

Site Landscape Appraisal For Wickhambrook Parish Council

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1. Introduction

Author's credentials

1. I am a Chartered Landscape Architect with 15+ years experience of working in the field of landscape assessment and appraisal in East Anglia. In recent years I have undertaken a number of Neighbourhood Plan studies in villages in Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, as well as district level landscape character assessment and settlement fringe sensitivity assessments in East Suffolk, in association with Alison Farmer Associates in 2018. I also regularly undertake Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for all types of land use applications.

Introduction

2. This report was commissioned in summer 2022 by the Parish Council who are in the process of preparing the Wickhambrook Neighbourhood Plan. It provides an assessment of the landscape sensitivities of 12 potential residential sites across the parish. The study will help sufficient housing to be delivered in the most appropriate location that does not harm the special character of the village, its valued views or distinctive features.
3. West Suffolk Council are preparing a new Local Plan which is expected to be adopted in approximately 2024. It is their intention to allocate a residential site in Wickhambrook. The emerging Neighbourhood Plan must, therefore, reflect any WSC allocation policy and carry it forward.
4. The 12 sites were put forward to West Suffolk by land owners in response to the 2020 West Suffolk Local Plan 'Call for Sites', for the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). West Suffolk have carried out their own high-level assessment process and identified their preferred option as well as rejecting other sites. Given the previous opportunity, and the number of sites subsequently potentially available, a further 'Call for Sites' for the Neighbourhood Plan was not undertaken.
5. This report represents the parish's own assessment work of the sites in LANDSCAPE TERMS only. It does not consider the other factors that determine

a site's suitability such as highways and access, flood risk, archaeology, etc. A site that may be considered suitable in landscape terms may be subject to other limiting factors that are not addressed in this report.

6. The Parish wish to understand the opportunities and constraints that relate to landscape value and visual sensitivity to all 12 sites should future development pressure arise. This document will be useful to both the parish and district councils in managing future applications for development, to landowners to understand the parameters which might limit changes in land use, and to householders or developers considering development.
7. The Village Design Guide (by AECOM) should also be used to arrive at appropriate design responses, should any of these sites proceed. The aim is to ensure Wickhambrook retains its character and high quality sensitive design prevails in future.
8. Following this introduction the report is set out in the following order;
 - Overview of the history and evolution of the village and its current form. *Understanding how a village developed, and its position within the landscape, is key to understanding its sense of place and, therefore, appropriate future forms of development.*
 - A review of existing character assessments that describe the landscape context and a outline parish assessment. *These documents form the key documents in all planning policy relevant to Wickhambrook that reference landscape character.*
 - Explanation of the approach and methodology used
 - The site assessment tables and site photos
9. The report does not extend to the whole parish, which is one of the largest village parishes in Suffolk, but focuses on the southwest zone which includes the area of highest density housing, the Conservation Area, and all the surrounding hamlets where the 12 SHELAA sites are located. This reflects the approximate extent of the map used by WSC to show the 12 sites- see figure 1.

Figure 1: Map of assessment area



— Approximate area of study that forms sufficient context to the 13 sites for assessment.

2. Settlement history

1. Wickhambrook is located in West Suffolk Council district, formerly St. Edmundsbury District. West Suffolk's planning website states: *'Wickhambrook is a village located in the southern part of the district 16 kilometres from Haverhill and Newmarket and 18 kilometres from Bury St Edmunds. It has a population of 1,286 (2019 mid-year estimate). Wickhambrook is designated as a local service centre with a range of services including a primary school, GP Surgery, a public house, recreation facilities and convenience food store and post office.'*
2. It is a large parish, circa 6.5 square miles, and is focused mostly north/west of the A134, but some scattered farms, including significant historic properties, are found to the south/east of this main route. It has a very distinctive and dispersed settlement pattern.
3. Much information about the context and character of Wickhambrook is provided in the recently completed 'Design Guidance and Codes' report by AECOM. It is not intended to repeat large amounts of the information in that report here, but the description of the parish was a useful resource and this section draws on it to provide a brief historic overview to the settlement.
4. Wickhambrook today is formed of a main village cluster (as defined by the Local Plan settlement boundary), and three hamlets called Boyden End, Malting End and Park Gate. There are then a set of further 'Greens' which each feature a farmhouse or two, cottages and more modern houses, strung out on a network of narrow, single-track lanes. The Greens are named Ashfield, Attleton, Baxter's, Coltsfoot, Clopton, Farley, Genesis, Meeting, Moor and Nunnery. Most of the hamlets and Greens lie outside the Local Plan settlement boundary, except parts of Meeting and Moor Greens. The remainder of these small settlements, which encircle the main village are, in planning terms, in 'countryside'. The Greens are of varying shape and size, from very small well defined spaces such as in Attleton Green to larger areas such as at Clopton.
5. The settlements are dispersed widely across the large parish and integrated with the underlying ancient network of fields and lanes, an enclosure pattern likely to be at least Anglo-Saxon in origin. The settlement has had an agricultural character and purpose throughout its history. There are three surviving large Manor houses, Giffords, Badmondfield and Clopton Hall, all high status, timber-framed 16th century houses, on the sites of Domesday manors. The village was known as "Wicham" at this time.
6. A point of focus to the parish is All Saints Church, a grade I Listed Building, located in the valley bottom west of the junction at Wickham Street. A further 16 Listed Buildings cluster around this junction (between Church Lane and the main A143). The value of this settlement cluster, and its landscape setting, is protected with Conservation Area status. There are more than 45 other Listed Buildings scattered across the parish, in hamlets and greens and on outlying farms. These farmsteads, often no longer connected to their farms, have timber framed houses and sometimes historic barns and outbuildings.
7. Yet the church did not become the focus of the nucleated village, instead this was formed on higher land to the west. The main village is a product of the 20th century and has a feeling of a centre at the Thorns Corner crossroads where the shop, the primary school, village hall and Methodist church all sit fairly close together. Cul-de-sac developments began to infill between Bunters Road, Cemetery Road and Nunnery Green from the mid-20th century onwards and coalesced to form a block of settlement now defined inside the Local Plan settlement boundary.
8. The historic scattered settlement pattern of Wickhambrook is considered to be highly sensitive. The areas of separation that lie between the greens and hamlets and the main village are just as important to settlement character as the hamlets themselves, and offer a visual experience where the countryside is seen prominently in views. The pattern would be very sensitive to infilling which might cause unwanted coalescence and loss of identity to the individual settlements.
9. That future growth should be directed to this main cluster makes sense in sustainability terms, as the main village also features other services such as the doctors' surgery and pub, but careful siting is important to ensure that key characteristics, features or views, that contribute particularly strongly to Wickhambrook's identity, are not eroded or lost. Instead, any development should seek to make visual or environmental enhancements.

