PARCEL NLP412, WARREN FARM PHASE II, AMPTHILL

Landscape & Visual Appraisal

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**APPENDIX 1** VISUAL ASSESSMENT
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd has been appointed by Denison Investments Ltd to undertake a Landscape Visual Appraisal relating to the potential exclusion of Parcel NLP412, Warren Farm Phase II, Ampthill from the Green Belt for residential development. The location and context of the site is illustrated on Plan ASP1 Site Location and Plan ASP2 Site and Setting.

1.2. This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) is not a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) but seeks to introduce the principle of development into the context of the existing landscape character, visual environment and landscape related policy to assess the ability of the site to integrate future development. Within their publication ‘Site Assessment Technical Document – Appendix D: Preliminary Site Assessment Results’ (July 2017), Central Bedfordshire identifies the site as parcel NLP412. In this document the site is reported to have failed at the Stage 1B of the assessment due to the potential coalescence it would cause.

1.3. The assessment of potential effects has been derived from guidance provided within GLVIA3 (Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3 Edition) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment in April 2013. The methodology is contained within Appendix 1 of this document.

1.4. This assessment should be read alongside the other supporting material which accompanies this report.
2. BASELINE ASSESSMENT

2.1. The site is located on the southern edge of Ampthill built-up area, adjacent to the consented residential scheme of Warren Farm Phase I (CB/12/01496/OUT). The site consists of a previous managed commercial poplar plantation of approximately 4.2 hectares located to the north of the A507. The site is directly adjacent to the southern built-up edge of Ampthill and surrounded to the west by a floodlit Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and to the south and east by poplar plantations.

2.2. The site is located outside of Ampthill settlement boundary and is situated at approximately 578 metres from the closest Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings related to the site, the closest being The Wooden House (Grade II) located approximately 581 metres to the north-west of the site.

2.3. The site forms a small part of a larger gap between the built-up areas of Ampthill and Flitwick located to the south. This gap is part of Green Belt which has for main purpose to preserve openness. It is acknowledged that built form is present within the Green Belt to the south of the site, as it comprises a variety of buildings such as school buildings, sewage works, etc. The location and setting of the site regarding these designations is illustrated on ASP2 Site and Setting.

2.4. The site is gently sloping, from 67m AOD in north-western part of the site to 64m AOD in the south-eastern part of the site. At a larger landscape scale, the site is located within a small-medium scale valley and is surrounded to the north-west, south-west and south by gentle slopes on which the built-up areas of Ampthill and Flitwick are located.

2.5. The site comprises a managed commercial poplar plantation comprising wood debris and patches of rough grassland. The southern and eastern boundaries are bordered by existing poplar plantation which separate the site from the A507 and affords it a strong degree of visual and physical containment. Some well-established trees and shrubs form the western boundary. The north-western and north-eastern site boundaries are adjacent to the new residential development of Warren Farm Phase
I. The north-western site boundary is characterised by a very limited extent of vegetation, while the north-eastern boundary is bordered by a row of poplar trees. The location and setting of the site is illustrated on ASP1 Site Location Plan and ASP2 Site and Setting.

2.6. The immediate context to the site is made up of residential developments associated with Ampthill to the north, an Upper School and Community College to the west, while a number of agricultural fields, poplar plantations, woodland copses and sewage works are located beyond the A507 to the south and east of the site.

2.7. Other than the patches of overgrown rough grassland and wood debris, the internal components of the site offer little in the way of landscape value. However, the more established vegetation structure and mature hedgerow and trees along the western boundary provides a strong degree of containment and visual separation from Redborne Upper School and Community College.

2.8. A number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are located within the setting of the site which provide links between Ampthill and the wider countryside. There are no footpaths located within the site or within its immediate setting, the closest being the footpath FP5, located approximately 590m to the east of the site. This footpath is part of the long distance recreational route known as ‘John Bunyan (JB) Trail’ that bisects the built-up area of Ampthill to the north of the site. Other PRoW located within the site setting are shown on ASP2 Site and Setting Plan.

2.9. A network of footpaths and bridleways also run through the wider landscape to the north of Ampthill. Refer to Plan ASP1 Site Location Plan and ASP2 Site and Setting Plan.

Landscape Policy

and spatial strategy to guide development in the north area of Central Bedfordshire up to 2026.

2.11. The Council is in the process of preparing a New Local Plan. A Draft Local Plan was published in July 2017 for public consultation. It sets out a proposed set of policies regarding the future for the district, identifying where new homes, jobs and infrastructure will be created and how the countryside will be protected.

