

WILLIAMS / SUMMARY PROOF

APP / LANDSCAPE

Application Ref: 19/03416/OUT
PINS Ref: APP/R3325/W/20/3265558

**LAND AT MANOR FARM,
COMBE HILL
TEMPLECOMBE,
SOUTH SOMERSET
BA8 0LJ..**

**SUMMARY LANDSCAPE PROOF
OF EVIDENCE
OF DAVID WILLIAMS**

**ON BEHALF OF
GLEESON STRATEGIC LAND LTD**

APRIL 2021

1.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 1.1 I have considered the landscape character and visual appearance of the Appeal Site and its role in the local and wider landscape to the south and east of Templecombe.
- 1.2 The Appeal Site is located to the east side of the historic village of Templecombe immediately adjacent to the built-up edge of the settlement with areas of open countryside / farmland to the east and south. Abbas and Templecombe and surrounding scattered settlements and farmsteads lie within open rural countryside although settlements occupying elevated positions on the River Cale valley sides form notable features in the landscape visible in long and very long-distance views from either side of the valley.
- 1.3 To the north of the Site are houses served off the High Street (No's 21 to 35) and 14 No. houses served off Templars Barton, a small cul-de-sac development with the houses served off East Street, to the north east of the Site, extending the limits of Templecombe eastwards beyond the Site.
- 1.4 Immediately to the west of the Site are a number of large, detached houses and bungalows served off the High Street and Combe Hill including Manor House (Grade II* Listed Building), Manor Barn, Knights Barn, Grianaig House, Silverlands, Sunnyhurst, Wingfield and Tally-Ho. To the west of the High Street / Combe Hill is further residential development predominantly semi-detached, terraced houses and bungalows extending along Bowden Road, and served off side streets and lanes with Berryfield House, Langdale and The Orchard situated on Combe Hill on the south west of the Site.
- 1.5 To the south of the Site, detailed planning permission has recently been granted for 2 dwellings adjoining the south western corner of the Site and Combe Hill (SSDC Ref: 18 / 03222 / OUT) which extend the limits of the village southwards beyond the Site. To the south of the village limits is open farmland, consisting primarily of open pasture fields enclosed by tall robust hedgerows, extending along the A357 towards Common Lane Farm and the village of Yenston with the larger settlement of Henstridge, about 2.0 kilometres from the Site.

- 1.6 To the east of the Site is open countryside and farmland comprising medium to large sized regular shape pasture fields occupying the low lying parts of the River Cale valley with the villages of Kingston Magna, and Buckhorn Weston occupying higher ground on the eastern side of the River Cale valley, about 4.5 kilometres from the Site and the small village of Cucklington to the north east, about 7.0 kilometres from the Site.
- 1.7 The village of Templecombe lies on the east facing undulating slopes of the River Cale valley on a minor ridge line at about 95 to 110 metres AOD. The Site, and western parts of Templecombe, lie on the ridge and lie at an elevation between about 85.0 metres AOD to about 100.0 metres AOD with the land falling southwards to a minor valley before rising to another ridge / area of high ground at Windmill Hill near Yenston. The highest point within the Site is near the Sites entrance at the south western corner with the land sloping northwards and eastwards to a low point near the north eastern corner of the Site, to the rear of No.12 East Street. The farm buildings and slurry pits are situated on slightly raised man-made ground extending eastwards from the general slope of the land.
- 1.8 The houses to the north are situated at approximately the same level as the northern parts of Site with existing development following the valley slope eastwards with houses on East Street lying at a lower level than much of the Site at about 85m AOD. Existing development to the west of the Site, on Combe Hill, lies a similar level to the higher parts of the Site between 95 to 100m AOD with the housing areas to the west, served off Bowden Road, lying at a slightly higher elevation at between 100 to 105m AOD and forming a backdrop to the Site.
- 1.9 The Site and surrounding landscape lies on the western fringes of National Character Area Profile (NCAP) No. 133: *Blackmore Vale and Vale of Wardour* with NCAP Area 140: *Yeovil Scarplands* to the west as defined in the Natural England National Character Map of England and National Character Area Profiles published in April 2014. Whilst at a local level, the Site and surrounding area lie within “Area 6: *Escarpments, ridges and vales – East of Yeovil*”. In relation to Area 6, the assessment subdivides the area into 4 landscape character areas with the Site and Templecombe lying within “Sub-Area 2: *Wooded Ridges and Clay Vales*” as defined in “*The Landscape of South Somerset – A Landscape Assessment of the Scenery of South Somerset*” in

1993 (CD/11.15). The LCA provides a description that is very generalised and not specifically relevant to the Site and its immediate surrounding area although the ridgeline upon which Templecombe is located on and the open pastoral vale to the east are mentioned. I have also highlighted the important local features / elements of the landscape which would apply to the Appeal Site and development proposals in paragraph 3.18 to 3.19 of my proof of evidence.