2. Settlement history continued-

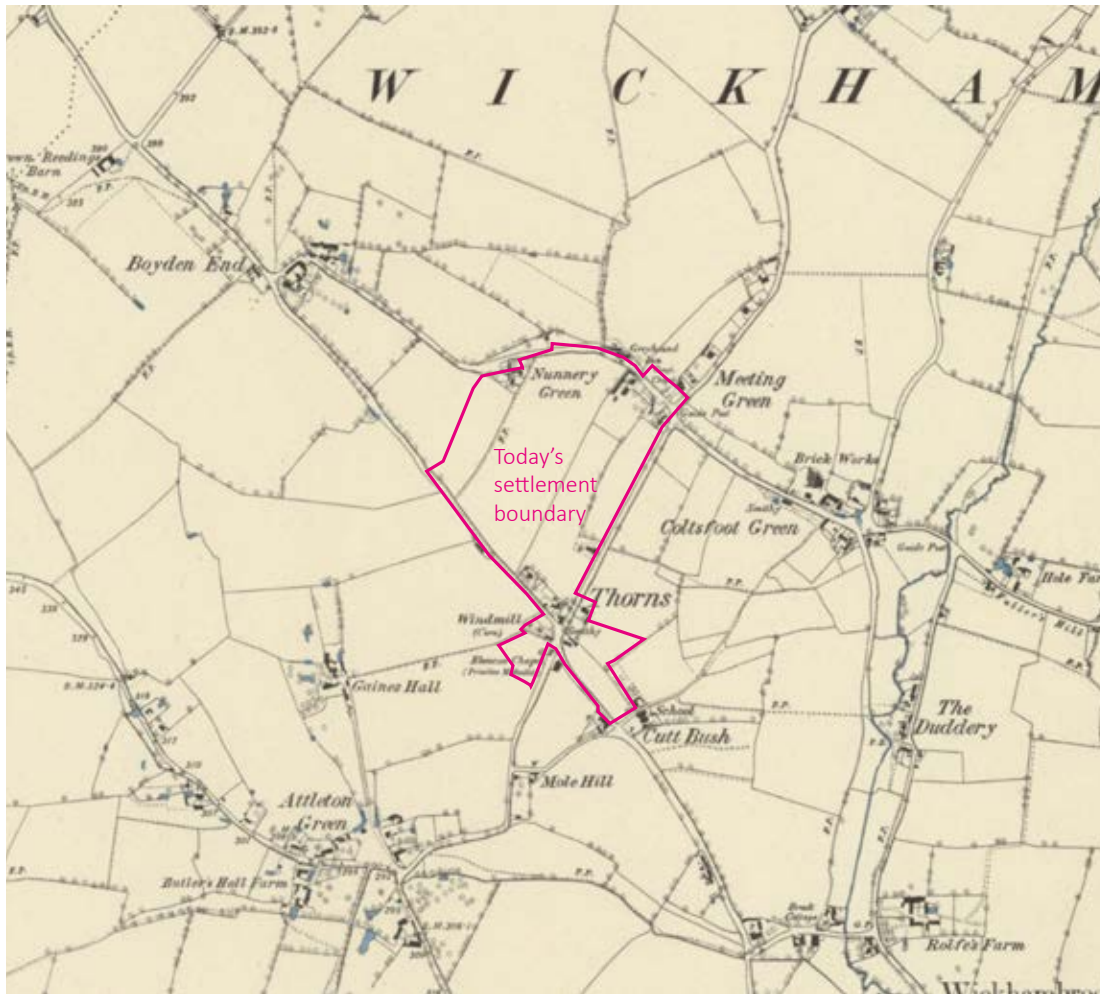


Figure 2. The main village area in 1884



Figure 3. Church Road and Wickham Street in 1958

Historic photos of the village

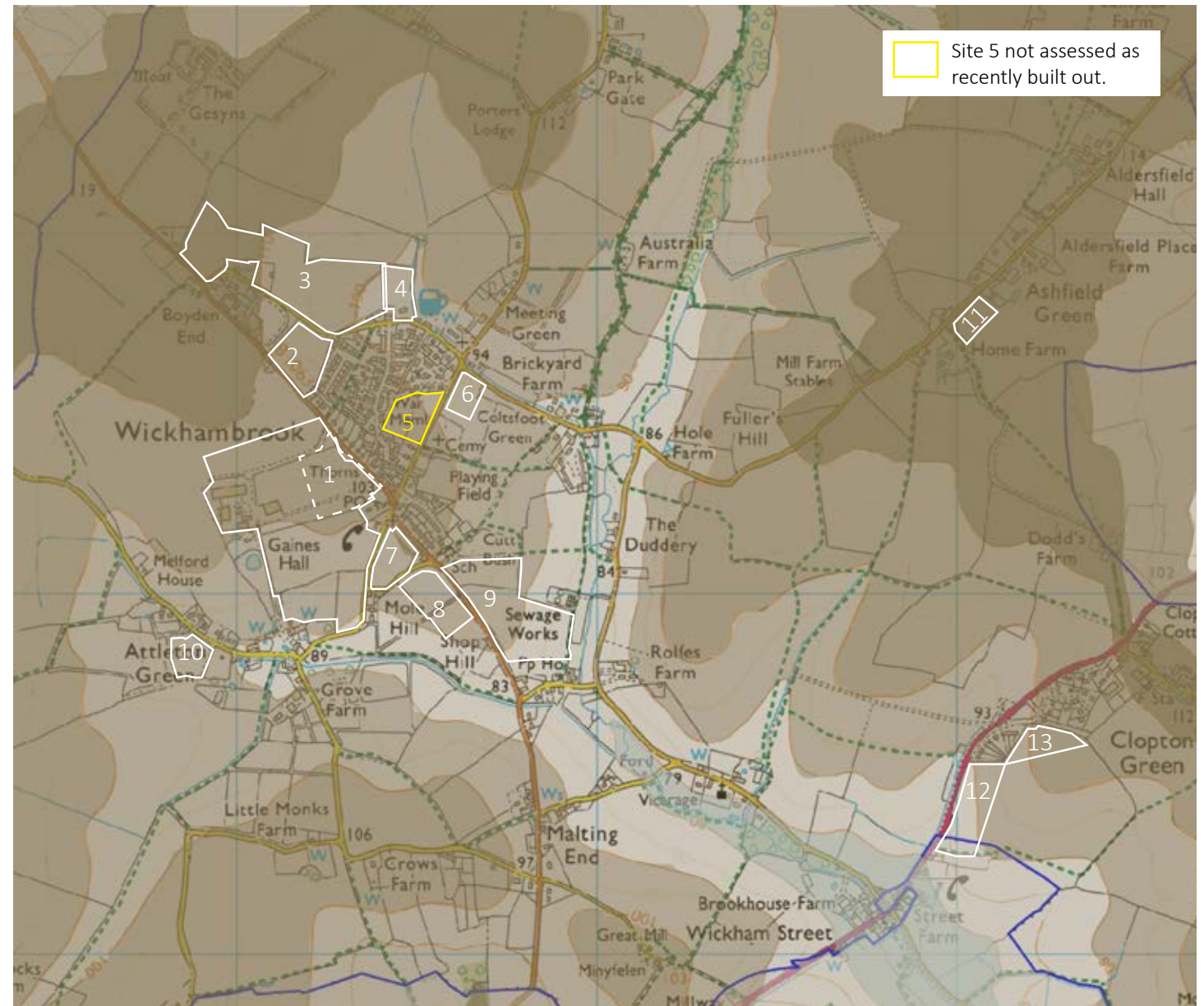


2. Settlement history continued-

Topography and soils

10. Understanding how a settlement evolved in relation to topography is useful in understanding the factors that shape local character and distinctiveness. It helps to illuminate appropriate future growth strategies in terms of where settlement should be located in the landscape.
11. The settlement is scattered across the complex but gentle slopes of the upper tributaries of a stream which coalesce and flow southeast to join the river Glem at Denston. The various small clusters of settlement nestle into folds in the landscape to create many scenic rural views of lightly settled countryside.
12. The medieval heart of the village, focused on the Conservation Area along Church Lane, which includes the church, is very low-lying compared to the rest of the village. It lies either side of the 80m contour in the valley bottom. Apart from Ashfield Green and Boyden End which are plateau top hamlets, all the other hamlets/Greens developed on the gently rolling valleys valleysides below c.105m contour.
13. The large main cluster, which is not a historic village nucleus, sits on the valley side between c.108m and 95m on an interfluvial plateau edge. Land then falls away from the village edges, to the south, east and west. The most elevated site is number 11, which sits on a high finger of plateau at Ashfield Green.

Figure 4. Topographical position of the village and the sites, numbered for reference



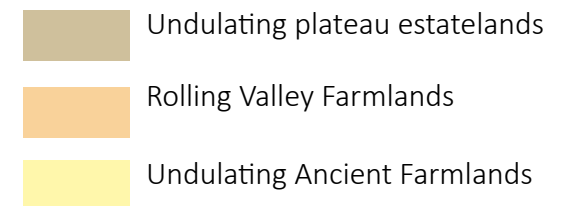
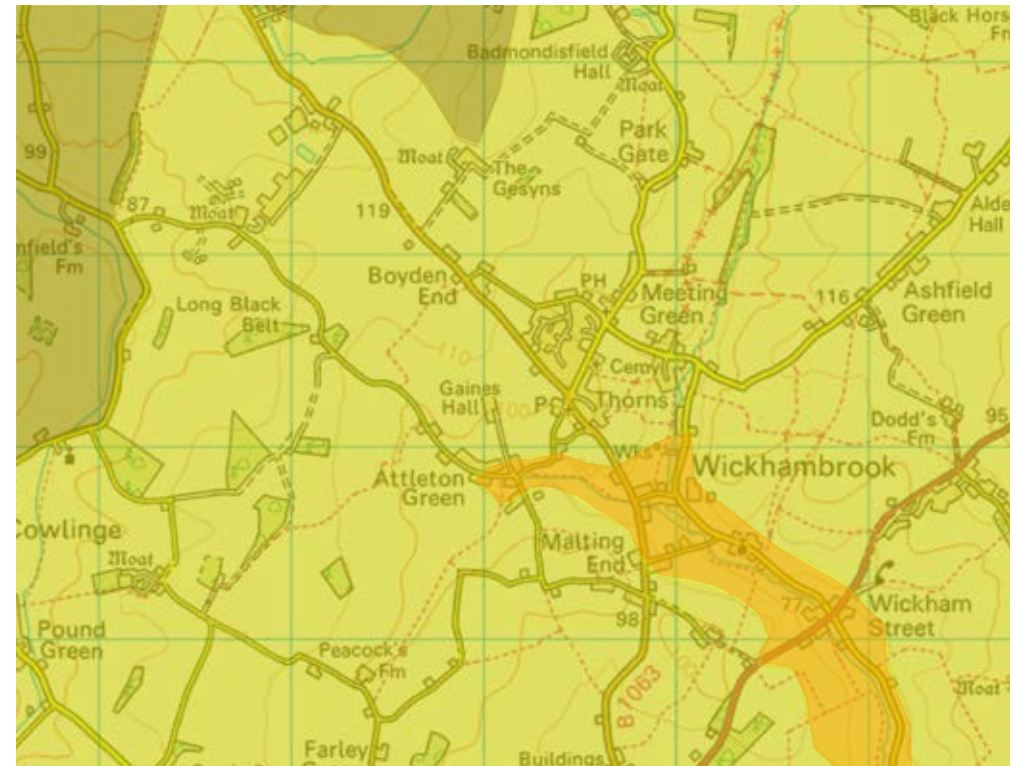
3. Landscape Character

1. This section provides a summary of the existing character assessments that are relevant to planning policy which requires a sympathetic response to local character and distinctiveness. For example, the NPPF directs, in para. 127, that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments will “function well and add to the overall quality of the area.... are visually attractiveand are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting...”
2. All district and Neighbourhood Plan policies must also reflect and reinforce this objective. Available character assessment are the starting point for understanding local character. However, further local/context level work should always be undertaken to ensure the grain of detail is sufficient to really understand local distinctiveness and sense of place.
3. Therefore, although there was not scope to define parish level character areas¹ in as part of this project, the different character types found in the parish are mapped on figure 8.
4. Any future applications for development sites, either within or outside the Neighbourhood Plan, should ask for evidence that character has been assessed on a local level, by a landscape planning professional with appropriate qualifications, and responded to accordingly.

County assessment

5. Suffolk County Council have a very useful character assessment, last updated in 2011, at www.suffolklandscape.org.uk. It maps three character types in Wickhambrook parish but the sites are all in the ‘Undulating Ancient Farmlands’ landscape type. The valley bottoms and the plateau tops fall into different types, as mapped in figure 5.

Figure 5: Map from Suffolk County Council LCA



¹ (see glossary for explanation of the difference between character areas and character types)

3. Landscape Character continued:-

6. The key characteristics of the Undulating Ancient Farmlands are stated as:
- Undulating arable landscape
 - Field pattern generally a random ancient pattern with occasional areas of regular fields associated with former mediaeval deer parks.
 - Oak, ash and field maple as hedgerow trees
 - Substantial open areas created for airfields and by post WWII agricultural improvement
 - Studded with blocks of ancient woodland
 - Dispersed settlement pattern of loosely clustered villages, hamlets and isolated farmsteads
 - Villages often associated with greens or former greens
 - Rich stock of mediaeval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings and moated sites
 - A large scale landscape with long undulating open views trees, either in hedges or in woods, are always a prominent feature
 - In the undulating landscape, crop production, especially oilseeds can be visually prominent
7. West Suffolk District commissioned their own Landscape Character Assessment in 2021. This puts Wickhambrook in character area C2 “Glem and Wickhambrook Farmlands”. Its key characteristics are listed as:
- Flat to gently undulating plateau landscape that forms an interfluvium between river catchments.
 - Chalky clay glacial till covers the plateau giving rise to fertile soils for arable farming with some areas slower draining heavier clay.
 - Dispersed settlement pattern of loosely clustered dwellings arranged around greens, isolated moated manor and church complexes and larger settlements where 20th century infill has occurred.
 - Large scale field pattern; with intensive arable farmland defined by

Figure 6. West Suffolk Landscape Character Areas

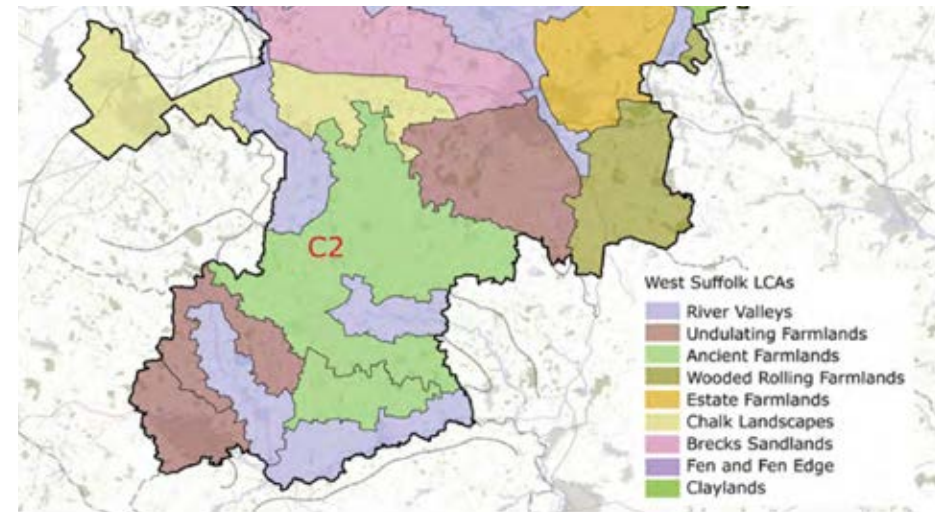
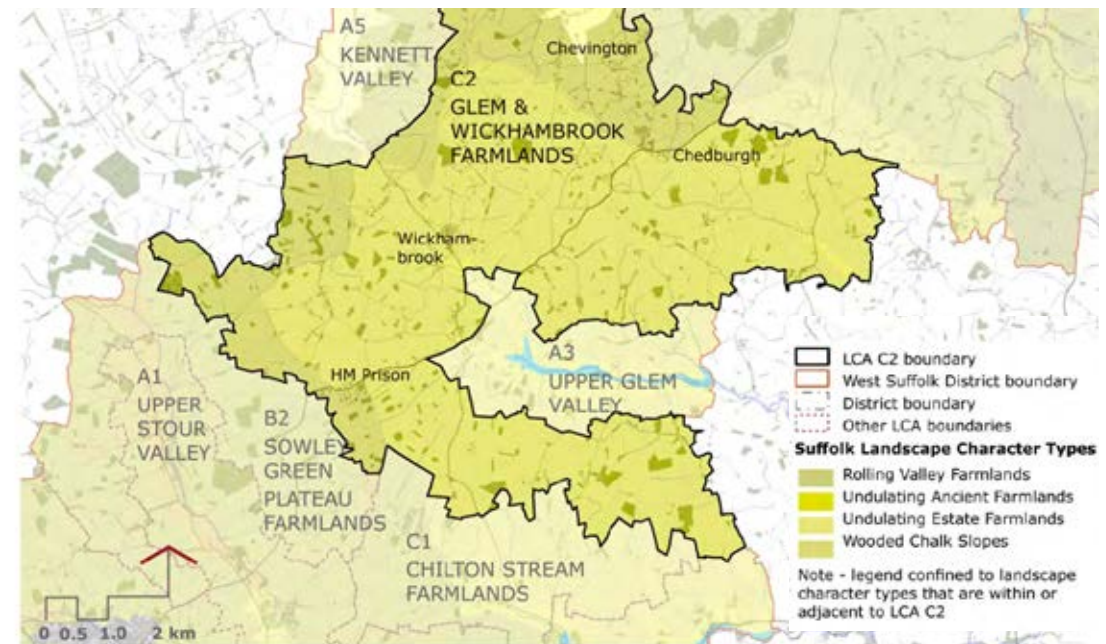


Figure 7. West Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment by AFA and Sheils Flynn (2022)



LCA C2 Glem and Wickhambrook Farmlands

3. Landscape Character continued:-

- hedgerows and linear poplar shelterbelts.
 - Large blocks of semi-natural ancient woodland, comprising oak and ash stands, create a wooded skyline.
 - Network of narrow lanes with wide verges.
 - Rich stock of medieval and Tudor timber-framed and brick buildings and moated sites.
 - Vertical structures break the skyline including masts and water towers.
 - Open expansive landscape with long views and wide skies
8. In summary, the district council identifies the setting of Wickhambrook as an area with noteworthy aspects of value. The combination of the wealth of natural habitats, intact historic landscape patterns and vegetative features, the strong role of the topography in distinctiveness, the landscape's role as setting to important heritage features, and the general feeling of remoteness and tranquillity combine to indicate a landscape with notable qualities.