2.12. As it is proposed for new development, the site is covered by a number of landscape related policies in the Adopted Core Strategy and Development Management Document:

**Core Strategy Policies**

- Policy CS14: High Quality Development
- Policy CS16: Landscape and Woodland
- Policy CS17: Green Infrastructure
- Policy CS18: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

**Development Management Policies**

- Policy DM4: Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes
- Policy DM6: Development Within Green Belt Infill Boundaries
- Policy DM14: Landscape and Woodland
- Policy DM15: Biodiversity
- Policy DM16: Green Infrastructure
- Policy DM17: Accessible Greenspaces

2.13. Although not formally adopted yet, the Draft Local Plan sets out several policies that are considered to be relevant in terms of landscape character and setting. These policies are the following:

- Policy EE1: Green Infrastructure
- Policy EE2: Enhancing Biodiversity
- Policy EE3: Nature Conservation
• Policy EE4: Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows
• Policy EE5: Landscape Character and Value
• Policy EE6: Tranquillity
• Policy EE12: Outdoor sport, leisure and open space

2.14. The site is situated outside the defined Settlement Envelope for Ampthill and within the Green Belt. This designation is covered by several saved policies in the adopted Core Strategy (July 2008) and Draft New Local Plan (June 2016).

2.15. Policy DM4 – Development Within and Beyond Settlement Envelopes:
“(…) Where no land is available within the settlement, a site adjacent to the settlement may be granted planning permission. Such development should make the best use of available land and lead to more sustainable communities”.

2.16. Policy DM6 – Development Within Green Belt Infill Boundaries:
“The Council will consider infill development acceptable in principle within the defined Green Belt Infill Boundaries. Particular attention will be paid to assessing the quality of development proposed and the likely impact on the character of the settlement and its surroundings”.

Landscape Character

2.17. At national level, the site is located in the centre of the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge (NCA90). This assessment provides a useful introduction to the landscape of the region but is too broad to apply at a more site-specific level.

2.18. Central Bedfordshire Council Landscape Character Assessment identifies the site as being located within the Greensand Valley Character Area (7), which has the following key characteristics:

• “The small-medium scale valleys of the River Flit and River Ouzel.”
- Surrounded largely by the enclosing landform of the Wooded Greensand Ridge.
- Underlying solid geology of Lower Greensand with alluvium and drift deposits of valley gravels associated with the Rivers.
- Rivers and associated wetland sites are important for biodiversity.
- Mixed woodland blocks and shelterbelts increase the sense of enclosure.
- Field and roadside boundaries are variable ranging from mature shelterbelts to scrubby degraded margins”.

2.19. The Greensand Valley Character Area (7) is subdivided into two landscape character types, which are the Flit Greensand Valley (7A) and the Ouzel Greensand Valley (7B). The landscape character assessment identified the site within the Flit Greensand Valley (7A) Landscape Character Type, which has the following key characteristics:

- “A medium scale valley cutting through, the diagonal band of Greensand with small areas of Oxford Clay and Gault Clay. Much of the valley is overlain by alluvium/peat with narrow terraces of river gravel. A mostly open landscape.
- Elevation ranges from 40m AOD - 85m AOD - becoming more elevated in the west where the valley abuts Mid Greensand Ridge (6b) and Toddington-Hockliffe Clay Hills (8a). The ridge provides a prominent backdrop and strong wooded context to the valley.
- Flitwick Moor SSSI valley mire system – alkaline fen and acid springs. The areas of peat are an archaeological resource.
- The valley was formerly the location for a number of traditional industries with a series of water mills (only one at Flitwick remains).
- Historic interest includes significant late prehistoric and Roman sites in upper reaches, plus medieval castles at Flitwick and Cainhoe.
- Flitwick Manor and Chicksands Priory are listed as Grade II parklands on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.
- Low lying areas of riverside farmland, including areas of improved pasture (with sheep, cattle and horses grazing), wet meadow and arable fields.
- Variable field and roadside boundaries - ranging from mature shelterbelts to scrubby degraded margins, sometimes also marked by drainage channels.
- Bordered by the urban areas of Flitwick and Ampthill as well as the smaller settlements of Shefford and Clophill. The presence of housing on the edge of the valley gives the impression that it is more settled than it is.
- At Chicksands Priory Estate - the British Intelligence and Security Centre is located on a former American military base (largely inaccessible and hidden from view).
- The A507 runs parallel to and crosses the River Flit - and dominates the valley both visually and audibly. Pedestrian steps and bridges crossing over the road are conspicuous. A busy roundabout connects the A507 to the A6 close to the settlement of Clophill.
- The small hamlet of Water End (characterised by red brick, thatch, weatherboarding and clay tiles) and the southern edge of Clophill.
- Two areas of ancient woodland: Upper Alders and Campton Plantation. A mostly open landscape but small areas of wet woodland are present; willows/ alders often line ditches.
- Past and present mineral extraction operations (fullers earth) - a restored quarry site, southeast of Clophill, forms a small complex of ponds and fringing vegetation.
- Scattered farmsteads occur in the west - where the valley widens and an arable land use dominates. Locally distinctive farm buildings occur in the area between Maulden and the Flit - many farms traditionally having onion lofts and sheds - although few now remain.”

