



Land East and West of Reepham Road, Hellesdon

746.01(RP)002 Landscape and Visual
Appraisal rev P1

FOR AND ON BEHALF OF RG CARTER FARMS LIMITED
AND DRAYTON FARMS LIMITED.

25/02/2020



Robert Myers Associates

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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01 Introduction

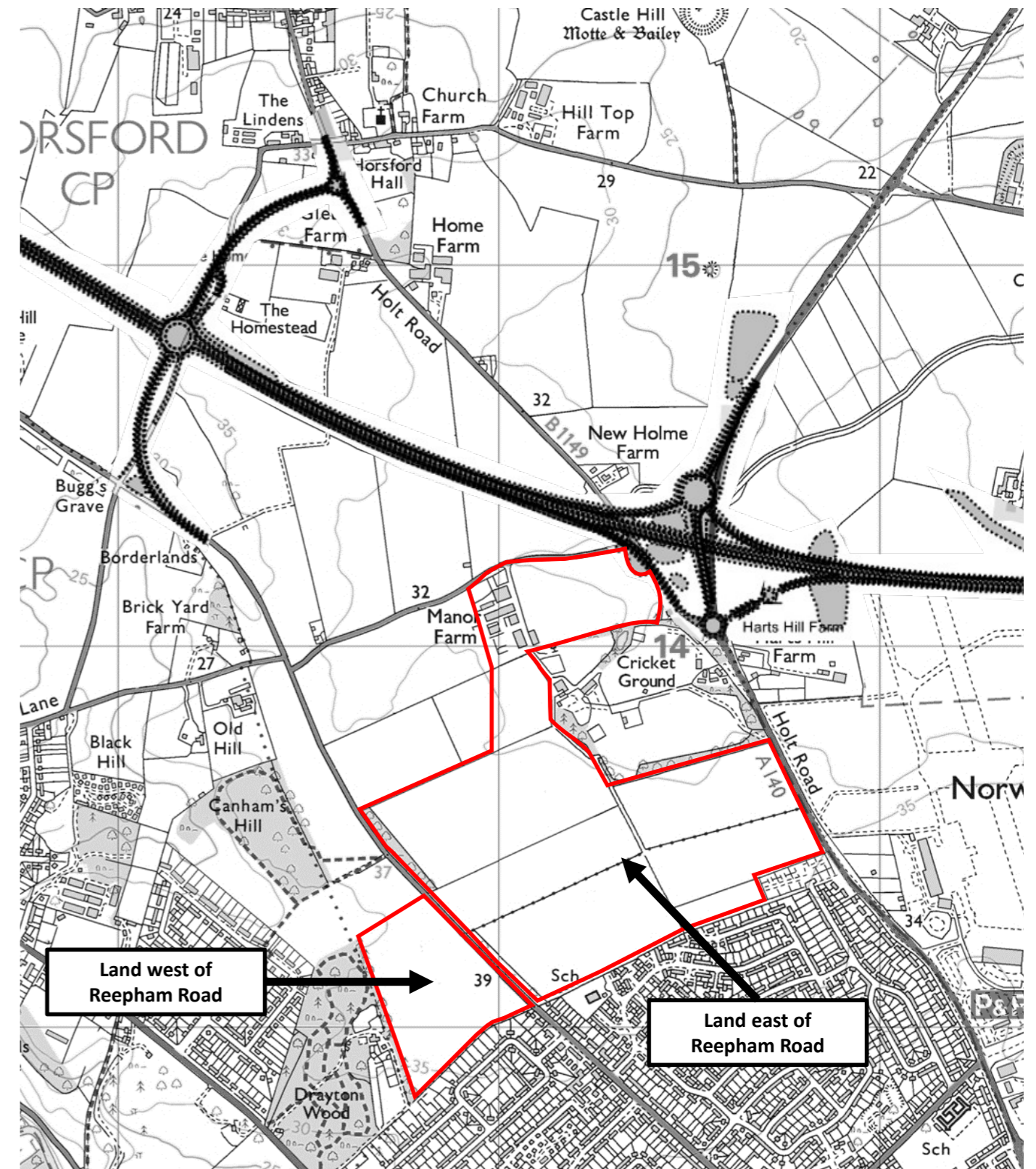
- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been produced on behalf of RG Carter Farms Ltd and Drayton Farms Ltd to support the promotion of land located east and west of Reepham Road, Hellesdon, Norfolk, for the purposes of residential and commercial development.
- 1.2 This site lies within the authority of Broadland District Council. This document is in response to the current consultation on the Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) and the Stage C Regulation 18 Draft Strategy and Site Allocations Consultation Document. The GNLP is being produced by Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council working together with Norfolk County Council through the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP).

RATIONALE

- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide a baseline appraisal of the landscape character and visual amenity of the site and its surrounding area and to develop a landscape-led strategy that will be used to inform and progress the parameters for future development.
- 1.4 This Appraisal seeks to address concerns raised within the GNLP Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA 2017 and Addendums), under which the two sites were considered, the larger site east of Reepham Road Ref: GNLP 0332R and the second parcel west of Reepham Road Ref: GNLP 0334R.

LIMITATIONS

- 1.5 This report is an appraisal of the key opportunities and constraints to inform a Landscape Strategy and has been prepared, in accordance with the broad principles set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) Third Edition 2013, published by the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), in relation to undertaking visual appraisals.



SITE BOUNDARY PLAN
Land Parcels East and West of Reepham Road, Hellesdon, Norwich.

01 Introduction

















SITE LOCATION AND PROPOSALS

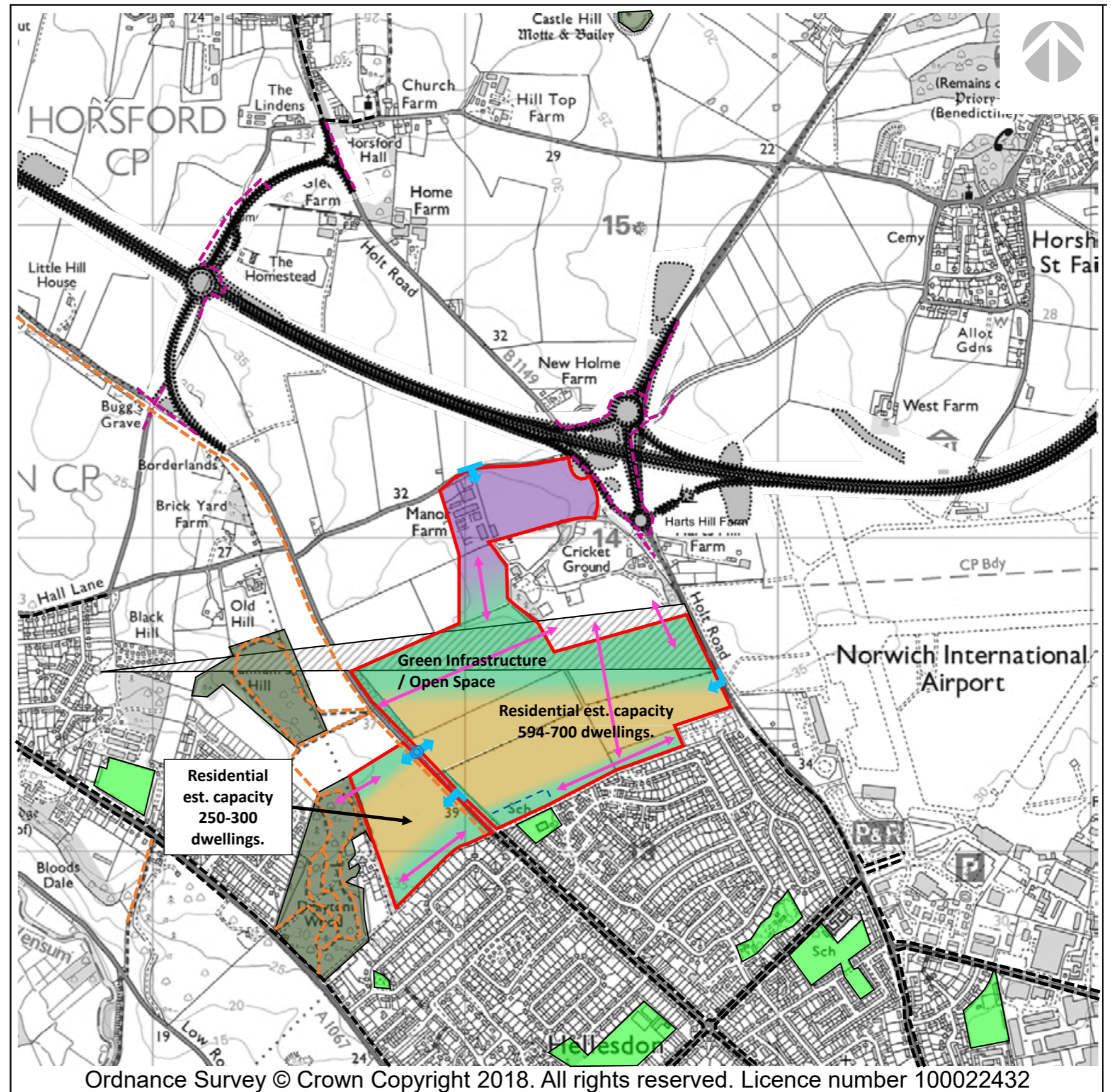
- 1.6 The site is located to the north west of the city centre of Norwich, to the northern edge of Hellesdon, alongside Reepham Road and the A140 Holt Road. Refer to Site Location Plan.
- 1.7 The proposal includes two sites, the larger parcel of land, east of Reepham Road, has a residential capacity of 600-700 dwellings, large areas of open space, community sports pitches and green infrastructure as well as a proposed commercial development zone across the existing Drayton Farm site adjacent to Holly Lane in the north eastern corner. The second parcel of land, west of Reepham Road, has a residential capacity of 250-300 dwellings alongside areas of open space and green infrastructure.
- 1.8 An Illustrative Development Framework Plan has been prepared, available in the accompanying Landscape Report, whereby existing boundary vegetation defining the site's boundary, especially along Reepham Road, and internal existing field boundaries are retained as part of the structural landscape strategy. Typically the dwellings will be arranged along a hierarchy of roads with a variety of green open spaces and green linkages proposed across the site. The layout allows for structural planting to reinforce and enhance existing vegetation, including hedgerows and regularly spaced trees to further soften the new settlement edge and screen the built form. Refer to Illustrative Concept Masterplan below.
- 1.9 The proposals seek the opportunity to establish a new settlement edge to Hellesdon and enhance arrival gateways, which will strengthen the sense of place of Hellesdon itself. The final developable area of each site and development densities should emerge from subsequent more detailed master planning exercises.



SITE LOCATION PLAN
Aerial view of site and surrounds.

01 Introduction

Key	
	Site redline boundary
	Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NNDR) © Greater Norwich Local Plan, © Crown copyright and database rights 2018 Ordnance Survey 100019340
	NNDR proposed cycle / pedestrian links
	Existing footpaths (visual streetview check)
	Proposed Drayton to Horsford Greenway
	School extension land (if justified)
	Proposed vehicular access
	Proposed pedestrian green links
	Proposed residential development
	Proposed Green Infrastructure / Open Space
	Proposed commercial development
	NIA Public Safety Zone
	Broadland DPD Allocation (2016) HEL4 (reduced land area)
	BDC EN2 Green Space
	BDC EN1 Locally Defined Area of Biodiversity / Geodiversity Importance
	Approximately 1,000m



ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT MASTERPLAN
Not to scale.

02 Planning Policy Context

2.1 This section of the Report details the key planning policies pertinent to the landscape and visual appraisal and considerations for development.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised February 2019 sets out national planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. This includes an emphasis on a variety of high quality homes to maintain or enhance the vitality of the community, whilst providing a balance between the conservation and protection of the natural and historic environment, management of green infrastructure, and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, drawing on existing contributions to the character of the place.

THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

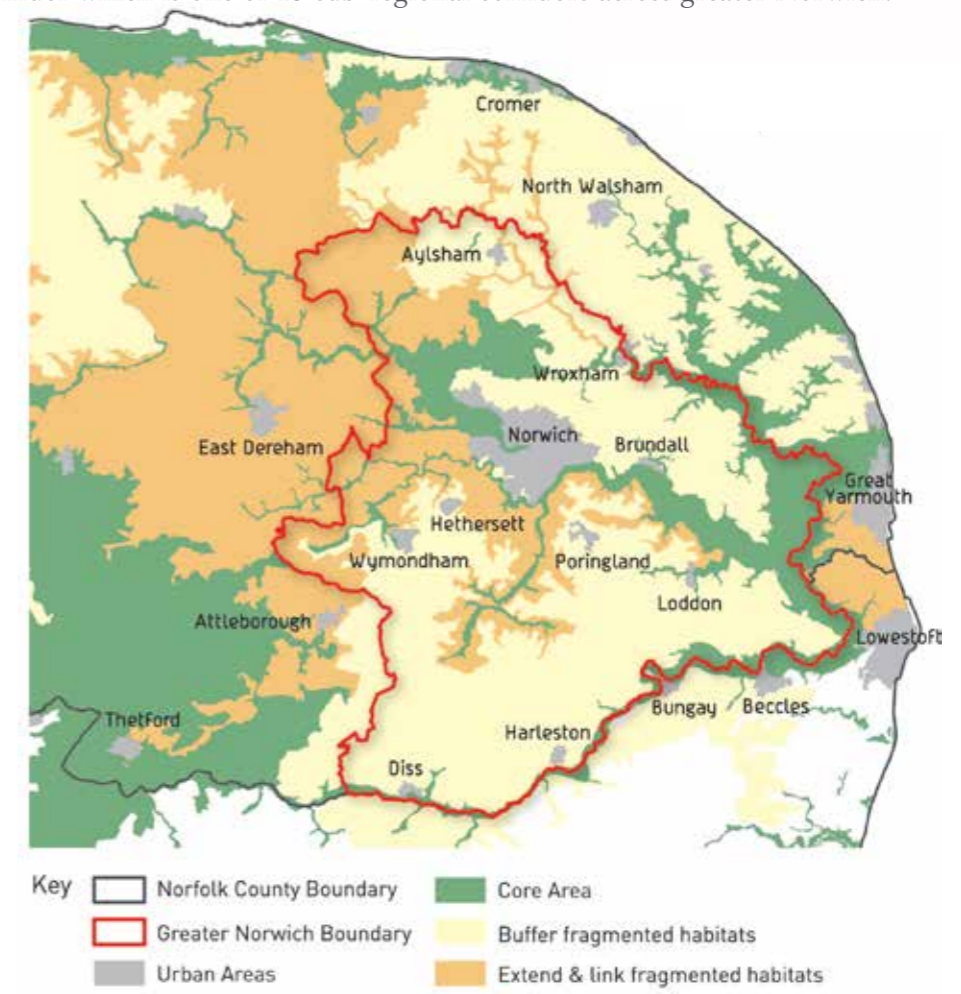
2.3 The Greater Norwich Development Partnership has prepared the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) (Adopted January 2014) which provides strategic planning guidance for the Greater Norwich Area, including Norwich City, Broadland District Council and South Norfolk District Council, working with Norfolk County Council.