Parish level understanding of character

9. The scope of this commission did not include for detailed mapping and description of unique parish character areas but, based on an understanding the Landscape Institute's guidance on Landscape Character Assessment ², a brief parish appraisal of types was completed. This followed a review of available desktop resources, overlaying digital maps of existing defined character areas, contours, aerial mapping etc, as well as observations made during a site visit in November 2022. Three types are mapped and described primarily defined by topography - the Valley Bottom, the Valley sides and the Plateau landscapes.
10. Some elements of the distinctive character of Wickhambrook can be seen in all three types. For example, the dispersed settlement pattern is widely distributed and Listed Buildings are seen across the whole parish on farmsteads or in the form of roadside thatched cottages.

11. A summary of each is given below, along with bullets that highlight the key sensitivities of each zone. The sensitivities highlight vulnerable aspects that contribute strongly to sense of place and character that should be protected. The implication is that were they to be eroded or lost, adverse effects on local character and distinctiveness would follow.

The Valley floor

12. The valley bottom landscape is an intimate, enclosed landscape experienced along narrow lanes, flanked by small fields. Stream courses wind their way through the valley bottom and the patterns feel ancient- organic and fine grained. Owing to their seasonal wetness the fields are generally grassland and they are interspersed with little copses or lines of trees along the watercourses giving a well vegetated feel. The feel is one of containment, as views out are contained by regular vegetation and rising land to either side. Settlement is scattered along the valley bottom, clustered in small groups often with historic thatched cottages- the majority of the Listed Buildings, and the Conservation Area, are found in this character type, along the narrow, winding lanes.
13. Sensitivities include:
- Enduring ancient small-scale patterns and enclosures, with historic landscape value, that greatly contribute to sense of place.
 - Scattered settlement pattern along the valley floor, clusters often focused around greens
 - Landscape where forms setting to heritage assets- Wickhambrook has a large number of Listed Buildings along the lanes in the valley bottoms.
 - Landscape important for ecosystem services such as flood water management.
 - Ecological value in combinations of water courses, copses and meadow for example.

² 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment', Natural England, 2014

3. Landscape Character continued:-

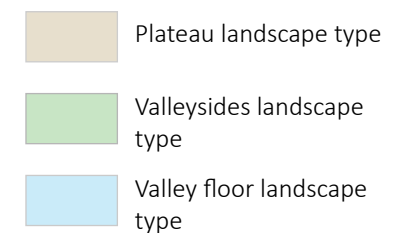
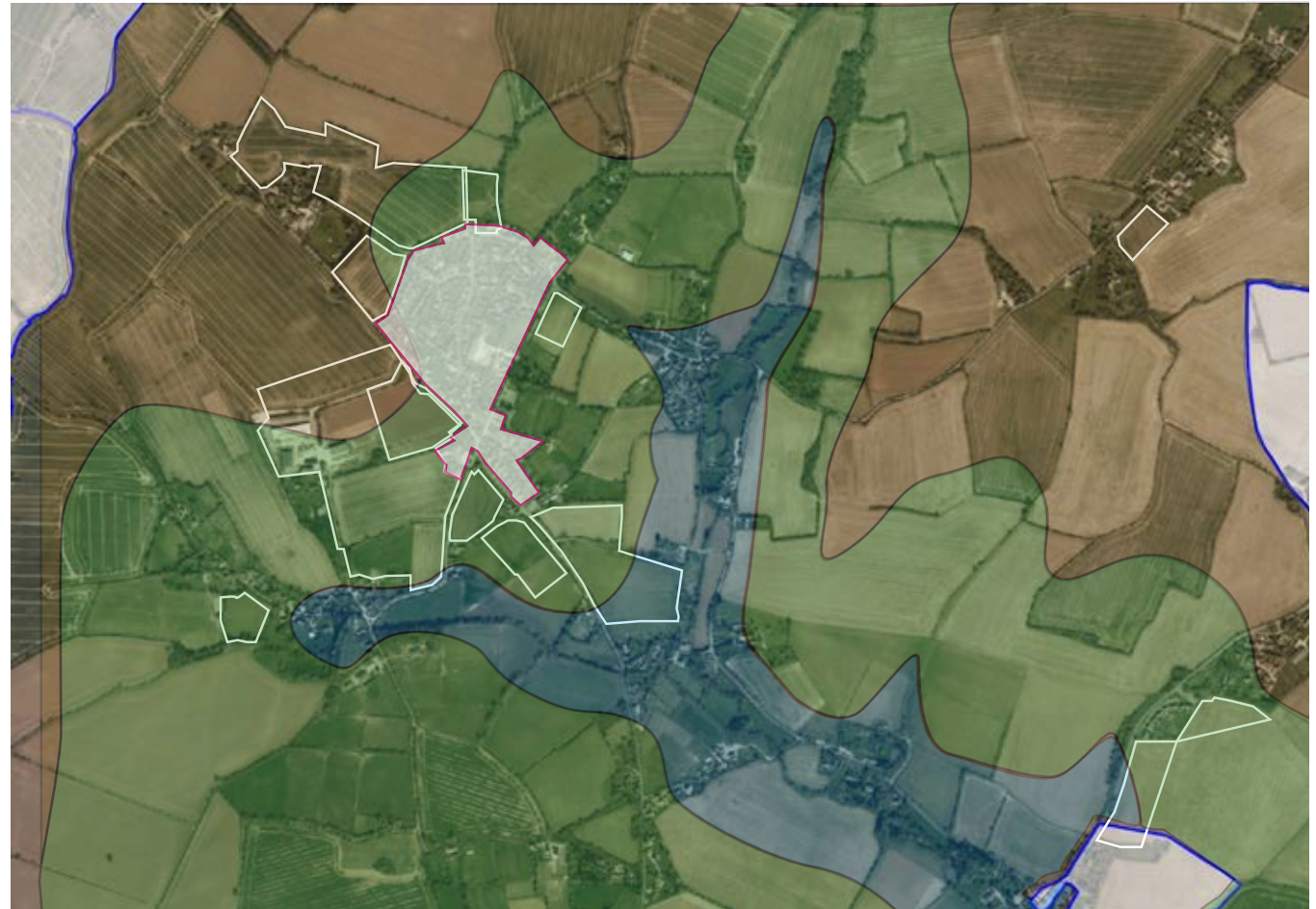
The Valley Sides

14. The valleysides are complex around Wickhambrook and form a very distinctive rolling setting. The slopes can sometimes feel a little steep, even though the water courses are small in these upper reaches. Field sizes increase a little on the valleysides. They can still be small but amalgamation has occurred and medium-sized fields often have dog-legged boundaries where fields have been joined. The visual experience is scenic and varied, with frequent, well managed hedges and tree cover in small copses. Land use is dominated by arable but there is also regular grassland- often being grazed by horses. The overall effect is a rolling, deeply rural and scenic landscape.

15. Sensitivities include:

- Valleysides are inherently visually sensitive - it is hard to screen or assimilate mitigate roofscapes on overlooked valley sides.
- Greater survival rate of historic field patterns and enclosures than on the plateau.

Figure 8. Parish Character types with the site boundaries overlaid



Plateau

16. The plateau to the east and west of the main village forms a much more open and elevated landscape. Land use is dominated by arable farming. The scale is much larger here and the amalgamated fields can be geometric and straight-edged, although organic patterns clearly underlie. Trees and woodland is reasonably sparse but vegetation is found in the form of hedge networks and small copses. Some elevated parts offer some particularly long range views and distinctive views over the valleys - these form some of the highest hilltops in Suffolk.

17. Sensitivities include:

- Visual sensitivities relating to elevated positions- developments potentially visible from wide area.
- Larger field sizes mean fewer hedges and opportunities for screening/assimilation- leading to the potential stark, unenclosed edges

Designations

18. Wickhambrook has no designations for landscape or for wildlife. It has a number of heritage assets- these are mapped on figure 9. Where sites are located within the setting of these assets, the assessment highlights this and make recommendations where appropriate.

19. Wickhambrook is well served with footpaths and minor lanes for walking, although surprisingly few would be affected by development on the 12 sites assessed. The rights of way network is also mapped on Figure 9.

Typical open and elevated plateau edge



Typical scenic rolling valleyside



Typical enclosed small scale valley bottom



4. Assessment approach

Approach

1. Twelve sites are assessed in this report, all are in ‘countryside’ in planning terms. They comprise West Suffolk Council’s (WSC) Preferred Site, other sites that were rejected, now called ‘omission sites’, and six sites that were ‘included’ in the Strategic Land Availability Assessment of 2020 and 2021. One of these sites, WS193, has since been developed, but the remaining five sites were omitted at the Preferred Options stage of the development of the West Suffolk Local Plan of May 2022.
2. Nine of the 12 sites are adjacent to the main village cluster although only three actually adjoin the settlement boundary. The other 6 are adjacent but are separated by a road or by some built form that falls outside the settlement boundary (i.e. the primary school).
3. The proposed Preferred Site is located between Bunters Road and Gaines Hall. It is assessed at the same time as WS195 (A) as the intended developable area is the same (see appendix 1). With regard to this site (4.12a) West Suffolk states;

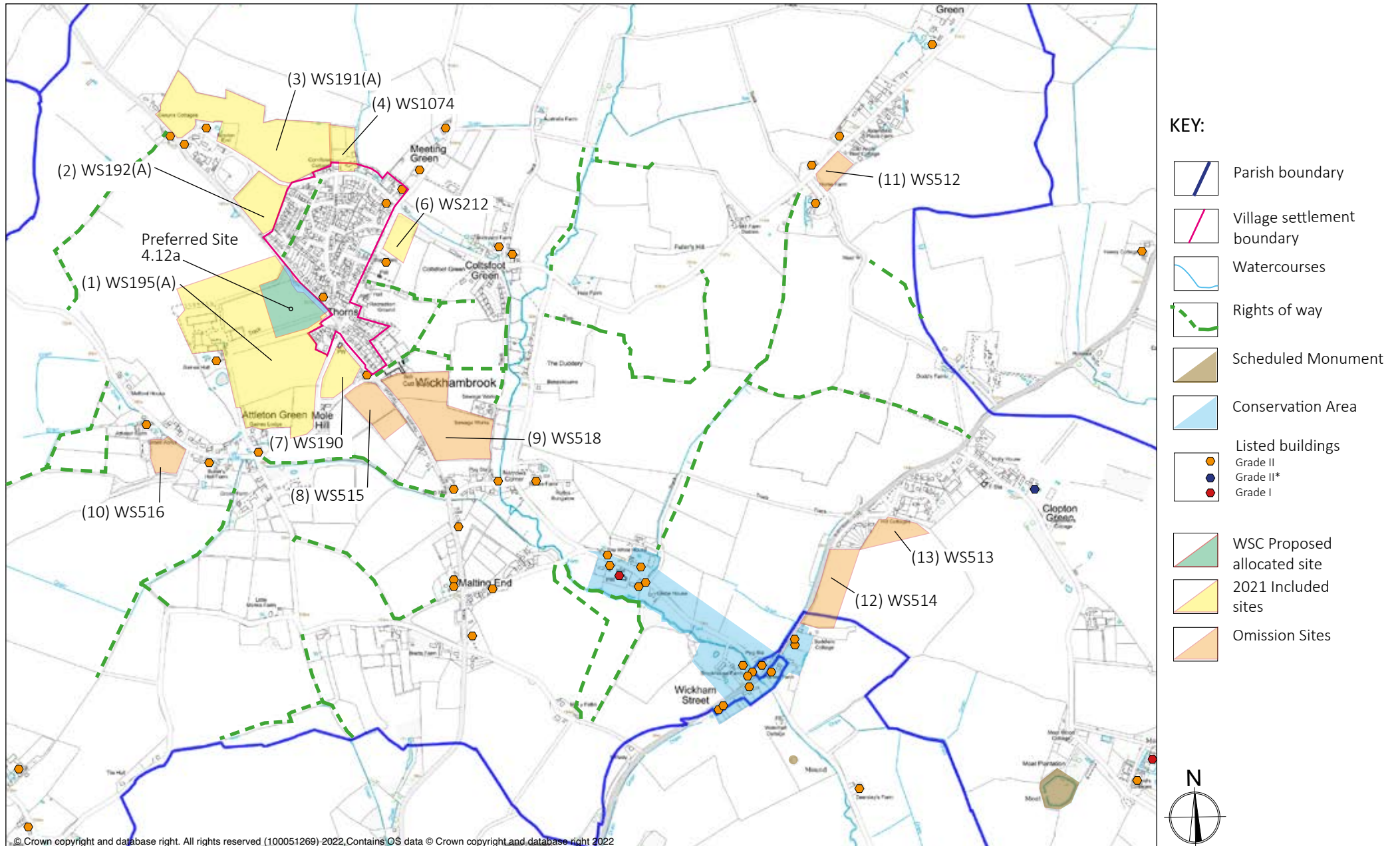
“One new site is proposed as a preferred sites for mixed use development in Wickhambrook providing an indicative capacity of 40 dwellings, with the opportunity for community facilities or retail and/or employment to be explored and determined through a site development brief.”
4. With regard to the suitability of other sites, and in relation to the dispersed pattern of greens and hamlets, the Preferred Options report (2021) makes a number of observations relating to landscape sensitivity;

“There is a need to prevent coalescence of these historic hamlets to preserve the character of Wickhambrook”.

