A would be a noticeable change to the view with built form extending to the north of the existing village edge yet in an established form and comparable with other visible housing areas to the edge of Stapleford.</li> <li>The two storey care home would be screened by existing development but the upper sections of the apartments and bungalows closest to the eastern boundary hedges would be visible.</li> <li>The proposed structure planting along the eastern boundary would develop to largely partly screen the new built forms by Year 15.</li> <li>The changes to Area B would be visible on the higher ground.</li> </ul>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) MINOR (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<b>MODERATE/MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>
<b>G: Haverhill Road</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development in Area A would be readily visible west of Haverhill Road.</li> <li>The two-storey care home would be set back beyond the roadside hedge and the existing houses on Gog Magog Way and clearly visible as a new feature.</li> <li>The upper sections of the apartments and bungalows closest to Haverhill Road would also be partly visible above retained hedges.</li> <li>New structure planting along the Haverhill Road Frontage would develop to largely screen the new built forms by Year 15.</li> <li>The changes to Area B would be screened from view retained roadside hedges.</li> <li>The open character east of Haverhill Road (albeit outside the Site) would be unchanged.</li> </ul>	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
<b>Hi: Haverhill Road</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development in Area A would be readily visible west of Haverhill Road above roadside hedges.</li> <li>The two-storey care home would be set back beyond the roadside hedge and in front of the existing houses on Gog Magog Way.</li> <li>The upper sections of the apartments and bungalows closest to Haverhill Road would be visible above roadside hedges.</li> <li>New structure planting along the Haverhill Road frontage and along the northern boundary of Area A would develop to largely screen the new built forms by Year 15.</li> <li>The changes to Area B would be largely screened from view by retained roadside hedges although an entrance/gate into the open space would allow a framed view. Planting close to Haverhill road may frame views towards Stapleford.</li> <li>The open character east of Haverhill Road would be unchanged.</li> </ul>	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>
<b>I: Haverhill Road</b>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development in Area A would be visible west of Haverhill Road above roadside hedges and form a visual feature against the existing houses on Gog Magog Way.</li> <li>The two-storey care home would be partly visible but largely set behind the upper sections of the proposed apartments and bungalows closest to Haverhill Road.</li> <li>New structure planting along the Haverhill Road frontage and along the northern boundary of Area A would develop to largely screen the new built forms by Year 15.</li> <li>The changes to Area B would be screened from view by retained roadside hedges and tree belts to the north of the Site.</li> <li>The open character east of Haverhill Road (albeit outside the Site) would be unchanged.</li> </ul>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
			<b>J: Magog Down</b>									
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The location provides a panoramic view from part of Magog Down towards Stapleford and the Granta Valley.</li> <li>Development in Area A would be a noticeable and conspicuous feature in Year 1 as part of the panorama in front of the existing built edge of Stapleford in the centre of the view in the middle distance.</li> <li>Planting and seeding works in Area B would be partly visible to the east as the majority of Area B would be screened by existing vegetation to the north.</li> <li>By Year 15 the proposed structure planting to the east, north and west would provide semi-mature woodland areas to assist with the assimilation of the built forms.</li> <li>The existing edge of Stapleford is largely contained in mature and semi-mature vegetation that provides a precedent and illustration of the likely effects by Year 15.</li> </ul>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Negligible (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>
<b>K: Bridleway Stapleford 2</b>										High (Area A) Low (Area B)		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An open and panoramic 360-degree view from the bridleway includes views towards the Gog Magog Hills and Stapleford.</li> <li>Development in Area A would be a noticeable and conspicuous feature to the north-west in Year 1 seen as an extension of the existing built edge of Stapleford in the centre of the view in the middle distance. As the natural topography rises to the north the proposed height and scale of the units reduces to offset the effects of the proposed built forms.</li> <li>Planting and seeding works in Area B would be visible on the higher ground which rises to the north. Lower level structure planting would not be noticeable at Year 1.</li> <li>By Year 15 the proposed structure planting to the east and north would provide semi-mature planting woodland behind the existing hedges to assist with the assimilation of the built forms.</li> <li>The existing edge of Stapleford is largely contained in mature and semi-mature vegetation that provide a precedent and illustration of the likely effects by Year 15.</li> </ul>	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Medium (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>MODERATE ADVERSE (AREA A) NEGLIGIBLE (AREA B)</b>	Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	Medium (Area A) Medium (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	Low (Area A) Medium (Area B)	<b>MINOR ADVERSE (AREA A) MINOR BENEFICIAL (AREA B)</b>

