

Proposed Single Dwelling Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire

A Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal
In consideration of a proposed single dwelling.

REPORT AND DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Quality Assurance

This document has been prepared and authorised by the Principal Landscape Architect in accordance with ISL Associates Ltd Quality Management procedures.

Document Status

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Appendix 1

Representative Viewpoint Appraisal

Viewpoint	Location
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1.0 Introduction

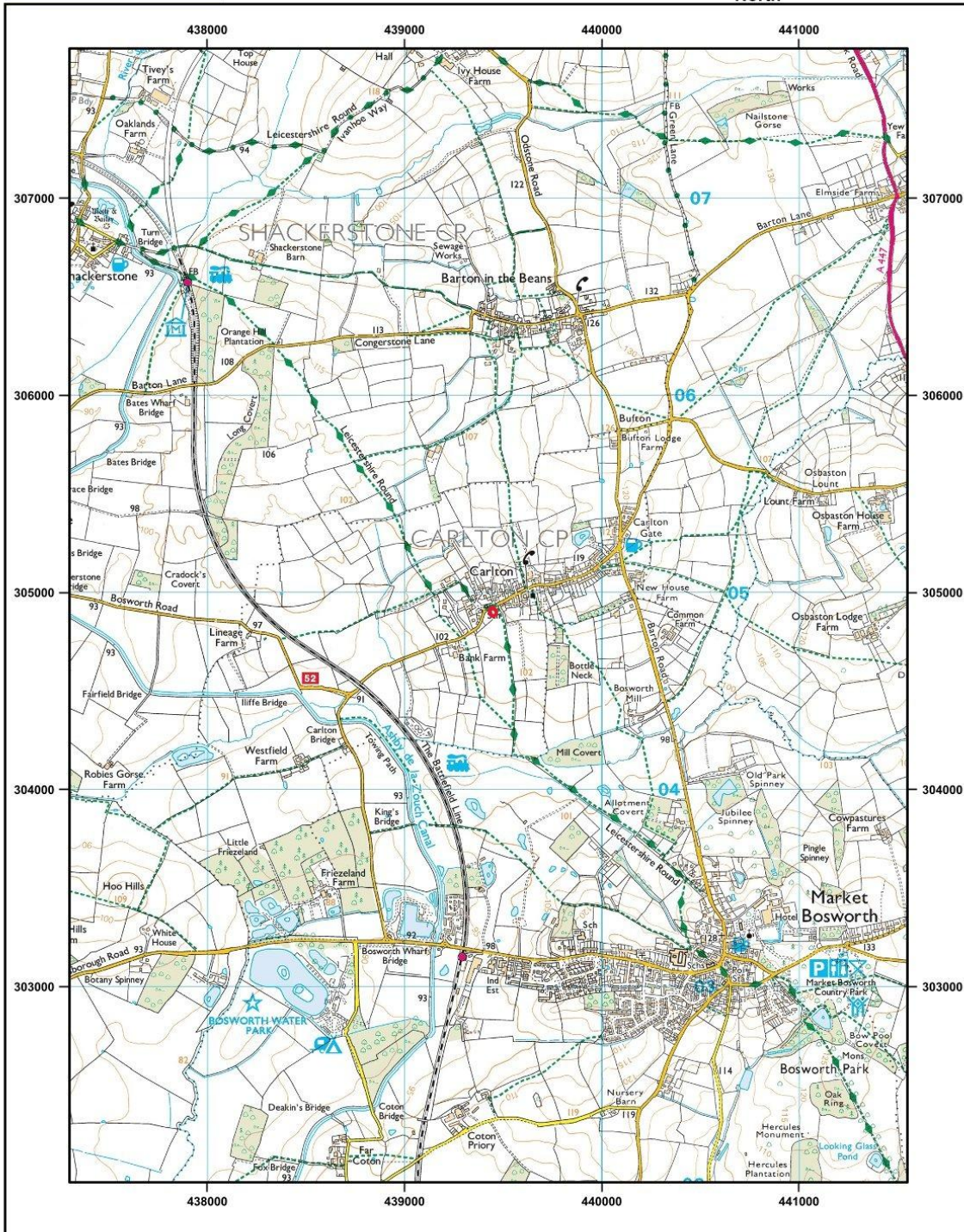
- 1.1 ISL Associates Ltd (Ian Stemp Landscape Associates) has been commissioned by Mr Stephen Mair to prepare a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) in support of written representations in relation to a planning appeal following the refusal of an outline planning application for the erection of a single self-build dwelling on land off Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire. The appraisal has been prepared to assess the likely effects of the proposed development on the character of the site and surrounding landscape, together with its visual effects on publicly accessible receptors. This report should be read in conjunction with the accompanying figures and viewpoint photographs.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared as a proportionate **Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA)** rather than a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). Having regard to the modest scale of the proposed development, the absence of any nationally or locally designated landscapes and the anticipated localised extent of landscape and visual effects, a proportionate appraisal is considered appropriate and consistent with the principles set out in *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3)*.
- 1.3 The location of the application site is illustrated on the following page.
- 1.4 Landscape character and visual amenity are important considerations in the assessment of development proposals, particularly where development is proposed within a rural landscape. The purpose of this appraisal is to establish the existing landscape and visual baseline, identify the characteristics and value of the receiving landscape, and assess the likely landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development. The assessment has been undertaken in a proportionate manner, reflecting the scale and nature of the proposal.
- 1.5 Representative viewpoint photographs have been prepared to illustrate the existing visual baseline and accompany this appraisal. These are presented in **Appendix A** and should be read alongside the assessment contained within Section 7.
- 1.6 The objectives of this Landscape and Visual Appraisal are to:
- Establish the existing landscape character and visual baseline of the site and its surroundings;
 - Review published landscape character assessments and relevant national and local planning policy relating to landscape matters;



- Identify landscape receptors and visual receptors that may experience effects arising from the proposed development;
- Assess the susceptibility and value of the receiving landscape in accordance with the principles of *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3)*;
- Assess the likely effects of the proposed development on landscape character;
- Assess the likely visual effects experienced by representative viewpoints and publicly accessible receptors;
- Identify opportunities for the retention and enhancement of existing landscape features where appropriate; and
- Provide an objective assessment of the likely landscape and visual effects to inform the determination of the planning application.



0 250 500 750 1000 1250 m
Scale 1:25000 - 1cm = 250m - A4 Size



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MAIN STREET
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Location Plan



2.0 Methodology

- 2.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared having regard to the principles contained within the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition* (GLVIA3), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (LI/IEMA, 2013). The appraisal has also been informed by *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (Natural England, 2014), together with relevant Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Notes where appropriate.
- 2.2 The assessment has been undertaken as a proportionate Landscape and Visual Appraisal, reflecting the scale and nature of the proposed development. It considers the likely effects of the proposals on both landscape character and visual amenity through the establishment of an existing baseline, followed by an assessment of the susceptibility and value of landscape and visual receptors, the magnitude of change arising from the proposed development and the resulting significance of effects.
- 2.3 GLVIA3 does not prescribe a fixed methodology for determining the significance of landscape and visual effects. Instead, it advocates the exercise of informed professional judgement, taking account of the sensitivity of the landscape resource or visual receptor together with the magnitude of change arising from the proposed development. This approach has been adopted throughout this appraisal.
- 2.4 An essential component of the assessment comprised a detailed field survey undertaken within the application site and the surrounding area. The survey included inspection from public highways, Public Rights of Way and other publicly accessible locations from which the site could reasonably be experienced. Particular attention was given to landscape character, settlement pattern, landform, vegetation, existing landscape features and the availability of views towards the application site.
- 2.5 Representative viewpoint photographs were obtained during the field survey to record baseline conditions and illustrate the relationship between the application site and the surrounding landscape. These photographs are reproduced in **Appendix A** and support the assessment but should not be regarded as a substitute for site observation or an exact representation of the human visual experience.
- 2.6 The majority of photographs were captured using an Apple iPhone 17 Pro Max. Images were taken using a focal length broadly equivalent to a 50 mm lens on a full-frame camera in order to provide a perspective comparable with that experienced by the human eye. The photographs are intended to



assist the reader in understanding the baseline conditions and are illustrative rather than definitive.