2.20. At a more site-specific level, Aspect has undertaken an assessment of the landscape character of the site and its immediate setting. This
assessment identifies that the site is located within a settlement fringe landscape, being adjacent to an existing built-up area. The established treescape lining most of the site boundaries creates a robust edge to the site and creates a strong degree of separation between the site and its setting to the west, east and south. The proximity of existing residential built-up areas to the north and the presence of school buildings to the west gives an urban edge character to the site. Upon completion of the new residential development (Warren Farm Phase I) being currently built adjacent to the site's northern boundary, it is considered that the settlement fringe character of the site will be reinforced. The extent of vegetation within the context of the site, including vegetation structure lining its western, eastern and southern boundaries affords it a strong degree of physical and visual containment.

2.21. In terms of landscape quality, it is considered that the site is influenced by its proximity to the existing urban edge, detracting from the remoteness and tranquillity of the site. The established vegetation associated with the site and its immediate context, coupled with the sites topography ensures that the site is not apparent within the wider setting and as such does not contribute to the scenic quality of the area. There are no features associated with the site that are considered rare or representative in landscape terms. In terms of recreation value, it is acknowledged that the site is not publicly accessible and as such it is considered that the recreational value is low. There are no known historic associations with the site or its immediate setting. The site is covered by a Green Belt designation, however, this is a planning designation which has no weight in terms of landscape value. To that end, it is considered that the value of the site is low.

2.22. The site is distinctly separate from the Green Belt area that extend to the west and east and which has limited intervisibility with the site. The sites localised setting is already largely developed and urbanised to the north, west, south and south-west. It is considered that the value of the site is low, based on the above analysis. In terms of susceptibility to change as a result of residential development, it is considered that the settlement edge landscape, with the existing built edge and the
presence of urbanising features, means that the site has some capacity to accommodate change. Furthermore, the significant vegetation structure surrounding the site is made of mature poplar plantations that ensure a physical gap of approximately 670m between the site the settlement edge of Flitwick (Refer to Plan ASP2). It is considered that the site has a medium susceptibility to change as result of sensitively designed residential development. To that end, it is considered that the localised landscape character, in which the site is set, is of low sensitivity.

Visual Environment

2.23. A visual assessment of the site and its setting has been undertaken and a viewpoint local plan and a series of photographs are included within Appendix 1 that illustrate the site within its setting. The photographs have been taken in accordance with published guidance from the Landscape Institute, from publicly accessible locations.

2.24. Viewpoint 1 is taken from the new residential development located to the north of the site (Warren Farm Phase I, CB/12/01496/OUT) approximately 90m to the north of the site. This views illustrates the relationship between the site and the settlement edge of Ampthill. In the foreground, the construction materials associated with the new residential development of Warren Farm Phase I is visible. In the middle ground, the poplar treebelt located along the site’s north-eastern boundary provide a strong degree of visual containment to the rest of the site. A number of lighting poles associated with Redborne Upper School and Community College are present in the background.

2.25. Viewpoint 2 is taken from Redborne Upper School and Community College, approximately 215m to the west of the site. From this location, the dense vegetation structure associated with the site’s western boundary filters efficiently the views towards the inner area of the site. In the foreground and middle ground, the car park and sports courts associated with Redborne Upper School & Community College are visible. It is considered that sensitively designed residential proposals would not be visible within the site if the existing vegetation structure
associated with the site’s western boundary is maintained and enhanced where required.