2.4 Norwich has been identified as a main focus for growth in the East of England, for new homes and jobs, leisure, cultural and educational development. Hellesdon lies within the Norwich Policy Area, (NPA), defined to provide a focus for the planning and co-ordination of Norwich related growth.

2.5 The JCS distributes growth according to a settlement hierarchy. The urban fringe parish of Hellesdon sits within the Norwich Policy Area (NPA) and is identified as being within the Norwich Urban Area, which is at the top of the growth hierarchy. However it is not specifically identified for the delivery of housing growth and as such comes within the smaller sites in the NPA, in accordance with settlement hierarchy, local environment and servicing considerations. The Norwich Urban Area is also identified for additional smaller scale Green Infrastructure opportunities.

2.6 The Airport Park and Ride is currently located off the A140 immediately south of the airfields. The Norwich Area Transportation Strategy plan within the JCS notes potential relocation and expansion to the new junction of the NDR with the A140, just north of the proposal site.

2.7 The River Wensum forms an important part of the Core Green Infrastructure Network, part of the Area Wide Policies set out within the Joint Core Strategy. This extends outwards from Norwich city centre to the north west, then curving back towards the east, wrapping around the north of Norwich. The Wensum Valley also forms part of the Norwich – Reepham – Aylsham Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Corridor which is one of 13 sub-regional corridors across greater Norwich.

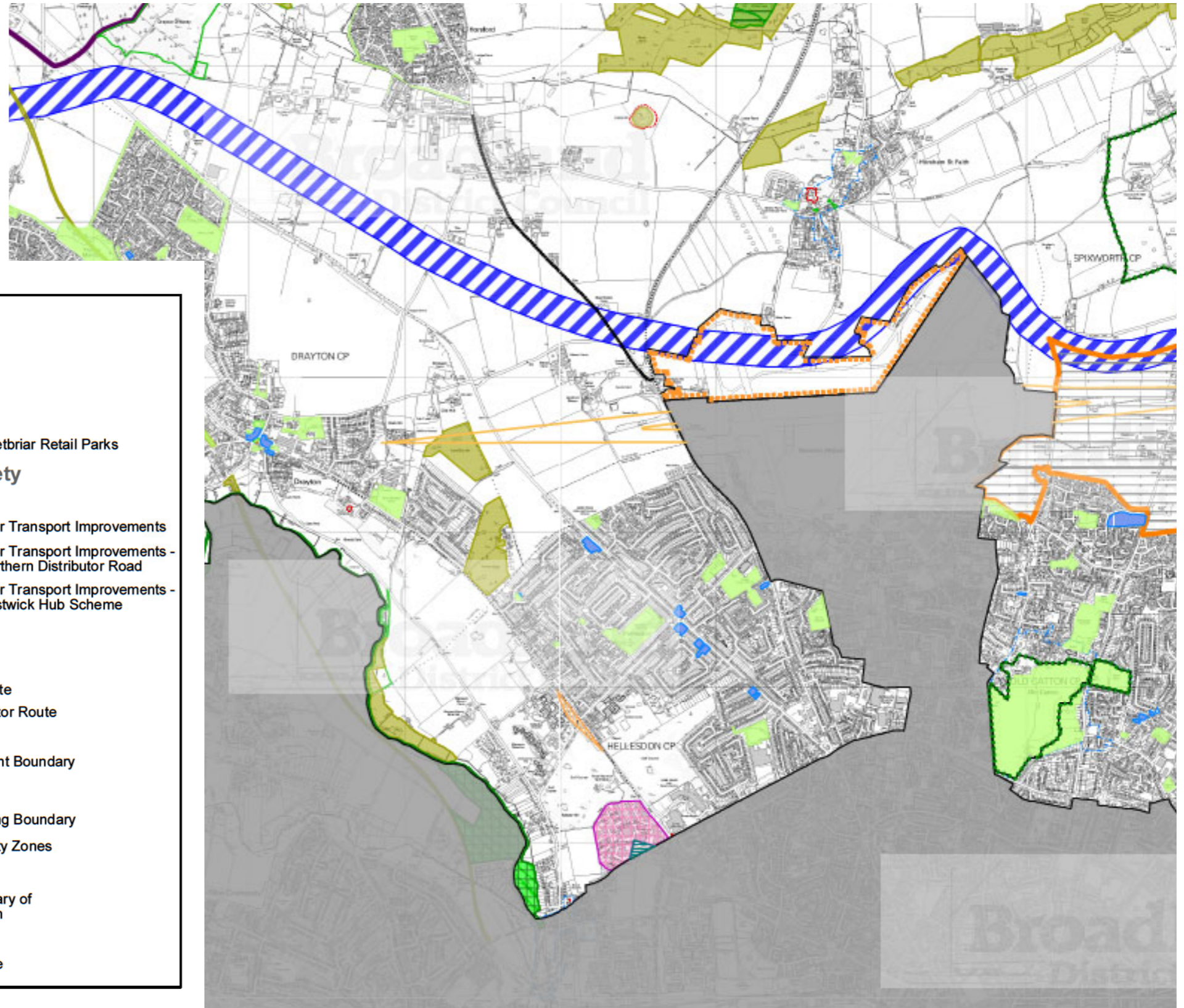



02

Planning Policy Context


POLICIES MAP

Extract from Broadland District Council





Development Management
DPD
Policies Map Key



broadland.gov.uk
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General Considerations

GC2
 Settlement Limit - See Site Allocations DPD

Environment

EN1
 Internationally Designated Area of Biodiversity Importance
e.g. Natura 2000 Sites / SPA's / SAC's / Ramsar Sites
 Nationally Defined Area of Biodiversity Importance
e.g. SSSI's / National Nature Reserves
 Locally Defined Area of Biodiversity / Geodiversity Importance
e.g. County Wildlife Site / Local Nature Reserves / RIGS
 Ancient Woodlands

EN2
 Green Space
 Conservation Areas
 Ancient Monument
 Historic Parkland / Historic Gardens
 Commons / Village Greens

Economy

E1
 Strategic Employment Sites

Retail

R1
 District, Commercial and Local Centres

R2
 Sprowston and Sweetbriar Retail Parks

Transport & Safety

TS1
 Protection of Land for Transport Improvements
for the Proposed Northern Distributor Road
 Protection of Land for Transport Improvements -
for the Proposed Postwick Hub Scheme
 Protection of Land for Transport Improvements -
for the Proposed Postwick Hub Scheme

TS3
 Trunk Road
 Principal Route
 Main Distributor Route

TS5
 Airport Development Boundary

TS6
 Airport Safeguarding Boundary
 Airport Public Safety Zones

Other features

Area Beyond Boundary of
Broadland Local Plan
 Norwich Policy Area
 Growth Area Triangle

02 Planning Policy Context

- 2.8 Broadland District Council's Development Management Plan Document (2015) sets out the policies for the District and an extract of the Policy Map is shown below. Policy EN1 - Biodiversity and Habitats and Policy EN2 - Landscape seek to ensure that development protects and enhances biodiversity and the character of the area and supports delivery of the green infrastructure network of the District.
- 2.9 Policy TS6 - Public Safety Zone, indicated on the policy map relate to Norwich Airport. Other safety zones not shown on the policies map include gas transmission pipelines. Proposed development will have to have regard to these issues.
- 2.10 Broadland District Council's Place Shaping Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2012 (SPD), and highlights best practice principles for developing new sites, including;
- Places for People
 - Enrich the existing
 - Make Connections
 - Work with the Landscape
 - Mix use and forms
 - Economically viable
 - Design for future changes
- 2.11 The Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), is a broad assessment of potentially available land. Whilst the HELAA assesses sites against a number of criteria, it is not an indication of how the site would perform against a Local Plan assessment. It is also possible that sites excluded from the HELAA can still go forward and be considered as part of a more detailed site allocation assessment.
- 2.12 The HELAA 2017 capacity assessment assessed GNLP 0332 and GNLP 0333 (east of Reepham Road) and GNLP 0334 (west of Reepham Road) as *Suitable*.
- 2.13 The HELAA 2018 Addendum capacity assessment assessed GNLP 0332R (east of Reepham Road), which included a revised site boundary combining GNLP0332 and GNLP0333. The main

difference being that 21.8 ha adjacent to the Reepham Road, which was part of GNLP0333, is no longer included. As the site was previously assessed for the original HELAA and it will not contribute any additional capacity to this HELAA addendum, it is therefore assessed as *Unsuitable*.

- 2.14 The HELAA 2018 Addendum capacity assessment assessed GNLP 0334R (west of Reepham Road), which since its original submission, the boundary of the site has been increased northwards along the Reepham Road from 6.4 ha to 11.7 ha. The area of land already considered through the original HELAA assessment must not be double-counted, the site is assessed as *Suitable*.
- 2.15 To clarify, the HELAA 2018 Addendum took care not to double count sites already considered in HELAA 2017. In the case of revised sites, if the site revision is of a similar size or smaller than the original submission, then although technically that site may be suitable for the HELAA it has been marked as Unsuitable to avoid double counting. If a revised site is significantly larger than the original submission then the additional area of land has been counted towards the HELAA figure and the site has been marked as Suitable.
- 2.16 Both sites are stated to be suitable for the land availability assessment.



02 Planning Policy Context

2.17 The HELAA site assessment is a desktop exercise utilising, amongst other methods, a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) assessment against 14 different criteria which represent the potential impacts of developing the site and the potential constraints on the development of the site.

2.18 The summary table below highlights those issues pertinent to this appraisal, from both the original HELAA in 2017 and the Addendum of 2018;

2017	Flood Risk	Significant Landscapes	Townscapes	Bio + Geo Diversity	Historic Environ't	Open Space + GI	Neighbouring Uses
0332	GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN	AMBER	RED
0333	GREEN	GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN	GREEN	RED
0334	GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN	GREEN
2018							
0332R	GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN	AMBER	RED
0334R	GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN	GREEN	AMBER

2.19 The HELAA Methodology (Final July 2016) indicates within the detail, that an Amber assessment of the criteria, is where potential impact of development could be mitigated. The criteria 'Neighbouring Uses' is assessed as Red, which may highlight concerns with 'regard to maintaining appropriate separation between new development and existing infrastructure installations'. In this instance the methodology states that advice would be taken from statutory undertakers and infrastructure providers.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS

2.20 The NPPF recognises that Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development. The proposed site is located across two Parishes, Horsford and Hellesdon, both of which have produced Neighbourhood Plans.

2.21 The majority of the proposed site sits within the southern 'toe' of Horsford Parish, and in terms of landscape character, visual amenity and to a large extent local community, is largely cut off from the rest of Horsford Parish by the NDR. Policies set out with Horsford NP typically relate to the village and its immediate surrounds. The remaining area of Horsford Parish, south of the NDR, has stronger links to the neighbouring parish of Hellesdon in terms of character, visual and local community connections.

2.22 Hellesdon NP sets out key objectives that it seeks to deliver, including to 'protect and enhance existing and create new local green infrastructure'. The NP sets out Hellesdon Green Grid 'designed to create a network of local branches that link into the more strategic River Wensum corridor and permeate across the Parish. ... to link up existing areas of green open space and / or follow major and historic routes through the parish which in some cases already benefit from fragments of green infrastructure and / or lend themselves to the creation of a feasible corridor.'

2.23 Where possible, new development proposals which meet other development plan policies will be expected to contribute to the creation of the green grid. Features of a green grid that will be particularly encouraged include:

- Native avenue tree-planting, particularly along Drayton High Road (A1067), Reepham Road and Cromer Road (A140)
- Hedgerows and species rich vegetated verges
- Pockets of managed wild-space and woodland
- Areas of more wild green space from the River Wensum, through Rabbits Hill and the Golf Course site towards Reepham Road.

03 Character Appraisal

3.1 This chapter describes the context in which the proposal site is located. The information has been gathered from a combination of desktop and site surveys, utilising both on-site and standard published research. These documents are explored in greater detail in the following pages. The document makes a reference to 'landscape' but this may also refer to 'townscape', otherwise known as the 'urban landscape'. The area is covered by two levels of landscape character assessment:

- National Landscape Character Areas - Natural England; and
- Broadland District Landscape Character Assessment (2013),

3.2 National Character Areas are broadbrush in nature and cover large areas of the country. As such, they can often lose local and detailed variations in character. However, they can form a useful baseline against which to assess the more detailed areas, provided by the District level assessments. For the purposes of the appraisal, only character areas closest to the application site have been explored in order to identify key issues for future development.

3.3 In addition, a local landscape character appraisal was undertaken to compare the published research with the situation at a site level. This ensures that local issues are not missed.

