

Our Ref: 19-2418

M Scott Properties Ltd

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Weldon, Corby  
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13<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## LANDSCAPE SUMMARY NOTE – LAND BETWEEN SHELFANGER ROAD AND HEYWOOD ROAD, DISS

### Brief

Lockhart Garratt Ltd (LGL) was instructed by M Scott Properties Ltd (MSP) to undertake an initial landscape assessment of the 8.77 hectare proposed development site located between Shelfanger Road and Heywood Road, Diss (hereafter referred to as the 'Site') in respect of a residential development.

### Description of the Site and its Setting

The Site is located to the west of Heywood Road at the northern extent of the settlement edge of Diss, Norfolk, adjacent to Diss Cemetery. A photographic record (Ref. 19-2411) and viewpoint location plan (Ref. 19-2406) are included at the back of this report. The Site is comprised of two rectangular shaped arable fields separated by a ditch, along with a triangular shaped area of land at the western extent, comprised of an area of woodland and overgrown scrub and rubbish.

The Site is not publicly accessible, however Public Footpath Diss FP26 runs along the entire length of the Site's northern boundary and connects Shelfanger Road to the west with Heywood Road to the east, along with Public Byway Diss RB25, which runs through the Site towards its western edge and continues north beyond the settlement edge.

The Site displays a relatively flat landform across its extent, however the land falls away gradually to the north beyond the Site boundary, to a minor watercourse corridor, before rising gradually towards the village of Shelfanger.

A ditch runs north to south across the middle of the Site, along with ditches running along the Site's eastern and northern boundaries. All of the ditches contained water at the time of survey. A single oak tree lies within the Site, close to the central ditch and southern boundary. This tree may have bat roosting potential, and it displays damage to the stem on its eastern side, possibly through storm damage.

The modern St Henry Morse Roman Catholic Church lies along the Site's southern boundary, surrounded by a native hedgerow and post and wire fence, forming a dominant feature along this boundary. Diss Cemetery lies to the immediate south of the southern Site boundary, comprised of a large, rectangular cemetery with numerous large, mature trees, particularly along the Cemetery's southern boundary, and western half of its northern boundary.

The main core of the settlement of Diss lies separated from the Site by the cemetery, with some modern development beginning to envelop the Site to the east and west.

Diss is a small market town within the county of Norfolk, close to the border of Suffolk, and displays a nucleated settlement pattern, centred around the historic core of the town along St Nicholas Street. The town has seen a continuous evolution and expansion through numerous time periods, many of which can be seen within the town through historic buildings of varying styles and ages.

The settlement of Diss lies within the valley of the River Waveney, a relatively large-scale open valley landscape, of arable and pastoral land use.

## **The Proposals**

The Site is identified within the Greater Norwich Local Plan as a preferred site and has been allocated for residential development because it is well related in form and character to the existing built up area of Diss. Alongside a residential development, the Site is also required to include an area for future expansion of the existing Diss Cemetery, as well as the provision of a new link road to connect Shelfanger Road in the west to Heywood Road in the east.

It is considered that the retention and enhancement of all existing boundary vegetation will be an important part of the landscape design of this scheme, as well as retaining and linking to the Public Rights of Way adjacent to the Site, and connecting to Diss Cemetery.

## **Landscape Character Discussion**

The Site lies within the South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands National Character Area (NCA). At a local level, it has been placed<sup>1</sup> within and close to the boundary of the Rural River Valley Landscape Character Type (LCT), and is further sub-categorised within the Waveney Rural River Valley Landscape Character Area (LCA). The Site lies adjacent to the boundary of the Tributary Farmland LCT, which occurs to the north.

The Waveney Rural River Valley LCA is broadly characterised by its glacial landform and floodplains, and it is notable in forming a geographic boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk. The key characteristics of this LCA are stated to be as follows:

- Flat, wide floodplain with gently sloping valley sides forming a broad valley.

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<sup>1</sup> South Norfolk Landscape Assessment (Land Use Consultants, 2001)

- A relatively large-scale open valley landscape (compared to other river valleys within the district) with some long views within the valley. More intimate and enclosed areas also occur along the river course.
- The course of the river is not always distinct, flowing across the character area boundary into Suffolk in some instances and in other areas braided into numerous small channels.
- A number of attractive fords (e.g. at Brockdish) and small bridges (e.g. Doit Bridge west of Diss) occur along the river course.
- Arable and pastoral farming is characteristic of the valley sides.
- Diversity of land cover along the valley floor including fen, heath and meadow creates ecological richness.
- Discrete woodland blocks occur along the valley floor, with larger and more significant woodland areas on the valley sides.
- Presence of Scole Roman Settlement Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- Strong market town character at Diss and Harleston (plus Bungay in Suffolk) with nucleated and linear settlement occurring along the valley.
- Mills (e.g. Windmill at Billingford) and Churches (including round tower churches, e.g. at Needham) form distinctive landmark features throughout the character area.
- The A1066 and A143 run along the upper valley sides, cutting into the character area in places. The A140 cuts across the character area west of Scole.
- A peaceful and tranquil character is retained away from the main roads.
- Intact river valley character.
- Role in dividing and defining the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk.