“The topography of the area creates long views out of the village. Land to the north-west and to the east of the settlement is on higher ground where there is a risk that large scale growth would be prominent in the landscape”.

“The village green to the south-east of the village acts as an entrance to Wickhambrook, which forms a key feature of the village and should be protected.”
5. This assessment judges the landscape and visual conditions and sensitivities on each of the 12 sites in turn, to judge if, or where, there is potential capacity (in landscape terms) for development. Results are presented in a tabulated format under a common set of indicators. The results should help ensure any allocations for new housing should only be considered in locations that do not harm the special character of Wickhambrook or its valued views or features, (and where all other policy tests are met). It also identifies approaches to mitigation that would be recommended, should the sites come forward now or in the future.
6. The results aim to assist with the following:
 - a) aid site planning on any allocated land;
 - b) provide evidence to help the parish respond to future speculative planning applications;
 - c) aid transparency; it is important that residents and land owners understand why decisions have been made, and understand where development might be supported and where it might be discouraged;
 - d) identify opportunities for the enhancement, management and conservation of the landscape and views in any allocated site.
7. It is important to note that the study takes no account of other factors that might influence allocation or delivery of the development, flood risk, protected species constraints, sustainability issues or whether highways access is possible, for example.
8. Sensitivity on each site was considered under a set of common headings derived from landscape sensitivity assessment guidance, and by reference to other good practice examples. Methods for assessing landscape sensitivity have only fairly recently been published. *“An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment – to inform spatial planning and land management”* was published in June 2019 (Christine Tudor, Natural England). The guidance urges studies to be simple,

Figure 9: Map of assessed sites, Rights of way and designations.



4. Assessment approach continued:-

transparent, robust and defensible.

9. The guidance provides the following definition of sensitivity (p5):

‘..Landscape sensitivity may be regarded as a measure of the resilience, or robustness, of a landscape to withstand specified change arising from development types or land management practices, without undue negative effects on the landscape and visual baseline and their value... a process that assesses the resilience / robustness of landscape character and the visual resource – and what we value - to a defined change, or changes..’

10. The tables that follow (table 1a and table 1a) set out the indicative conditions for five landscape focused sensitivity indicators:

Physical landscape and vegetation

Settlement Pattern and gateway

Local rural character

Biodiversity and wildlife

Historic Landscape

And two visual or perceptual focused sensitivity indicators:

Visual amenity

Visual prominence

11. Professional judgement is applied to each factor to determine whether each indicator has a prevailing HIGH, MODERATE or LOW level of sensitivity, and allocated a related traffic light colour of red/amber/green to allow easy comparison. Results are presented in the form of a table that provides written detail on the specific landscape and visual issues on each site. The judgements were a result of both desktop work and the site visit made on November 16th 2022.
12. The sites are *not* then subject to an overall marking or scoring process, to generate a ranking, but the findings will assist the Neighbourhood Plan group to reach a greater understanding of the potential capacity (in landscape terms) for residential development in each site.

13. All the sites are assessed individually except for two. Preferred Site 4,12a is set within the much larger site of WS195 (14ha) that was put forward. Both are assessed simultaneously as site 1. This is because development is focused only in a limited area (area shaded yellow in appendix 1) and this was the focus for assessment.

Assumptions

14. To assess the potential sensitivity to development, some assumptions had to be made relating to the potential extent and form of development across each site. This necessarily took two paths. Where a strategic site plan was submitted, it was used as the basis for assessing the likely location of development. Strategic site plans were available for three sites - WS191, 192 and 4.12a. The site plans are shown at appendix 1. The site plans are the result of a detailed body of work to promote these sites, including Landscape and Visual Assessment, by the land owners.
15. Both WS195(A) and 191(A) have extensive site areas (shaded yellow in the maps that follow) that were put forward to the SHELAA. Yet the site plans put forward for these sites show development on only part of these areas. They leave large parts undeveloped, for reasons that are not clear. If, therefore, the site plans for WS191 and 4.12a vary from those currently presented to WSC, reassessment would be needed, as the assumption made here is that they would be developed in the areas as proposed in the indicative layouts (see p45) .
16. Where no strategic layout was available, and only red line drawing were available it has been assumed that development would be expected to broadly fill the site, within the red line area. Apart from WS518, which is more extensive, the sites are fairly small, so this assumption is credible. A general assumption was made that housing would be limited to two storeys in height and would generally be detached.
17. WS193, labelled as Site 5 on figure 8 was put mapped as a site to assess, but it was quickly omitted, as this site has already been built out and recently completed. Site 5 is therefore missing from the maps and assessment tables- re-numbering did not take place to avoid potential inconsistencies.

Table 1a: POTENTIAL LANDSCAPE IMPACTS - EXAMPLE INDICATORS

LANDSCAPE FACTORS		Lower value and/or sensitivity	←----->	Higher value and/or sensitivity	
Physical landscape and vegetation	Vulnerability of 'sense of place' to the loss or erosion of visible landform or hydrological features. Extent that vegetative features such as woodland, significant trees, or hedges, would foreseeable be lost/compromised as a result of development.	No loss of distinctive landform; landform plays little role in defining local character. No significant vegetation would be lost, or minor losses but easy to mitigate.		Some loss of landform or water features that play some role in defining character. Moderate loss of vegetative features but mitigation generally viable.	Significant loss of distinctive landform that is important to local character, or vegetative feature and/or water course, and where mitigation would be difficult.
Settlement Pattern and gateways	Vulnerability of the distinctive and historic settlement pattern of Wickhambrook. Consideration of the nature and form of the adjacent settlement edges and gateways. Likelihood of successful integration with existing edges- modern or historic. Likelihood of causing coalescence between the main village and other hamlets. Prominence of site relating to gateway or arrival points where sense of place would be influenced.	Development of the site would fit well with the settlement pattern given its location, size and position in the landscape. No impact to distinctive arrival points. No disruption to historic patterns.		Development of the site would be somewhat discordant with the historic settlement pattern, given its location, size and position in the landscape; potential for minor adverse impacts to distinctive arrival points.	Development of the site would be very discordant with the historic settlement pattern, given its location, size and position in the landscape; potential for adverse impact to distinctive arrival points.
Local rural character	To what extent does the site contribute to local landscape character and how vulnerable would it be if the site was developed. (Character as defined in the District LCA and by parish-level detail identified in this study).	Site contributes little to local landscape character, possibly with even detracting elements. Loss of historic patterns; hedges absent. Landscape in poor condition and good potential for enhancement		Site contributes to distinctive rural character. Condition of features mixed, some hedgerow trees endure. Some indication of time-depth/ historic continuity	Site contributes notably to distinctive rural character and features intact hedges, mature trees- landscape in good condition. Strong indication of time-depth / historic continuity
Biodiversity and wildlife	Extent of potential harm to features with ecological value and as part of ecological network.	Little current value; little foreseeable impact to ecological system/wildlife and/or mitigation very feasible		Limited current value and modest foreseeable impact to ecological system or to wildlife and mitigation feasible	Value high and foreseeable harmful impact to ecological system mitigation unlikely to be feasible
Historic Landscape	Relationship of the site to the setting of Listed Buildings or to Wickhambrook Conservation Area. Extent of potential impact on the historic landscape.	No impact on Heritage Assets or CA. No loss of historic landscape features.		Some inter-visibility between Heritage assets and site. Some loss of a historic landscape features.	Foreseeable direct impact on at least one designated asset or loss of a historic landscape feature.

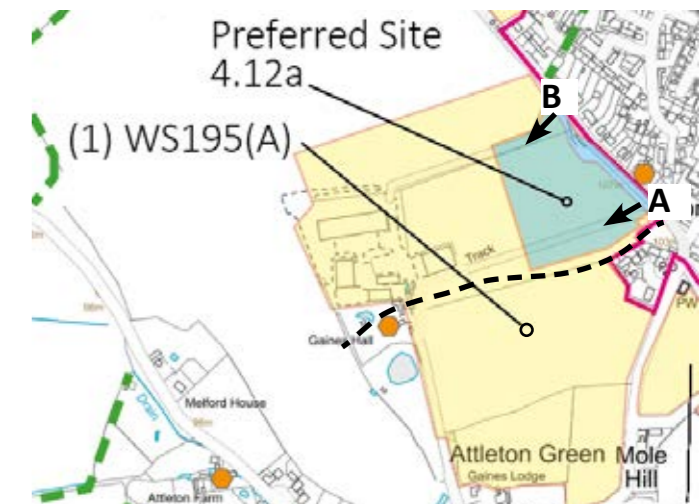
Table 1b: POTENTIAL VISUAL IMPACTS: EXAMPLE INDICATORS

VISUAL AND PERCEPTUAL FACTORS		LOWER value and/or sensitivity ←-----→ HIGHER value and/or sensitivity		
Visual prominence	How generally visible the site is from the surrounding landscape, and how prominently the land is located within views from the village edge or principal roads. Vulnerability of skylines. Impact on any notable views.	Conditions combine to make views of land generally difficult to experience. Limited visibility from principal routes or arrival points. Intact hedge network, woodland or existing urban edge provides good screening and assimilation potential. No mitigation required.	Some views available where conditions allow. Moderately visible in views from principal routes or village edge. Boundaries partially open, some opportunity for screening and assimilation but mitigation required.	Visually prominent, forming part of view from many points. Integral part of view from one or more principal routes or village edge. Boundaries very open, little opportunity for screening and assimilation. Extensive mitigation would be needed.
Visual amenity	Nature of impacts on the visual amenity of existing residents and other sensitive receptors such as users of footpaths.	No views from visually sensitive receptors. Any visual impacts are on receptors of low sensitivity; e.g. minor road users, people at work.	Views from a few visually sensitive points and/or at longer range. Views are Moderately sensitive; e.g. some views from dwellings at some distance.	Direct and close range views from one or more sensitive receptors. Highly sensitive receptors such as footpath users and residents with ground floor views.

A black and white photograph of a rural landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, flat field. In the middle ground, a cluster of buildings is visible, including a prominent church with a tall, square tower. The buildings are surrounded by trees and shrubs. In the background, there are rolling hills and a line of trees under a clear sky. A vertical line is drawn on the left side of the image, extending from the top to the middle ground.

5. Site Assessments

Site name	Land west of Bunters Road	Area	WS195(A) 14.4ha but only the area of site 4.12a is proposed to be developed - 2.85ha (40 dwellings)
Reference numbers	1 - WS195(A) and 4.12a	Status	WS195(A) 'Included site' in the Site Submission Review Report (July 2021) but omitted in the Local Plan'. Part of the Site (shaded green) is the preferred site 4.12a.
Location	Land west of Bunters Road, Wickhambrook. For both sites the same area is proposed for housing, regardless of differing red lines	Land use / description	Large area of arable farmland, comprising several fields. Development is only proposed in the northern part. Claydons also wish (some consents in place) to expand their commercial activities - to the north and east of the current yard.