NATIONAL CHARACTER

3.4 The site, situated along the northern edge of the village of Hellesdon, lies in the Central North Norfolk Character Area 78. This Character Area extends northwards from Norwich, narrowing around Aylsham and widening out again towards Fakenham in the west and North Walsham in the east, extending all the way to the coastline, as defined in the Natural England National Character Areas.

3.5 The key characteristics of this area are described as:

- Generally low lying topography
- The River Wensum is a major river through this NCA, flowing south eastwards. The river

has a slow to moderate flow because of the low lying topography. The Wensum is a chalk fed river designated as a SSSI and SAC due to its rich aquatic life.

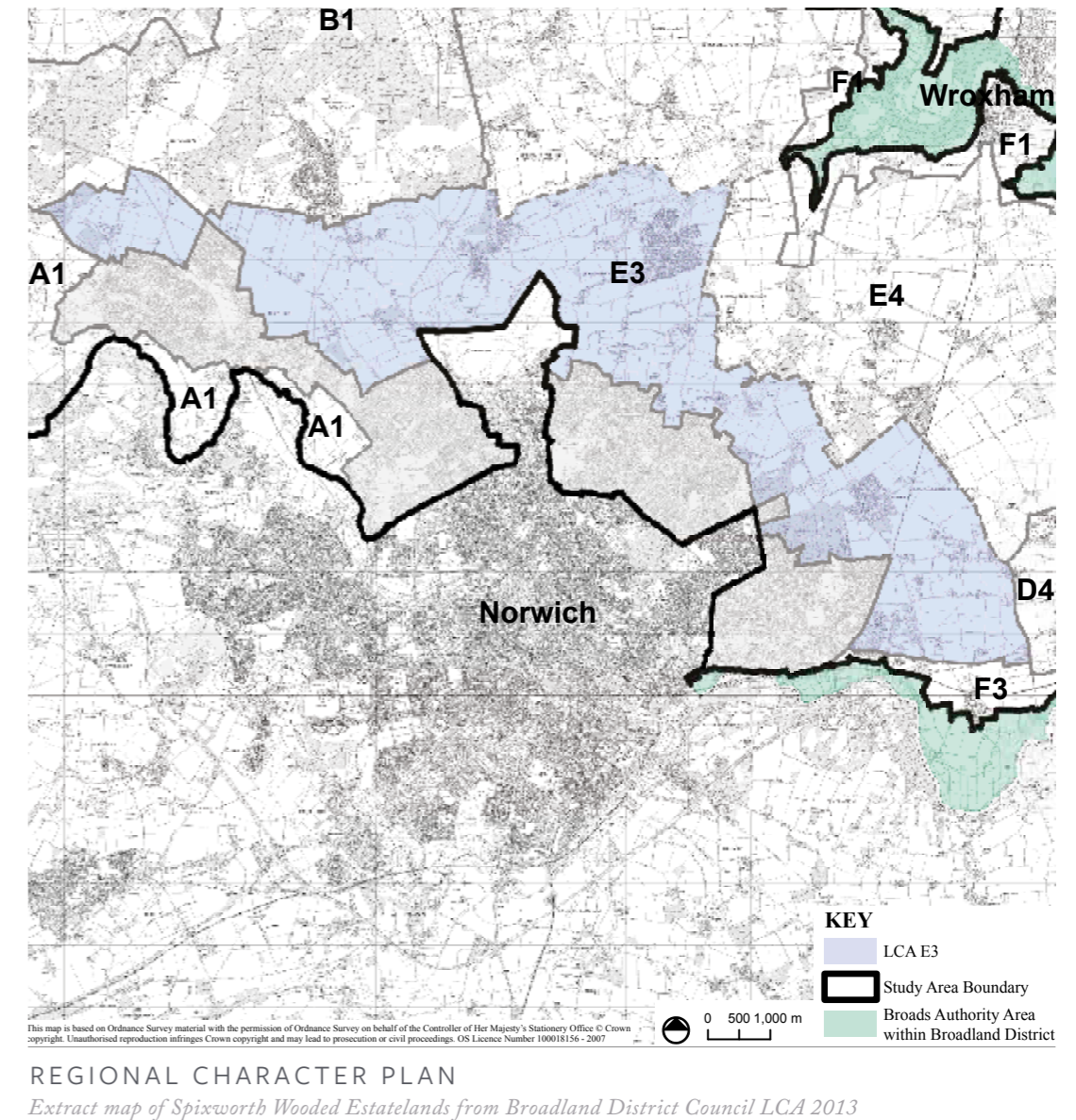
- The area is relatively well wooded in the East Anglian context, with a variety of woodland types scattered throughout the landscape: mixed deciduous or pasture woodlands (oak and beech) on the heavier soils and conifers on the lighter sands, especially to the north and west.
- There is a mosaic of areas of mixed hedgerow with frequent hedgerow oaks and areas of poor or remnant hedgerow with no hedgerow trees which is dependent on different landownership and consequent farming practices.
- Fields in general are variable in size and the 14th Century small scale and irregular enclosure has given way, in many areas, to a large, more regular pattern of 20th century rationalisation.
- Arable farming represents almost 60% of farm types in the area.
- Between the Wensum and Bure important heaths and mires survive in the area north-west of Norwich, and within the city's boundary at Mousehold Heath. These are a remnant of a once far more extensive area.
- The area has very few towns. The main town Aylsham, forms an active centre with its own identity. Large villages also contain more facilities than usual because of their relative isolation. This nucleated pattern is seen most clearly north of the Wensum. Closer to Norwich especially along the A1067 and A47, urbanisation creeps westwards, with a string of 19th and 20th century commuter villages.
- The red brick and frequently black-glazed pantiled farmhouse of the early 18th century is an inherent component of the Norfolk character which is expressed most clearly within this character area. There are also a large proportion of 17th century houses, with flint walls dressed with brick and steeply-pitched thatched or pantiled roofs, although the area generally has a small-scale 18th century character. There are some estate villages, of unified style.



03 Character Appraisal

REGIONAL CHARACTER

- 3.6 The Broadland District Council Landscape Character Assessment SPD (2013), defines the generic character type, within which the proposed site is located, as Wooded Estatelands, further subdivided into character areas, reflecting distinctive variations in local character within each type, this being Spixworth Wooded Estatelands.
- 3.7 This character area forms a narrow belt of land abutting the northern settlement edge of Norwich. The land within this area forms part of an extensive area of sands and gravels. Although land use within the area is influenced by its close proximity to Norwich, a large proportion of the area is still in arable cultivation. Other urban fringe uses have developed on converted farmland in central and western parts, such as golf courses and sporting fields. The other major land use in this area is Norwich International Airport. Although the majority of airport infrastructure is located south of the District boundary, the northern section of the airport's runways encroach central parts of this character area.
- 3.8 A number of roads radiate from the city of Norwich across the landscape, at times, coinciding with ribbon development. The A140 is a particularly busy road that dissects the centre of the area, introducing considerable amounts of movement and noise to the landscape. The NIA is a major influence of the character within central parts, creating an open exposed landscape. The airport and its associated buildings and machinery are visually intrusive, and the robust tree belts located around its boundary form striking lines across the landscape. The settlement edge of Norwich is often abrupt and encloses southerly views, forming a harsh boundary to the area.
- 3.9 Although the area abuts the urban edge of Norwich, the landscape generally comprises a semi-rural character. Its strength of character has been diluted by substantial fragmentation to the hedgerow structure. The road network has a strong influence; well used by commuters, it is noisy and busy. The mixture of land uses within the area generally coincides with a fairly weak sense of identity.
- 3.10 The SPD sets out Landscape Planning Guidelines that apply to Spixworth Wooded Estatelands, of



which the following are pertinent to the proposal site:

- Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern and is well integrated into the surrounding landscape;
- Seek to maintain greenspace between the edges of Norwich urban area and adjacent villages;
- Seek to conserve and enhance the landscape setting of Norwich and seek to screen (where possible) existing and potential harsh settlement edges; and
- Seek to maintain and enhance copses of mature trees and existing robust hedgerows as well as opportunities for the restoration of fragmented hedgerows.

03 Character Appraisal

LOCAL CHARACTER

- 3.11 The landscape in and around the proposal site broadly reflects that described within the published landscape character assessments. The area presents a semi rural, urban fringe character of arable fields with hedgerows and woodland belts, alongside edge of urban fringe settlement. Regular woodlands, copses and hedgerows interrupt and filter the views across fields, creating a wooded horizon.
- 3.12 Hellesdon occupies the upper slopes to the east of the flood plan of the River Wensum, forming the urban fringe to north west of Norwich city. The existing northern edge of Hellesdon forms a harsh and abrupt settlement edge. Allotments and an area of open space follow the settlement boundary. Areas of residential development are interspersed with commercial enterprises.
- 3.13 The area is strongly influenced, both in terms of noise and visual effect of constant movement, by the very busy NDR, A140, A1067 and Reepham Road, along with Norwich International Airport (NIA), which is located just east of the A140, with extensive open and exposed airstrip and associated large hangers and office buildings to its southern edge.
- 3.14 The overall character is of a semi rural agricultural landscape intensively cultivated and strongly influenced by urban fringe land uses, a transition zone with the wider rural countryside situated further to the north, beyond the NDR. The presence of extensive areas of built development, urban fringe land uses along this north western sector of Norwich and the linear extension of settlements along the A1067, similar to the A1074, has led to some loss of individual settlement identity. The overall landscape character is considered to be weak, possibly poor in some urban fringe locations.
- 3.15 The CPRE map of tranquillity (2007) appears to indicate that the lowest scores for tranquillity are associated with the city of Norwich. Disturbance can also be seen to be associated with the main transport routes radiating out from the city centre such as the A140 and A1067. The 2007 Intrusion Map (CPRE) shows the extent to which rural landscapes are 'intruded on' from urban development, noise (primarily traffic noise), and other sources of visual and auditory intrusion. This shows that

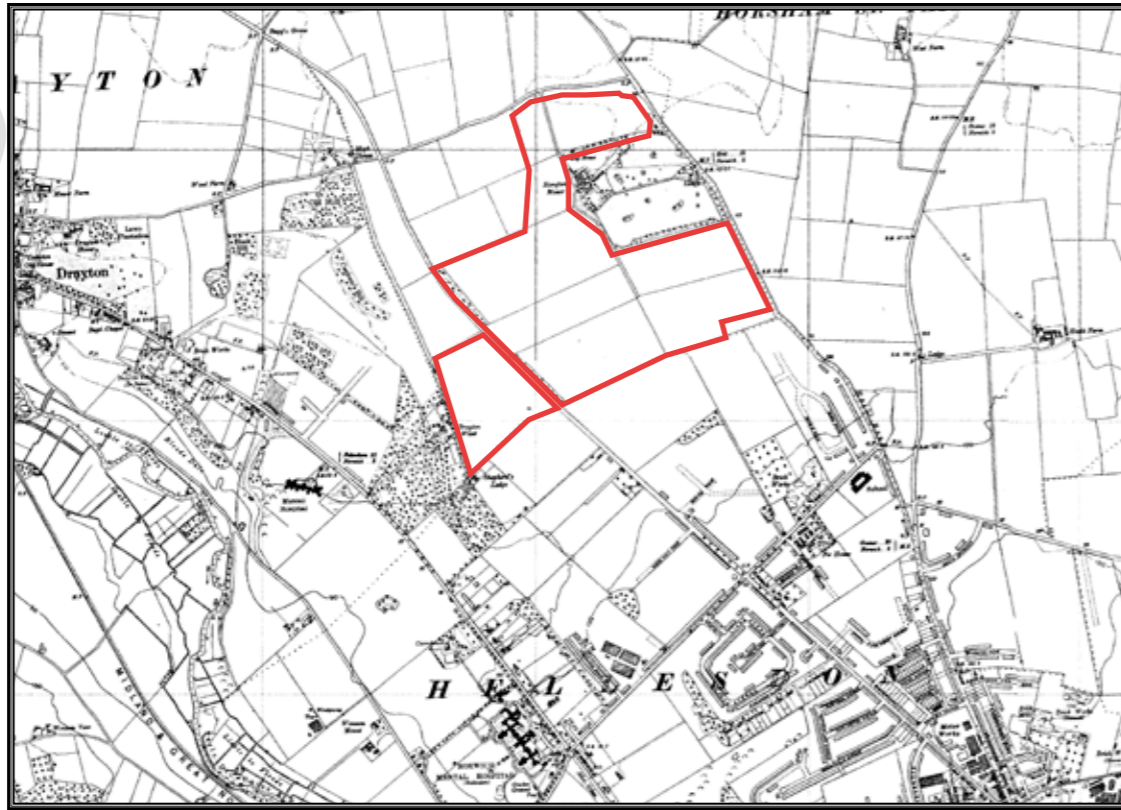
disturbance is associated with the 'A' roads that run through the area including the A140 and A1067. Intrusion also occurs in and around the city of Norwich.