2.26. Viewpoint 3 is taken from the A507, approximately 160m to the south-west of the site. It looks north-east towards the site, which is located beyond vegetation structure lining the A507 and a mature poplar plantation. There are no views of the site available from Viewpoint 3 due to this intervening vegetation. It is considered that, if preserved, the carefully designed proposals for a residential development built within the site would not be visible from this part of the A507 road corridor.

2.27. Viewpoint 4 is also taken from the A507 and looks north-west towards the site, which is not visible due to the presence of the intervening vegetation structure made of mature trees and shrubs. Along the A507, the presence of an established treescape provides a strong degree of separation between the road corridor and the site located further to the north. Considering that the existing vegetation structure located to the south of the site will be preserved, it is assumed that carefully designed residential proposals built within the site would not be perceptible on the approach to Flitwick and Ampthill.
3. Potential Landscape and Visual Effects

3.1. Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition (GLVIA3) prescribes the need for a site assessment to determine whether there are physical qualities or components of the site of value.

3.2. In terms of landscape quality, it is considered that the site is influenced by its proximity to the existing settlement edge, detracting from the remoteness and tranquillity of the site. The established vegetation structure associated with the site and its immediate context, coupled with the site’s low-lying topography ensures that the site is not apparent within the wider setting and as such does not contribute to the scenic quality of the area. There are no features associated with the site that are considered rare or representative in landscape terms. The site is not publicly accessible and as such it is considered that its recreational value is low. There are no known historic associations with the site or its immediate setting. It is acknowledged that the site is located within the Green Belt, however, as the Green Belt is a planning designation, it has no weight in terms of landscape value. Therefore, it is considered that the value of the site is low.

3.3. It is acknowledged that the development of this site for residential use would extend built form into previously undeveloped parcel forming part of a gap between the existing built-up areas of Ampthill and Flitwick. The site is however well related to the existing settlement edge of Ampthill and is located in proximity to a locally important road corridor which has an urbanising influence. Furthermore, the site is well related to the adjacent site where the new residential development of Warren Farm Phase I is currently being built. Upon construction, this new development will increase the sense of urban fringe character associated with the site.
Landscape Related Policy

3.4. The context of the immediate site setting is already characterised by the neighbouring built form associated with Ampthill. The retention and reinforcement of the existing boundary vegetation with additional planting and the implementation of internal planting where appropriate will ensure that a robust green edge to the site is maintained and enhanced where required. The introduction of a sensitively designed scheme could be integrated without significant harm to the existing key characteristics of the sites setting. The development of the site would be perceived within the context of existing residential properties, road corridors and other urbanising features ensuring that it is not introducing new or alien components into the fabric of the landscape. The use of a considered and appropriate palette of materials, which have been informed by the local vernacular will ensure that the proposed residential development can be integrated into its setting. The incorporation of a comprehensive scheme of landscaping will also assist the integration of the proposals creating a high-quality environment in which to live.

3.5. It is therefore considered that the proposed development of the site for residential use can be integrated without significant harm to the existing landscape character of the site and its localised and wider setting.

Visual Environment

3.6. Within the context of the existing visual environment, it is considered that the site can integrate appropriately designed residential development without compromising the amenities or qualities of the localised setting. As shown within the visual assessment, views of the site are localised, with the primary receptors being nearby residential dwellings to the north. Within these views, the site is not readily apparent, with the boundary vegetation affording a degree of visual and physical containment to the site. It is considered that there are no long-distance views of the site, due to the strong degree of containment afforded to the site by the built-up area of Ampthill, surrounding established treescape and low-lying nature of the site. The presence of the established vegetation cover within the localised site context and the
retention of boundary trees where appropriate will ensure that carefully designed built form will not appear prominent or overbearing. The retention and enhancement of the landscaped boundaries will soften the proposed residential development and assist in the integration of the built form. The retention of these features will also ensure that any built form is afforded an appropriate set back from the new residential development of Warren Farm Phase I, Redborne Upper School and Community College and the A507 road corridor. It allow preserving an appropriate buffer of approximately 670m between the settlements of Ampthill and Flitwick which will maintain a sense of openness.

3.7. Therefore, it is considered that sensitively designed proposals can be integrated without significant harm to the visual environment and related receptors. Any views of the proposed residential development would be highly localised and seen within the context of existing built form.

Review of Site Allocation within Emerging Local Plan Process

3.8. The site is assessed in the Central Bedfordshire ‘Site Assessment Technical Document – Appendix D: Preliminary Site Assessment Results’ (July 2017). The above-mentioned document reports that the site has failed at the Stage 1B of their assessment due to the potential coalescence it would cause between the settlements of Flitwick and Ampthill.