- 1.10 There are no landscape designations covering the Site, such as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or Special Landscape Areas (SLA), and none of the trees or woodlands within and immediately adjoining the Site that are covered by Tree Preservation Order(s). The nearest listed building to the Site is Manor House which is located on the High Street / A357 immediately to the west of the Site and is a Grade II* listed building. Details of the Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the Site, in particular the legibility of the significance of the grade II* listed Manor House when perceived from the Site and contribution of the Site to this heritage asset's significance are address in Mr J Smith's evidence.
- 1.11 However, it should be noted that Manor House is tightly contained by modern 20th Century development on three sides (north, west, and south) and part of the fourth side (to the south east by Manor Farm house and large barns and to the north east by Templars Retreat and boundary walls) and there are no windows directly facing the Appeal Site and it is the blank end gable wall of the listed building backs on to the Appeal Site.
- 1.12 From a landscape perspective, the initial impression of this listed building when seen from the Site and also Public Footpath No. SM 29 / 12 to the east (see paragraph 3.20 below) is an unassuming stone gable wall seen amongst a variety of built forms consisting of the adjoining, more modern residential development. As a consequence of the above, the Site only forms part of the wider or extended setting to the listed building and therefore I consider that the listed building contributes in a limited way to or influences the character and visual appearance of the Site.
- 1.13 There are no public footpaths crossing the Site and there are a limited number of Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the immediate vicinity of the Site. The nearest PROW to the Site is located to the east and is Public Footpath No.

WN29 / 12 which extends from East Street and north eastern corner of the Site, across the open fields to Common Lane to the south east of the Site.

1.14 I concluded from the landscape and visual appraisal of the Site, the following:

- a. That the Site is a roughly rectangular shaped parcel of land of some 4.31 hectares (10.65 acres) located to the east side of the historic village of Templecombe immediately adjacent to the built-up edge of the settlement with areas of open countryside / farmland to the east and south;
- b. That the Site comprises open land around Manor Farm house including four small pasture fields, part of a larger pasture field to the north east, several large farm buildings / barns, areas of gravel and concrete hardstanding, several slurry pits to the east of Manor Farm with a gravel entrance driveway off Combe Hill / A357;
- c. That the Site is contained by built development on two sides, to the west and north with post and wire fencing to the east and south and an open north eastern edge of the Site not defined by any physical or visual features on the ground and due to the open nature of the eastern and southern boundaries, there are short to very long-distance views obtained out of the Site across the River Cale valley / Blackmore Vale and vice versa;
- d. That the assessment identifies that the Site is relatively well contained and enclosed in the local landscape due to residential development to the west and north, undulating topography and field boundary vegetation to the south, although there are outwards views from the Site across the River Cale valley to the east and south east;
- e. That the topography of the area is dominated by the wide-open valley of the River Cale valley and its tributary streams (Bow Brook and Filley Brook).
- f. That the Site is situated on the edge of the settlement of Abbas and Templecombe outside the existing built-up area of the settlement and therefore situated within the open countryside;

- g. That the “Zone of Theoretical Visibility” (ZTV) of the proposed development indicated that the ZTV would be relatively limited due to residential development and vegetation to the west and north, undulating topography and vegetation to the south but to the east, north east and south east, the ZTV would extend across the River Cale valley in an arc following rising ground from between Cucklington to the north and Kington Magna / Stour Hill to the east, up to about 7.0 kilometres from the Site with parts of the development theoretically visible approximately 5 to 9 kilometres to the south and south east including areas around Henstridge, Stalbridge and Marnhull; and
- h. That, as a consequence of the above, the potential impact of the proposed development would be confined mainly to areas of countryside to the east of Templecombe although the effects of the development would diminish with distance to the north east, east and south east.