Viewpoint	Sensitivity	Description of Effect	Year 1 – Winter					Year 15 – Summer				
			Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance	Size/scale	Geograph.Inf	Duration/Rev	Magnitude	Significance
<b>L: Hinton Road</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Views are focused along the hedge lined Hinton Way.</li> <li>Area A is completely screened from view by intervening higher ground.</li> <li>There is a small gap in the roadside hedgerow into Area B which could form a future pedestrian access point with glimpsed views into the western part of Area B.</li> <li>Intermittent planting and wildflower meadows may be just be visible at the entrance point at Year 1 increasing to Year 15, but Area B is otherwise screened from view by the roadside hedges.</li> </ul>	No Change (Area A) Low (Area B)	No Change (Area A) Medium (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	No Change (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>NEGLECTIBLE (AREA A) MINOR BENEFICIAL</b>	No Change (Area A) Low (Area B)	No Change (Area A) Medium (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	No Change Low (Area A) Low (Area B)	<b>NEGLECTIBLE (AREA A) MINOR BENEFICIAL</b>
<b>M: Hinton Road</b>	Low (Area A) Very Low (Area B)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Views are focused along the hedge lined Hinton Way.</li> <li>Areas A and B are both completely screened from view by intervening higher ground and mature vegetation.</li> <li>It is possible by Year 15 that some of the proposed trees to the west of Area B could be visible above the boundary hedgerow.</li> </ul>	No Change (Area A) No Change (Area B)	No Change (Area A) No Change (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	No Change (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>NEGLECTIBLE (AREA A) NEGLECTIBLE (AREA B)</b>	No Change (Area A) No Change (Area B)	No Change (Area A) No Change (Area B)	High (Area A) Low (Area B)	No Change (Area A) No Change (Area B)	<b>NEGLECTIBLE (AREA A) NEGLECTIBLE (AREA B)</b>

**Summary and conclusions of visual effects**

- 8.4 Public views towards the Site have been assessed from a range of locations that reflect the presence of people in the landscape and where there is likely to be visibility of the Site proposals. Thirteen representative viewpoints (A-M) have been assessed following consultation with SCDC landscape officer on suitable locations.
- 8.5 The effects and appearance of the proposed retirement village (Area A) and the proposed semi-natural open space (Area B) are markedly different and are considered separately below.
- 8.6 The most open public aspects from roads of Area A are from Haverhill Road (Viewpoints C, D, E, G, H and I) which runs directly past the Site but where a strong continuous boundary hedge also



- provides some visual enclosure from the Site. In close proximity to the Site it is considered that the proposed development, and most noticeably the two-storey care home, would be clearly evident from Haverhill Road above the hedges and at the new site entrance. At the closer locations e.g. Viewpoints D and G there would be up to a Major/Moderate Adverse effect at Year 1. This would reduce to Moderate or Minor adverse (depending on locations) as the proposed structure planting matures. In the approaches to Stapleford from the north on Haverhill Road (Viewpoints G, H and I) the proposed planting would mature to form gateway copses to offset the initial presence of the proposed built development. In these approaches the existing development on Gog Magog Way and Chalk Hill developments are already visible from this direction.
- 8.7 There would be no views of Area A from Hinton Way due to containing landform and vegetation (as illustrated by Viewpoints L and M).
- 8.8 Views from within Stapleford are limited (as illustrated by Viewpoints A, B and E) where the maximum levels of effect even at Year 1 are assessed as being Minor Adverse. There is one location approaching the village cemetery, which is detached from the village (see Viewpoint F) where there would be a Moderate adverse effect at Year 1 but this would reduce to Moderate/Minor by Year 15 with the growth of the proposed woodland planting belts to the west of the site boundary.
- 8.9 Views from Rights of Way are restricted to a single Route Bridleway S2 to the south-east. This passes through a very open landscape in the Granta Valley with 360 degree views including views up to the chalk hills and towards Stapleford village. The proposed development would be clearly visible to the north-west extending the village limits to a degree and resulting in a Moderate Adverse effect at Year 1 and then reducing to Minor Adverse by Year 15 with the growth of trees on the Site effectively extending the existing village edge character to the north-east. However, the views from the bridleway are wide ranging and not particularly focused towards the Site. The higher ground of Area B will remain as a backdrop to the village in its extended form (including Area A).
- 8.10 There would also be an elevated view of the development from an area of accessible open space, Magog Down to the north-east. This is possible from only part of the access land (Viewpoint J) but does provide two separate panoramic views: i) towards over the Granta Valley including the Site and Stapleford to the south-west and ii) to the west towards Cambridge with Addenbrooks hospital being the most prominent built feature. Receptors at this location are assessed as being of High sensitivity and that there would be a Medium magnitude of change at Year 1 with a Major/Moderate Adverse effect. However, by Year 15 this would reduce to Moderate Adverse with the establishment of the woodland blocks proposed within and around the Site.

- 8.11 The most open existing views from private residential properties are from those adjacent to the Site at Gog Magog Way, Chalk Hill and Haverhill Road. All proposed buildings would be set back a suitable distance to protect residential amenity.
- 8.12 The visual effects of the proposals on Area B are more extensive but more subtle and gradual in change. Planting and seeding at Year 1 will be generally neutral in nature and seen as a change of texture. The growth of planting will establish and create new and beneficial semi-natural features in the landscape. This change would be noticeable from some public locations e.g. Viewpoint J. However, the visual change would be most noticeable when accessing the Site as part of the completed proposals.