The Site is considered to be partially representative of the Waveney Rural River Valley LCA on account of its location adjacent to a small, historic market settlement of strong vernacular character, and distinct arable and pastoral valley landform to the north. However, the open countryside to the immediate north displays a more arable agricultural character than that of a floodplain and riverine landscape, consistent with the character of the Tributary Farmland LCT that occurs in this location.

The Site lies outside of the Diss Conservation Area, and is separated from it by Diss Cemetery and existing residential development along Heywood Avenue to the south. The Site does not contain any historic or landscape designations, and none are located within the immediate setting of the Site. The nearest Listed Buildings are located over 300m away to the south within the historic core of the town.

The Site is characterised by its arable land use, as well as an association with the open countryside to the north, on account of a lack of any boundary vegetation along the Site's northern boundary. The landform falls away to the north and rises gradually, allowing for some medium distance views. The Site's southern boundary consists of a native hedgerow in relatively good condition with a number of mature trees of mixed species, largely associated with the adjacent cemetery. To the east, there is no physical boundary demarcation, with the exception of a ditch running parallel to Heywood Road. To

the west, the triangular parcel of land is bound by a mature native hedgerow with hedgerow trees, which appears largely overgrown in places. To the north, a small fragment of overgrown hedgerow lies along the western corner, with a ditch running along the entire northern boundary.

### **Landscape Character Conclusion**

The Site, when considering the surrounding landscape character, expresses a number of urbanising influences, as well as having an association with the open countryside to the north on account of a lack of boundary vegetation. The Site is considered to be partially representative of the published landscape character assessments, but it shares a connection with the existing settlement edge.

### **Visual Environment Implications**

The Site displays a relatively flat topography across its extent and as a result, views across the Site are available, with the exception of limited views into the western parcel, as a result of a number of mature trees and shrubs within this triangular piece of land. The existing built form to the east of the Site and the St Henry Morse Roman Catholic Church are visible across much of the Site and within its immediate setting. The strong boundary vegetation to the south, associated with Diss Cemetery restricts some views further south toward the settlement core of Diss. However, the built form along both Shelfanger Road to the west and Heywood Road to the east is clearly visible, with the Site forming a space between the two built up areas and highway infrastructure.

Outward views north from the Site consist of open countryside looking north towards the small village of Shelfanger, on account of a lack of any boundary vegetation to the north. The landform to the north falls away gradually before rising again, and views back towards the Site from the network of adjacent Public Rights of Way are available close to the Site, in particular from Public Byway Diss RB25 but begin to dissipate as the landform falls towards Public Footpath Diss FP24, where views are expected to be limited to rooftop views of any potential development. Clear, primary views from Public Footpath Diss FP26 are available due to the close proximity of this footpath to the northern Site boundary.

### **Visual Environment Conclusion**

Views of the Site are available from Heywood Road to the east, and to a slightly lesser extent from Shelfanger Road to the west, along with clear views from Public Footpath Diss FP26 to the north and Public Byway Diss RB25. Views from the network of PRoW further north are less available due to the distance from Site, undulating landform and existing vegetation. Views from the settlement core of Diss will be restricted due to the presence of Diss Cemetery and its associated mature vegetation.

## Overall Conclusions

The Site currently displays an arable and open character, however it feels connected to the settlement of Diss on account of the presence of Diss Cemetery, St Henry Morse Roman Catholic Church and residential built form along Heywood Road and Shelfanger Road. The proposed development of the Site would fill an obvious gap between two existing areas of built form, allowing a link road to be created to join the two main roads in and out of the settlement.