- 2.7 The proposed development may also be visible from private residential properties and other privately owned land that was not publicly accessible during the field survey. Where appropriate, potential visual effects have been considered through professional judgement informed by field observations, mapping, aerial photography and the relationship between landform, vegetation and existing built development.
- 2.8 All photographs were taken from ground level and therefore do not necessarily represent views available from upper-storey windows or other elevated locations.
- 2.9 Having regard to the nature and scale of the proposed development, the local topography, existing vegetation and the anticipated extent of visibility, the study area extends to approximately 2 kilometres from the application site. Beyond this distance it is considered unlikely that the proposed development would give rise to material landscape or visual effects.
- 2.10 The field survey was undertaken during the summer period, when deciduous trees and hedgerows were generally in full leaf. Consequently, the assessment reflects visibility under conditions of seasonal vegetation cover, with intervening vegetation providing a degree of filtering and screening. It is recognised that visibility may be greater during the winter months when deciduous vegetation is not in leaf and vegetation cover is reduced.
- 2.11 The field survey was supplemented by a desk-based review of published information, including:
 - Ordnance Survey mapping;
 - aerial photography and historic mapping;
 - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
 - relevant Local Plan policies;
 - published Landscape Character Assessments;
 - MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside);
 - Public Rights of Way mapping; and
 - other relevant environmental and planning information.
- 2.12 This appraisal has been prepared by a Chartered Landscape Architect with extensive experience in landscape and visual assessment. The findings represent an objective and balanced professional judgement based upon site observations, published guidance and an understanding of the local landscape context.

**Assessment Framework**

- 2.13 The assessment of landscape and visual effects has been undertaken through the exercise of professional judgement, informed by the principles of GLVIA3. The assessment considers the sensitivity of the landscape resource or visual receptor together with the magnitude of change arising from the proposed development in order to determine the significance of effects.

Landscape Receptors

- 2.14 Landscape effects have been assessed by considering:
- the susceptibility of the landscape resource to the proposed development;
 - the value of the landscape resource; and
 - the magnitude of landscape change.
- 2.15 Landscape susceptibility reflects the ability of the receiving landscape to accommodate the proposed development without undue adverse effects on its character. Landscape value has been informed by consideration of:
- landscape condition;
 - scenic quality;
 - rarity;
 - representativeness;
 - conservation interests;
 - recreational value; and
 - perceptual qualities.

Visual Receptors

- 2.16 Visual effects have been assessed by considering:
- the susceptibility of the visual receptor;
 - the nature and extent of available views;
 - the magnitude of visual change; and
 - the resulting significance of effect.
- 2.17 The susceptibility of visual receptors varies according to the expectations and activities of those experiencing the view. Receptors whose primary purpose is to appreciate the landscape, such as residents and users of Public Rights of Way, are generally more susceptible to changes in views than motorists or people whose principal attention is focused on other activities.

Magnitude of Change

- 2.18 The magnitude of landscape and visual change has been determined through professional judgement, taking account of:
- the size and scale of the change;
 - the geographical extent of the effect;
 - the duration of the effect;



- the reversibility of the change;
- the proportion of the view affected (for visual effects);
- the degree of contrast with the existing landscape or view; and
- the influence of the proposal on the overall landscape character or visual experience.

Not all of these factors will carry equal weight in every assessment.

Significance of Effect

- 2.19 The significance of landscape and visual effects has been determined through the balanced consideration of receptor sensitivity together with the magnitude of change. Effects may be beneficial, neutral or adverse and are described using the categories Major, Moderate, Minor and Negligible, together with intermediate categories where appropriate.
- 2.20 The significance categories provide a framework for the exercise of professional judgement and should not be interpreted as the outcome of a rigid matrix or scoring system. Consistent with GLVIA3, the assessment recognises that the significance of an effect depends upon the specific circumstances of each receptor and the nature of the proposed change.
- 2.21 The following tables provide a general guide to the terminology used throughout this appraisal. They are intended to assist interpretation of the assessment and do not represent a rigid or formulaic approach. Consistent with the principles of GLVIA3, the significance of landscape and visual effects has been determined through professional judgement, informed by receptor susceptibility and value, together with the magnitude of change resulting from the proposed development.

Table A.1 – Criteria for Determining Landscape Susceptibility

Susceptibility Definition

High	Landscapes that are particularly susceptible to the type of development proposed and have limited ability to accommodate change without materially affecting their character.
Medium	Landscapes that are capable of accommodating some change without fundamentally altering their character, although noticeable effects may occur.
Low	Landscapes that are generally capable of accommodating the proposed development without material alteration to their defining characteristics.
Negligible	Landscapes with very limited susceptibility to the proposed development where little or no change to landscape character would be expected.

Table A.2 – Criteria for Determining Landscape Value

Value	Definition
High	Landscapes of recognised national or regional importance, or landscapes possessing a combination of exceptional scenic quality, rarity, intact character, conservation interest or strong perceptual qualities.
Medium	Landscapes that make an important contribution to local character and possess good scenic quality, intact landscape structure or recognised local value but are not subject to national designation.
Low	Landscapes of limited scenic quality or local distinctiveness where landscape characteristics have been modified or fragmented, but which nevertheless contribute to the local landscape resource.
Negligible	Landscapes of very limited value with little contribution to local landscape character or visual amenity.

**Table A.3 – Criteria for Determining the Magnitude of Landscape Change**

Magnitude	Criteria
High	The proposed development would result in a substantial alteration to the landscape resource through the loss or modification of key characteristics, landscape elements and perceptual qualities. The change would be extensive, long-term and not readily reversible.
Medium	The proposed development would result in a noticeable alteration to the landscape resource affecting important characteristics whilst the underlying landscape character remains recognisable. The change would generally be localised and of medium to long-term duration.
Low	The proposed development would introduce limited changes to the landscape resource affecting a small number of landscape elements. The overall landscape character would remain largely unchanged and the effects would generally be localised.
Negligible	The proposed development would result in barely perceptible change to the landscape resource with little or no discernible influence on landscape character.

**Table A.4 – Criteria for Determining Visual Receptor Sensitivity**

Sensitivity	Definition
High	Occupiers of residential properties; users of Public Rights of Way; walkers, cyclists and others engaged in outdoor recreation where appreciation of the landscape forms an important part of the experience; and users of recognised scenic routes.
Medium	People travelling through the landscape on local roads, railways or other transport routes; visitors to hotels, community facilities and public open spaces; and people at places of work or education where the surrounding landscape contributes to the quality of the environment but is not the principal focus of attention.
Low	People whose principal activity is not related to appreciation of the surrounding landscape or views, including most people at work, users of commercial or industrial premises, participants in organised sport where attention is focused on the activity itself, and users of transport routes where the surrounding landscape is of limited importance to the overall experience.
Negligible	Receptors with little or no opportunity to experience the proposed development or where the view forms an insignificant component of the overall activity being undertaken. This category should be applied sparingly.

**Table A.5 – Criteria for Determining the Magnitude of Visual Change**

Magnitude	Criteria
High	The proposed development would result in a substantial alteration to the existing view, becoming a prominent or defining element within the visual composition and materially influencing the visual experience of the receptor.
Medium	The proposed development would introduce a clearly perceptible change to the existing view, altering important components whilst the overall composition and character of the view remain recognisable.
Low	The proposed development would introduce limited change to the existing view affecting only a small proportion of the visual composition. The proposal would remain compatible with the existing visual context and would not become a dominant feature.
Negligible	The proposed development would result in barely perceptible change to the existing view with little or no discernible influence on visual amenity.
No Change	The proposed development would not be visible or would not materially alter the existing view experienced by the receptor.