1.15 I also concluded from the visual assessment of the Site that, apart from views in close proximity to the Site including a short section of Combe Hill at the Sites entrance, partial and glimpsed views from the High Street and Manor Close to the west of the Site, and open views from a section of Public Footpath No. WN 29 / 12 and East Street immediately to the east of the Site, there are a limited number of middle and longer distance views from other public viewpoints.

1.16 The visual assessment also indicated that, whilst there are a number of views towards the Site, the perception of the Site varies depending on the location of the viewer. In the majority of near distance views from the east, the full extent of the northern and eastern parts of the Site are seen against a backdrop of built development along the edge of Templecombe albeit the south western parts of the Site are less obvious in near distance views, they are seen in middle and longer distance views again seen against a backdrop of built development along the Combe Hill on the edge of Templecombe.

1.17 It can also be concluded from the landscape and visual assessment the following:

- a) That the visual prominence of the Site varies with parts of the Site evident in near distance views from the east but elsewhere containment is good to the north, west and south and that the existing agricultural barns on the Site form a notable, discordant and detracting feature on the Site and in the local and wider landscape;
- b) That whilst there are views into the Site from vantage points in close proximity to the Site, intervisibility within the wider area is relatively limited, due to the framework of hedgerows and trees occupying the River Cale valley side slopes and low-lying area; and
- c) That when viewed from the wider surrounding area (i.e. greater than 1 kilometre from the Site), the Site contributes in a limited way to the overall character and appearance of the landscape as the Site is not a prominent feature and forms a very small part of the overall panoramic view and could be easily missed.

1.18 In terms of judging the landscape quality / condition of the Site, it is for the individual practitioner to form a view based upon professional judgement and experience. Based on my assessment of the Site and the surrounding area, I concluded that the sensitivity of the Site and surrounding landscape is considered to be 'medium to low' sensitivity to change. Based on my assessment of the Site and the surrounding area, I concluded the following:

- a) That the overall landscape condition / quality of the Site and its immediate surrounds is regarded as 'good' although the Site has relatively few features of intrinsic landscape quality such as woodlands, and hedgerows, as most of the land is in farmland use with limited intrinsic quality albeit parts of the Site contribute to extended setting of Manor House, listed building;
- b) That the Site and countryside surrounding Templecombe lie within a non-designated landscape and therefore the Site cannot be considered forming a 'valued' landscape of national / regional / district importance under definition of a 'valued' landscapes as set out in paragraph 170 (a) of the NPPF February 2019 (CD 11.01); and
- c) That the Site and surrounding area would have local importance / value given the openness of the landscape, visibility from properties on the

edge of Templecombe and accessibility of the area via the network of local lanes and public rights of way.

1.19 In Section 4.0 of my proof of evidence, I briefly describe the proposed development as well as minor changes to the Appeal Scheme since the Decision Notice (CD / 9.02) was issued on 14th August 2020, by reference to an amended Illustrative Masterplan (CD / 10.01), Drawing No. 19-025 / SK01 Rev H (CD / 10.01), a new Level Parameters Plan Drawing No.19-025 / 610 (CD / 10.02), an updated Landscape Strategy Plan, Drawing No. 0360 / L4 Rev I (CD / 10.03) and Appeal Design and Access Statement (Appendix D to this evidence). In addition to the provision of new housing, the proposed development of the Appeal Site, will also bring forward a number of landscape and biodiversity benefits which would accord with the landscape guidelines set out in the national and district level landscape character assessments and South Somerset 'Landscape Design' Guidance (CD / 11.18 – page 5 / Section 3 – Nature Conservation / Section 4 – Designing with plants), and exceed the requirements of Policy HW1- Provision of Open Space in New Developments , EQ2 – General Development, EQ3 – Historic Environment, EQ4 - Biodiversity and EQ5 – Green Infrastructure of the Local Plan (CD / 11.03).

1.20 These benefits include:

- i) Increasing the tree cover in the locality;
- ii) Providing a wider diversity of wildlife habitats (such as native tree and shrub planting, wildflower grasslands, ponds, and swales);
- iii) The provision of strategic scale tree planting;
- iv) The provision of formal open spaces and parkland, improving recreational opportunities and links to wider footpath network;
- v) The provision of semi-natural green spaces including informal and variety of open spaces;
- vi) Helping to mitigate climate change through the provision of SuDS and tree planting for shading;
- vii) The achievement of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of approximately 19%; and;
- viii) A number of heritage benefits which are detailed in Mr J Smith proof of evidence.