HISTORICAL & CULTURAL INFLUENCES

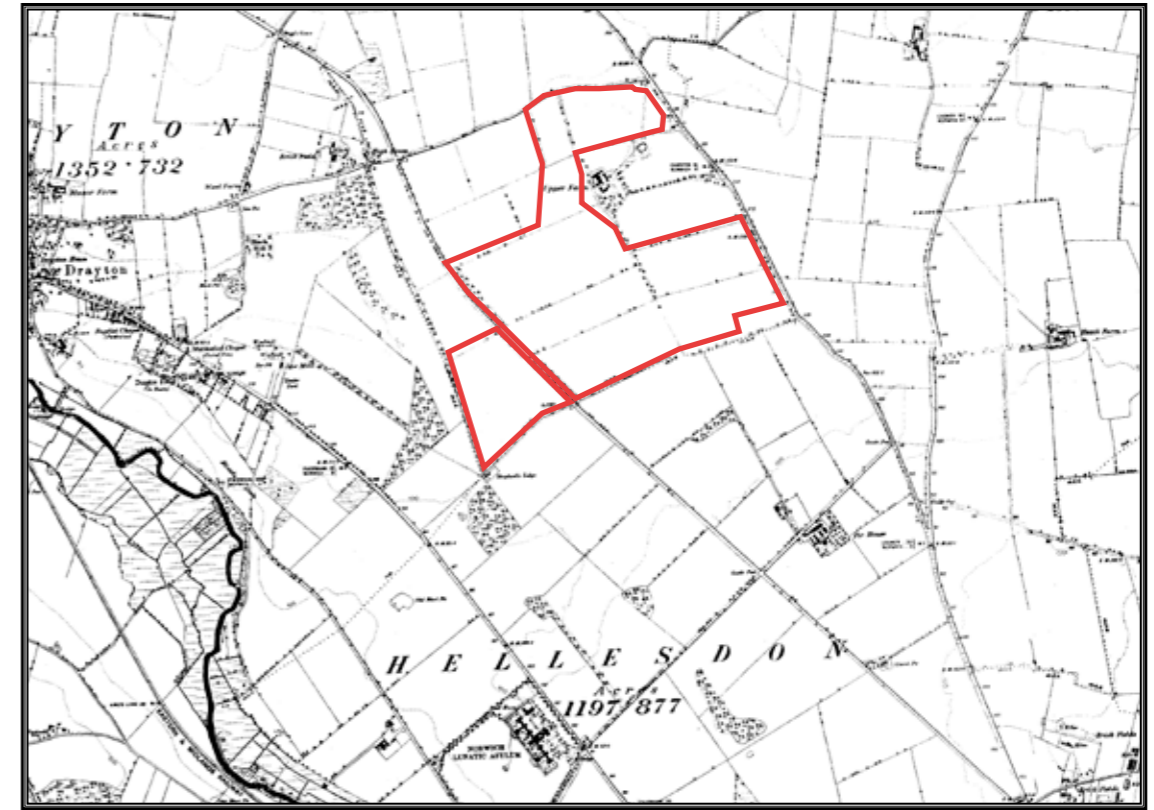
- 3.16 Norwich was founded at the confluence of the Yare and the Wensum during Saxon times and was well settled by the time of William the Conqueror. The Domesday Book notes large flocks of sheep throughout the county suggesting it was a prosperous farming and wool-producing area. By the 13th century Norwich was one of the largest cities in England, together with London, Bristol and York. The cloth industry sustained its exports and wealth right up to the 19th century. Medieval and later settlement is mixed, with a generally very high degree of dispersal, including numerous well separated market towns and large villages and their associated numerous churches. Surrounding these is a pattern of dispersed hamlets, farmsteads and manorial complexes, still a dominant element of the settlement pattern today.
- 3.17 Much of the early medieval landscape of heaths and wood pasture was enclosed between the 14th and 17th centuries, the resulting small-scale, irregular field patterns, high hedges and a meandering road network are still in evidence today. Medieval deer parks were largely converted to farmland in the 16th and 17th centuries.
- 3.18 The arrival of the railway in Norfolk in the late 1800s signalled the beginning of mass tourism, to the coastline especially. By the end of the 19th century Norfolk was no longer famous for its wool and cloth, but for its tourist attractions. Almost a third of historic parkland has been converted to arable use since the First World War. A number of railways closed due to economic restructuring and the Beeching axe in the 1950s and 60s, many of which were subsequently reinvented as long-distance footpaths, which include the Marriott's Way.
- 3.19 A string of commuter villages were built close to Norwich in the 19th and 20th centuries, especially along the A47 and A1067. Pressure to accommodate growth and development continues, with increasing urbanisation of areas around Norwich.



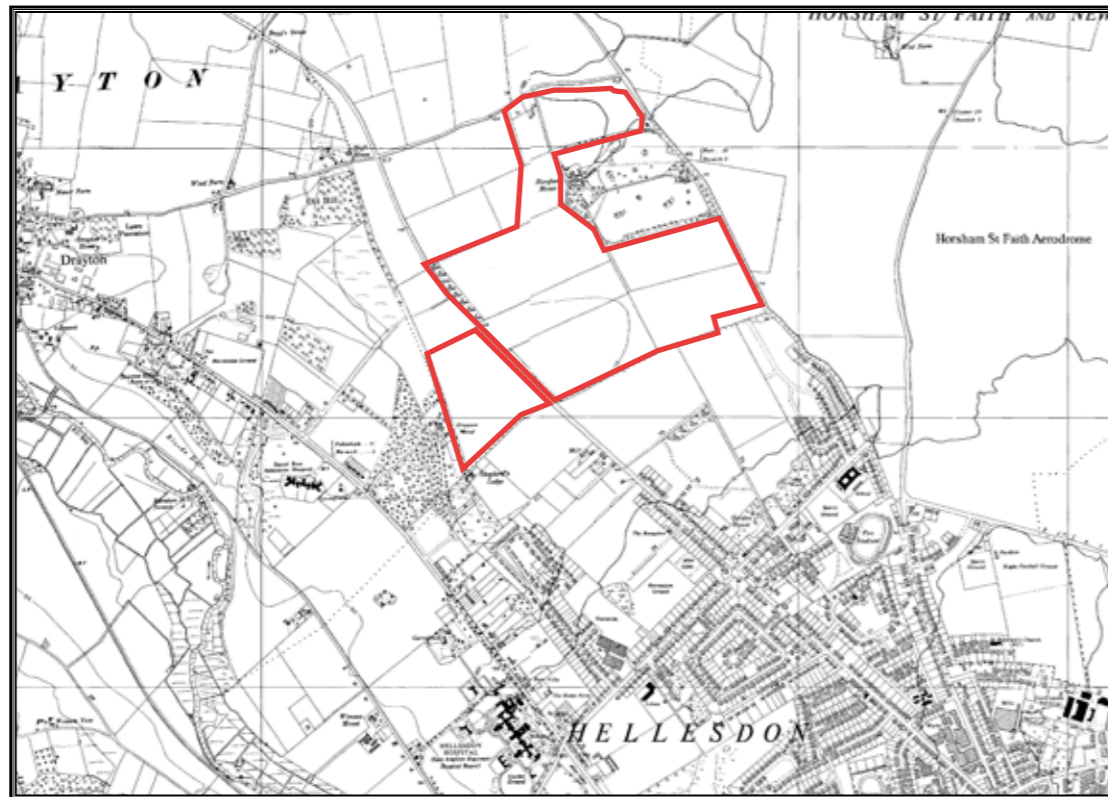
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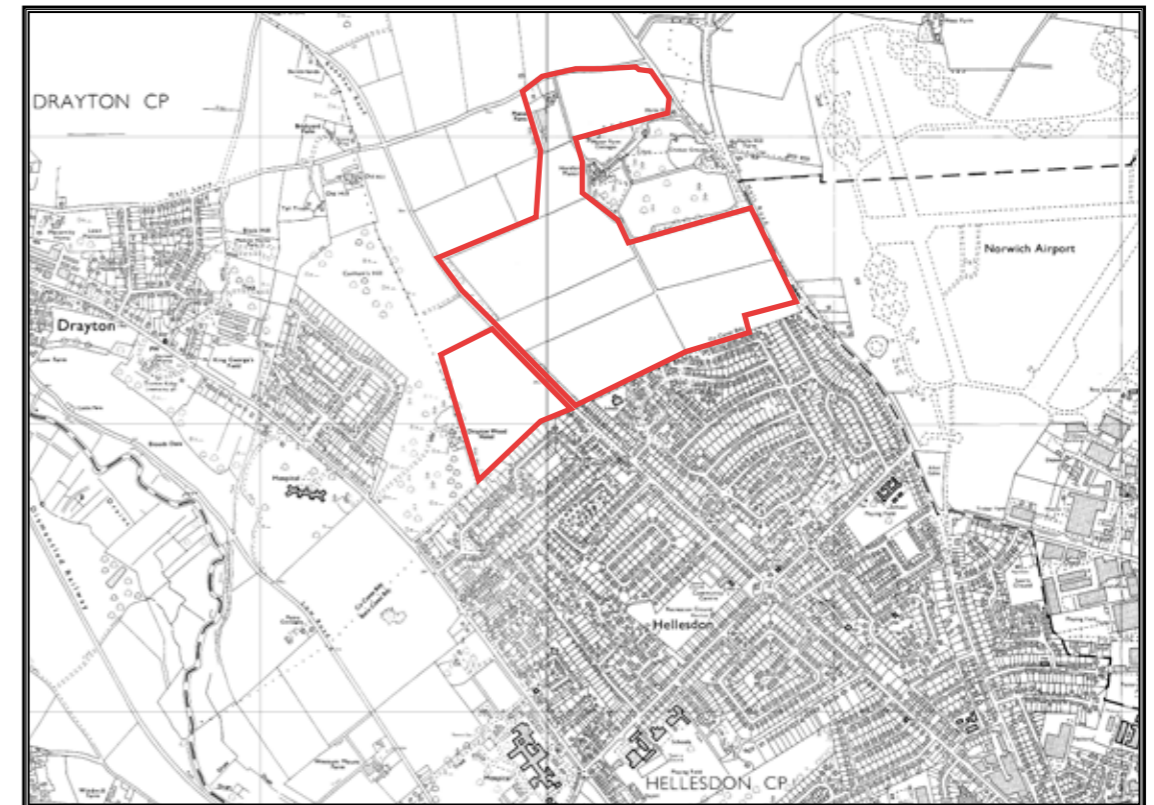
HISTORIC MAP 1888-1892



HISTORIC MAP 1938



HISTORIC MAP 1957-1958



HISTORIC MAP 1987-1995



03 Baseline Appraisal

SETTLEMENT & LANDUSE

- 3.20 The area has very few towns, with the main settlements being the city of Norwich and the town of Alysham. There is a rich abundance of minor country houses between the major estates of Sheringham, Blickling and Felbrigg with dispersed villages scattered among the dense network of minor roads. Closer to Norwich, especially along the A1067 and A47, urbanisation creeps westwards, with a string of 19th and 20th century commuter villages.
- 3.21 Old Hellesdon and its historic centre is at the junction of Low Road and Hellesdon Hall Road, close to the River Wensum, a small settlement clustered around Hellesdon Mill and St Mary's Church. The line of the modern Parish boundary (following Hellesdon Hall Road) means that today, the majority of this early hamlet is outside of Hellesdon Parish and Broadland District authority. Hellesdon Conservation Area (CA) covers the historic core of the old village. The proposal site is not within nor adjacent to the CA.
- 3.22 A search of the English Heritage map of Listed Buildings highlights that the only Listed Building within Hellesdon is St Mary's Church Grade II* situated in the far south western corner and adjacent to the parish boundary. Other Listed Buildings are located within the historic cores of the old settlement of Hellesdon, Drayton and Horsham St Faith, located over 1.5km away from the proposed site boundary. The proposal site will not impact the setting of any of the listed dwellings as the historic cores of both Hellesdon and Drayton are screened by existing residential development and woodlands. The historic core of Horsham St Faith, to the north east, is screened by the NDR and existing residential development.
- 3.23 The modern suburb of Hellesdon comprises in the majority 20th century development. Early 20th century housing spreads out from Norwich along the A140 Holt Road and the A1067 Drayton High Road. Mid-20th century, post-war housing expanded to fill in-between these arterial routes creating low-density neighbourhoods of loop-roads and cul-de-sacs.

- 3.24 Today, Hellesdon is almost entirely formed of residential development with areas of commercial activity. Entering via the A140 Holt Road or Reepham Road, immediately presents dense urban residential roads with a lack of green frontages as the vast majority have been paved to allow parking. There is no gradual arrival via loose arrangement of dwellings typical of traditional village edge settlement.
- 3.25 Dwellings in Hellesdon are in the majority single storey bungalows but overall contains a mix of styles including two storey detached houses and semi detached dwellings. Materials typically include red brick with red or black pantile roofing, red brick and white render, with the majority of plot frontages defined by low red brick walls. The red brick and frequently black-glazed pantiled farmhouse of the early 18th century is an inherent component of the Norfolk character.
- 3.26 Norwich International Airport provides open and exposed areas across the runways, with associated buildings and commercial development forming a semi circle around its southern boundary.
- 3.27 Norwich is the major focus of growth for Norfolk and there is likely to be significant development in this area. New roads and improvements to the road and rail network are planned to meet the demands of new development.