A: View west from a gateway on Bunters Road



B. View down the driveway towards Claydons works compound, just north of 4.12a



	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The larger site 'WS195(A)' comprises a number of fields but residential land use is only proposed in the northern part- reflected by the area of Preferred Site 4.12a. The area proposed is fairly flat and is elevated plateau edge, reaching about 108m AOD. It provides the rural setting to the west side of the village edge along Bunters Road. Land then slopes down to meet Attleton Green at around the 90m contour. The plateau edge is less distinctive in terms of topography and physical features than the adjacent valleysides and bottom. There is little tree cover around the site, only boundary hedges notably along Bunters Road. There do not appear to be any water features.	LOW
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Apart from a few dwellings around the back of the shop, settlement is generally not found on the west side of Bunters Road, it forms a tight block on the east side. There are large scale modern agricultural scale buildings at Claydon's, but these are not visually prominent. They sit on slightly lower ground, and are seen against a green backdrop, making them unobtrusive in their green finish. Therefore, development here would not fit particularly well with the existing settlement pattern as there is only a very short section of settlement edge to integrate with. There is also little structural vegetation to provide screening or assimilation on the farmland sides. The edges of the new residential estate could be stark. However, the adjoining village is 'modern' in origin and there is plenty of scope for new structural planting to soften new edges on the interfaces with the farmland, but this would take time to mature. The continuous roadside hedge along Bunters Road provides opportunities and constraints. Whilst a mature screen is beneficial, and its removal would not be recommended in landscape terms, it would make it difficult to reflect the existing settlement pattern along Bunter Roads whereby houses face the road.	MOD
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The proposed developable area crosses the boundary between the Plateau and the Valleyside parish landscape types. The character of the landscape setting has moderate value as rural setting to the village edge. It reads as part of a fairly large-scale, open, rolling plateau landscape where field sizes are fairly large and the landscape feels modernised, with straight-edged patterns and a wide main road and modern drive to the Claydon works. Woodlands are seen along the skyline to the west and these could be reflected in a landscape led mitigation strategy.	MOD
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for Wildlife on or near the site. There is a pond at Gaines Farm which could potentially support protected species. Biodiversity value will lie in the system of field boundary hedges.	LOW
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	Gaines Hall I (Listed farmhouse) lies to the west, its boundary adjoining the wider site-WS195(A). But if development is limited to the area identified as 4.12a, little impact is anticipated, given the separation. Opposite the developable area on Bunters Road sits Gaines Cottage (Grade II house) at close range, although direct views from the property are screened by the site's roadside hedge.	MOD
	VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	The site is visually sensitive because it's somewhat elevated. It would be easily seen on the approach into the village from the north.. Although close range views are often restricted by hedges on the east and north sides. It is also screened from views from the village 'centre' by built form that clusters around the shop. Long views are possible outwards so development here would be visible from elevated points to the west.
Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact		<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	No footpaths are present on the site or along its boundaries, although Bunters Road pavement (east) and lane (south) are used for informal recreation. There are footpaths (no's.16,28) at longer range that would be likely to experience a degree of visual change. Visual change would have most impact on the residents that face onto Bunters Road from where direct views will be experienced at close range. The site is also most prominent to passing traffic.	HIGH

Summary Statement

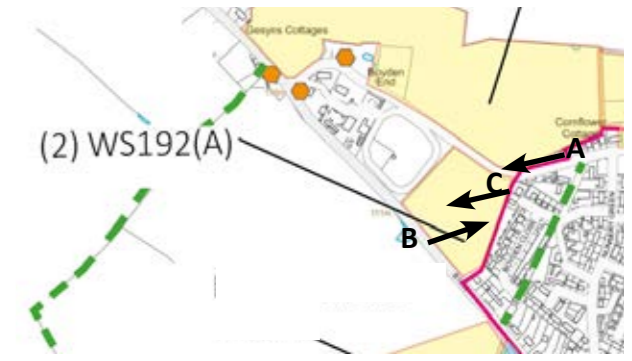
The allocated site does not directly adjoin the edges of the settlement, but faces them, over Bunters Road. The indicative layout exacerbates this problem by adding a gap between the development and the road.

Development here will constitute a break into countryside and therefore a departure from the prevailing existing settlement pattern, where development forms a tight cluster on the east side of Bunters Road.

The lack of edges or structural vegetation within the farmland, to provide enclosure, and the prominent, elevated position of the site beside the main road, means development here could have adverse effects on the rural character and on views in the local area. Mitigation of these effects through new structural planting would be take some years to mature. The roadside hedge is a feature of value and must be retained.

The site also has sensitivities relating to the heritage asset at Gaines Hall. Whilst the northern part of the site is allocated, development on the lower slopes to the south must be avoided.

Site name	Land north of Bunters Road	Area	2ha
Reference number	2 - WS192(A)	Status	Site included in the SHELAA but omitted in the Local Plan. “Potential impact to character and appearance of the village. An alternative site is considered to be a more suitable and sustainable option”
Location	Between Bunters Road and Nunnery Green lane, north of the main settlement cluster. Adjoining settlement boundary.	Land use / description	Agricultural land



A. View southward from the Nunnery Green lane



B. View eastward from Bunters Road



C. View southward from the lane



	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is a single field, upper valleyside landscape that slopes gently towards the east from 110m AOD to c.104m AOD. It is sandwiched between Bunters Road and the Nunnery Green/Boyden End lane to the east and west and by residential land use to the north and south. Slope forms distinctive setting to the northern village edge and enables views to the northeast. No water features or trees on site but boundary roadside hedges are present, with gaps. The northern boundary with the adjacent property features a belt of trees which form a continuous, mature feature and dense screen. After loss of the farmland itself, with retention of boundary features, no further significant physical impacts are predicted.	MOD
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site adjoins the settlement boundary so development here would form an extension to the existing modern village. It sits at the northern gateway to the main village, when approached from Boyden End. Infilling here would cause erosion of the gap to this small cluster/hamlet. The well vegetated boundaries of land south of Boyden End would continue to provide a degree of buffer and separation.	MOD
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is in the 'Valleyside' parish landscape type. It has value in its role as setting and buffer between the village and historic Boyden End. It forms part of the gently rolling landscape that wraps around the northern edges of the main village and contributes positively to the scenic, valleyside character. The underlying landscape patterns here are organic and historic in origin, and the combination of subtle topography and native field boundary features makes for attractive views.	MOD
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for Wildlife on or near the site. Some limited biodiversity value will lie in the system of gappy roadside boundary hedges.	LOW
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	Whilst there are three Listed Buildings clustered nearby at Boyden End, none of them directly interface or have views of the site, owing to distance and intervening vegetation, and no direct impacts on Heritage are predicted.	LOW
VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	The site is adjacent to the main road that passes through the village so is somewhat prominent. However, the straight alignment of Bunters Road on the approach means the site would not be prominently seen on the approach, instead it would remain tucked behind the extended curtilage of Boyden End House. From the south, again, it would not be seen until passing in close proximity, as is contained by existing residential land use. The site offers views from Bunters Road down over farmland that slopes away in a series of hedged fields, providing a strong sense of ruralness. Development of the site could cause harm to scenic or important view.	MOD
	Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual impact	<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	No views from any R.O.W. but Nunnery Green/Boyden End lane is a well used pedestrian walking route, and direct, close range views would be possible from it. The site would be perceived by these receptors as extension to the Boyden Close residential area. There are around ten houses that overlook the site from Boyden Close, some fronting directly onto the field behind a narrow piece of open space. Development of this site would have a direct impact on these houses and mitigation measures should be considered.	HIGH

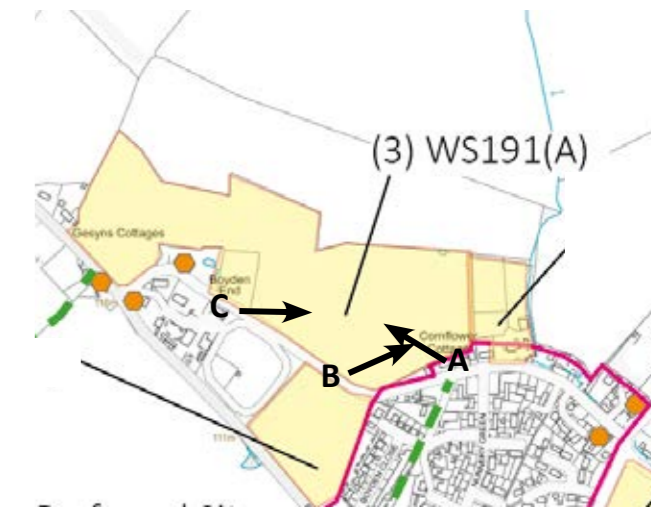
Summary Statement

This site is a well defined parcel of land between the village and a strongly vegetated curtilage to the north.

Whilst development on the east side of Bunters Road is in harmony with the existing settlement pattern, it would cause substantial closure of the rural gap between the main cluster and the heritage sensitive hamlet of Boyden End, which has a separate identity.

Development would erode the rural setting of the north side of the main village and cause substantial visual impacts to those dwellings that directly overlook the site along its southern edge.

Site name	Land north and west of Boyden End (also known as north of Nunnery Green)	Area	8.9ha
Reference number	3 - WS191(A)	Status	Included in the SHELAA but omitted in the Local Plan. "Potential impact to character and appearance of the village. An alternative site is considered to be a more suitable and sustainable option."
Location	Land lying north and east of Boyden End and northwest of the main village, north of Nunnery Green/Boyden End lane	Land use / description	Farmland under arable cultivation.



	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site lies on the north side of Nunnery Green/Boyden End lane and on the east side of the B1063 north of Boyden End. It is a single, large field, on very gently sloping upper valleyside landscape. It falls from c.116m AOD in the west to c.99m AOD in the east. It adjoins the settlement boundary for a short stretch behind 5 modernised dwellings that includes Cornflower Cottage. Whilst now incorporated into the main village, this part of the settlement was known as Nunnery Green. No water features or significant trees on the site itself but boundary field and roadside hedges are present, with gaps. Field boundary oaks are present. The eastern boundary with WS1074 features a belt of trees including tall Lombardy poplars. The physical impacts are related to the loss of the farmland itself; it is assumed boundary features would be retained.	MOD
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Nunnery Green/Boyden End lane currently defines and contains the main village, and all the development on the north side of is in a linear, one-plot-deep pattern. The character of the Lane through Nunnery Green is narrow and winding and has a somewhat modern, but rural village edge feel, with views out to the countryside becoming available further west. The small cluster at Boyden End follows the same one-plot deep pattern and has a historic feel. The land owners proposal to site a residential estate in the eastern end only, to avoid causing substantial disruption to the historic settlement pattern and separated position of Boyden End, is very necessary. There should be no development further west as this would cause coalescence of the hamlet with the main village.	MOD
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is in the 'Valleyside' parish landscape type. It is a fairly prominent piece of land that provides rural setting and backdrop to Nunnery Green. It forms part of the very gently rolling landscape that wraps around the northern edges of the main village, which contributes positively to the wider valleyside character. The underlying landscape patterns here are organic and historic in origin, and the combination of subtle topography and native field boundary features makes for attractive views.	HIGH
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for Wildlife on or near the site. Biodiversity value will lie in the system of field boundary hedges that connect with the wider countryside.	MOD
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	The early OS maps show the field is now an amalgamation of 6 smaller enclosures. Its dog-legged boundaries indicate it was once several fields which were merged over the course of the 20th century. There are no designated assets in Nunnery Green but there are 3 Listed Buildings in Boyden End. As long as development limited to the area shaded in Appendix 1, there should be no impacts on heritage features.	LOW
VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	The site is prominent in views along the lane and would be seen on the approach to the village from Boyden End. Development could result in adverse visual impacts on distinctive views from the village edge. Glimpses are also possible from the main road (across site WS192(A)).	MOD
	Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact	<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	No views from any R.O.W. but Nunnery Green/Boyden End lane is a well used pedestrian walking route, and direct, close range views of new development would be possible from it. A small number of houses (approximately 5) back onto the site's eastern end (see photo C) and would experience a large degree of visual change from upper and lower windows.	HIGH

Summary Statement

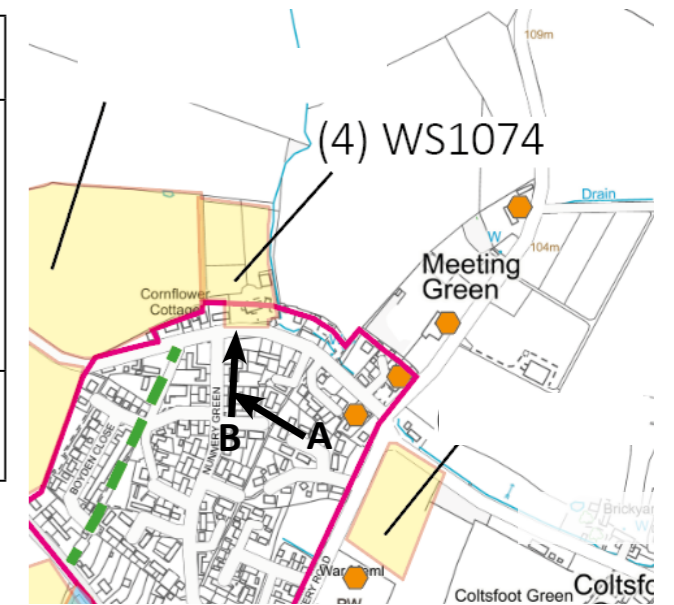
There is a discrepancy between the total area put forward to the SHELAA Call for Sites, and the indicative site plan subsequently put forward by the landowners which is the subject of this assessment (see p45 for the indicative site plan).