1.21 In Section 5.0 of this proof of evidence, I set out the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposed development of the Site, for up to 60No. new dwellings, infrastructure, associated landscaping, open space and access, on the local and wider landscape. On the basis of my assessment I conclude the following:

Summary of Predicted Landscape Effects with Mitigation					
Landscape Receptor	Period	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change / Nature	Significance of Landscape Effect	Residual Landscape Effect
Landscape Elements (Housing Area)	Year 1 / Completion	Low to Very Low	High to Medium / N	Moderate to Moderate / Slight adverse	Moderate to Moderate / Slight adverse
	Year 15	Low to Very Low	Medium to Low / N	Slight adverse	Slight adverse
Landscape Elements (Open Space Area)	Year 1 / Completion	Low to Very Low	Low to Medium / P	Slight to Moderate / Slight beneficial	Slight to Moderate / Slight beneficial
	Year 15	Low to Very Low	Medium / P	Moderate beneficial	Moderate beneficial
Landscape Elements - Overall	Year 1 / Completion	Low to Very Low	Medium to Low N	Slight adverse	Slight adverse
	Year 15	Low to Very Low	Low N / Low P	Neutral to Slight beneficial	Neutral to Slight beneficial
Landscape Pattern's / Site Character (Housing Area)	Year 1 / Completion	Low	Medium / N	Moderate / Slight' adverse	Moderate / Slight' adverse
	Year 15	Low	Low / N	Slight' adverse	Slight' adverse
Landscape Pattern's / Site Character (Open Space Area)	Year 1 / Completion	Low	Low to Medium / P	Slight to Moderate / Slight' beneficial	Slight to Moderate / Slight' beneficial
	Year 15	Low	Medium / P	'Moderate / Slight' beneficial	'Moderate / Slight' beneficial
Landscape Pattern's / Site Character - Overall	Year 1 / Completion	Low	Medium to Low N	Slight adverse	Slight adverse
	Year 15	Low	Low N / Low P	Neutral to Slight beneficial	Neutral to Slight beneficial
Wider Landscape / River Cale Valley	Year 1 / Completion	Low to Medium	Very Low to negligible / N	Slight to Negligible' adverse	Slight to Negligible' adverse
	Year 15	Low to Medium	Very Low / P	Slight to Negligible' beneficial	Slight to Negligible' beneficial

Summary of Predicted Visual Effects with Mitigation¹					
Receptor	Period	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change / Nature	Significance of Visual Effect	Residual Visual Effect
View from the West (VP No's.1)	Year 1 / Completion	Medium – Very Low	Very High to Medium / N	Substantial to Moderate / Slight Adverse	Substantial to Moderate / Slight Adverse
	Year 15	Medium – Very Low	Medium to Low / N	Moderate Adverse to Negligible	Moderate Adverse to Negligible
View from the West (VP No's. 2, 3 &4)	Year 1 / Completion	Medium – Very Low	Low to Negligible / N	Slight Adverse to Negligible	Slight Adverse to Negligible
	Year 15	Medium – Very Low	Very Low to Negligible / N	Negligible	Negligible
Views from the South (VP No.5)	Year 1 / Completion	Medium – Very Low	Medium to Low / N	Moderate Adverse to Negligible	Moderate Adverse to Negligible
	Year 15	Medium – Very Low	Low to Negligible/ N	Slight Adverse to Negligible	Slight Adverse to Negligible
Views from the East (VP No's. 6, 7 & 8)	Year 1 / Completion	High – Very High	High to Medium / N	Major Substantial to Moderate / Substantial Adverse	Major Substantial to Moderate / Substantial Adverse
	Year 15	High – Very High	Low to Very Low / N	'Moderate / Slight to Slight' adverse	'Moderate / Slight to Slight' adverse
Views from the East (VP No's. 9 & 10)	Year 1 / Completion	Medium – Very Low	High to Medium / N	Moderate / Substantial to Slight Adverse	Moderate / Substantial to Slight Adverse
	Year 15	Medium – Very Low	Medium / N	'Moderate / Slight to Slight' adverse	'Moderate / Slight to Slight' adverse
Middle distance Views from the East (VP No. 11)	Year 1 / Completion	Medium – Very Low	Medium to Low / N	Moderate to Slight Adverse to Negligible	Moderate to Slight Adverse to Negligible
	Year 15	Medium – Very Low	Low to Negligible / N	Moderate / Slight' adverse to 'Negligible	Moderate / Slight' adverse to 'Negligible
Very Long-distance Views from the East, South East and North East (VP No's. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, & 18)	Year 1 / Completion	Medium to Low	Negligible	Slight Adverse to Negligible	Slight Adverse to Negligible
	Year 15	Medium to Low	Negligible	Negligible / Neutral	Negligible Neutral