**Table A.6 – Criteria for Determining the Significance of Landscape Effects**

Significance	Description
Major Adverse	Fundamental alteration to the character of the receiving landscape resource, resulting in the loss or substantial modification of key landscape characteristics and a material change to sense of place.
Moderate Adverse	Noticeable alteration to important characteristics of the receiving landscape resource whilst the underlying landscape character remains recognisable.
Minor Adverse	Limited changes to the landscape resource that remain generally compatible with the existing landscape character and do not materially alter the overall sense of place.
Negligible Adverse	Barely perceptible adverse changes giving rise to little or no discernible effect on landscape character.
Neutral / No Material Effect	No material alteration to the receiving landscape resource. Existing landscape character and sense of place are retained.
Negligible Beneficial	Barely perceptible improvements to the landscape resource through limited enhancement of existing landscape features or management.
Minor Beneficial	Limited improvements through enhancement of landscape structure, characteristic features or local distinctiveness.



Significance	Description
Moderate Beneficial	Noticeable enhancement of the receiving landscape resource through strengthening of landscape character and improvement of landscape condition.
Major Beneficial	Substantial enhancement of the receiving landscape resource through restoration, creation or reinforcement of key landscape characteristics and sense of place.

**Table A.7 – Criteria for Determining the Significance of Visual Effects**

Significance	Description
Major Adverse	Fundamental alteration to the existing view resulting in a substantial adverse effect on visual amenity.
Moderate Adverse	Clearly perceptible alteration to the existing view affecting important components whilst the overall composition remains recognisable.
Minor Adverse	Limited alteration to the existing view that remains generally compatible with the prevailing visual context and does not materially diminish visual amenity.
Negligible Adverse	Barely perceptible adverse changes resulting in little or no discernible effect on visual amenity.
Neutral / No Material Effect	No material alteration to the existing view or visual amenity experienced by the receptor.
Negligible Beneficial	Barely perceptible improvements to the existing view with little discernible enhancement of visual amenity.
Minor Beneficial	Limited improvements to the composition of the existing view through enhanced landscape structure or improved visual integration.
Moderate Beneficial	Noticeable improvement to the existing view, enhancing visual amenity whilst retaining the overall composition of the view.



Significance	Description
Major Beneficial	Fundamental enhancement of the existing view through substantial improvement in visual composition and visual amenity.

3.0 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024)

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and provides the overarching framework for determining planning applications.
- 3.2 In relation to landscape and visual matters, Section 12 (*Achieving Well-Designed Places*) and Section 15 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment*) are of particular relevance.
- 3.3 Paragraph 131 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:
"...are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping..."
- 3.4 Section 15 seeks to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and requires planning decisions to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and minimising impacts on the natural environment.
- 3.5 The NPPF does not seek to prevent all forms of development within rural areas. Rather, it requires that proposals are appropriately designed, respond positively to their surroundings and conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the landscape where appropriate.
- 3.6 Accordingly, this Landscape and Visual Appraisal considers the extent to which the proposed development responds to the existing landscape context and assesses the likely landscape and visual effects arising from the proposals.

Local Planning Policy

Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan

- 3.7 The statutory Development Plan for the area comprises the Hinckley & Bosworth Core Strategy (2009) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2016). Together, these documents establish the planning policy framework against which the proposed development will be assessed.
For the purposes of this Landscape and Visual Appraisal, the following policies are of particular relevance:

**Policy DM4 – Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation**

3.8 Policy DM4 seeks to ensure that development within the countryside respects the intrinsic character, beauty and openness of the rural landscape and does not result in unacceptable harm to its character or appearance.

3.9 To protect its intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character, the countryside will first and foremost be safeguarded from unsustainable development. Development in the countryside will be considered sustainable where:

a) It is for outdoor sport or recreation purposes (including ancillary buildings) and it can be demonstrated that the proposed scheme cannot be provided within or adjacent to settlement boundaries; or

b) The proposal involves the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting; or diversification of rural businesses; or

c) It significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation and/or

d) It relates to the provision of stand-alone renewable energy developments in line with Policy DM2: Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development; or

e) It relates to the provision of accommodation for a rural worker in line with Policy DM5 -Enabling Rural Worker Accommodation.

and:

i) It does not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside; and

ii) It does not undermine the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements; and

iii) It does not create or exacerbate ribbon development; with Core Strategy Policies 6 and 9; and

iv) If within a Green Wedge, it protects its role and function in line

v) If within the National Forest, it contributes to the delivery of the National Forest Strategy in line with Core Strategy Policy 21

**Policy DM10 – Development and Design**

- 3.10 Policy DM10 requires development to respond positively to local character and distinctiveness, retain important landscape features where practicable, and incorporate high-quality landscaping to assist its integration into the surrounding environment.

Developments will be permitted providing that the following requirements are met:

- a) It would not have a significant adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of nearby residents and occupiers of adjacent buildings, including matters of lighting, air quality (including odour), noise, vibration and visual intrusion; be adversely affected by activities in the vicinity of the site; architectural features;*
- b) The amenity of occupiers of the proposed development would not*
- c) It complements or enhances the character of the surrounding area with regard to scale, layout, density, mass, design, materials and*
- d) The use and application of building materials respects the materials of existing, adjoining/neighbouring buildings and the local area generally; add to the quality of the design and siting; line with Core Strategy Policy 24; emission vehicles are included where feasible;*
- e) It incorporates a high standard of landscaping where this would*
- f) It maximises opportunities for the conservation of energy and resources through design, layout, orientation and construction in*
- g) Where parking is to be provided charging points for electric or low*
- h) An appropriate Sustainable Drainage Scheme is submitted to and approved by the relevant Authority. Schemes should incorporate wildlife areas, ponds, swales and permeable paving where appropriate;*
- i) It maximises natural surveillance and incorporates the principles of Secured by Design and has considered the incorporation of fire safety measures.*

In exceptional circumstances where outstanding, innovative design is demonstrated (particularly where high levels of sustainability are an integral



feature), applications will be considered favourably, even where this may result in some limited conflict with the above criteria.

- 3.11 The adopted Local Plan Proposals Map (See Figure 3), identifies the application site as lying outside the defined Settlement Boundary for Carlton, within land designated as Countryside. The site is not subject to any landscape-related statutory or local planning designations, including Green Wedge, National Forest, Charnwood Forest or Bosworth Battlefield. Accordingly, the principal landscape planning considerations relate to the effect of the proposed development upon local landscape character and visual amenity rather than upon any designated landscape.

Neighbourhood Plans and Other Policy Constraints

- 3.12 There is currently no adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Carlton Parish, and the application site lies outside the designated boundary of the Market Bosworth Neighbourhood Plan. Consequently, there are no neighbourhood planning policies applicable to the site.
- 3.13 There are no statutory landscape designations affecting the application site and consequently landscape effects are principally assessed against the existing character of the local landscape.
- 3.14 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has therefore been prepared having regard to the National Planning Policy Framework, the adopted Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan and the Borough Council's published landscape evidence base, including the Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment, which are considered in the following section.



4.0 Baseline Conditions

4.1 Site Location

The application site is located on the southern edge of the village of Carlton, within the administrative area of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Leicestershire (Figure 1). The site comprises approximately 0.19 hectares of agricultural land positioned immediately south of Main Street and adjacent to existing residential development.

- 4.2 The site occupies a transitional position between the established built form of Carlton and the surrounding agricultural landscape. Existing residential properties lie immediately to the north and east, whilst agricultural land extends to the south and west. The surrounding landscape is characterised by a network of public highways, Public Rights of Way and agricultural fields enclosed by mature hedgerows.

Site Description

4.3 Existing land use.

The application site comprises a small parcel of permanent pasture located on the southern edge of Carlton. The land is currently unmanaged agricultural grassland, enclosed by established field boundaries and forming part of the wider rural landscape surrounding the village. The site measures approximately 0.19 hectares and has no evidence of recent agricultural intensification or built development.

Site boundaries.

- 4.4 The site is enclosed on all sides by established field boundaries. The northern boundary adjoins existing residential properties and their associated garden boundaries, whilst the eastern boundary fronts Main Street. The southern and western boundaries adjoin open agricultural land. The boundaries are generally well-defined by mature native hedgerows supplemented in places by post-and-wire fencing.

Existing vegetation.

- 4.5 Vegetation within the site is limited to semi-improved grassland, with no significant internal vegetation or landscape features. The principal vegetation resource is concentrated along the site boundaries, where established hedgerows and associated verge vegetation contribute to the site's enclosure and its integration within the surrounding landscape.