This area of the village fringe is highly valued by residents for its quiet and rural character. The adjoining lane is valued for the informal recreation and amenity it offers.

Whilst development of the east part of the parcel would not represent a significant departure from the settlement pattern, it would cause partial closure of the rural gap between the main cluster and the Heritage sensitive hamlet of Boyden End, which has a separate identity.

Development would erode the rural setting of the north side of the main village and cause substantial visual impacts to those dwellings that directly overlook the site along its southeastern edges

Site name	Land adjacent Bunters Gait, Nunnery Green	Area	0.77ha
Reference number	4 - WS1074	Status	Omission site. "The site is considered an unsustainable location due to its distance and/or proximity to existing services and facilities. An alternative site is considered to be a more suitable and sustainable option." DC/19/0961/FUL planning application for one dwelling and access granted on 16 July 2019
Location	Land to rear of houses on Nunnery Green	Land use / description	Land behind a modern house - 'Bunters Gait', that has recently been used for horses.



A. The Site entrance



B. The site from the elevated footpath opposite

	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	This parcel is equestrian land to the rear of a large brick house called 'Bunters Gait'. A section of hedge has recently been removed to make a new access on the west side of the house. It is very gently sloping field, enclosed on all sides- by a shelter belt of trees to east and west, including Lombardy poplars, a hedge to the north and the house and garden curtilage to the south. A stream is mapped along the east boundary.	LOW
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	All the development on the north side of the lane is in a linear, one-plot-deep pattern. Development of this site would therefore be contrary to the prevailing pattern and be considered 'backland'. To the south side lies the development is mid 20th century estate development.	MOD
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is in the 'Valleyside' parish landscape type. It is not prominent in views and its adaptation for equestrian use means it does not contribute particularly to the wider valleyside character. Impacts on the local landscape character will be limited.	LOW
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for Wildlife on or near the site. Biodiversity value will lie in the boundary hedges, and the stream.	MOD
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	This parcel was once part of the system of small fields that backed Nunnery Green. There are no Listed Buildings adjacent to the site. There are several listed buildings are Meeting Green to the east but the site does not contribute to their setting and its unlikely there is significant intervisibility.	LOW
VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	This site is the least visually prominent of all those assessed. Its contained nature, generally screened by the frontage house and its tall hedges, means it is hard to see into. Development of this site would not impact on any scenic or important views.	LOW
	Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact	<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	No views from any R.O.W. Glimpse into the development from a small section of Nunnery Green/Boyden End lane adjacent to the site. New houses would be seen behind existing residences so would not be out of context. Significant impacts to the rear views from Bunters Gait, St. Crispins and Goshawk House (to the west) would be experienced, other views from properties are more distant, oblique and filtered.	MOD

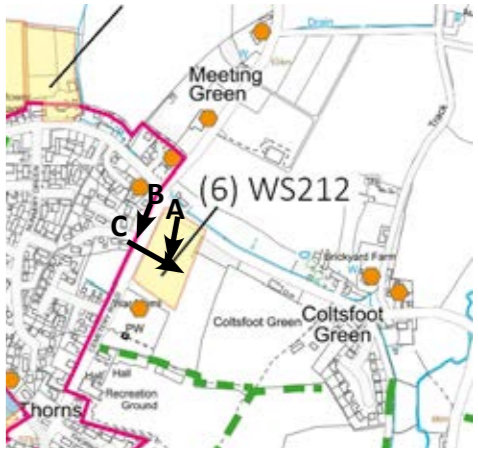
Summary Statement

This site is attached to the main village cluster and would have limited visual impacts on the wider village or the wider landscape.

However, it constitutes 'backland' development and does not follow the settlement pattern along Nunnery Green which is a one plot deep pattern.

Development would erode the rural setting of the north side of the main village and cause substantial visual impacts to those dwellings that directly overlook the site along its edges.

Site name	Land at Cemetery Hill	Area	1.08ha
Reference number	6 - WS212	Status	Omission site. “Landscape impact – large open field, highly visible on entrance to the village from the north. An alternative site is considered to be a more suitable and sustainable option.”
Location	Field at the north end of Cemetery Road, on the east side and also bounded by road to Coltsford Green.	Land use / description	Agricultural land



A. View from north



B. View up Cemetery Road



C. View over site from west

	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Small, single, rectangular field on the village edge. It is currently not being cultivated but is farmland. It forms part of the sloping valley side and sits between the c.100m and 95m contours. It has intermittent boundary vegetation along the north and west sides. It lies south of the graveyard from which it is separated by a dense hedge. It is separated from the Settlement Boundary by Cemetery Road on its west side. Physical impacts are related to the loss of the farmland itself and the erosion of the sense of the valley topography.	MOD
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site sits on the arrival point to the main village to traffic coming from Coltsfoot Green and Meeting Green and helps provide separation between the main village and these hamlets, although Meeting Green has already been connected with the main village. Settlement in this area is relatively recent in origin, and comprises small estate developments that have aggregated between Bunters Road and Nunnery Green/Boyden End lane to form the main village in the 20th century. These are generally on the west side of Cemetery Road but Thorns Close is the exception, on the east side.	MOD
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is in the 'Valleyside' parish landscape type where it forms the rural fringes to the village - a small scale landscape where ancient patterns endure and scenic views are experienced over the gently rolling valley sides. Were the site to be developed, the distinctive sense of the valley, as setting to the settlement clusters, would be eroded.	HIGH
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for Wildlife on or near the site.	MOD
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	The War Memorial in the centre of the graveyard adjacent to the north is Grade II listed. The graveyard is also a feature of historic interest and, of course, emotional sensitivity to local people. It is enclosed by a dense hedge which contributes to its sense of privacy; the rural landscape provides a sense of peace and quiet. Development of the site would have adverse effects on the asset and its setting.	HIGH
	VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	Photo B shows the site's orientation and relationship with the valley to the south east. Moderately long views are possible to and from the opposite valley side (however it does not appear there are many receptors here.) The site is not prominent in that no views are possible from the Main Road. Cemetery Road is a more minor route but direct views of the site are experienced from it upon arrival at the village, as there is little boundary vegetation. Development of the site could cause harm to scenic or important view from footpaths/lanes in the area.
Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual impact		<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	No views from any R.O.W. Some impact on residential amenity from a small number of dwellings at close range over looking the site from Croft Close and The Meadows (recently completed). Residential receptors are considered sensitive receptors.	MOD

Summary Statement

This small site is of notable landscape value for its intact historic form and for the role it plays forming attractive, rolling rural setting to the village edge.

It is sensitive in heritage terms given its role in the setting of a listed asset, and is part of the rural gap between the main village and Coltsfoot Green.

Conserving its undeveloped form is important for conserving the distinctive dispersed settlement pattern in Wlckhambrook.

Site name	Land south of Bunters Road	Area	1.6ha
Reference number	7 - WS190	Status	Included in the SHELAA but omitted in the Local Plan. "Landscape impact – considered to be important open space at southern entrance to village. Potential impact to character and appearance of the village. An alternative site is considered to be a more suitable and sustainable option."
Location	Parcel to the south of the Methodist church and the main village, on the west side of Bunters Road and the north side of Mole Hill	Land use / description	Arable land not currently under cultivation



A. Photo from the north



B. Photo from the east

	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Small field with an irregular, triangular shape, defined by roads on all three sides- Shop Hill to the north, and narrow lanes to the west and east. It forms part of the distinctive rolling valleyside south of the village centre and slopes from c.101m down to c.93m AOD. It is farmland but it's currently uncultivated and overgrown. It is separated from the Settlement Boundary by Shop Hill along its north side, and flanked to either side on Shop Hill by built form- the Methodist Church to the north and three old cottages to the east. Potential physical impacts are related to the loss of the farmland itself and the erosion of the sense of the valley topography that provides important setting to the village centre.	HIGH
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is prominently located alongside the arrival point, from several directions, at the village centre. There are currently no large blocks of settlement on the west side of the main road. Settlement on the opposite side of Shop Hill is relatively recent (20th century) in origin; small estate developments that form a spur of settlement. The narrow lanes that wind towards Attleton Green are characteristic of the rural area, but Shop Hill is a fairly wide modernised main road.	MOD
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is in the 'Valleyside' parish landscape type where it forms the rural fringes to the village- a small scale valley landscape where ancient patterns endure and scenic views are experienced over the valleysides. The site falls away behind the Methodist Church, allowing views over the little valley below. These distinctive gently rolling valley views are important to the character of the village centre.	HIGH
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for Wildlife on or near the site. Boundary vegetation is generally absent.	MOD
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	There is one Listed Building whose wider setting could be impacted by development of the site, Cutt Bush Cottage sits on the eastern-most corner of the triangle, its rear curtilage adjoining the site for a short length. The Methodist Church, and the two unlisted thatched cottages to the east, could be considered non-designated heritage assets. The isolated setting of the Methodist Church would be entirely changed were the site to be developed.	MOD
	VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	The site is very visually prominent in the views from the main road adjacent, and from the village centre. Views are not filtered or screened, due to the lack of boundary vegetation. Unimpeded views into the site are also possible from the two narrow lanes to each side. These are slightly in cutting, having been worn down over the centuries before tarmac came along. There would be a detrimental effect on the skylines in this area. Development of the site could cause harm to scenic or important view from roads/lanes in the area.
Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact		<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	No views from any R.O.W. A row of bungalows (c.8No) directly overlook the site from the north along Shop Hill, and small number of other dwellings also overlook the site from the east and south corners, eg at Mole Hill. Dwellings are considered sensitive receptors and they would experience the largest visual impact.	HIGH

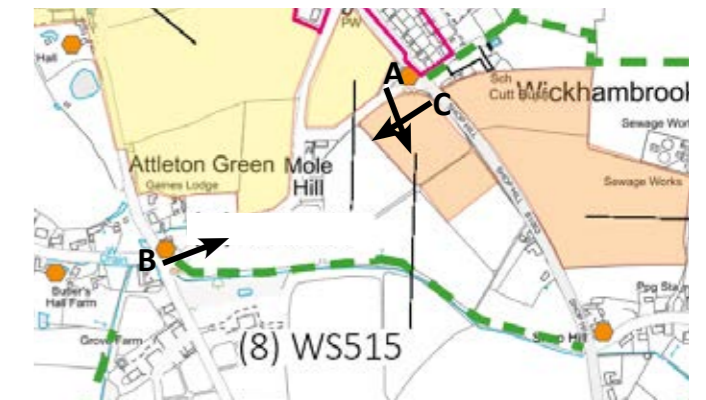
Summary Statement

This site is not an appropriate option for expansion of the main village cluster. The main settlement is found on the plateau edge and is not found on these southwest facing valley slopes. Development here would have an adverse effect on the character of the valley and be contrary to the prevailing landscape position of the main village.

It is of notable landscape value for its intact historic form, and because its integral to providing the rural character that interacts with the heart of the village. It is also visually prominent in views around the village centre and directly overlooked from a number of properties.

It sits within the wider setting of a listed asset, and is part of the rural gap between the main village and Attleton Green. Conserving its undeveloped form is important for conserving the distinctive dispersed settlement pattern in Wickhambrook.

Site name	Land off Shop Hill (B1063), Wickhambrook	Area	1.9ha
Reference number	8 - WS515	Status	Site unsuitable due to significant policy constraints - not adjacent to settlement boundary
Location	Land on the southwest side of Shop Hill, the upper parts of a larger, sloping field.	Land use / description	This is equestrian grazed grassland.