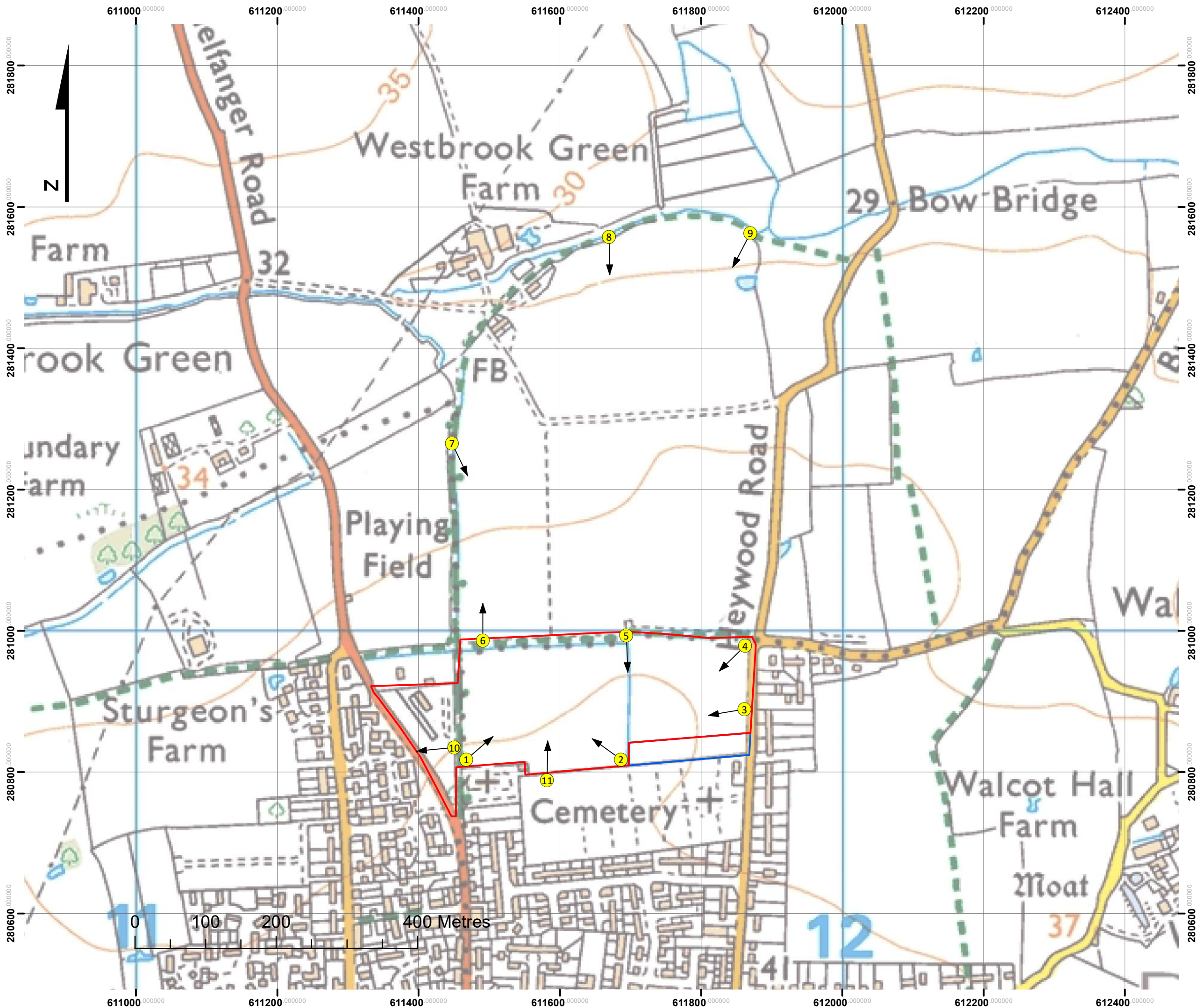
Views towards the northern settlement edge of Diss currently consist of areas of built form and the presence of a row of mature trees associated with Diss Cemetery. Any proposed development would need to ensure that the landscape design incorporated a robust green edge to the northern Site boundary, to break up a potential development edge and retain a treed character to the settlement edge. It will also be important to consider the visual amenity of the existing properties to the east and west, through the retention and creation of appropriate boundary vegetation, and good urban design.

## Recommendations

- Retention and enhancement of all existing boundary vegetation;
- Creation of a new boundary hedgerow with hedgerow trees along the Site's eastern and northern boundaries, with provision for vehicular access points;
- Retention of existing Public Footpath Diss FP26 to the north and Public Byway Diss RB25 within or adjacent to the proposed development, with suitable pedestrian links into the Site providing access to the surrounding countryside;
- Retention of the north-south ditch within the Site with the creation of crossing points, and the ecological enrichment of its corridor;
- Retention of a small section of woodland and scrub within the southern corner of the western parcel, with additional planting to retain a green edge around the St Henry Morse Roman Catholic Church and create a small ecological habitat; and
- Creation of an area within the southern section of the Site to be retained for future expansion of the cemetery, and to ensure that a robust hedgerow with hedgerow trees is created along the boundaries of this extension, with suitable links into the existing cemetery. This hedgerow should include a combination of broadleaved and conifer trees, to reflect and reinforce the existing character.