Trees and hedgerows.

- 4.6 The site is enclosed by mature native hedgerows of varying height and density. The hedgerows provide a continuous vegetated framework around the site and contribute positively to local landscape character. Whilst there



are no mature trees within the site itself, numerous mature trees are present within adjoining residential gardens and along nearby field boundaries, forming an attractive and well-established treed backdrop to the village edge.

Topography.

- 4.7 The site is generally level with only very gentle local variations in ground level. The absence of pronounced landform creates a relatively simple landscape, although the surrounding hedgerows and vegetation limit outward views from within the site and contribute to a contained visual envelope.

Existing built features.

- 4.8 There are no buildings or permanent structures within the application site. Existing built development is limited to the surrounding residential properties immediately north and east of the site. Other features comprise post-and-wire fencing, timber field gates and utility poles with overhead electricity lines, all of which are characteristic elements within the local rural landscape.

Site access.

- 4.9 The site is currently accessed from Main Street via an existing field gate located within the eastern boundary. Main Street forms the principal highway through this part of Carlton and provides direct vehicular and pedestrian access to the surrounding residential area. The site frontage is defined by an established native hedgerow, with the existing access representing the only interruption within the otherwise continuous roadside vegetation.

Landscape Context

- 4.10 The application site lies within a predominantly rural landscape characterised by a mosaic of arable and pastoral farmland surrounding the village of Carlton. Agricultural fields are generally medium-sized and enclosed by mature native hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees, creating a well-defined landscape framework throughout the surrounding countryside.
- 4.11 The wider landscape exhibits a gently undulating landform with intermittent medium-distance views across adjoining farmland. Woodland is generally limited to small copses, shelterbelts and trees associated with farmsteads and settlements, resulting in a landscape that is predominantly open but visually structured by hedgerows, mature trees and occasional woodland blocks.
- 4.12 Carlton is experienced as a compact rural settlement set within this wider agricultural landscape. Existing development is concentrated around the village road network and is softened by mature garden vegetation, hedgerows and trees, which contribute significantly to the landscape setting of the settlement. The transition between the village and the surrounding



countryside is generally defined by established vegetation rather than abrupt changes in land use or built form.

- 4.13 The application site occupies a transitional position at this interface. Whilst the site remains agricultural in character and forms part of the surrounding farmland, it also exhibits a strong visual and physical relationship with the adjacent residential development immediately to the north and east. Mature boundary hedgerows and garden vegetation create a contained landscape setting which integrates the site with both the surrounding countryside and the existing village edge.
- 4.14 The surrounding landscape is readily accessible by a network of local roads and Public Rights of Way, from which the site is experienced within the context of both the village and the wider agricultural landscape. Views towards the site are generally filtered by mature hedgerows and roadside vegetation, with the field itself forming one component of the wider landscape mosaic rather than a visually prominent feature.

Settlement Pattern

- 4.15 Carlton is a small nucleated rural village comprising predominantly residential development focused around Main Street and the local road network. Development is generally compact in form and is interspersed with mature trees and garden vegetation, which contribute to a well-established and verdant settlement edge. Beyond the village, the surrounding landscape remains predominantly agricultural, maintaining a clear distinction between the built form of the settlement and the wider countryside.

Landscape

- 4.16 The application site lies within a predominantly agricultural landscape characterised by a mixture of pasture and arable fields. Farming remains the principal land use beyond the village envelope, with medium-sized fields forming a coherent pattern across the surrounding countryside. The landscape exhibits a distinctly rural character, with relatively few built elements beyond isolated farmsteads and agricultural infrastructure.

Field Boundaries

- 4.17 The agricultural landscape is defined by a well-established network of mature native hedgerows which enclose individual fields and provide a strong landscape framework. Hedgerows vary in height and density but are generally continuous, contributing to landscape enclosure, biodiversity and local distinctiveness. Post-and-wire fencing is present in places but remains visually subordinate to the established vegetation.

**Woodland**

- 4.18 Woodland within the study area is generally limited to small copses, shelterbelts and groups of mature trees rather than extensive woodland blocks. Mature trees are also associated with field boundaries, farmsteads and residential gardens, contributing to the vegetated character of the landscape and providing a varied skyline. The cumulative effect of these landscape features is to create a well-wooded rural setting without restricting the predominantly open agricultural character of the surrounding countryside.

Roads

- 4.19 The local highway network comprises a series of rural roads connecting Carlton with neighbouring settlements including Congerstone, Barton in the Beans, Market Bosworth and Barlestone. Main Street forms the principal route through Carlton and defines the eastern boundary of the application site. Roads are generally enclosed by mature hedgerows and roadside vegetation, with intermittent views across adjoining agricultural land. Footways, street lighting and overhead utility infrastructure are present within the village, reflecting its established residential character.

Relationship with Carlton village

- 4.20 The application site occupies a transitional position on the southern edge of Carlton. It retains its agricultural character whilst exhibiting a close physical and visual relationship with the adjoining residential development immediately to the north and east. Existing dwellings, mature gardens and boundary vegetation form a well-defined settlement edge which is softened by substantial tree cover and hedgerows. The site therefore forms part of the interface between the village and the surrounding agricultural landscape rather than functioning as an isolated parcel of open countryside.

Relationship with the wider landscape

- 4.21 To the south and west, the site forms part of a wider agricultural landscape extending beyond Carlton towards neighbouring settlements. This landscape is characterised by gently undulating farmland enclosed by mature hedgerows, scattered hedgerow trees and occasional woodland blocks. Whilst the site contributes to the continuity of this rural landscape, its immediate relationship with the existing village and the strong vegetated settlement edge distinguishes it from the more expansive agricultural land beyond. The site is therefore experienced within the context of both the wider countryside and the established edge of Carlton, reflecting its transitional landscape position.



Night-time Character

- 4.22 The application site lies on the southern edge of Carlton where the existing night-time environment is influenced by the adjacent village. Main Street is served by street lighting and the surrounding residential properties generate typical domestic illumination associated with a rural settlement. Consequently, the site is not experienced as part of an intrinsically dark landscape.
- 4.23 Beyond the immediate village edge, the surrounding agricultural landscape exhibits lower levels of artificial illumination, consistent with the published Landscape Character Assessment, which identifies areas of little light pollution within the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area. However, the influence of existing settlement lighting is readily apparent in the vicinity of the application site, resulting in a gradual transition between the lit village and the darker countryside beyond.

Published Landscape Character

National Character Area

- 4.24 The application site lies within National Character Area (NCA) 94: Leicestershire Vales, as identified by Natural England. This National Character Area extends across much of central and southern Leicestershire and is characterised by broad, gently undulating clay vales comprising a mosaic of arable and pastoral farmland interspersed with numerous villages, hedgerows, scattered woodland and river valleys.
- 4.25 The key characteristics of the Leicestershire Vales include a predominantly agricultural landscape, medium to large fields enclosed by hedgerows, scattered hedgerow trees, small woodland blocks and a settlement pattern comprising villages and market towns dispersed throughout the rural landscape. Whilst the National Character Area contains extensive areas of open farmland, the character of the landscape is also influenced by mature vegetation associated with settlements, farmsteads and watercourses.
- *An open landscape of gentle clay ridges and valleys underlain by Mercia Mudstone and Lias groups bedrock but with an extensive cover of superficial deposits occasionally giving rise to moderately steep scarp slopes. There is an overall visual uniformity to the landscape and settlement pattern.*
 - *Land use characterised by a mixture of pasture and arable agriculture that has developed on the neutral clay soils.*
 - *Distinctive river valley of the Soar and Swift, with flat flood plains and gravel terraces together with tributaries including the Sence. Riverside*



meadows and waterside trees and shrubs are common, along with waterbodies resulting from gravel extraction.