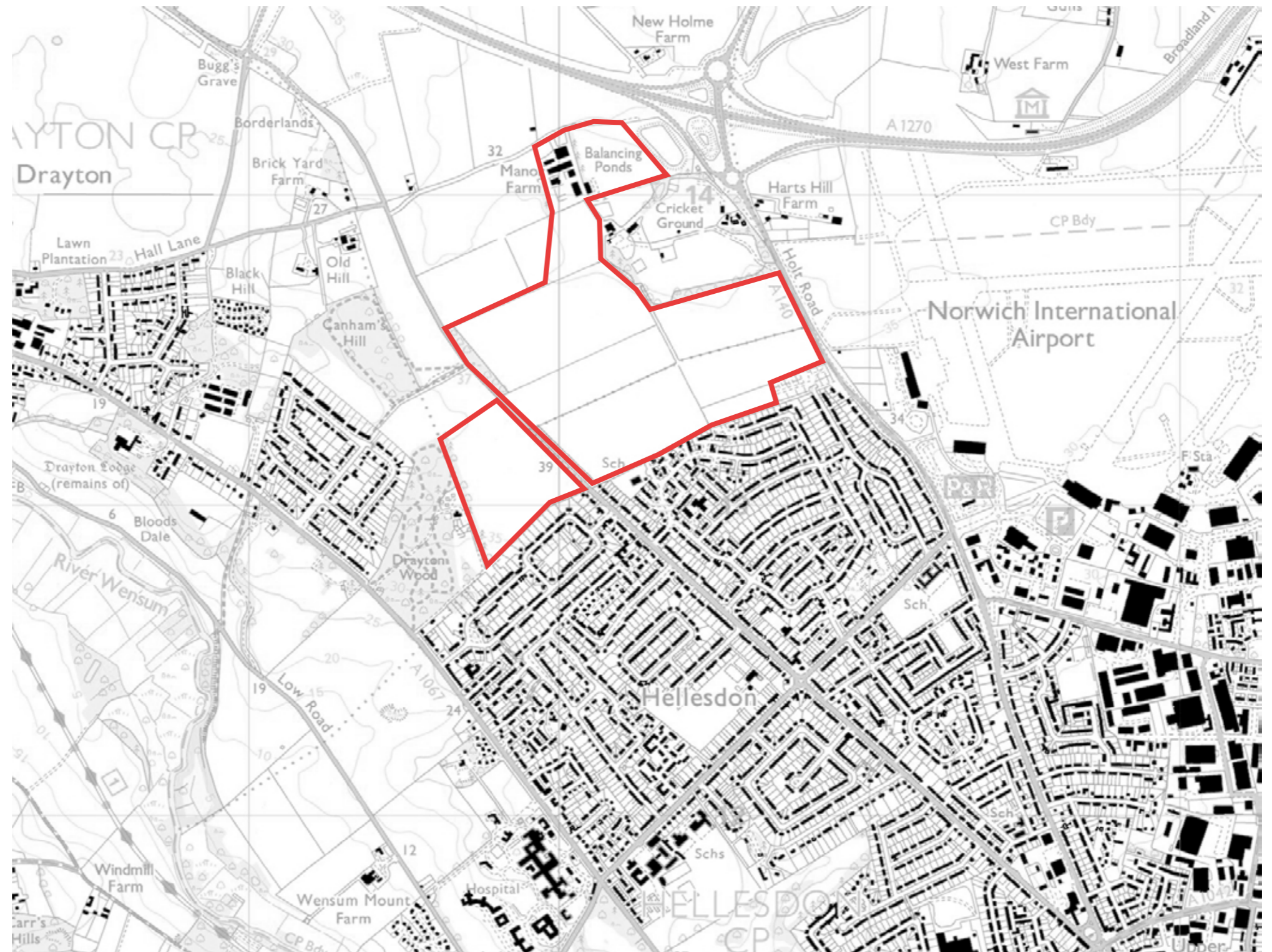
Photos from Bush Road, Hellesdon

03 Baseline Appraisal

SETTLEMENT & LANDUSE

3.28 Referring to the settlement block pattern, it can be seen that the pattern is relatively dense, reflecting the urban fringe location, and that buildings are situated along a regular grid pattern, with small incidental green spaces. Appears to be dominated by semi-detached dwellings with smaller gardens. Larger buildings, typically those of commercial nature, dominate the area south of the NIA.

3.29 The block pattern of Drayton is notably reduced in density and with a looser arrangement compared to Hellesdon. Plots appear to be bigger with large individual dwellings, typical of village layout.



SETTLEMENT BLOCK PLAN



03 Baseline Appraisal

LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS

- 3.30 The relevant protected and designated landscape areas within the study area are shown on the Designations Plan below. This information has been taken from MAGIC (www.magic.gov.uk).
- 3.31 The site itself is not located within any landscape designation and there are no designations within 1.5km of the site.
- 3.32 The River Wensum, a chalk fed river noted for its rich aquatic life, is protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located approximately 0.9km at its nearest point, west of the site. Development on the proposal site would not be visible due to intervening woodland and existing buildings that rise up the valley slopes east of the river.
- 3.33 The closest Scheduled Monument (SM) is Drayton Lodge, 1km to the west of site boundary. Other SMs that are further distant include Horsford Castle 1.5km to the north and St Faith Priory 1.7km to the north east. Development on the proposal site would not impact upon these.
- 3.34 Approximately 2.5km to the south east lies Catton Hall Grade II* Registered Park and Garden. A late 18th century country house set in the remains of a Victorian garden, surrounded by a park landscaped by Humphry Repton in 1788, it being his first paid commission.
- 3.35 The site is bounded by Broadleaf Deciduous Woodland Priority BAP Habitat, which includes Drayton Wood and the woodland belts alongside Reepham Road. Canham's Hill wood just to the north west is also classified as priority habitat and is in the same ownership of the proposed development site. Set between the two woodlands is a remnant area of Lowland Heathland also classified as Priority Habitat. Drayton Wood and Canham's Hill wood are both County Wildlife Sites.



Woodland belt along Reepham Road.



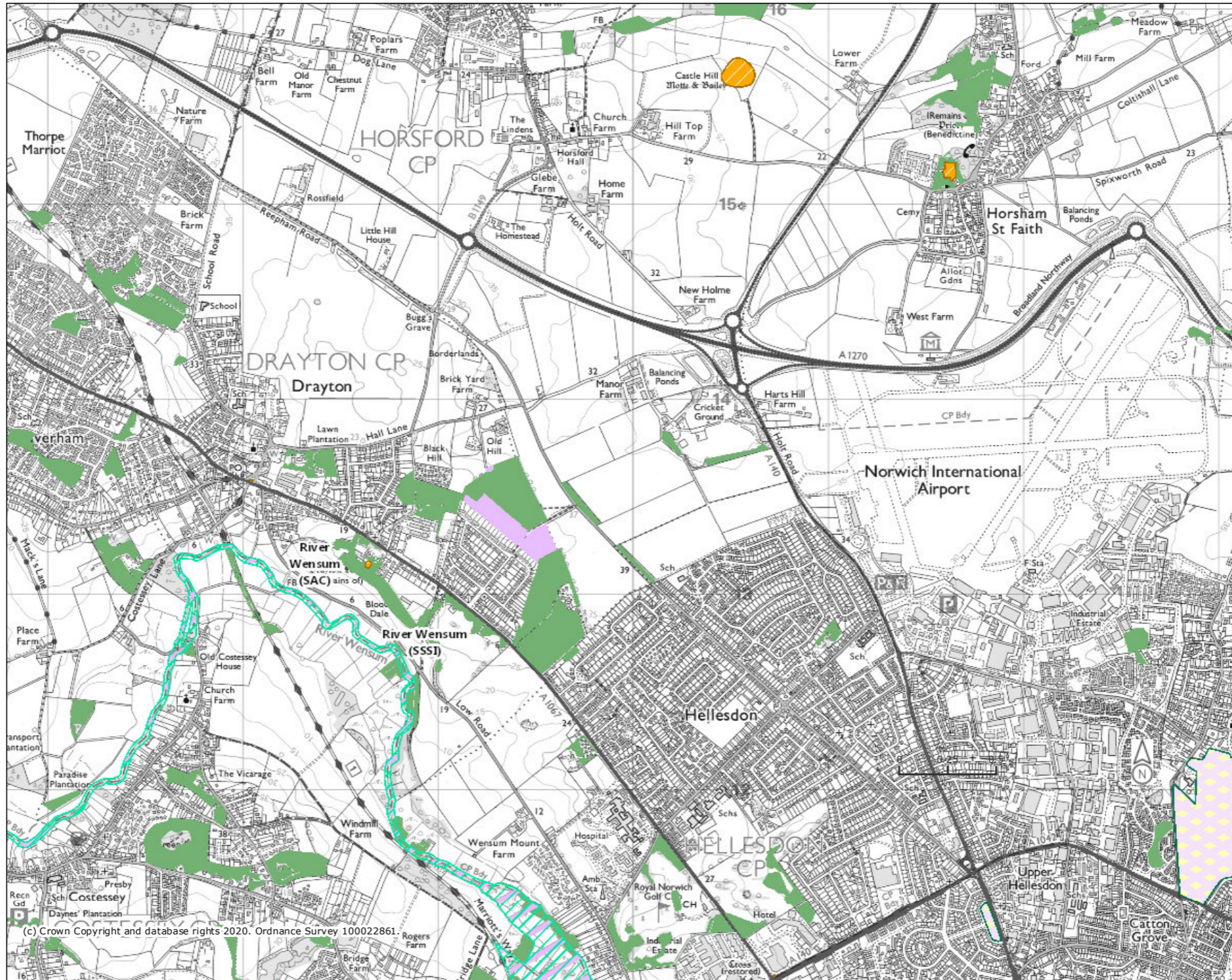
Drayton Wood CWS

03

Baseline Appraisal

MAGiC

Landscape Designations



Legend

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)
- Special Areas of Conservation (England)
- Scheduled Monuments (England)
- Registered Parks and Gardens (England)
- Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Heathland (England)
- Priority Habitat Inventory - Deciduous Woodland (England)

Projection = OSGB36
 xmin = 616000
 ymin = 311600
 xmax = 624000
 ymax = 315400

Map produced by MAGIC on 5 March, 2020.
 Copyright resides with the data suppliers and the map must not be reproduced without their permission. Some information in MAGIC is a snapshot of the information that is being maintained or continually updated by the originating organisation. Please refer to the metadata for details as information may be illustrative or representative rather than definitive at this stage.

DESIGNATIONS PLAN
www.magic.gov.uk

03 Baseline Appraisal

TOPOGRAPHY, HYDROLOGY & GEOLOGY

3.36 The village of Hellesdon is located along the upper slopes to the east of the River Wensum, at approximately 25-35 AOD. The land slopes in an east to west direction down to the River itself at approximately 5m AOD. The site itself lies at 35m Above Ordnance Datum level. It is relatively flat with a gentle slope down to 30m AOD to the north eastern area alongside Holly Lane and the NDR balancing ponds.

3.37 A floodplain is the area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks, or high tides and stormy seas cause flooding in coastal areas. There are two different kinds of area shown on the Flood Map for Planning;

- Dark Blue shows the area that could be affected by flooding if there were no flood defences. This area could be flooded from a river by a flood that has a 1 per cent (1 in 100) or greater chance of happening each year.
- Light Blue shows the additional extent of an extreme flood. These outlying areas are likely to be affected by a major flood, with up to a 0.1 per cent (1 in 1000) chance of occurring each year.

3.38 These two colours show the extent of the natural floodplain if there were no flood defences or certain other man-made structures and channel improvements. Where there is no blue shading, this shows the area where flooding from rivers is very unlikely. There is less than a 0.1 per cent (1 in 1000) chance of flooding occurring each year. The majority of England and Wales falls within this area. (For planning and development purposes, this is the same as Flood Zone 1, in England only.)

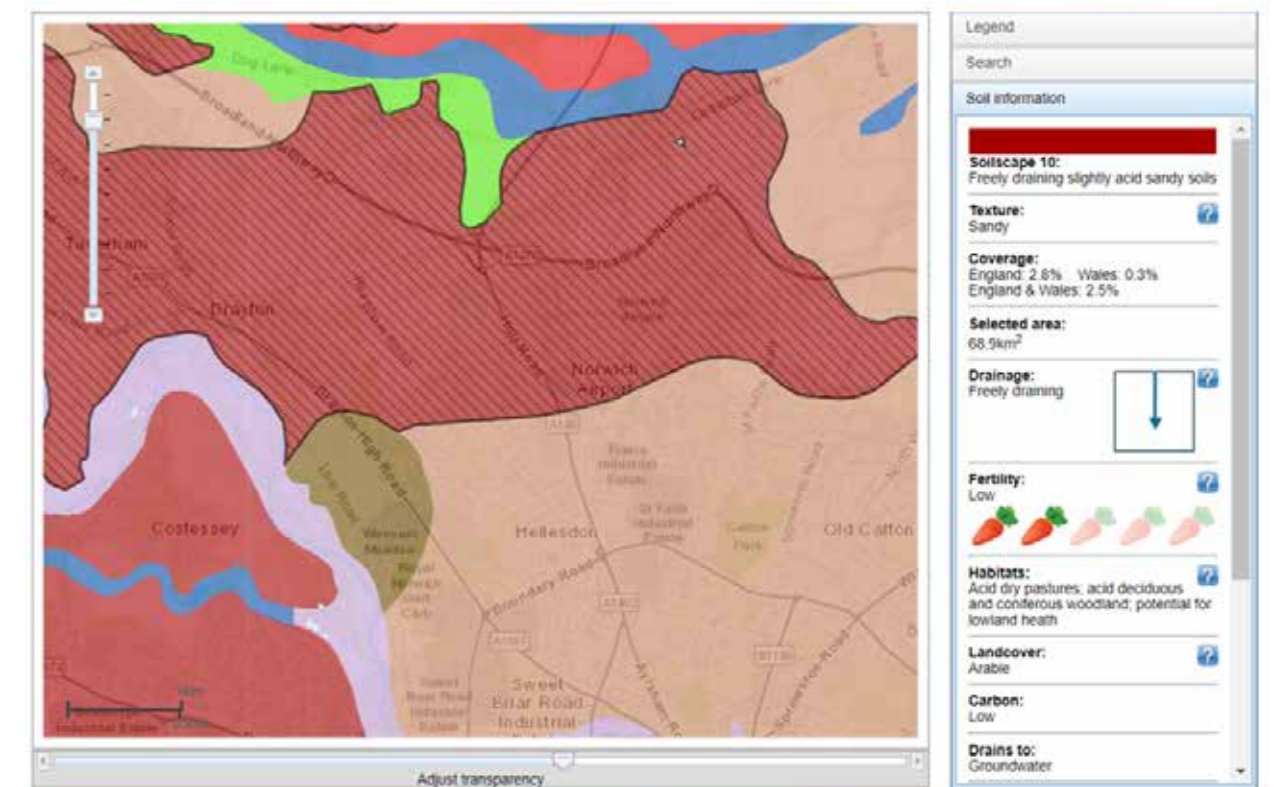
3.39 The proposal site is located within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore of the lowest risk.

3.40 The soil type consists of freely draining slightly acid sandy soils, with low natural fertility.

3.41 The Natural England Agricultural Land Classification map for the Eastern Region (2010) indicates that the site is of Grade 3 Good to Moderate classification.