A. View over site towards the Southeast



B. View from Attleton Green - site is located on the upper slopes



C. Site is behind the hedge in views from Shop Hill

	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Site clearly part of a valleyside, which falls away at a noticeable rate to the southwest. The main village is generally on the flatter plateau edge, so development here would be a departure from the prevailing pattern. Be unlikely to cause the loss of any vegetative features as there are none- it is assumed the roadside hedge along the boundary with Shop Hill, would be retained.	HIGH
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Development here would not feel well connected to the village. Settlement is currently found on the east side of Shop Hill, only north of the line between Mole Hill and the primary school. Located next to the main road, the site is fairly prominent.	HIGH
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is in a little valley system which is a key part of local character and gives rise to scenic views. It provides a distinctive setting to the main village of Wickhambrook. The trees fringing the valley bottom, the field boundaries and the skyline emphasize the topography and creates a strong rural feel. The rural character of the little valley would be eroded if the village spread into this area.	HIGH
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Much of the site is grazed grass with little ecological value, so the value lies in the network of boundary hedges.	LOW
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	There is one listed building Cutt Bush Cottage- close to the site at the top of Mole Hill. This does not look directly out onto the parcel, its enclosed within a tall hedge. With mitigation in the corner nearest to the cottage- perhaps offsetting development, or providing a landscape buffer, it is judged development could take place without harm to the asset.	LOW
	VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	The site is not all that prominent in views on the approach from the south because it lies to the side, behind a large hedge and land falls away quite quickly. However, direct views are experienced on the approach from the north around the top of Mole Hill. Longer distance glimpses also possible from Attleton Green (see photo C) and adverse impacts on sense of separation predicted. Development here would be noticeable and would visually not relate well to the rest of the village. Development of the site could cause harm to scenic or important view from footpaths/lanes in the area.
Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact		<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There is a ROW that runs along the bottom of the valley that would offer views up to the site at reasonably close range. As the site is set apart from the main village edge there are no dwellings with direct views over the site.	MOD

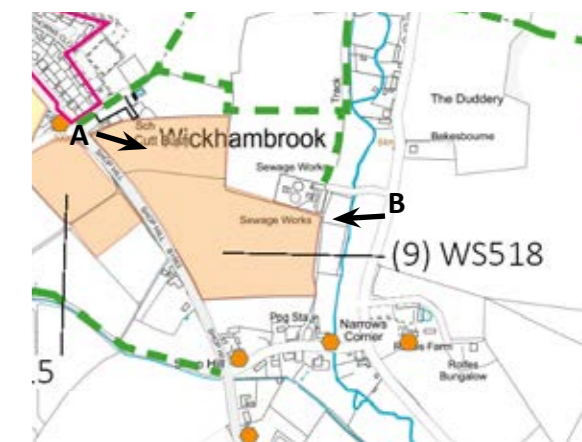
Summary Statement

This site is not an appropriate option for expansion of the main village cluster. The main settlement is found on the plateau edge and is not found on these southwest facing valleyslopes. Development here would have an adverse effect on the character of the rural valley and be contrary to the prevailing landscape position of the main village.

The site's function as part of the rural gap between the main village and Attleton Green should be conserved to prevent coalescence and loss of the village's distinctive dispersed pattern.

As well as being scenic, the views over the site promote appreciation of the valley setting, and the scattered form of the settlement.

Site name	Cutt Bush and Commerce Field, east of Shop Hill	Area	5.70ha
Reference number	9 - WS518	Status	Site unsuitable due to significant policy constraints - not adjacent to settlement boundary
Location	Two farmland fields to the east of Shop Hill, south of the Primary school.	Land use / description	Arable farmland.



A. View over the northerly field, towards the SE



B. View from Duddery Lane (image from Google Streetview)

View from Duddery Lane (from Google Streetview)

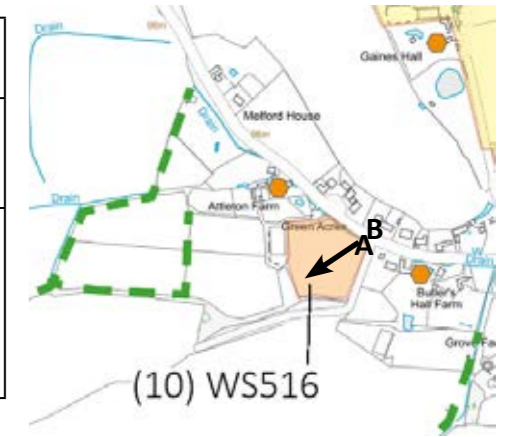
	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	This large site occupies a valleyside position, falling from 100m in the west to 85m in the east. It comprises two fields that form part of the farmland landscape that separates the main village from the Narrows Corner/Shop Hill linear settlement cluster. It does not directly adjoin the settlement boundary, although it could appear to connect through the grounds of the primary school. A mature hedge divides the two fields and mature oak trees, the rest of the boundaries are also hedged, some outgrown into trees.	MOD
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are two types of settlement pattern in this area. The infilled, plateau top main village cluster and the scattered Narrows Corner/Shop Hill linear settlement that nestles along the valley bottom. Owing to the valleyside location, and its southeastward orientation, the site is not physically or visually well related to either cluster. In the main village large blocks of settlement are found on the east side of Shop Hill and only to the north of the line between Mole Hill and the primary school. Estate development seen here down the valleyside would be a departure from the existing pattern where estate blocks are found on the plateau.	HIGH
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site straddles the 'Valleyside' and 'Valley bottom' parish landscape types. It forms the rural fringe on the south side of the main village. Fields have been amalgamated but the underlying small-scale ancient patterns can still be read and hedges are in good condition. Scenic views are experienced over the gently rolling valleysides to the south giving a strong rural feel..	MOD
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for wildlife on or near the site. Biodiversity value likely to be fairly low given the agricultural purpose of the land parcel, but would lie in the connected hedge networks and associated verges. It is the only site that features a hedge through the centre of the red line area	MOD
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	There are approx. five Listed Buildings in the vicinity from which oblique glimpses of the site may be possible but there are no heritage assets adjacent to the site- no direct impacts are foreseen.	LOW
VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	The site slopes towards the southeast and so is not prominently visible from the main village. It is currently hard to see into from the adjacent main road (Shop Hill) because there is a particularly tall continuous roadside hedge. There are only two gateways currently offering brief glimpses in. Visual impacts will possibly be greater on the valley below to the southeast because development would be seen along the skyline and down the valleyside (see photo B). Development of the site could cause harm to scenic or important view from footpaths/lanes in the area.	MOD
	Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact	<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no ROWs along the site itself but there is a footpath beyond the boundary hedge along the north and northeast - it briefly adjoins the site boundary. Despite the large size of the site, it does not appear there are many dwellings overlooking the site that would experience visual change.	MOD

Summary Statement

This site is not an appropriate option for expansion of the main village cluster. The main settlement is found on the plateau edge and is not found on valley slopes. Development here would have an adverse effect on the character of the rural valley to the east and be contrary to the prevailing landscape position of the main village.

The site's function as part of the rural gap between the main village and Narrows Corner should be conserved to prevent coalescence and loss of the village's distinctive dispersed pattern.

Site name	Land at Attleton Green, Wickhambrook,	Area	1.1ha
Reference number	10 - WS516	Status	Site unsuitable due to significant policy constraints - not adjacent to settlement boundary
Location	A single horse paddock lying west of the lane that passes through Attleton Green.	Land use / description	This is grazed equine land.



A. View into site at entrance point



B. View into site including roadside hedge

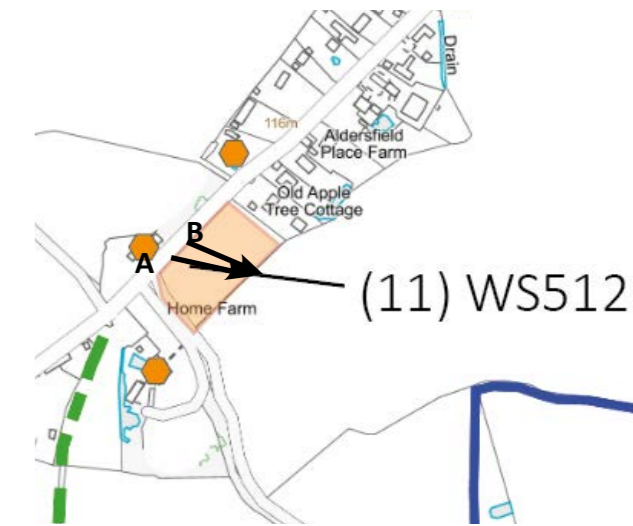
	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H / M / L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is part of the low-lying hamlet of Attleton Green. The site is a small field, of just over a hectare, under equestrian land use. Land use fringing the settlement is primarily pastoral owing to the seasonally wet soils. The site is enclosed on all sides by hedges, including a dense, regularly managed roadside hedge. It lies on the edge of the bottom of the shallow tributary valley and likely has seasonally wet soils. There are many scattered ponds in this area but there does not appear to be one on the site.	LOW
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Attleton Green has a small green at its heart, the drive to the old manor of Gaines Hall passes along its east side. Settlement is scattered along winding narrow lanes and is a mix of listed farmhouses, thatched cottages and more modern, low rise additions. The pattern is generally linear and one plot deep, the exception being the small residential estate at the western end of the lane, partly opposite the site. This group of 5 c.1970s era bungalows are a departure from the prevailing historic pattern. It would be difficult to assimilate an estate here without disrupting the historic pattern.	HIGH
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site sits on the lower edge of the Valleyside landscape type. The qualities of Attleton Green relate to its small scale, rural character. The quiet, gently winding lanes with historic farmsteads and thatched cottages create a historic feel- there are a few modern houses here, but these have limited impact as they occupy deep plots and are often well vegetated. There are also many mature trees around the settlement and roadside (e.g. ash, willow, birch) so views out to the wider landscape are not generally possible, contained also by the rising topography. Glimpses of the dwellings are interspersed with glimpses into fields. An estate development could change this character and bring a suburban feel to this corner of Attleton Green.	MOD
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for wildlife on or near the site. Biodiversity value likely to be modest, lying in the connected hedge network.	MOD
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	Historically, the site would have been a traditionally grazed meadow, associated with one of the adjacent farmhouses, but today is part of a stud. The immediate setting of the site is formed of c.1970s chalet bungalows which are not sensitive in heritage terms. However, it is sandwiched between two farmsteads each with grade II listed farmhouses- Attleton Farm (with Wells Cottage), and Butler's Hall Farm. The field does not directly read as part of the immediate setting of either building, because of the linear arrangement and the well vegetated boundaries. However, the site separates them and contributes to their significance as separate entities- loss of the gap to residential development could disrupt this relationship, even if the site is not visible from them.	HIGH
VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	Not visually prominent. Tucked between well vegetated farmsteads on a quiet back road, this site is generally not visible from either Attleton Green or the wider landscape. The hedges that enclose it provide a high degree of screening and enclosure and rising land on both sides means new housing here would not make an impact on skylines. Development of the site would not harm any scenic or important view.	LOW
	Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact	<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	No direct views to the site are possible from anywhere except the adjacent section of lane. Views from the facing bungalows here might be possible, but only over the top of the roadside hedge, assuming the roadside hedge is retained.	LOW

Summary Statement

This somewhat isolated site is unsuitable as development would not fit with the one-plot-deep historic pattern in this hamlet. A residential estate here would have an adverse effect on the prevailing rural feel in this lightly settled part of the parish.

Its role providing rural setting and separation to listed buildings in the hamlet should be conserved.

Site name	Land at Ashfield Green, Wickhambrook	Area	0.819ha
Reference number	11 - WS512	Status	Site unsuitable due to significant policy constraints - not adjacent to settlement boundary
Location	South of Ashfield Green, north of Home Farm, alongside the road.	Land use / description	Agricultural land until recently - over the last year the site has been hedged and is uncultivated.



A. Site photo 2022



B. Google Streetview October 2021



	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The Wickhambrook Road ascends the valley side then tracks along the flat top of the plateau, at elevations above 100m. Lying at over 105m this is the most elevated of all the assessed sites. It lies on the east side of Ashfield Green and was part of a larger arable land until relatively recently, the site area has now been divided off. Is it now under grass and new hedge has been planted along the east boundary. On the other three sides there are good, continuous hedges with trees, particularly along the mature, vegetated curtilage of Home Farm.	LOW
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Ashfield Green is an linear settlement, a mix of historic cottages and farmsteads, and some more modern infill, lightly scattered for a half mile or so along the Wickhambrook Road, interspersed with fields that allow long views. Settlement is found up the valley and along the spine of the plateau. Ashfield Green does not have strong arrival points, instead the dwellings just group a little more densely together on the plateau. There are no residential estates along Ashfield Green, all dwellings are a single plot depth, often set back from the road with a deep front garden. It would be difficult to assimilate an estate here without disrupting the historic pattern.	HIGH
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is in the Plateau landscape type. Local distinctiveness relates to the straightness of the road, the scattered dwellings and the elevated land which offers long views in places.	HIGH
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for wildlife on or near the site. Biodiversity value likely to be moderately low as land is only recently converted farmland. It will lie in the connected hedge networks along the boundaries.	MOD
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	There are 3 Listed Buildings in close proximity to the site comprising Home Farm to the south, Ashfield Green Cottage facing the site, across the road, and a further Listed building to the north.	HIGH
VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	No impacts on the main settlement. Elevated position of the site means there could be impacts on the wider landscape, however settlement is seen in this position along the spine of the plateau. Development of the site would not harm any specific scenic or important view.	MOD
	Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact	<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Impacts will result only on a small number of receptors. Fairly minor traffic volumes use this road and a single house across the road will experienced direct views (Listed building).	MOD

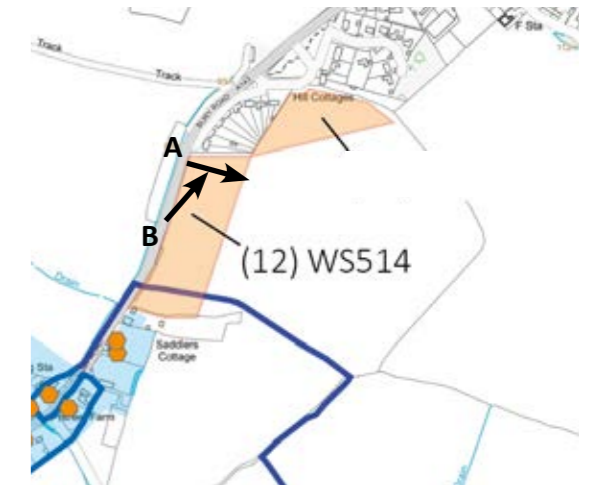
Summary Statement

This isolated site, some distance from the main village, is a very unsuitable and unsustainable location for settlement expansion.