- Woodland character derived largely from spinneys and copses on the ridges and the more undulating land and from waterside and hedgerow trees and hedgerows. The density, height and pattern of hedgerows varies throughout.
- Diverse levels of tranquillity associated with contrasts between busy urban areas and some deeply rural parts. Large settlements dominate the open character of the landscape. Leicester, Lutterworth, Hinckley and Market Harborough and related infrastructure, including major roads, are often visually dominant.
- Frequent small towns and large villages often characterised by red brick buildings and attractive stone buildings in older village centres and eastern towns and villages. Frequent, imposing spired churches are also characteristic, together with fine examples of individual historic buildings.
- Rich and varied historic landscape, with the nationally important Bosworth Battlefield near Sutton Cheney, prominent historic parklands and country houses, ridge-and-furrow earthworks and important medieval settlement remains, for example at Wistow Hall, Gumley, Knaptoft and Peatling Magna.

- 4.26 National Character Areas provide a strategic description of landscape character across broad geographical areas. Whilst they establish the overall landscape context for the site, more detailed guidance is provided by the Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment, which is considered more relevant when assessing the landscape effects of a small-scale residential development.

Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment

- 4.27 The Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment (2017) identifies the application site as lying within Landscape Character Area J – Barton Village Farmlands. This character area occupies the north-eastern part of the Borough and includes the villages of Carlton, Barton in the Beans, Nailstone and Odstone.
- 4.28 The published assessment describes the landscape as comprising gently undulating farmland characterised by a mixture of arable and pasture land uses, a regular pattern of medium-sized fields enclosed by mixed native hedgerows, scattered mature trees and occasional small woodland copses. The area is noted for its rural and tranquil character, a network of rural lanes,



Public Rights of Way and villages that are well integrated into the surrounding landscape through mature vegetation.

Key Characteristics

- 1) Undulating landform which rises to the east.*
- 2) Mix of arable and pasture farmland.*
- 3) Vegetated character as a result of individual trees, small copses and scattered trees within mixed hedgerows.*
- 4) Regular pattern of medium sized fields which are smaller around settlements, including potential areas of ridge and furrow.*
- 5) Rural, tranquil character with areas of little light pollution.*
- 6) Few main roads with rural lanes lined by ditches, hedgerows and grass verges with little or no street lighting.*
- 7) Small linear hilltop villages of Carlton, Barton in the Beans, Odstone and Nailstone which are well-integrated into the landscape and surrounded by vegetation creating an overall harmonious landscape pattern.*
- 8) The church spire of Nailstone church which is a distinctive landmark on a wooded horizon.*
- 9) Long distance footpaths and public rights of way pass through the area providing recreational amenity.*
- 10) Visitor attractions including the Battlefield Line and Ashby Canal enable appreciation of the landscape and provide evidence of the history of the area.*

4.29 Of particular relevance to the application site are the identified characteristics relating to:

- gently undulating topography;
- mixed arable and pastoral agriculture;
- mature hedgerow boundaries with scattered trees;
- medium-sized field pattern;
- a well-vegetated landscape framework;
- compact rural villages integrated within the surrounding countryside; and
- an extensive Public Rights of Way network providing recreational access through the landscape.



- 4.30 These characteristics provide the principal published reference against which the landscape resource associated with the application site has been assessed.

Relationship of the Site to Published Landscape Character

- 4.31 The field survey confirms that the application site exhibits many of the defining characteristics identified within the published Landscape Character Assessment. The site comprises a small agricultural field enclosed by mature native hedgerows and forms part of a wider landscape characterised by mixed farming, gently undulating landform, scattered mature trees and a strong hedgerow framework.
- 4.32 The surrounding landscape displays the regular pattern of medium-sized agricultural fields identified within the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area. Mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees and occasional woodland blocks contribute to a well-vegetated landscape structure, whilst the wider area retains a distinctly rural character with relatively limited built development beyond the villages.
- 4.33 The field survey also confirms the published description of Carlton as a compact rural settlement that is well integrated within the surrounding landscape by mature vegetation. Existing residential development is softened by garden trees, hedgerows and other planting, creating a vegetated settlement edge rather than a visually abrupt transition between the village and surrounding farmland.
- 4.34 Whilst the application site shares the agricultural characteristics of the wider Landscape Character Area, it also occupies a transitional position at the interface between the established built form of Carlton and the surrounding countryside. Consequently, the site displays characteristics associated with both the wider agricultural landscape and the existing village edge. This relationship is evident in the site's physical enclosure by mature hedgerows, its immediate association with adjoining residential development and its continuing contribution to the wider agricultural setting of the village.
- 4.35 Overall, the site is considered to be representative of the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area whilst also reflecting the locally distinctive characteristics associated with the edge of a compact rural settlement. The published Landscape Character Assessment therefore provides an appropriate context for the subsequent assessment of landscape and visual effects.

**Landscape Value**

- 4.36 GLVIA3 recognises that landscape value may arise from a range of factors including landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreational value, perceptual qualities and cultural associations. The assessment of landscape value therefore considers both statutory and non-statutory designations together with the intrinsic characteristics of the landscape resource.
- 4.37 The application site is not subject to any national or local landscape designation. It does not lie within a National Park, National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), Registered Park and Garden or other nationally recognised landscape designation. Similarly, the site is not identified within the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan as forming part of a locally designated landscape.
- 4.38 The site comprises a small area of permanent pasture enclosed by mature native hedgerows and forms part of the wider agricultural landscape surrounding Carlton. The landscape is generally in good condition, with well-maintained field boundaries and a mature vegetated framework that is characteristic of the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area. These features contribute positively to local landscape character but are representative of the wider locality rather than being uncommon or exceptional.
- 4.39 The surrounding landscape possesses an established rural character, with agricultural land, hedgerows, mature trees and dispersed woodland contributing to its scenic quality. Public Rights of Way within the surrounding area provide opportunities to experience the landscape and contribute to its recreational value, although the application site itself is private agricultural land with no public access.
- 4.40 The site does not contain features of particular landscape rarity or distinctive landform and does not make a recognised contribution to the setting of any nationally designated landscape. Its principal value derives from its contribution to the locally characteristic agricultural landscape and its role within the vegetated transition between Carlton and the surrounding countryside.
- 4.41 Having regard to the published landscape character assessments, the absence of landscape designations and the characteristics observed during the site survey, the landscape resource associated with the application site is considered to be of moderate landscape value. This reflects its representative contribution to the local landscape character whilst recognising that it does



not possess qualities that distinguish it as being of elevated landscape value at either the local or national level.

Landscape Condition

- 4.42 The application site comprises a well-maintained parcel of permanent pasture enclosed by mature native hedgerows. The surrounding agricultural landscape exhibits a coherent field pattern with generally intact boundary features and a well-established framework of hedgerows and mature trees. Existing land management practices appear to maintain the agricultural character of the landscape, with little evidence of fragmentation or visual detractors. Overall, the landscape is considered to be in good condition and remains representative of the wider Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area.

Scenic Quality

- 4.43 The surrounding landscape possesses an attractive rural character derived from its gently undulating landform, agricultural land use, mature hedgerows, scattered hedgerow trees and intermittent woodland. Views are generally contained by vegetation and landform, creating a varied and visually coherent landscape. Whilst the landscape is pleasant and locally attractive, it is characteristic of the wider rural landscape of western Leicestershire and does not exhibit exceptional scenic qualities or dramatic visual features.

Rarity

- 4.44 The landscape characteristics associated with the application site are typical of the Leicestershire Vales and the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area. Permanent pasture, native hedgerows, mature boundary trees and a regular agricultural field pattern are common features throughout the locality. The site does not contain rare landscape features, distinctive landforms or uncommon vegetation communities that would distinguish it from the surrounding landscape.

Representativeness

- 4.45 The application site is considered to be representative of the published landscape character of the area. It displays many of the defining characteristics identified within the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area, including agricultural land use, mature hedgerow boundaries, a coherent field pattern and a close relationship between the village and surrounding farmland. As such, the site provides a typical example of the local landscape character.

Conservation Interests

- 4.46 The application site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory landscape designation. It does not form part of a National Landscape, National Park or



Registered Park and Garden, nor is it identified as a locally designated landscape. The mature hedgerows and boundary vegetation contribute to local biodiversity and landscape character and may provide habitat connectivity within the wider countryside. However, the site does not contain landscape features of recognised national or regional conservation importance.