FLOOD RISK MAP *Extract from <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>.*



SOILSCAPE MAP *Map extract from www.landis.org.uk/soilsapes/.*

03 Baseline Appraisal

VEGETATION COVER

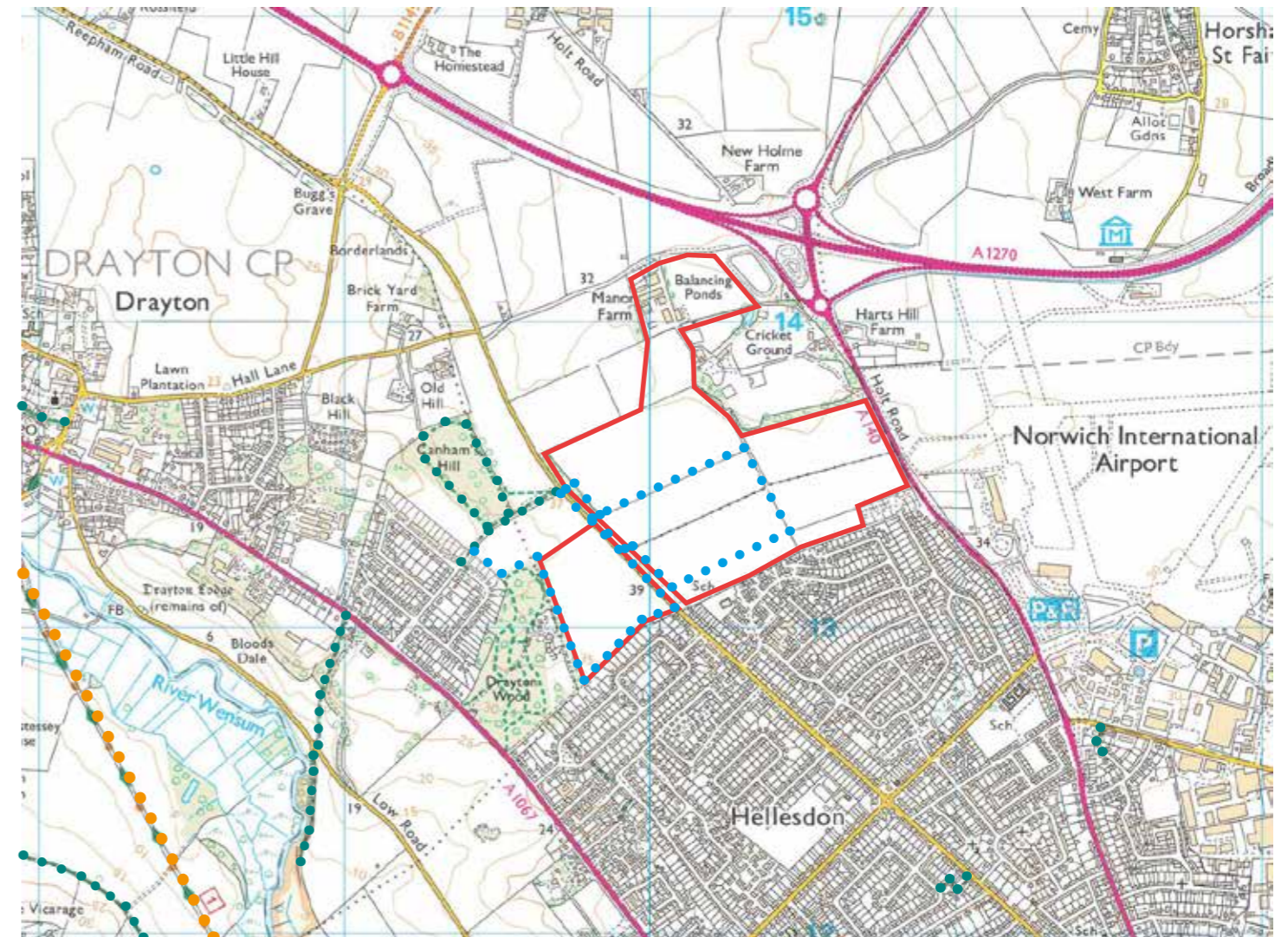
3.42 The local countryside has typically large arable fields allowing views over gently rolling topography, with woodland and copses interrupting the long views and hedgerows, where present, filtering views. The predominant tree species are oak and beech, with a scattering of pine on more sandy soils. Woodland follows the route of the River Wensum, with other notable areas of woodland just north of Horsford. There is a noticeable lack of hedgerows defining field boundaries, which are instead defined by trackways, or the occasional individual mature tree. Generally the horizon line appears wooded with a layering effect over longer distance views.

3.43 In contrast, the urban fringe settlement of Hellesdon is defined along its northern edge by a sparse vegetated strip formed by rear garden trees and mature shrubs. Allotments and green open space form the juncture between these rear gardens and arable fields to land east of Reepham Road, but provide meagre contributions to the screening and softening of the urban edge. Land west of Reepham Road benefits from a stronger vegetated rear garden boundary. This announces an abrupt change in character from open arable fields to intimate urban edge leading further on into the centre of Norwich.

ACCESS & RIGHTS OF WAY

3.44 There is a lack of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) across the area, however there are two PRoWs, one around Canham's Hill wood and connecting Howell Road to Reepham Road, as well as a further PRoW looping through Drayton Wood, although this appeared to be private land associated with a care home upon visiting the site and surrounds. There are also a couple of permissive footpaths crossing through the site along field boundaries. Views from these routes were considered in the visual appraisal.

3.45 There is a recreational trail, 'Marriots Way', a 26 mile footpath, bridleway and cycle route, which follows the routes of two disused railway lines, and runs between Aylsham and Norwich, passing through the valley of the River Wensum to the west of the site. Views to the site are not available as they are obscured by existing buildings and vegetation, topography and distance.



ACCESS & RIGHTS OF WAY

PRoWs and Permissive Footpaths through and around the proposed site boundaries.

KEY

- ● ● ● ● *Public Rights of Way (PRoWs)*
- ● ● ● ● *Permissive Footpaths*
- ● ● ● ● *Marriots Way*



PRoWs connecting Reepham Road to Howell Road.

03 Baseline Appraisal

SITE LOCATION & CHARACTERISTICS

3.46 Hellesdon itself occupies the slopes to the east of the meandering River Wensum, with the village of Drayton to the north west along the A1067 Drayton High Road, merging with Taverham to form one settlement. The village of Horsford lies further to the north, beyond the NDR and is almost encircled by Horsford Woods and various plantation woodlands.

3.47 Hellesdon has spread mainly to the north and south in its formation, predominately within the bounds of the A1067 and the A140. The A1067 connects Fakenham in the north west to the centre of Norwich, with the A140 connecting Cromer in the north, also to the centre of Norwich. The River Wensum forms a green corridor, with its pronounced meanderings leading to the centre of Norwich itself.

3.48 The smaller land parcel to the west of Reepham Road occupies an area of approximately 11.7 hectares. It consists of arable land is defined by Drayton Wood to the west, well vegetated rear gardens of Westwood Drive to the south and mature trees and sections of overgrown hedgerow along Reepham Road itself to the east. It continues to the north as arable farmland. There is a stand of mature pine trees mid-way along the western site boundary with the rest of the wooded areas being broadleaf species with a heavy preponderance of beech.

3.49 The larger land parcel to the east of Reepham Road occupies an area of approximately 64 hectares. It consists of arable land, with external site boundaries defined by mature woodland belts and mature trees along Reepham Road to the east, chain link fencing to green open space and allotments to southern boundary, with well vegetated rear garden boundaries of existing dwellings to Cottinghams Drive and Sadler Road. To the east is the A140 Holt Road, with a few scattered small trees along an otherwise open and exposed boundary. To the north east is the well vegetated boundary to Nest Norfolk Community Hub and associated sports facilities. To the north lies Drayton Farms, associated cottages and large agricultural buildings set within mature tree and hedgerow boundaries, including mature evergreen pine elements, the area extending to Holly Lane. To the north east are hedgerow field boundaries with individual trees.



View across open space to dwellings off Cottingham's Drive.



View south along green track within site boundary.



View across fields to dwellings off Cottingham's Drive.



View north east towards rear of Drayton Farm.

3.50 Internal field boundaries to the land east of Reepham Road consist of hedgerows and individual trees. Woodland belts, approx 20m wide, consist of a beech with some hawthorn and buckthorn. The ground flora consists of ivy, bramble and patches of bracken.

3.51 The site lies at 35m Above Ordnance Datum level. It is relatively flat and gently slopes down to 30m AOD to the north eastern area alongside Holly Lane and the NDR balancing ponds. The soil type consists of freely draining sandy soils.

3.52 There are Public Rights of Way through Canham's Hill woodland and Drayton Wood, with Permissive Pathways around the boundary of the small land parcel to the west and around the field boundaries to the south western sector of the larger land parcel to the east of Reepham Road. These are illustrated on the Access and Rights of Way Plan above.

03 Baseline Appraisal

LANDSCAPE VALUE

3.53 This sets out the relative value attached to different landscapes by society, bearing in mind that a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a variety of different reasons. Value can apply to areas of landscape as a whole, or to the individual elements, features and aesthetic or perceptual dimensions which contribute to the character of the landscape.

3.54 The site does not form part of any landscape designation, nor does it sit within 1.5km of a designation. The proposal site consists of arable land and woodland belts, on the edge of settlement that forms the urban fringe to the city of Norwich. It sits within a transition zone contained and strongly influenced by the NDR to the north, urban fringe settlement to the south, NIA to the east and River Wensum and existing settlement to the west. The wider rural countryside lies further north beyond the NDR.

3.55 The site, at approximately 35m AOD, occupies a relatively flat area, with the land falling away to the north east and the balancing ponds of the NDR. The area has a light industrial / commercial character along the A140, with airport hangers, office buildings, community sports hub along with Drayton Farms and its associated large modern agricultural barns. Other busy local roads such as Reepham Road and the A1067, connecting to the city centre provide a source of constant noise and movement.

3.56 This urban fringe area is valued for its good highways network leading in and out of the city centre, as well as international connections via the airport. Rural lanes connect to outlying villages, some of which are well vegetated lanes especially along the lower valley alongside the River Wensum.

3.57 This is a transition zone disturbed by noise and movement, however value is attributed by local residents for being semi rural and having access to fields for dog walking, walking and cycling, as well as the allotments which appear to be well utilised.

3.58 This particular area would be typically experienced by receptors such as farm workers and residents who may also enjoy traversing the public rights of way as a local recreational resource, as well as visitors passing through along the highway network. Activity around the site area is very much associated with arable crop production, local community sports hub, NIA and edge of settlement, as visitors would typically be drawn to the city centre of Norwich or even further to the coast.

3.59 A lack of designations for recognisable landscapes does not necessarily mean that the local area is not valued. It may however signify that there are elements within this landscape that are valued, rather than the landscape as a whole. These elements would include;

- Arable agricultural landscape with wooded horizon
- Semi rural landscape, a transition zone between the NDR to the north and dense residential and commercial areas of urban fringe to the south
- Importance of maintaining and enhancing separation of settlements
- Drayton Wood and Canham's Hill wood as backdrop to views
- Woodlands and copses along the River Wensum and long distance trails such as Marriots Way.

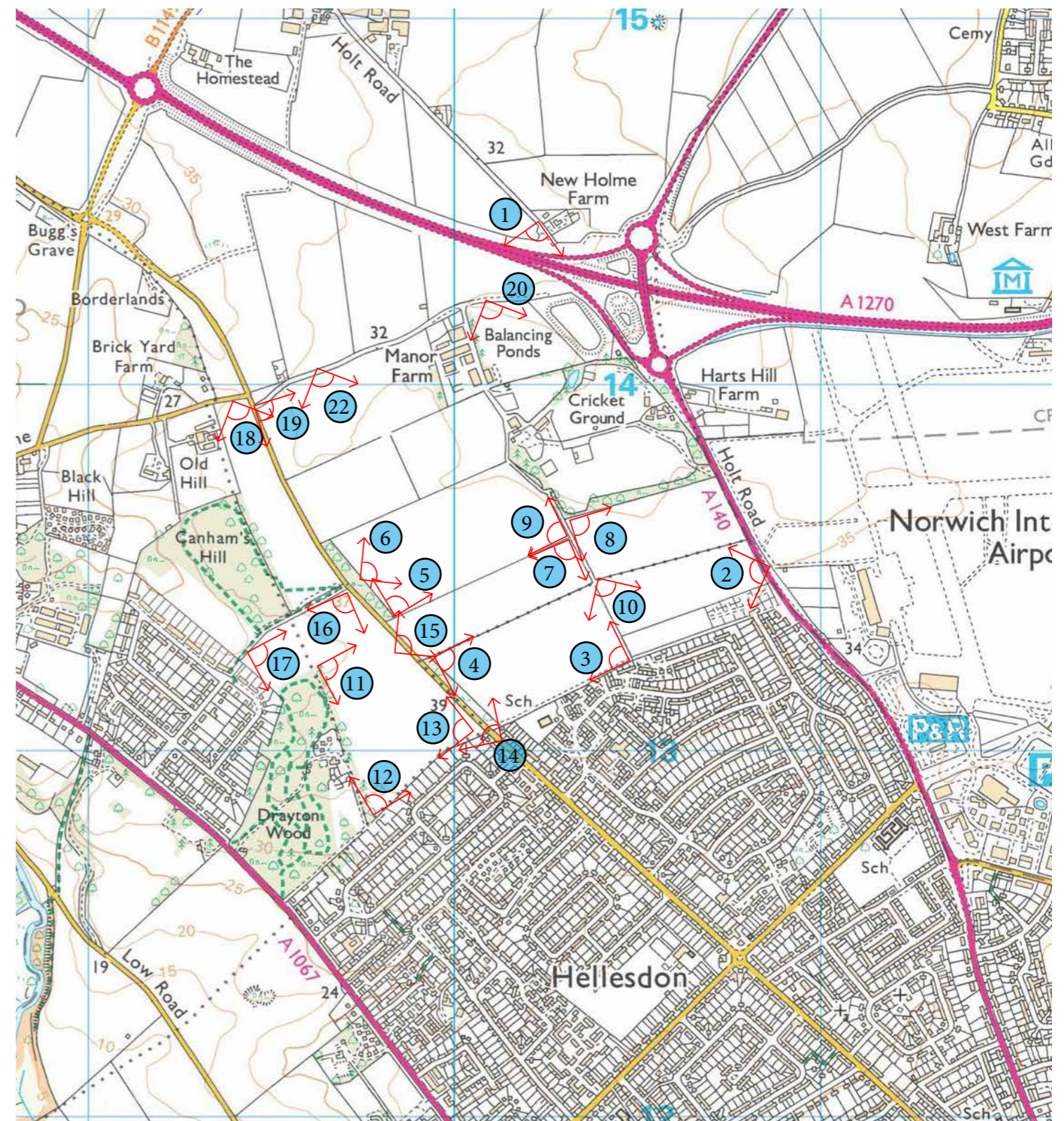


04 Visual Appraisal

- 4.1 The local area was visited 26th February 2020, in clear bright conditions, to identify key views which may be impacted upon by proposed development. The winter months would represent worst case scenario when trees are out of leaf and the majority of arable fields having been harvested.
- 4.2 As the proposed development occupies a site adjacent to the northern edge of Hellesdon, key views were identified as being from the surrounding area, in particular those from the main roads of the A140 Holt Road and Reepham Road, along with the residential areas along Cottinghams Drive and Westwood Drive, as well as the Public Rights of Way within this area. Topography, distance, the NDR and its associated embankments, vegetation and existing dwellings screen the site from further afield. Photographs were taken and digitally stitched together to form panoramas.
- 4.3 Photographs and subsequent panoramas have been taken and created in accordance with Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11, utilising a fixed 50mm focal length standard lens with use of a monopod to aid creation of panoramas.