¹ It should note that some of the summary of effects for visual receptors cover a wider spectrum of effects (i.e. View from the West (VP No.1). This reflects the sensitivity of the receptors as pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian users of Combe Hill are ranked higher than vehicle users and proximity of the proposed development to the receptors and magnitude of changed experienced.

Summary of Predicted Visual Effects with Mitigation¹					
Receptor	Period	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change / Nature	Significance of Visual Effect	Residual Visual Effect
Very Long-distance Views from the East, South East and North East (VP No.17, 19 & 20)	Year 1 / Completion	High	Negligible	Slight Adverse	Slight Adverse
	Year 15	High	Negligible	Slight Adverse to Negligible	Slight Adverse to Negligible
Views from the adjoining residential properties (32No.)	Year 1 / Completion	High	Medium to Low / N	Moderate / Substantial to Moderate Adverse	Moderate / Substantial to Moderate Adverse
	Year 15	High	Low / N	Moderate / Slight to Slight Adverse	Moderate / Slight to Slight Adverse

1.22 In Section 6.0 of my Proof of Evidence, I have considered first reason for refusal in so far as it relates to landscape and visual matters. This reason for refusal relates to the Councils / Planning Officers view that:

- i) The Site is not suitable for the quantum of development proposed;
- ii) The proposed development would result in an unacceptable level of harm to the rural character of the Site and wider landscape as well as unacceptable harm to the visual amenity of those receptors adjacent to the Site and those in the wider landscape;
- iii) Due to the above the proposals fails to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (CD / 11.01) and planning policies SD1 and EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan (CD / 11.03).

1.23 On the basis of my assessment of the Appeal proposals, the visual and landscape issues relating to the Site and consideration of the first Reasons for Refusal, I draw the following conclusions:

- a) The Site is not designated as having any particular landscape value or quality, such as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Special Landscape Area, (although my assessment indicates it does contain some features of importance such as hedgerows and adjoining mature trees on the edges of the Site).

- b) That, based on my landscape and visual assessment and using the criteria set out in Appendix A of the Landscape Report (CD / 6.09) the sensitivity of the Site is assessed as 'low'.
- c) The landscape and visual impacts of the scheme have been assessed using a tried and tested methodology which accords with GLVIA3 guidelines.
- d) The DWLC Landscape Report (CD / 6.09) is the only detailed assessment that has been carried out using a structured and consistent approach taking account of all the inter-related aspects of the landscape, views, and scheme proposals.
- e) The landscape and visual effects of the proposed development would be localised to the immediate area around the Site and the effects would diminish with distance within the ZTV.
- f) The proposed development would not erode or harm the special qualities or key landscape characteristics of the area, although it is acknowledged that the Appeal Scheme will result in the loss of open farmland, it will remove the existing barns which are a discordant, detracting features from the landscape and introduce housing which will be in keeping with the adjoining landscape patterns and be perceived in the context of the existing built up areas of Templecombe [which already influence the character of the Site];
- g) The landscape effects would initially range from "Slight" adverse effects on landscape elements, "Slight" adverse effects on landscape patterns / character of the Site and "Slight to Negligible" adverse level of significance on the landscape in the locality, whilst the wider surrounding area and majority of the River Cale Valley would remain unaffected. The residual landscape effects would be "Neutral to Slight" beneficial in the longer term as the landscape proposals mature and the scheme integrates with the surrounding area.
- h) The visual assessment shows that the visual effects of the development would range from "Major / Substantial to Moderate / Substantial" to "Slight" adverse to "Negligible" visual effects initially in near distance views (depending on the location of the viewer) and that the visual effects will reduce to "Moderate / Slight to Negligible" adverse effects in the longer term, with local views from a section of Public Footpath No.SM29 / 12 to the east being "Moderate / Slight to Slight" adverse depending on the location of the viewer. In longer distance views from

the east and River Cale valley sides, it is predicted that there would be “Moderate / Slight to Negligible” adverse effects initially (which are not considered ‘significant’) with the visual effects reducing to “Negligible” effects in the longer term.