Recreational Value

- 4.47 The site itself is private agricultural land with no public access. However, the surrounding landscape is accessible via the local road network and a number of Public Rights of Way which provide opportunities to experience the rural landscape. These routes contribute to the recreational value of the wider landscape and allow appreciation of the agricultural setting and surrounding countryside, although the application site does not itself provide a recreational resource.

Perceptual Qualities

- 4.48 The application site exhibits perceptual qualities associated with a rural agricultural landscape. The presence of pasture, mature hedgerows and surrounding farmland contributes to a sense of openness and tranquillity typical of the wider countryside. Nevertheless, the site also exhibits a strong relationship with the existing built form of Carlton, with adjoining residential properties, local roads and associated village activity influencing its character. Consequently, the site is experienced as part of the transitional landscape between the village and the surrounding countryside rather than as an isolated rural landscape.

Overall Landscape Value

- 4.49 Taking these factors into account, the application site is considered to make a **moderate contribution** to the local landscape resource. Whilst it displays the characteristic features of the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area and contributes positively to the rural setting of Carlton, it is neither rare nor subject to landscape designation, and its qualities are representative of the wider agricultural landscape rather than exceptional. This provides an appropriate baseline for the assessment of landscape effects presented in the following sections.

Visual Baseline

- 4.50 The principal visual receptors comprise users of Main Street, Congerstone Lane, Public Rights of Way and surrounding residential properties. Recreational users of Public Rights of Way are considered to have a high sensitivity to visual change owing to their expectation of experiencing and appreciating the surrounding landscape, whilst road users experience generally transient views and are therefore considered to have a medium



sensitivity. Adjacent residential properties also experience views towards the appeal site, although these are generally filtered by existing boundary vegetation and built form.

- 4.51 Visibility of the appeal site is influenced by the gently undulating landform, the existing pattern of development along the southern edge of Carlton and the mature hedgerow and tree network that encloses the site. Views are generally available from sections of the surrounding Public Rights of Way to the south and east, although these are frequently filtered by hedgerows, mature trees and field boundary vegetation. From Main Street and Congerstone Lane, views towards the site are more limited owing to the presence of roadside hedgerows, existing residential development and garden vegetation.
- 4.52 The appeal site is experienced as part of the existing settlement edge rather than as an isolated feature within the wider countryside. Existing residential development to both the east and west of the site forms part of the visual baseline and influences the perception of this part of the village edge. Consequently, the proposed development would be viewed within an established pattern of built form rather than against an undeveloped rural skyline.
- 4.53 Overall, the visual baseline is characterised by a combination of open views from nearby Public Rights of Way and filtered, intermittent views from the surrounding road network, with existing vegetation playing an important role in containing views and defining the transition between the village and the surrounding agricultural landscape.



5.0 Development Proposals

Overview

- 5.1 The appeal relates to the refusal of an outline planning application for the erection of a single self-build dwelling on land off Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire. The proposed development comprises a single detached dwelling together with associated access, parking, domestic garden and landscaping.
- 5.2 The proposed development has been designed to respond to the site's position on the existing southern edge of the village and to integrate with the surrounding landscape through the retention of existing vegetation, the introduction of additional native planting and the careful siting of the proposed dwelling.

Site Layout

- 5.3 The proposed dwelling is located within the eastern part of the site, immediately adjoining the existing settlement edge. Its siting reflects the established pattern of development along Main Street and maintains an area of open paddock to the eastern part of the site, preserving a transition between the proposed development and the surrounding countryside. Please see the following page for development proposals plan.
- 5.4 Vehicular access would be taken from Main Street via a new access point. Whilst a short section of roadside hedgerow would require removal to facilitate access, the majority of the existing boundary hedgerow would be retained.

Landscape Strategy

- 5.5 The proposed landscape strategy has been developed to retain and reinforce the existing landscape framework surrounding the site.
- 5.6 Key elements include:
- Retention of the majority of the existing native boundary hedgerows.
 - Retention of existing mature trees where practicable.
 - Retention of part of the eastern paddock to maintain openness adjacent to the Public Right of Way.
 - Reinforcement of site boundaries through additional native hedgerow planting.
 - New native tree planting to strengthen the settlement edge and soften views of the proposed dwelling.
 - Appropriate soft landscaping associated with the proposed dwelling to integrate the development with its surroundings.



- 5.7 These measures have been incorporated into the design from the outset and form an integral part of the proposed development, responding directly to the landscape characteristics of the site and its relationship with the surrounding countryside.

6.0 Landscape Effects

- 6.1 Landscape effects relate to changes in the physical landscape and its character arising from the proposed development. They consider how the proposal would influence the constituent elements of the landscape, including landform, vegetation, field pattern, settlement pattern and landscape character, together with the susceptibility of the landscape resource to change and the resulting significance of effect. The assessment considers effects during construction, upon completion (Year 1) and following the establishment of the proposed landscape mitigation (Year 15).
- 6.2 The appeal site comprises a small paddock located on the southern edge of Carlton, enclosed by established native hedgerows with scattered mature trees. Although the site contributes to the rural setting of the village, it is experienced in close association with the existing settlement edge and does not form part of an extensive or uninterrupted tract of open countryside. The site is not subject to any national or local landscape designation.
- 6.3 The proposed development would result in the permanent loss of part of the existing paddock and its replacement with a single detached dwelling, associated access, driveway and domestic garden. Whilst this would introduce a localised change in land use and landscape character within the site, the proposal would retain the majority of the existing boundary hedgerows and mature trees that define the site and contribute to the existing landscape framework.

Landscape Susceptibility

- 6.4 Landscape susceptibility reflects the ability of the landscape to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for its underlying character.
- 6.5 The appeal site occupies a small paddock immediately adjoining the existing southern edge of Carlton and is physically and visually associated with the village. Whilst the site contributes to the rural setting of the settlement, it does not form part of an extensive or uninterrupted area of open countryside and is contained by established hedgerows, mature trees and adjacent built development.
- 6.6 The wider **Barton Village Farmlands** Landscape Character Area has the capacity to accommodate limited, appropriately designed development adjoining existing settlements, provided that key landscape characteristics, including the mature hedgerow network, tree cover and the transition between settlement and countryside, are retained and reinforced.



- 6.7 The proposal has been designed to respond to these characteristics through the retention of the majority of existing boundary vegetation, the reinforcement of the landscape framework with additional native hedgerow and tree planting, and the retention of part of the eastern paddock.
- 6.8 Taking these factors into account, the susceptibility of the landscape to the proposed development is considered to be **Medium**.

Landscape Character

- 6.9 The appeal site lies within the **Barton Village Farmlands** Landscape Character Area, characterised by gently undulating agricultural land, irregular field patterns, mature hedgerows, scattered trees and villages set within a well-vegetated landscape.
- 6.10 The proposal would not alter the key characteristics of the wider Landscape Character Area. The underlying landform, field pattern beyond the site, mature hedgerow network and established settlement pattern would remain intact. The development would represent a modest extension to the existing village edge rather than introducing a new or isolated form of development within the wider countryside.
- 6.11 Accordingly, the proposal would give rise to a **localised landscape effect**, confined principally to the appeal site and its immediate surroundings, without materially affecting the character of the wider landscape.

Landscape Elements

- 6.12 The proposal has been designed to retain the majority of the existing landscape structure surrounding the site. Existing native hedgerows and mature trees along the site boundaries would be retained and protected during construction, continuing to define the site and maintain the established landscape framework.
- 6.13 A short section of roadside hedgerow would require removal to facilitate the proposed vehicular access. However, this represents only a limited interruption to the existing boundary and would be offset through the reinforcement of retained hedgerows and the introduction of additional native hedgerow and tree planting.
- 6.14 The eastern part of the existing paddock would also be retained as open space, preserving an element of the site's existing pastoral character and maintaining a transition between the proposed dwelling and the surrounding countryside.



- 6.15 Overall, the proposal retains the landscape features that make the greatest contribution to local landscape character while introducing additional planting that strengthens the existing green infrastructure.

