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Waddow View, Clitheroe
Address: Land off Waddington Road, Clitheroe

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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CONTENTS

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**
- 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT**
- 3.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND QUALITY**
- 4.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS**
- 5.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**
- 6.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**
- 7.0 RELEVANT LANDSCAPE POLICIES**
- 8.0 CONCLUSIONS**

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Character Assessments

- National Landscape Character Area 33, Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill, 1998
- Extract from Lancashire County Council Landscape and Heritage SPG, July 2006
- A Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Type 5e, the Lower Ribblesdale (Clitheroe to Gisburn), 'Undulating Lowland Farmland', 2000
- Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment, September 2009

Appendix 2 – Figures

TAG 1: Location and Context Plan

TAG 2: Site Characteristics Plan

TAG 3: Photographic Viewpoints and ZVI

TAG 4: Illustrative Masterplan

Appendix 3 – Photomontages

Photographs 1 to 20 (sheets 1-6)

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Planning Background

- 1.1 In June 2012 The Appleton Group prepared a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) to accompany the planning application to develop an area of fields off Waddington Road, Clitheroe, known as Waddow View (hereafter referred to as the Site). This application was refused by Ribble Valley Borough Council's Planning Committee and also subsequently refused at Proposed development (Planning Inspectorate ref: APP/T2350/A/13/2194601) held in the summer 2013. The Appleton Group gave evidence at the Public Inquiry on landscape character and visual amenity impact matters and a further detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was carried out as part of the process for the formulation of the Proof of Evidence.
- 1.2 Pursuant to the above the applicants are seeking to submit a new planning application for the development for residential use on the land. The new proposed development takes account of the past planning history of the site and the consultation process that was undertaken for both the original planning application and the subsequent Proposed development. The illustrative masterplan which accompanies the application reflects on the Council's Countryside Officer's comments of the original application which commented on the need to supplement the existing tree cover, especially around the perimeter of the development where it may impact on the open countryside beyond.

Proposed Development Appeal Decision and Report, January 2014

- 1.3 More importantly the new application considers the decision notice and report from the Inspector dated 23rd January 2014 and takes reference regarding a number of points relating to landscape character and landscape and visual impact. In summary, the dismissal of the Proposed development did not rest on the landscape and amenity reasons for refusal. The Inspector considered that some harm would accrue to the landscape which would be counter to the aims and objectives of the strict application of the saved Local Plan and its emerging Core Strategy Policies, but that it would not be a determining issue in its own right given the need to meet RVBC's housing demands (para. 215). Changes to landscape character were considered not to be significant and outweighed by other public benefits (para. 70). As a consequence the illustrative masterplan has been a 'landscape led' collaboration of landscape matters, highway design and architectural put.

Terms of Reference

- 1.4 The Appleton Group was commissioned by the applicant in June 2014 to carry out a Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVIA) in respect of the new planning for the erection of up to 275no. dwellings on land off Waddington Road, Clitheroe. The application is outline with all matters reserved for subsequent approval save for access. An illustrative layout has been prepared to demonstrate the likely distribution of housing cells in relation to a highway network and landscape setting which could be accommodated on the site and thereby best understand the proposals potential impact. The application is also informed by a number of other surveys and studies including a tree survey, ecological survey and transport assessment. The site occupies 9.2 hectares.
- 1.5 The Appleton Group is a firm of landscape architects and environmental consultants, a registered practice of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. A Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI) was directly involved in writing this assessment: Lorna Cruice CMLI (Practice Director). Viewpoint photography, mapping and figures were taken and prepared by Lorna Cruice and Stuart Walker (Landscape Architect).