3.9. It is acknowledged that the site is located within the Green Belt. However, it is considered that the scale of the site and existing treescape made of mature poplar plantations would be sufficient to provide a permanent green buffer of approximately 70m to 120m (Refer to Plan ASP2) between the site and the A507. The proposals incorporate a strong landscape strategy, the site would preserve appropriate permanent buffers in order to maintain the sense of openness between the settlements of Ampthill and Flitwick. Furthermore, the landscape proposals associated with this area would allow the site self-containment and mitigating the views towards the proposals.
3.10. It is therefore considered that, if designed appropriately, the development of the site would constitute a logical urban extension to the settlement and would not contribute to the coalescence of Ampthill and Flitwick. The site presents opportunities to provide sustainable land for a carefully designed residential development within the localised context of the southern part of Ampthill that can be integrated without harm to the wider landscape setting. Therefore, from a landscape perspective, it is considered that the site could be accommodate a residential development that is sensitively designed.

**Green Belt Review**

3.11. As identified within section 2 of this report, the site is located within the Green Belt. Within the NPPF, Paragraph 80 identifies that the Green Belt serves five purposes. These are outlined as being:

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

3.12. In addition, Paragraph 85 states that “When defining boundaries, local planning authorities should:

- “ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;”
- not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;
- where necessary, identify in their plans areas of ‘safeguarded land’ between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;
- make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the
permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following a Local Plan review which proposes the development;

- satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period; and
- define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.”

3.13. It is considered that the proposed development of the site would form a logical extension to Ampthill, with existing development located to the north and west of the site. Existing residential development to the north of the site already forms a notable urbanising feature within the site’s localised and wider setting and any proposed development would be seen within this context. The A507 forms a logical extension to the settlement of Ampthill. Furthermore, the mature poplar plantation to the south of the site affords a strong level of physical and visual containment restricting intervisibility between the site and the settlement of Flitwick located in its wider setting.

3.14. The permanent retention of existing poplar plantations to the south and west of the site will provide an appropriate offset from the A507 road corridor and wider setting of the site to the south. Additional planting will be implemented within the site and where potential breaks in boundary vegetation occur. The proposals would accord with the NPPF paragraphs 85 and 80, ensuring boundaries are redefined utilising physical and permanent features such as the treebelts and roads with landscape buffers to define the new Green Belt edge. A suitable undeveloped ‘gap’ would be maintained between the redefined Green Belt edge and existing settlements of Ampthill and Flitwick, as illustrated by Viewpoints 3 and 4 within Appendix 1. Proposals would ensure that the separate settlements within the site’s localised and wider context will not merge through the use of the physical and permanent features as well as maintaining a substantial undeveloped ‘gap’, and development of the site would therefore not result in coalescence. This also ensures that the setting and separate characters of the settlements are preserved.
3.15. The third purpose of the Green Belt is to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. New development proposals will inevitably require some green field land, however the site is not of particularly high landscape value, is influenced by its urban fringe setting and is well contained by adjoining residential development. It is considered that the extent of mature vegetation within the site’s localised and wider setting would ensure that any impact upon the wider countryside as a result of development would be localised. It is considered that whilst proposed development of the site would develop some green field agricultural land on the southern edge of Ampthill, it would not represent a significant encroachment into the countryside, being contained by the existing urbanising features that are already characterised by the urban edge, and the opportunities that are provided to form a new logical Green Belt boundary through the retention and enhancement of the southern site boundary and adjacent poplar plantations.

3.16. In terms of the fourth purpose, this is not considered relevant for this particular site. In terms of the fifth purpose of Green Belts to assist in urban regeneration, at a prima facie level it seems that the use of a Green Belt site is likely to discourage rather than encourage the use of derelict and other urban land. However, Councils are struggling to meet development targets on previously developed land alone and as such some green field sites of lower landscape value need to be considered particularly in terms of the opportunity to meet housing needs and provide a comprehensive scheme with wider social and economic benefits. Consequently, it is considered that the fifth purpose of Green Belts is not being materially compromised by any proposed development within the site.

3.17. It is therefore considered that the exclusion of the site from Green Belt will not significantly affect the characteristics of the surrounding Green Belt designation.