Overall Landscape Effects

- 6.16 The landscape effects of the proposal would be confined principally to the appeal site through the loss of part of the existing paddock and the introduction of built development. Whilst these changes would be permanent, they would occur immediately adjacent to the existing settlement edge and would not materially alter the character or perception of the wider landscape.
- 6.17 The proposed landscape strategy has been developed to retain and reinforce the existing landscape framework through the protection of boundary hedgerows and mature trees, the retention of part of the eastern paddock and the introduction of additional native hedgerow and tree planting. As this planting establishes, the development would become increasingly integrated with the existing village edge, further reducing its influence on the surrounding landscape.
- 6.18 Overall, the proposal would result in a **Minor Adverse** landscape effect at completion. Following the establishment of the proposed landscape mitigation, the residual landscape effect would reduce to **Negligible Adverse**, with the key characteristics of the wider landscape remaining intact.

Night-time Effects

- 6.19 The proposed dwelling would introduce a limited amount of external and internal domestic lighting associated with normal residential occupation. However, the development would extend the existing pattern of lighting associated with the southern edge of Carlton rather than introducing an isolated source of illumination within the wider countryside.
- 6.20 Existing street lighting along Main Street and lighting associated with adjacent residential properties already influence the local night-time environment. Retention of the existing boundary hedgerows together with proposed native tree and hedgerow planting would assist in filtering views of external lighting and reducing light spill.
- 6.21 The proposal would therefore result in a **Minor Adverse** effect on the local night-time landscape character, reducing towards **Negligible Adverse** as the proposed planting matures.



7.0 Visual Effects

- 7.1 Visual effects relate to changes in the appearance of the landscape as experienced by people. They are concerned with how the proposed development would influence existing views and visual amenity, taking into account the sensitivity of the visual receptor, the nature and extent of the proposed change, and the resulting significance of effect. Visual effects are assessed from publicly accessible locations representative of the range of views towards the appeal site and consider the construction phase, the completed development (Year 1) and the residual effects following the establishment of the proposed landscape mitigation (Year 15).
- 7.2 The visual effects of the proposed development have been assessed from eight representative viewpoints selected to reflect the range of publicly accessible views towards the appeal site from surrounding Public Rights of Way and the local highway network. The assessment considers the likely visual effects during construction, upon completion (Year 1) and following the establishment of the proposed landscape mitigation (Year 15). The location of each viewpoint is shown with the corresponding viewpoint photographs presented in **Appendix A**.
- 7.3 Visual receptors comprise users of Public Rights of Way, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists travelling along the surrounding highway network. Recreational users of Public Rights of Way are generally considered to be of **High** sensitivity, reflecting their appreciation of the surrounding landscape, whilst highway users are considered to be of **Medium** sensitivity owing to the more transient nature of their views.
- 7.4 Overall, the assessment demonstrates that visual effects are generally localised and closely related to the immediate surroundings of the appeal site. The proposed dwelling would be experienced in direct association with the existing southern edge of Carlton and would not appear as an isolated feature within the wider countryside.

Public Rights of Way

- 7.5 Public Rights of Way to the south and east of the appeal site provide the principal publicly accessible views of the proposed development. From the majority of these locations, the appeal site is experienced within the context of the existing settlement edge, with mature hedgerows, scattered trees and existing vegetation forming an established landscape framework that filters and contains views.



- 7.6 From the more distant viewpoints, the proposed dwelling would occupy only a small proportion of the available panorama and would be viewed against the backdrop of the existing village. Existing vegetation substantially limits the visual prominence of the proposal, ensuring that the wider agricultural landscape remains the dominant feature within the view.
- 7.7 At intermediate distances, the proposed dwelling would become more readily perceptible. However, the retained boundary hedgerows and existing vegetation would continue to filter views of the development, with visibility generally limited to the upper storey and roofscape from certain viewpoints. The proposal would continue to be experienced as part of the existing settlement edge and would not materially alter the appreciation of the surrounding rural landscape.
- 7.8 The greatest visual effects would occur from the Public Right of Way immediately adjacent to the appeal site (View 4). From this location, the proposed dwelling would replace part of the existing paddock within the foreground of the view, resulting in the most noticeable change to the existing visual composition. Consequently, this viewpoint experiences the highest level of visual effect. However, the proposed landscape strategy has been specifically designed to respond to this sensitivity through the retention of part of the eastern paddock, reinforcement of the Public Right of Way boundary and the introduction of additional native hedgerow and tree planting. These measures would progressively integrate the development into the existing landscape framework and reduce the residual visual effect over time.

Highway Users

- 7.9 Views from Main Street and Congerstone Lane are generally restricted by mature roadside hedgerows, trees and existing vegetation, which provide a strong and characteristic landscape framework around the village.
- 7.10 Whilst a short section of roadside hedgerow would be removed to facilitate the proposed access, the majority of the existing boundary vegetation would be retained and reinforced through additional native hedgerow and tree planting. As a result, the proposed dwelling would remain largely filtered from public view, with visibility generally limited to intermittent views of the upper storey and roofscape.
- 7.11 Views experienced by pedestrians are generally of greater duration than those available to motorists, whose views are typically transient. Nevertheless, the existing vegetation substantially limits visual exposure from the local highway network and ensures that the proposal would be perceived as a



modest addition to the existing settlement edge rather than as a prominent feature within the surrounding countryside.

Overall Visual Effects

- 7.12 The viewpoint assessment demonstrates that visual effects are principally confined to the immediate vicinity of the appeal site and diminish rapidly with increasing distance. Existing hedgerows, mature trees and boundary vegetation provide an effective landscape framework that filters views of the proposed dwelling from many publicly accessible locations.
- 7.13 The proposal would consistently be experienced in association with the existing southern edge of Carlton, reinforcing the established pattern of development rather than appearing as isolated encroachment into the wider countryside. Although the proposal would inevitably introduce localised changes to the existing views, particularly from the Public Right of Way immediately adjacent to the site, these effects are limited geographically and reduce appreciably with distance.
- 7.14 The proposed landscape strategy has been developed to retain and reinforce the existing landscape structure through the retention of existing boundary vegetation, the retention of part of the eastern paddock and the introduction of additional native hedgerow and tree planting. As this planting establishes, the development would become progressively integrated within the existing settlement edge, further reducing its visual prominence.
- 7.15 Overall, the assessment identifies the greatest visual effect from the Public Right of Way immediately adjoining the appeal site, where the proposal would result in a **Major Adverse** visual effect at completion, reducing to **Moderate Adverse** following the establishment of the proposed landscape mitigation. Elsewhere, visual effects are generally assessed as **Minor Adverse** at completion, reducing to **Negligible Adverse** as the proposed landscape mitigation matures. Collectively, the assessment demonstrates that the proposal would not result in significant adverse visual effects across the wider landscape surrounding Carlton.



8.0 Mitigation, Conservation and Enhancement Measures

- 8.1 The proposed development has been designed from the outset to respond positively to the landscape and visual characteristics of the appeal site and its surroundings. Mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design to avoid or minimise adverse landscape and visual effects, whilst reinforcing the existing landscape framework and contributing to the rural setting of Carlton.

Embedded Mitigation

- 8.2 A number of mitigation measures are inherent within the proposed design and have informed the layout of the development from the earliest stages of the design process. These include:

- The siting of the proposed dwelling immediately adjoining the existing southern edge of Carlton, ensuring that the development is experienced as a continuation of the established settlement pattern rather than as isolated development within the wider countryside.
- The retention of the majority of the existing native boundary hedgerows and mature trees, maintaining the landscape structure that defines the site and contributes to the rural character of the village edge.
- The retention of part of the eastern paddock, preserving an element of the site's existing pastoral character and maintaining a transition between the proposed dwelling and the surrounding countryside.
- Limiting the extent of new access works, with only a short section of roadside hedgerow removed where necessary to provide safe vehicular access.

- 8.3 These measures substantially reduce the extent of landscape change and assist in maintaining the existing relationship between the village and the surrounding countryside.