Development would not fit with the scattered, one-plot-deep historic pattern in this hamlet, and would have an adverse effect on the prevailing rural feel in this part of the settlement.

It is visually sensitive and occupies an elevated position. The simple patterns would be easily disrupted by a new residential estate which could have wide ranging visual impacts.

Site name	Land at Bury Road, Wickhambrook	Area	1.106ha
Reference number	13 - WS513	Status	Not preferred option. Deferred - suitability: not adjacent to settlement boundary
Location	Land east of Bury Road and south of Clopton Green	Land use / description	Agricultural land part of a larger field, south of a curved row of houses that face Bury Road. The far south of the site is in Denston parish.



A. View east from corner of site



B. View north from beside main road

	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Notably sloping, arable farmland sitting between c.82m and c.98m. It lies north of the Conservation Area in the valley bottom at Wickham Street. It is to the south of an array of mid-century semi-detached houses which form the southern edge of the predominately modern settlement cluster at Clopton Green. It is a small portion of a large field- the far boundaries of which, to the south and east, cannot be seen owing to the curve of the hill. There are no hydrological features on the site. There is little vegetation on the site or along its boundaries. Physical features are not at risk but development of the site would partly obscure understanding of the valley topography.	LOW
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Historically, the settlement that sprung up to the north was likely associated Clopton Hall, located above the site on Giffords Lane. The adjacent cluster of semi-detached houses are modern in origin (mid century) and are poorly integrated into the landscape with inconsistent boundary planting. The site currently provides the undeveloped gap between the Clopton cluster and the Conservation Area at Wickham Street. Its development would mean the two clusters would become joined and their separate identities would be eroded.	HIGH
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is predominantly the Valleyside parish landscape type. Apart from the distinctive sloping landform, the site lacks distinctive patterns or elements as field sizes are enlarged, hedges have been removed resulting in bare skylines to the east. Without other features to influence it, the character is influenced by the houses above it which provide a sense of a modern landscape.	MOD
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for wildlife on or near the site. The site is currently arable farmland with little in the way of boundary vegetation. Biodiversity value likely to be low.	LOW
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	The landscape does not form any direct setting to any Listed Buildings but there are listed buildings just beyond the boundary to the south (some in Denston parish). The area just meets the edge of the Conservation Area at Saddlers Cottage. Development here would be to the detriment of the Conservation Area as its green setting and sense of separation could be threatened.	HIGH
	VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	Site very prominent as located directly beside main A134 road. Views into the area provide a sense of separation from Wickham Street. Development of the site would be very obvious but would not harm any scenic or important view.
Visual amenity Nature of receptors experiencing visual Impact		<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	High volumes of traffic pass the site daily. The site is close to the existing group of houses here. None would directly face the development but glimpses from the rear of the dwellings may be possible.	MOD

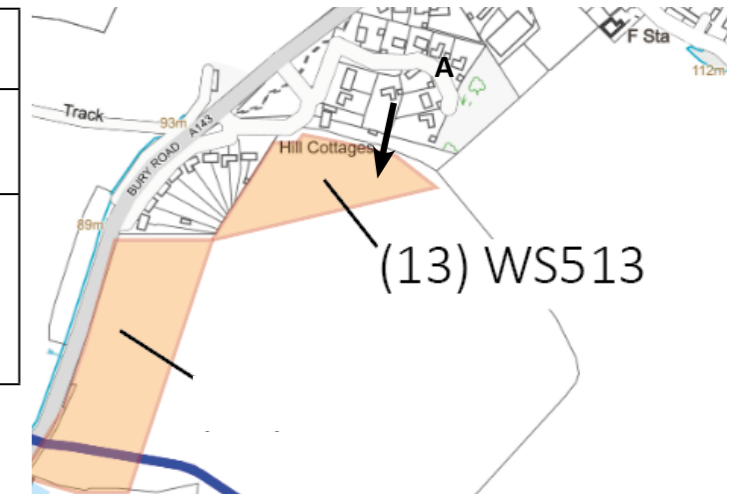
Summary Statement

This isolated site, some distance from the main village, is a very unsuitable and unsustainable location for settlement expansion.

It is valleyside location is very visually prominent from the main road. Visual effects of developing the site would be hard to mitigate and unsympathetic hard edges with open countryside would result.

It forms part of the rural gap between the Clopton Green cluster Wickham Street. It should be conserved as rural settings for the hamlets, to help maintain their separate identities and prevent coalescence, and to conserve the distinctiveness of the sensitive Conservation Area.

Site name	Land at Street Farm, Bury Road, Wickhambrook	Area	2.539ha
Reference number	12 - WS514	Status	Deferred - suitability: not adjacent to settlement boundary
Location	Field on the east side of Bury Road, south of Hill Cottage and Clopton Park	Land use / description	Arable land use. Site would infill between Hill Cottage to the north and Clopton Park to the west.



A. View south across site



	Sensitivity Factor:	Source /Evidence / Indicator	Assessment of potential impact of residential land use	Sensitivity H/M/L
LANDSCAPE FACTORS	Physical landscape including vegetation Impact on distinctive topography / water features / significant trees or other vegetation.	<i>OS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	Sloping and elevated arable farmland sitting around the 100m contour, on the shoulder of the plateau. It is a small portion of a much larger field- the boundaries of which, to the south and east, cannot be seen owing to the curve of the hill. There are no water features on the site. There is little vegetation along its boundaries, just some gappy hedging along the residential boundary.	LOW
	Settlement pattern and gateways Fit with historic pattern; prominence of site in relation to arrival points; nature of road network	<i>OS maps; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	This cluster of settlement is modern in origin and likely dates from the mid century. Historically, settlement here was associated with Clopton Hall, above the site on Giffords Lane. This cluster is not one of the historic hamlets or Greens and has no relationship with the main village and its services. The shape and location of the site means it has a weak link with the road network and the resultant form would not have roadside frontage. It would be discordant with the form of the existing houses already here.	HIGH
	Local rural landscape character Contribution of Site and setting to local character and distinctiveness	<i>County and District Character assessment; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	This site is in the upper part of the Valley Side landscape type. It lacks distinctive patterns or elements as field sizes are enlarged, and hedges have been removed resulting in bare skylines to the southeast. These conditions give the landscape less ability to assimilate new development- the lack of hedge network to provide enclosure means new development here would be stark and visually prominent Skylines in the distance are regularly wooded- settlement is not a prominent component- groups of houses on higher should be resisted.	HIGH
	Biodiversity and wildlife Impact on designated features or features with potential value as part of ecological network	<i>Reference to GIS mapping; Site observations and professional judgement</i>	There are no designations for wildlife on or near the site. The site is currently arable farmland with little in the way of boundary vegetation. Biodiversity value likely to be low.	LOW
	Historic landscape Landscape as setting to designated heritage features; impacts on Conservation Area; SAMs; etc	<i>Reference to Historic England mapping; site observations.</i>	The landscape does not form setting to any Listed Buildings. Clopton Hall (grade II*) is located to the east but it appears there is no inter-visibility between the site and the Hall. In the 1950s the wider field, was part of extensive orchards that covered much of the land across Clopton Green (a historic Wickhambrook settlement cluster).	LOW
VISUAL FACTORS	Visual prominence Prominence of site in general views around the village; impacts to skyline; impacts on any important views;	<i>Site observations and professional judgement relating to visual sensitivity</i>	Although it appears to be tucked away behind Clopton Park and not prominent from the A134, it is on elevated land- views out extend to several miles to the south- this means the site could potentially be seen from a wide area, extending the group of houses already seen. Views from Bury Road when emerging from Wickham Street are also likely- the houses would sit prominently in the skyline. Development of the site would not harm any scenic or important view.	HIGH
	Visual amenity Nature and sensitivity of the receptors likely to experience visual change.	<i>Site observations and professional judgement</i>	The site is not directly overlooked by any ROW and the adjacent house might experience visual change from some side windows. Views also likely from the rear of other houses in Clopton Park. Receptors in the wider landscape would need to be identified and assessed.	MOD

Summary Statement

This isolated site, some distance from the main village, is a very unsuitable and unsustainable location for settlement expansion.

It is elevated and very visually prominent from the main road, sitting along the skyline. Visual effects of developing the site would be hard to mitigate and unsympathetic hard edges with open countryside would result with detriment to the rural character.

It forms part of the rural gap between the Clopton Green cluster and the Conservation Area at Wickham Street and should be conserved as such to maintain the separate identities of the hamlets.

Appendix

Appendix 1- Strategic site plans for Site 4.12a, WS195, 191 and 192

ILLUSTRATIVE LANDSCAPE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

LANDSCAPE VISION

- The landscape strategy plan sets out the level of strategic planting envisaged for the site in order to provide a high quality landscape setting and strong green infrastructure framework to the proposed buildings. The landscape objectives of the Proposed Development include:
 - To create a comprehensive new landscape scheme which integrates with the existing development in Wickhambrook and the surrounding countryside to the south and west.
 - To develop and enhance the site boundaries as nature conservation habitats for a range of locally occurring species.
 - To enhance the character of the surrounding landscape.
 - To establish green corridors / landscape dominated streets that permeate the built form (north-south and west-east), connecting the site and established residential areas via a series of linked open spaces to the wider countryside in order to ensure permeability for people and wildlife.

DESIGN FEATURES

11 ENTRANCE GATEWAYS

Existing vegetation will be retained wherever possible in order to create a 'green' entrance into proposed development areas. Native feature trees will be incorporated along main spine roads in order to soften the built form in views from the wider landscape and create an attractive entrance to the development and the village of Wickhambrook.

12 TYES/GREENS

Development parcel locations have been informed by the historic settlement pattern of Wickhambrook with settlement generally nucleated around central greens/tyes. The strategy plan incorporates retained agricultural land/Public Open Space to prevent the coalescence of existing ties.

13 RELATIONSHIP TO CLAYDON YIELD-O-METER

New landscape buffer planting will be incorporated along the northern and western boundary of Parcel WS195 in order to provide physical screening from the existing and consented commercial buildings at Claydon Yield-o-Meter.

14 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Save for site access, existing boundary hedgerows and trees will be retained (with buffers to development), reinforced and brought into regular, long-term management. This will protect visual amenity and landscape character as well as continuing to offer commuting and foraging opportunities for wildlife.

Several incidental open spaces are proposed within the development. Groups of native tree planting within the open spaces will contribute to the local amenity and biodiversity, as well as providing a green framework for the buildings in local views.

Multifunctionality is central to the green infrastructure concept and approach. It refers to the potential for green infrastructure to have a range of functions, to deliver a broad range of ecosystem services. The Public Open Space as part of the Green Infrastructure as indicated on the proposal will be 'multifunctional', enabling the land to perform a range of functions, such as the provision for healthy recreation whilst performing functions to alleviate flood risk through the use of sustainable drainage systems. These functions are not limited to drainage/SUDS and recreation, but also include ecological enhancement and visual amenity improvement and mental and physical health benefits for the users.

Environmental benefits of green space include flood water alleviation, green travel routes, water purification, cooling temperatures, pollution management and enhancing biodiversity and ecological and climatic resilience. Green infrastructure contributes to the reduction of water pollution, through exploiting the natural processes of sedimentation, filtration and biodegradation to remove pollutants.



15 BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT

All strategic planting will incorporate species that are native and locally appropriate to the area; plant stock will be of local provenance where possible.

Marginal plug planting and native buffers will create habitat and foraging opportunities for local fauna.

16 RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Parcel WS192 incorporates Public Open Space along the eastern boundary in order to create a positive interface between the Site and existing residential dwellings along Boydes Close.



PRECEDENT IMAGES



INDICATIVE SECTION - WS192 AS SEEN FROM BUNTERS ROAD



INDICATIVE SECTION THROUGH PUBLIC OPEN SPACE (INCORPORATING SUDS ATTENUATION)



TYPICAL NATIVE TREE PLANTING PALETTE



TYPICAL NATIVE SHRUB PLANTING PALETTE