Alison Barrett  
Landscape Consultant  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2020





**Legend:**

- Site Boundary
- Preferred Cemetery Extension
- → Viewpoint and Direction

REVISIONS:		
DATE:	VERSION:	INITIALS:



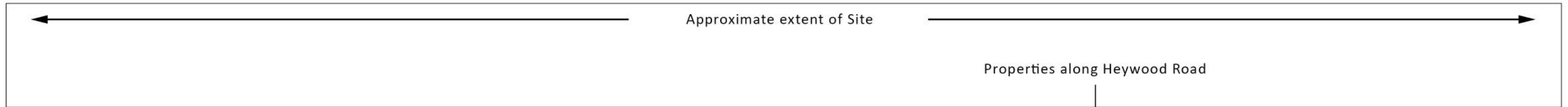
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PROJECT/SITE:	Diss
CLIENT:	M Scott Properties
MAP REF:	4064/13/19-2406
VERSION:	v1
DATE:	04/03/20
SCALE:	1:5,000 @A3
APPROVED BY:	AB
PRODUCED BY:	SM

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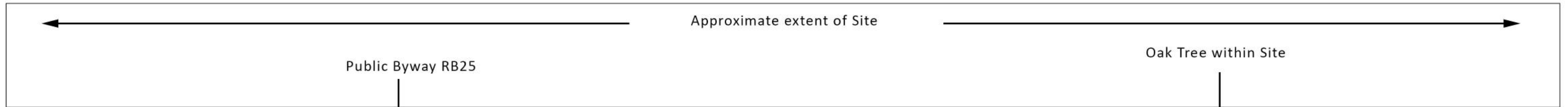
Location: View from within Site, looking North-East

Grid Reference: TM 11467 80817

	
TITLE: Viewpoint 1	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
MAP REF: 19-2411	
VERSION: V1	
DATE: 4th March 2020	
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Location: View from within Site, looking North-West

Grid Reference: TM 11685 80817

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TITLE: Viewpoint 2	
PROJECT/SITE: Land at Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
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Location: View from Heywood Road, looking West across Site

Grid Reference: TM11860 80890

	
TITLE: Viewpoint 3	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
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Location: View from Public Footpath Diss FP26, looking South-West

Grid Reference: TM 11861 80980

	
TITLE: Viewpoint 4	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
MAP REF: 19-2411	
VERSION: V1	
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Location: View from Public Footpath Diss FP26, looking South

Grid Reference: TM 11692 80993

TITLE: Viewpoint 5	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
MAP REF: 19-2411	
VERSION: V1	
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Westbrook Green Farm

Gradual rise in landform  
to the North

Location: View from Public Footpath Diss FP26, looking North

Grid Reference: TM11489 80985

			
TITLE:	Viewpoint 6		
PROJECT/SITE:	Land off Heywood Road, Diss		
CLIENT:	M Scott Properties Ltd		
MAP REF:	19-2411		
VERSION:	V1		
DATE:	4th March 2020		
APPROVED BY:	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">AB</td> <td style="text-align: center;">JTO</td> </tr> </table>	AB	JTO
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Location: View from Public Byway Diss RB25, looking South-East

Grid Reference: TM 11447 81264

	
TITLE: Viewpoint 7	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
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Location: View from Public Footpath Diss FP24, looking South

Grid Reference: TM 11669 81558

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TITLE: Viewpoint 8	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
MAP REF: 19-2411	
VERSION: V1	
DATE: 4th March 2020	
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Location: View from Public Footpath Diss FP24, looking South

Grid Reference: TM 11869 81563

	
TITLE: Viewpoint 9	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
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Location: View from within Site, looking West

Grid Reference: TM 11448 80836

	
TITLE: Viewpoint 10	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
MAP REF: 19-2411	
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Location: View from within Diss Cemetery, looking North

Grid Reference: TM 11579 80788

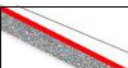


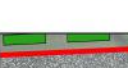




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TITLE: Viewpoint 11	
PROJECT/SITE: Land off Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
MAP REF: 19-2411	
VERSION: V1	
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**Key:**

-  Site Boundary
-  Existing Woodland Retained
-  Proposed Tree/Hedgerow Planting
-  Proposed new link road (indicative alignment)
-  Inward views
-  Potential access
-  Existing Public Footpath
-  Existing Public Byway



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TITLE: Constraints and Opportunities Appraisal Plan	
PROJECT/SITE: Land west of Heywood Road, Diss	
CLIENT: M Scott Properties Ltd	
MAP REF: 19-2408	
VERSION: V2	
DATE: 10/03/2020	SCALE: Not to Scale
APPROVED BY: ID	PRODUCED BY: SL

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