Landscape Enhancement

- 8.4 The proposed landscape strategy extends beyond mitigation by providing opportunities to reinforce and enhance the existing landscape framework.
- 8.5 Additional native hedgerow planting would strengthen existing field boundaries and reinforce the established pattern of enclosure around the site. New native tree planting would supplement the existing tree cover, softening the appearance of the proposed dwelling and strengthening the vegetated character of the settlement edge.



- 8.6 These measures would increase the continuity of native vegetation surrounding the site, contributing positively to local landscape character and enhancing biodiversity through the introduction of additional native species.
- 8.7 As the proposed planting matures, the development would become progressively integrated into the surrounding landscape, reducing its visual prominence and strengthening the transition between the built form of the village and the adjoining countryside.

Residual Effects

- 8.8 Following the establishment of the proposed landscape mitigation, the residual landscape and visual effects of the development would be limited.
- 8.9 Landscape effects would remain confined to the appeal site, with the wider landscape character of the Barton Village Farmlands remaining unchanged. The proposed dwelling would become increasingly assimilated into the existing settlement edge through the maturation of the proposed planting and the retention of the existing landscape framework.
- 8.10 Similarly, visual effects would reduce over time as the proposed hedgerows and trees mature. Whilst localised effects would remain from the Public Right of Way immediately adjoining the appeal site, visual effects from the wider network of Public Rights of Way and the surrounding highway network would become increasingly limited, with the development continuing to be perceived as part of the existing village rather than as an isolated feature within the countryside.
- 8.11 Overall, the proposed mitigation and enhancement measures ensure that the development responds positively to its landscape setting and substantially reduce the long-term landscape and visual effects identified within this appraisal.



9.0 Response to the Landscape Reasons for Refusal

Introduction

- 9.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been prepared in response to the proposed residential development and provides an objective assessment of the likely effects of the development upon landscape character and visual amenity. The assessment has considered the published landscape evidence base, site-specific characteristics, field survey observations and representative viewpoints in accordance with the principles of GLVIA3. The following section explains how the findings of the appraisal relate to the landscape matters identified within the reasons for refusal.

Character and Appearance of the Countryside

- 9.2 The application site forms part of the rural landscape surrounding Carlton and currently comprises a small parcel of agricultural pasture enclosed by mature native hedgerows. Whilst the site contributes to the agricultural setting of the village, it also occupies a transitional position between the established built form of Carlton and the wider countryside.
- 9.3 The assessment has demonstrated that the proposal would introduce a localised change to this transitional landscape. However, the wider landscape framework, including mature hedgerows, existing trees, agricultural field pattern and the prevailing character of the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area, would remain substantially unchanged.
- 9.4 The proposal would therefore not alter the defining characteristics of the wider landscape, which would continue to be experienced as a predominantly agricultural landscape containing a compact rural settlement integrated by mature vegetation.

Relationship with the Existing Settlement Pattern

- 9.5 Field observations confirm that the application site is physically and visually associated with the existing village edge. Residential development already extends along Main Street immediately to the north and east, whilst mature garden vegetation and boundary hedgerows soften the transition between built development and the surrounding countryside.
- 9.6 The proposed dwelling would be read in the context of this existing settlement edge rather than as isolated development within the open countryside. Its position adjacent to existing residential properties reflects the established pattern of development along this part of Main Street and would not fundamentally alter the form or identity of Carlton.

**Visual Effects**

- 9.7 The assessment demonstrates that visual effects would be limited in extent and largely confined to the immediate surroundings of the application site.
- 9.8 The greatest effects would occur from the adjacent Public Right of Way (Viewpoint 4), where the development would inevitably be experienced at close range. Even here, the proposal would remain visually associated with the existing settlement edge and the effects would reduce over time as the proposed planting established.
- 9.9 Elsewhere, mature hedgerows, roadside vegetation, existing garden trees and the undulating landform substantially restrict views of the site. Consequently, visual effects from the wider landscape are assessed as generally Minor Adverse at completion, reducing to Negligible Adverse following establishment of the proposed landscaping.

Landscape Integration

- 9.10 The proposal incorporates a number of embedded design measures intended to assist its integration within the surrounding landscape. These include the retention of the majority of existing boundary hedgerows, the reinforcement of native planting, and the careful siting of the dwelling adjacent to the existing settlement edge.
- 9.11 These measures retain the vegetated framework that currently defines the village boundary and ensure that the proposal would become progressively integrated into the surrounding landscape as planting matures.

Professional Opinion

- 9.12 Having regard to the published landscape character assessments, the field survey, the representative viewpoints and the assessment of landscape and visual effects presented within this appraisal, it is considered that the proposed development would result in localised and limited effects upon landscape character and visual amenity.
- 9.13 The proposal would not materially alter the defining characteristics of the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area, nor would it result in widespread or significant adverse visual effects. Whilst some localised change would occur, particularly in views immediately adjacent to the site, these effects are not considered to amount to unacceptable landscape harm when assessed against the existing settlement context, the scale of the proposal and the proposed landscape mitigation.



10.0 Overall Conclusions

- 10.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has assessed the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development for a single detached dwelling on land south of Main Street, Carlton, in accordance with the principles set out in the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3)*.
- 10.2 The assessment concludes that the appeal site occupies a contained position on the existing southern edge of Carlton, where it is physically and visually associated with the established settlement. Whilst the site contributes to the rural setting of the village, it does not form part of an extensive or uninterrupted tract of open countryside. Existing hedgerows, mature trees and adjacent built development establish a strong landscape framework that contains the site and influences its character.
- 10.3 The proposed development has been designed to respond positively to this context. The siting of the dwelling adjoining the existing settlement edge, together with the retention of the majority of the existing boundary hedgerows and mature trees, the retention of part of the eastern paddock and the introduction of additional native hedgerow and tree planting, represents embedded mitigation that substantially reduces landscape and visual effects.
- 10.4 The assessment identifies that landscape effects would be confined principally to the appeal site and its immediate surroundings. The wider character of the Barton Village Farmlands Landscape Character Area would remain unchanged, with its defining characteristics, including the mature hedgerow network, scattered trees, agricultural field pattern and established settlement pattern, continuing to be clearly evident.
- 10.5 The visual assessment demonstrates that effects are generally localised and diminish rapidly with increasing distance from the appeal site. Existing vegetation filters many views towards the site, ensuring that the proposed dwelling is consistently experienced in association with the existing southern edge of Carlton rather than as isolated development within the wider countryside. The greatest visual effect would occur from the adjacent Public Right of Way (View 4), where the proposal would result in a **Major Adverse** effect at completion, reducing to **Moderate Adverse** as the proposed landscape mitigation matures. Elsewhere, visual effects are generally assessed as **Minor Adverse** at completion, reducing to **Negligible Adverse** following the establishment of the proposed planting.



- 10.6 It is also relevant to consider the wider pattern of development along the southern edge of Carlton. The appeal site is situated between relatively recent residential developments to both the east and west. These developments form part of the existing landscape baseline and demonstrate that the village edge has evolved through a series of incremental additions over time. The proposed dwelling would occupy a contained parcel of land between these established areas of development and would therefore be perceived as part of the existing settlement edge rather than as an isolated encroachment into the wider countryside. This existing pattern of development is an important consideration when assessing the character and appearance of the area.
- 10.7 The Council's reason for refusal concludes that the proposal would result in unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area through an obtrusive extension into the open countryside. Based on the findings of this appraisal, the landscape and visual evidence does not support that conclusion. Whilst the proposal would give rise to localised adverse effects, particularly from the immediately adjoining Public Right of Way, these effects are limited in geographical extent, are moderated through the embedded design and landscape strategy, and do not materially alter the character of the wider landscape or the established settlement pattern.
- 10.8 The proposal would not introduce an isolated source of illumination within the open countryside but would represent a modest extension of the existing pattern of domestic lighting associated with the southern edge of Carlton
- 10.9 Overall, it is concluded that the proposed development represents a modest, logical and well-contained addition to the existing southern edge of Carlton. Subject to the implementation and successful establishment of the proposed landscape strategy, the development would integrate with the existing landscape framework and would not give rise to significant adverse landscape or visual effects across the wider area. Accordingly, in landscape and visual terms, the evidence presented within this appraisal does not support the landscape-related concerns identified within the Council's reason for refusal.