REPRESENTATIVE VIEWPOINTS

- 4.4 The local area was surveyed to identify representative locations from where the proposal site was visible. Viewpoints from where the proposal site was not visible were, in the majority, scoped out.
- 4.5 The location of these key views are identified on the Viewpoint Location Plan and the corresponding images and descriptions are included on the following pages.



VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 1: Taken from the abrupt end of Holt Road, north of the Northern Distributor Road (NDR). Looking south to proposed area of commercial development, the recently created balancing ponds are visible along with a few fields either side of Holly Road. Evergreen trees, a mix of mature pine and conifers, screens existing large barns, with white rendered semi detached cottages set within a clearing. Over time new planting along embankments will screen this view. The NDR has a strong detracting influence due to noise and movement, which over time, new planting will help to mitigate.

Viewpoint 2: Taken from A140 Holt Road, south of the NDR. Looking westwards across the fields for proposed residential development, to mature woodland belts along Reepham Road. Norwich International Airport (NIA) is located to the immediate east of Holt Road. Allotments and a green open space provided by Hellesdon Parish Council on the Promoter's landownership, form the southern site boundary. Beyond these residential dwellings are visible.

Holt Road itself is very busy with constant fast flowing traffic.



VIEWPOINT 1



VIEWPOINT 2



04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 3: Taken from Permissive Footpath at south eastern corner of green open space, looking north west. Well utilised by dog walkers. Mature woodland belts along Reepham Road, with Drayton Wood and Canham's Hill wood beyond, forming the horizon to the west and north west. Hedgerows and individual trees define field boundaries across the proposed site also contribute to the overall wooded character.



VIEWPOINT 3

Viewpoint 4: Taken from Permissive Footpath along the internal edge of a woodland belt to Reepham Road. Field boundaries are defined by hedgerows and mature trees. Existing dwellings along Cottinghams Drive along with blue grey roof of Primary School are visible through the sparsely vegetated southern boundary.



VIEWPOINT 4

04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 5: Taken from the Permissive Footpath at the corner of field and woodland belt to Reepham Road, looking north east. Drayton Farm is to the centre of the view with mature trees and tree belts providing some screening. Layers of hedgerows and mature trees merge together to form wooded horizon line.



VIEWPOINT 5

Viewpoint 6: Taken from the Permissive Path within the woodland belt between field and Reepham Road, looking east. Drayton Farm is to the centre of the view with mature trees providing some screening. Layers of hedgerows and mature trees merge together to form wooded horizon line.



VIEWPOINT 6

04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 7: Taken from Permissive Footpath at mid point of proposed residential site, looking south west. Existing dwellings along Cottinghams Drive visible along horizon on left half of view. Mature woodland belts along Reepham Road, forming the horizon to the west and right hand side of the view. Hedgerows and individual trees define field boundaries across the proposed site also contribute to the overall wooded character.



VIEWPOINT 7

Viewpoint 8: Taken from Permissive Footpath at mid point of proposed residential site, looking south east. Existing dwellings along Cottinghams Drive visible along horizon on right hand side of view. Longer distance, more open and exposed views towards and across fields and NIA with associated large hangers visible to centre of view, adjacent to bright yellow lorry.

The A140 and NIA have a detracting influence due to movement.



VIEWPOINT 8



04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 9: Taken from the Permissive Footpath at mid point of proposed residential site, looking north west. Drayton Farm is to the immediate right of the view. Mature woodland belts along Reepham Road, with Drayton Wood and Canham's Hill wood beyond, form the horizon to the west and north west. Layers of hedgerows and mature trees to field boundaries merge together to form wooded horizon line.



VIEWPOINT 9

Viewpoint 10: Taken from Permissive Footpath at mid point of proposed residential site, looking south. Existing dwellings along Cottinghams Drive visible along horizon line, with allotments to left hand side of view and green open space to right hand side of view. The southern site boundary is sparsely vegetated.



VIEWPOINT 10

04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 11: Taken from Permissive Footpath at north eastern corner of Drayton Wood, looking south east. Mature trees and sections of overgrown hedgerow along with woodland belts along Reepham Road form the horizon line and screen views beyond. Slight rise in landform to south and existing dwellings along Westwood Drive are screened.

Slightly sheltered position and feels more rural, can hear birdsong in woodland although can still hear busy traffic along Reepham Road.



VIEWPOINT 11

Viewpoint 12: Taken from Permissive Footpath at south eastern corner of Drayton Wood, looking north east. Mature trees and sections of overgrown hedgerow along with woodland belts along Reepham Road form the horizon line and screen views beyond.

Sheltered position and feels more rural, can hear birdsong in woodland with minimal disturbance from traffic noise.



VIEWPOINT 12



04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 13: Taken from the Permissive Footpath adjacent to Reepham Road, looking to north west. Drayton Wood forms the horizon, with a large proportion of evergreen trees. Further to the north west is Canham's Hill wood, to the right hand side of the view. Mature trees and sections of overgrown hedgerow line Reepham Road, to the right hand side of this view.



VIEWPOINT 13

Viewpoint 14: Taken from Reepham Road, looking north west along the road. Mature trees and sections of overgrown hedgerow along with woodland belts line the road, although there are a few gaps.

Reepham Road is very busy with traffic typical of urban fringe to city of Norwich.



VIEWPOINT 14

04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 15: Taken from Permissive Footpath at mid point along field boundary to Reepham Road, looking to the east. Mature trees and sections of overgrown hedgerow form the boundaries, although there are some large gaps.

Reepham Road is very busy with constant traffic, visually detracting.



VIEWPOINT 15

Viewpoint 16: Taken from Permissive Footpath along field boundary to Reepham Road, looking to the south west. Drayton Wood, with mature pines, forms the western site boundary. The well vegetated southern boundary, to the left hand side of the view, is formed by existing dwellings and their rear gardens along Westwood Drive.

Reepham Road is very busy with constant traffic typical of urban fringe location.



VIEWPOINT 16



04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 17: Taken from the Permissive Footpath between Canham's Hill wood and the existing dwellings along Howell Road, looking to the south east. Drayton Wood forms the horizon to the right hand side of the view, with mature trees and overgrown hedgerow along Reepham Road forming the remaining horizon line.



VIEWPOINT 17

Viewpoint 18: Taken from Hall Lane, looking to the south and proposed site, which is not visible. Mature trees and sections of overgrown hedgerow define Reepham Road, with Canham's Hill wood defining the western boundary and right hand side of the view.



VIEWPOINT 18

04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 19: Taken from Reepham Road opposite the junction with Holly Lane, looking to the south east. The open boundary here allows longer distance views, with the wooded horizon formed by hedgerows and individual trees that define field boundaries, which also contribute to the overall wooded character.

Constant traffic is a detracting visual influence from local roads, as well as the NIA.



VIEWPOINT 19

Viewpoint 20: Taken from Holly Lane, looking to the south east and the proposed area of commercial development. Mature trees, some evergreen, a mix of mature pine and conifers, screens existing large barns, with white rendered semi detached cottages set within a clearing.

Constant traffic is a detracting visual influence from local roads, as well as the NIA.



VIEWPOINT 20

04 Visual Appraisal

Viewpoint 21: Taken from Holly Lane adjacent to the mobile phone mast site, looking to the south. The open boundary here allows longer distance views, with the wooded horizon formed by hedgerows and individual trees that define field boundaries, along with mature trees and woodland belts to Reepham Road, all of which contribute to the overall wooded character.

Constant traffic is a detracting visual influence from local roads, as well as the NIA.



VIEWPOINT 21

04 Visual Appraisal

VISUAL APPRAISAL

- 4.6 The 21 viewpoints of the site and surrounds help provide a good understanding of the existing visual baseline.
- 4.7 Land to the west of Reepham Road is screened to the east by mature trees and overgrown hedgerow along Reepham Road, to the south by mature vegetated boundary to dwellings along Westward Drive and to the west by Drayton Woods. The northern boundary is open to arable field. Overall this parcel of land is enclosed and sheltered by existing tall mature vegetation that is dense enough to provide screening during winter months.
- 4.8 Land to the east of Reepham Road experiences quite an exposed settlement edge along its southern boundary. Medium to longer distance views across the site terminate at wooded horizons. These horizons are formed by woodland belts and hedgerow field boundaries with individual trees, overlapping in layers that merge together contributing to the overall wooded character.
- 4.9 The local highways network of the A140 Holt Road and Reepham Road as well as NIA are sources of constant movement, a detracting influence on visual amenity.
- 4.10 Embankments along with new planting to the NDR screen the majority of views towards the site from the north. Over time the new planting will establish and provide further screening of the NDR itself and views beyond.

ZONE OF THEORETICAL INFLUENCE

- 4.11 The Zone of Theoretical Influence (ZTI), or area from within which the proposed development may have an effect, without mitigation, is relatively contained with the main areas to be influenced extending to the east and north. The ZTI extends eastwards across the airstrips of Norwich International Airport, which are functionally open and flat expanses of land, whereby distance and hedgerow boundaries to the A140 will filter these views to some extent. To the north the ZTI extends across neighbouring fields with filtered views extending to Holly Lane and the fields

beyond where existing hedgerow and treed field margins, along with distance will further reduce effect of development. Proposed commercial development to the north east corner of the site will be visible across the immediate fields to the north, with the embankments of the NDR preventing the majority of the ZTI from extending further northwards, however filtered views may be experienced until planting along the embankments of the NDR is fully established. In both of these areas the ZTI extensions are across private land, not publicly accessible and therefore the instances of receptors are reduced to those focused on working the arable land or at NIA, where there is reduced emphasis on the visual surroundings.

- 4.12 To the west of Reepham Road, the ZTI extends northwards from the proposed development, across the continuation of the open arable field. Bunding with shrubs and occasional trees along the existing route of the PRoW to the north will filter views beyond. Between Drayton Wood and Canham's Hill wood, views from existing dwellings along Howell Road, as well as the PRoW, would be filtered through occasional trees and shrubs, some bunding, along with oblique angle of view and intervening separation and distance of arable field.
- 4.13 To the south west there is a mature well vegetated boundary to rear gardens along Westward Drive, however new development may occasionally be glimpsed between the existing dwellings. To the south and south eastern boundary to Cottinghams Drive, Sadler Road and Bush Road, new development may also occasionally be glimpsed between the existing dwellings, although the existing green space and the allotments mean the proposed development will be well set back from the existing rear gardens, especially important when there is a lack of existing mature boundary vegetation.