- i) In all views, it is considered that the visual effects will be reduced significantly by;
 - i) the use of traditional materials and weathering to more subdued tones.
 - ii) the introduction of significant open space and new hedgerows and substantial tree / ‘buffer’ planting to the northern parts of the Site and eastern and southern boundaries of the Site, and;
 - iii) the provision of tree and shrub planting within the development.
 - iv) The proposed landscape measures will minimize the overall visual effects of the development and assimilate the new housing into the landscape resulting in beneficial effects in the longer term.

1.24 I also considered and commented on the Planning committee report as set out in paragraph 6.10 to 6.25 of my proof of evidence and I concluded the following:

- i) That the out of date ‘*Peripheral Landscape Study*’ (Study) (CD/11.19) and its capacity findings carry less relevance in terms of the Site’s sensitivity and capacity to accommodate development in part because the Study did not consider ‘Conservation Areas’ or Listed Buildings and their settings, in determining the sensitivity of the landscape, an aspect of the landscape which my assessment has considered;
- ii) That the Planning Officers Report makes little reference to, and appears to ignore, the substantial amount of information that accompanied the Application. This information included the Landscape Report (CD / 6.09) which considered the likely landscape and visual impacts of the development and landscape, biodiversity and community benefits brought forward by the proposed development of the Site for housing, none of which appears to have been considered by the Planning Officer;
- iii) Nor did Mr Potterton counter the conclusions of the Landscape Report (CD / 6.09) with a similar systematic assessment of his own;
- iv) That Mr Potterton criticism of my assessment on ‘value’ of the Site is misplaced;

- v) That I disagree that 'Area A' is the only part of the Site that is suitable for development for the reasons set out in my proof of evidence, and by limiting housing development to only this part of the Site, would not bring forward the same level of benefits nor would it bring forward similar landscape benefits as set out in paragraph 4.12 to 4.14 of my proof of evidence (and if a similar quantum of benefits were provided, it is unlikely that a smaller scheme would be viable).

1.25 I have also considered the points of objection which have been raised by local residents and Parish Council. These issues include:

- i) Contrary to Local Plan policies, guidance within NPPF and South Somerset Periphery Landscape Study 2008;
- ii) Unacceptable encroachment into the countryside and will spoil an area of great landscape value;
- iii) This scheme will most surely and irredeemably spoil an area of great natural beauty and archaeological value;
- iv) Impact on and spoil views from the Public Footpath;
- v) Detriment to wildlife interests, including bats which are protected species and hedgehogs..

1.26 I have commented individually on each issue raised and concluded that none of the environmental / landscape and visual matters raised by local residents or Parish Council would justify dismissing the appeal proposals.

1.27 Based on my assessment of the Appeal Site and the development proposals, I concluded, that the proposed development will have some local impacts but the effects of the development on character and visual appearance of the wider area would not be significant and that the likely adverse landscape and visual effects.

1.28 I consider that the proposed development would accord with the guidance within the National Character Area Profile No.133 – Blackmore Vale and Vale of Wardour (CD / 11.14) that I have highlighted in paragraph 3.14 and 3.15 of my proof, and in relation to Policy EQ2 – General Development of the Local Plan, I consider the Appeal scheme would accord with this policy in that it would conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the area and local character of this part of Templecombe, in particular as the proposed

development “nestles into the ridge” and provides landscape planting and open space to mitigate any harmful impacts. In relation to Policy EQ4 – Biodiversity and Policy EQ 5 – Green Infrastructure of the Local Plan, I also consider that the Appeal scheme accords with these policies in that it would provide significant areas of open space, new tree and shrub planting, new hedgerows and areas of grasslands including wildflower grass and habitats which amounts to a biodiversity net gain of 19% over and above the existing ecological value of the Appeal Site.

- 1.29 All these factors would need to be taken into account to planning balance which Mr J Orton, in his proof of evidence, considers in detail.
- 1.30 Having regard to the evidence given by Mr Jonathan Smith on heritage issues and Mr J Orton on planning matters and the conclusions set out in this Proof of Evidence, I respectfully request that the appeal be allowed.