3.18. While it is acknowledged that the development of this site would extend built form into greenfield land, the site is well related to the existing urban edge, with development to the north, west, south, south-west and
south-east with a number of urbanising influences extending to the south. The site presents opportunities to provide sustainable land for residential use within the localised context of the northern settlement edge of Flitwick that can be integrated without harm to the wider landscape setting or Green Belt purposes. Opportunities exist for a redefined Green Belt boundary that could create a more robust and enduring Green Belt edge through the retention and enhancement of the site southern boundary and adjacent poplar plantations. It is considered that development of the site for residential uses comply with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, and would not significantly affect the characteristics of the surrounding Green Belt designation. It is therefore considered that the site could be developed in accordance with landscape policies and it is a suitable site in landscape and visual terms for residential development.
CONCLUSIONS

3.19. Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd have received instruction on behalf of Denison Investments Ltd to undertake an initial Landscape and Visual Appraisal relating to the potential for residential development and Green Belt release on land at Warren Farm, Ampthill. The site is located directly adjacent to the southern built-up edge of Ampthill, with existing development to the north and west.

3.20. It is acknowledged that the development of this site would extend built form into greenfield land, however the site is well related to the existing urban edge, with development to the north and west with a number of urbanising influences extending to the north. The site presents opportunities to accommodate a residential development within the localised context of the southern settlement edge of Ampthill that can be integrated without harm to the wider landscape setting or Green Belt purposes. Opportunities exist for a redefined Green Belt boundary that could create a more robust and defined edge to the Green Belt through the retention and enhancement of mature tree planting to the south and west of the site. It is considered that development of the site for residential uses comply with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, and would not significantly affect the characteristics of the surrounding Green Belt designation. It is therefore considered that the site could be developed in accordance with the adopted and emerging policies of the Local Plan.

3.21. In terms of landscape quality, it is considered that the site is influenced by its proximity to the settlement edge of Ampthill, detracting from the remoteness and tranquillity of the site. The established vegetation associated with the site’s boundaries and its immediate context, coupled with the site’s topography ensures that views of the site from the wider setting will be limited and as such the site does not contribute to the scenic quality of the area. There are no features associated with the site that are considered rare or representative in landscape terms. The site is not publicly accessible and as such it is considered that the recreational value is low. There are no known historic or literary associations with the site or its immediate setting. It is acknowledged
that the site is located within an area designated as Green Belt, however, this designation is planning related and has no weight in terms of landscape value. To that end, it is considered that the value of the site is low.

3.22. The context of the immediate site setting is already characterised by the neighbouring built form associated with Ampthill. The retention and reinforcement of the existing boundary planting and internal planting where appropriate will ensure that a robust green edge to the site is maintained or implemented where necessary and will effectively screen the views from its immediate setting.

3.23. The use of an appropriate palette of materials and a carefully considered layout will ensure that the proposed development can be integrated in this location and appear as a natural addition to the existing urban grain. Views of the proposed development will be highly localised and will not give rise to significant adverse effects. Currently views towards the site are characterised by a degree of urbanising components and built form associated with its immediate setting to the north and west. The proposed development will not introduce new components that would appear alien or out of character within the context of these views and will not appear dominant or overbearing within the context of the adjoining street scene.

3.24. Within their publication ‘Site Assessment Technical Document – Appendix D: Preliminary Site Assessment Results’ (July 2017), Central Bedfordshire identifies the site as parcel NLP412. In this document the site is reported to have failed at the Stage 1B of the assessment due to the potential coalescence it would cause. Following this appraisal, Aspect Landscape Planning Ltd disagree with the finding of this assessment and consider that the site is capable of accommodating residential development and would not cause coalescence between the settlements of Ampthill and Flitwick.

3.25. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development of the site for residential development can be supported from a landscape and visual context and the site would be appropriate for taking forward.
ASPECT PLANS
APPENDIX 1

VISUAL ASSESSMENT
Poplar trees associated with the site's northern boundary

Site inner area located beyond tree belt and construction materials

Lighting poles (Redborne upper school and community college)

Construction materials associated with the Warren Farm phase 1 residential development

Dense vegetation structure associated with the site's western boundary

Sport courts associated with Redborne upper school and community college

N.B. IMAGES TO ILLUSTRATE THE EXISTING LANDSCAPE CONTEXT ONLY. Panoramas are created from multiple photographs taken using a digital equivalent of a 35mm camera with 50mm lens in line with best practice and current guidance. Images illustrate a horizontal field of view of 66° and when printed at A2, should be viewed at a distance of 330mm curved through the same radius in order to correctly illustrate the existing landscape context. To ensure considered judgements are accurately assessed, images should not be substituted for visiting the viewpoint.