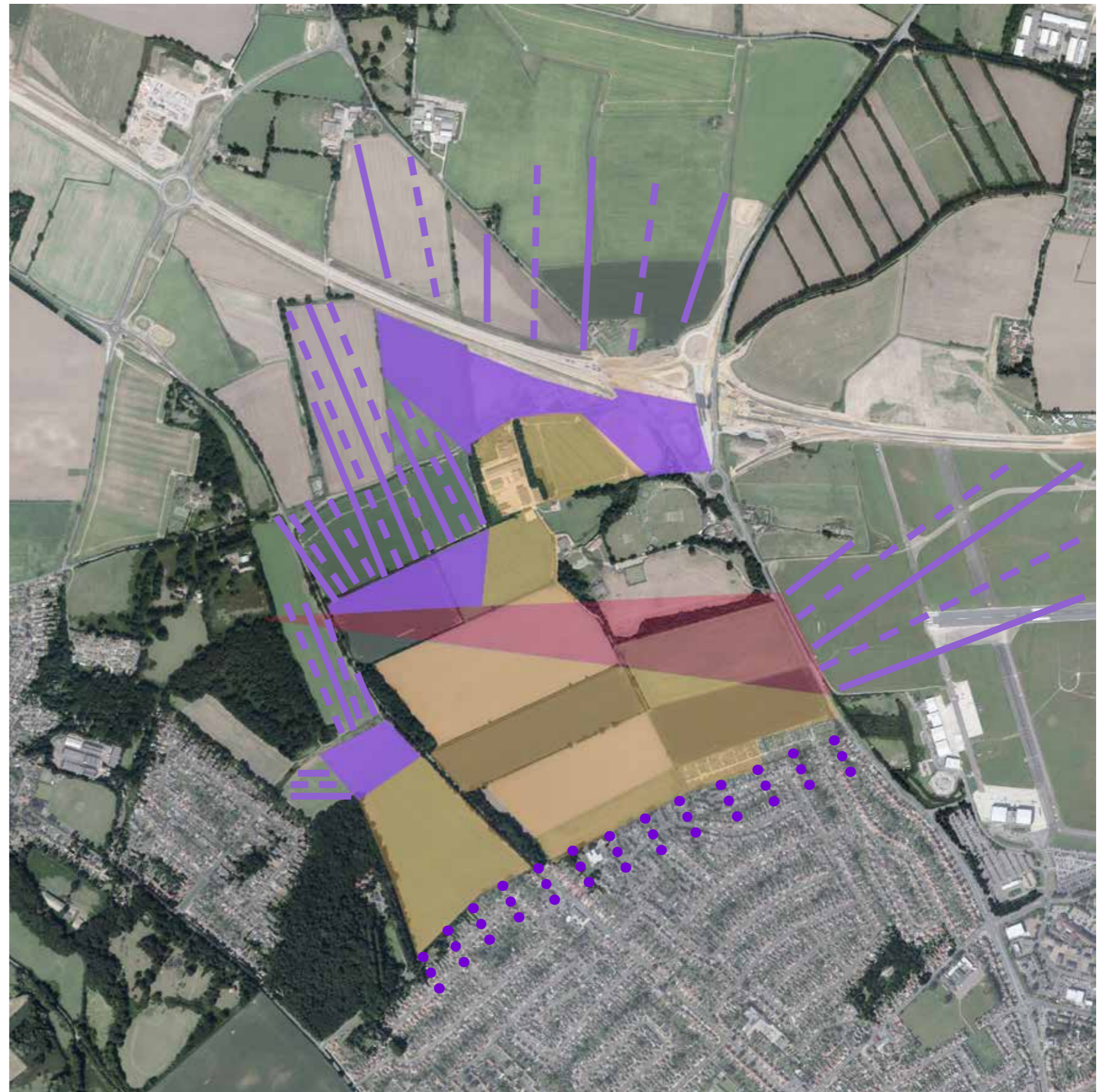
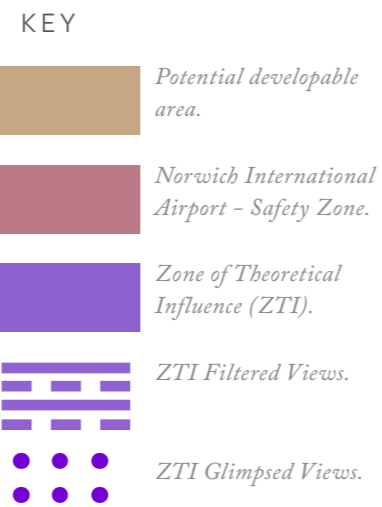


04 Visual Appraisal

VISUAL EVALUATION

4.14 Currently, heading southwards along the A140, one experiences a harsh settlement edge with no real sense of arrival gateway upon entering Hellesdon, with a lack of clear identity.

4.15 Views open up across fields where there are a lack of hedgerows, to wooded horizons formed by layers of woodland, hedgerows and individual trees. Longer views are gained across the open and exposed runways of the NIA, otherwise views are curtailed to the middle distance by existing buildings and vegetation, along with embankments to the NDR.



ZONE OF THEORETICAL INFLUENCE PLAN

05 Landscape Strategy

FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT

5.1 In consideration of context, the visual setting and the local character of this semi rural transition landscape, a suitable strategy can further reduce potential effects through careful attention to developable areas, strategic green infrastructure and open spaces, with particular emphasis on medium to longer distance views and the creation of a new edge to the urban fringe.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

5.2 Following on from the appraisal and evaluations above, the subsequent prospects and limitations for development of the proposed site can be defined as:

- Enclosed nature of site to west of Reepham Road;
- Existing mature hedgerow field boundaries and individual trees to internal area of site to east of Reepham Road;
- Mature woodland belts along western boundary to Reepham Road;
- Located outside of settlement boundary;
- Immediately adjacent to Drayton Wood County Wildlife Site;
- Strong influence from local highways network and NIA;
- Existing harsh and exposed settlement edge to southern site boundary;
- NIA Airport Safety Zone across site to east of Reepham Road.

LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

5.3 The landscape strategy and recommendations take into consideration local landscape and settlement character along with visual amenity. The proposed site sits outside of the settlement boundary envelope, adjacent to the County Wildlife Site (CWS) of Drayton Wood with Canham's Hill CWS woodland just to the north west, therefore it is essential that the strategy retains where possible and enhances existing boundary vegetation.

5.4 The strategy for this transition landscape should be to strengthen and enhance the character of the edge of urban fringe settlement and the semi rural wooded character of the landscape. There are particular opportunities to enhance the urban fringe and create new arrival gateways to Hellesdon along both Reepham Road and the A140 Holt Road.








5.5 The strategic proposals would include:

- Establish main entrance into both the sites, off Reepham Road and Holt Road. New site entrances to retain the existing woodland buffers and individual trees;
- Create new woodland 'buffer' to the northern boundary of land west of Reepham Road, approx 20m wide, screening development from Canham's Hill whilst maintaining the distinctive gap between Drayton Woods and Canham's Hill. It will create a strong green link from Drayton Woods to Reepham Road, linking fragmented habitats;
- Creation of internal breaks and interest, utilising existing hedgerows and trees within the developable area to create linkages to open space and routes for pedestrians and wildlife. These will create views through and between new dwellings to wooded boundaries beyond, breaking up the built form;
- Creation and enhancement of green corridor/public open space to the south of both parcels as an important landscape feature, linking habitats and communities between existing and proposed developments whilst also ensuring sustainable access to the site.
- Choice of materials should reflect local vernacular, such as red brick and dark roofing;
- To retain and protect existing boundary trees. A full Tree Survey would be required to ensure no construction works take place within the Root Protection Areas. To ensure the site is enhanced to increase biodiversity;
- Species selection to fit with the local character and to promote biodiversity, helping stitch the site into the wider landscape (subject to selection of species approved by NIA (refer to Bird Hazard Risk Assessment)); and
- Any future planning application should include an ecological survey, a tree survey, detailed landscape proposals including proposed plant species and a management plan for structural vegetation and open space areas.



05 Landscape Strategy

KEY

-  *Commercial development*
-  *Residential*
-  *Public Open Green Space*
-  *Green screening buffer*
-  *Proposed vehicular access/routes*
-  *Proposed pedestrian access/links*
-  *Site area*



ILLUSTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

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- 6.1 An opportunity exists to create a high quality development to the north of Hellesdon whilst creating a new north western edge to the settlement itself. The site is well located to achieve a sustainable pattern of development with access to the primary road network and in close proximity to employment and services.
- 6.2 *Responding to Planning Policy Context*
- The HELAA RAG assessment, which looks at potential impacts of developing the site and the potential constraints on the development of the site, the following criteria were considered pertinent to this Landscape and Visual Appraisal, and are addressed as follows;
- 6.3 Flood Risk: RAG assessed as GREEN. The site is in Flood Risk Zone 1, where flooding from rivers is very unlikely, and as such is not considered as a reason to preclude development.
- 6.4 Significant Landscapes: RAG assessed as AMBER. The site is not located within or near to nationally designated landscapes. There are none within 1.5km.
- 6.5 Land west of Reepham Road sits adjacent to Drayton Wood County Wildlife Site along its western boundary. Potential impact of development can be mitigated via the introduction of new woodland to the northern boundary of the proposed site connecting Drayton Wood to Reepham Road. Careful design of new settlement with looser arrangement of dwellings, space for skyline impact trees as well as views through built form to woodland boundaries, creating a special sense of place, building upon perception of ownership and protection of natural areas by new occupiers.
- 6.6 The perceived loss of the existing gap between the built settlements of Hellesdon and Drayton can be mitigated to some extent through the introduction of new woodland that would extend Drayton Wood, screening new development in views from the north along Reepham Road and any oblique views from Howell Road to the west, as well as retaining the physical gap between Canham's Hill and Drayton Wood themselves.
- 6.7 The RAG assessment also considers Agricultural Land Classifications, as part of Significant Landscapes, to ensure protection of best and most versatile agricultural land such as Grade 1 and Grade 2. The site is classified as Grade 3 with low natural fertility, slightly acid sandy soils.
- 6.8 Townscapes: RAG assessed as AMBER. Hellesdon sits within the Norwich Policy Area (NPA) and is identified as being within the Norwich Urban Area, as set out within the JCS. It is not a sensitive area of settlement in the RAG assessment terms. The development proposals also support BDC's Place Shaping Guide, particularly through enrichment of the existing, such as the existing exposed settlement edge, making connections such as green linkages and pedestrian routes and working with the landscape such as retention of existing vegetation. The proposals will benefit from careful consideration of the position and location of new dwellings to reflect the diversity of the town. This may include a tighter urban grain to the southern boundary of the site and a looser grain to the settlement edge to the north, refining local townscape character, whilst establishing a sense of arrival along the A140 Holt Road and Reepham Road.
- 6.9 The proposed site offers opportunities to increase pedestrian connectivity with the potential to connect to existing Public Rights of Way to the west of the site as well as new connections to existing residential areas along Cottingham's Drive, Sadler Road and Bush Road. The form of development could be based around a distinctive network of streets and open spaces creating an attractive new community, benefiting the existing urban fringe of Hellesdon.
- 6.10 Bio & Geo Diversity: RAG assessed as AMBER. BDC's DMP Policies EN1 and EN2 are supported by the proposed development through protection of existing vegetation including woodland belts, hedgerows and individual trees, along with new planting which will link fragmented habitats and enhance biodiversity, assisting in delivery of the green infrastructure network of the District.
- 6.11 There are opportunities to improve and enhance local ecology and biodiversity through the creation of a woodland buffer to the northern edge of the site to the west of Reepham Road, connecting to Drayton Wood. As well as the creation of open space, additional tree and hedgerow planting within the development itself, enhancing internal site linkages to existing vegetation, reinforcing and



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enhancing the wildlife value of the site.

- 6.12 Historic Environment: RAG assessed as GREEN. There are no historic assets or Conservation Areas within or adjacent to the proposed site boundary. There are none within 1km.
- 6.13 Open Space and GI: RAG assessed as GREEN and AMBER. The proposed development site does not sit within the Core Green Infrastructure Network, nor the Sub Regional GI Corridor. It will, however, support the initiatives through taking opportunities to increase bio diversity across the site and join fragmented habitats, such as through the creation of a new woodland buffer and green open space whilst retaining existing vegetation including hedgerows, trees and woodland belts. Green Infrastructure highlighted within the Hellesdon Neighbourhood Plan is incorporated within the proposed Illustrative Development Framework Plan, therefore meeting the NP aspirations.
- 6.14 No existing open space will be lost. Existing allotments and green open space to northern boundary of Hellesdon, as well as the woodland buffers along Reepham Road are retained. Green Infrastructure proposed as part of the concept masterplan provides east / west and north / south structure. The NIA Safety Zone is utilised efficiently for the creation of new sports pitches, benefiting the existing community and expanding what is currently offered at the NEST community sports hub. New Open Spaces will comprise formal and informal areas, reinforcing the streetscape and character of the development, contributing to the townscape and ensuring the development has a sense of place.
- 6.15 Neighbouring Uses: RAG assessed as RED and AMBER. The proposed development of residential dwellings with a commercial development area to the north eastern corner adjacent to the NDR would reflect the existing settlement of Hellesdon, which represents in the majority residential areas with regular pockets of commercial development, alongside larger areas of commercial development such as that associated with the NIA. Proposed development is therefore not considered to be a conflicting use.
- 6.16 The RAG assessment takes into account advice from statutory infrastructure providers with regards

to maintaining appropriate separation between new development and installations such as the NDR and NIA. Over time planting along the NDR embankments will aid screening and reduce noise and disturbance. Proposed areas of residential development are set back from the NDR, and are accompanied by existing mature planting alongside the introduction of new structural planting, reinforcing screening and noise reduction. Commercial areas are proposed closer to the NDR, typically to allow ease of access to major transport routes. The proposed development pays particular regard to Policy TS6, NIA Public Safety Zone, utilising the zone effectively to provide public open green space and sports pitches, benefiting the community and improving biodiversity across the site.

6.17 *Responding to Character Appraisal*

The site sits within a transition zone between Hellesdon and the NDR. Hellesdon has an existing harsh settlement boundary to its northern edge and a weak sense of identity, where character has been diluted by fragmentation of green infrastructure, introduction of distributor road network, where planting has yet to establish but will, overtime, help mitigate exposed embankments. Locally it is valued for access to semi rural landscape for walking, cycling and the well utilised allotments. Retention of existing mature vegetation, introduction of new woodland and green open spaces will increase habitat types and bio-diversity, reduce noise disturbance and strengthen links between fragmented green infrastructure and adding to the overall network, benefiting wildlife and with areas for public use, the community as a whole.



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6.18 *Responding to Visual Appraisal*

Land west of Reepham Road is in the majority enclosed and with the creation of new woodland buffer to its northern edge, will be further screened from view, as well as maintaining the visual and physical gap between settlements and woodlands. Land east of Reepham Road, with retention of woodland belts, internal site hedgerows and trees, reinforced through the introduction of new vegetation, will soften and screen mid to longer distance views to the site, through the layering effect that forms wooded horizons.

6.19 Overall, this Appraisal concludes that there are opportunities to create a successful new settlement edge, with considered design and introduction of GI and open space, creating connections for wildlife and for the benefit of the whole community.





Robert Myers Associates

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

13-15 COVENT GARDEN
CAMBRIDGE
CB1 2HS

T: +44 (0) 1223 351400

PENSONS YARD
STOKE BLISS
WORCESTERSHIRE

WR15 8RT
T: +44 (0) 1885 227377

info@robertmyers-associates.co.uk
www.robertmyers-associates.co.uk