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 1.6 This assessment considers the baseline for both landscape and visual amenity and seeks to identify the sensitivity of each before considering the change that the introduction of the proposed housing development will produce. Potential landscape, visual and character impacts of the proposals will be assessed and mitigation proposals to ameliorate such impact should it occur will be recommended. The document has been carried out in accordance with best practice contained within the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' 3rd edition prepared jointly by The Landscape Institute and The Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment (I.E.M.A.).
- 1.7 The assessment should be read in conjunction with the following drawing:
1.3.1 Illustrative Landscape **Masterplan (TAG 4 - APPENDIX 2)**
- 1.8 The following principal sources of information were used to inform the Assessment of Effects on the Landscape Resource and Visual Amenity:

Sources of Information

1.8.1 Planning Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2012;
- Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan, adopted June 1998;

- Saved Policies from above, September 2007;
- Ribble Valley draft Core Strategy 2008-2028.

1.8.2 *Guidance*

- 'Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment third edition 2013;
- 'Landscape Character Assessment for England and Scotland', Scottish Natural.

1.8.3 *Advice*

- 'A Handbook on Environmental Impact Assessment – Third Edition', SNH, 2009.

1.8.4 *Background*

- Character of England, 1998
- A Strategy for Lancashire: Lancashire Character Assessment, 2000;
- Supplementary Planning Documents
- Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment, September 2009;
- OS 1: 50000 map sheets 108;
- Aerial photographs of the site and surroundings;
- Topographical Survey data; and
- Information regarding the proposed development provided by the client and commissioned consultants.

Definition of Assessment Area

- 1.9 The focused study area shown on **Figure TAG 3 – Photograph Viewpoint Locations**, was selected on a realistic and pragmatic basis as an approximate 0.5km radius from the centre of the site, beyond which the proposed development is unlikely to result in significant impacts or effects. Viewpoints where predicted impacts may be significant to a greater or lesser degree were taken at those points carried out within the previous LVIA's together with additional views. Potential views from further distance were also assessed and discounted as being negligible or not feasible.

Site Visits

- 1.10 Site visits were made during June 2014 in order to survey the existing landscape and to assess both local landscape character and visual amenity. The baseline condition of the site was established and an assessment of the positive and detracting elements in the landscape were recorded, as was the general land use and quality of the site and surrounding area. Viewpoints were identified based on public viewpoints (public rights of way) and a best effort was made to establish where potential sensitive and open views of the site could be observed. Private viewpoints (residential properties) were also

considered, key distant viewpoints identified to determine the wider impact on the landscape and where development would have the potential to affect the quality and character of existing views. A photographic survey of the site was made using a prime lens (AF-S NIKKRO 35mm 1:1.8G) on a digital SLR camera (Nikon D3100) which allows for images to be reproduced as close to that which is generally equivalent to the focal length of the human eye.

Predicted Viewpoints

- 1.11 The LVIA considers that the proposals would affect the visual amenity of the Site from views that are generally at close quarters. These are views that are generally seen by:
- i. Walkers using the footpath that crosses the site and the footpath that runs along its western boundary.
 - ii. The occupiers of existing residential properties.
 - iii. Users of the short section of Waddington Road where the new access is to be formed.
 - iv. From the cemetery to the west and the older burial ground on the northern side of Waddington Road.
 - v. Visitors to the higher viewer areas of Clitheroe Castle.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

Location and Context

- 2.1 The location and context of the site are shown on **Figure TAG 1- Location and Context**. The site is located directly adjacent the urban boundary of Clitheroe on the north-western side. The town of Clitheroe is a planned nucleated settlement situated on a triangle of land in the lower Ribblesdale between the River Ribble to the west and the Mearley Brook to the east at NGR SD 444 418 (centred). The historic core of the town is centred on the high point of a limestone reef knoll where the castle and surrounding gardens are located within a Conservation Area with later residential and commercial development in industrial and modern times spreading south-west and north-east along the communication arteries of the High street and the railway line, and towards the A59 which bypasses the town to the south-east. The knoll forms a small highpoint in a landscape of gently undulating drumlins, with the castle at a height of around 117m aOD. The land falls away gently to the west and the River Ribble, to a height of around 59m aOD at Low Moor and Brungerley Bridge. East of Clitheroe, the countryside rises sharply, to a height of around 110m aOD on the eastern edge of the urban area, placing Clitheroe on the lowland fringes of Pendle Hill, which overlooks and dominates the entire area some 5 kilometres to the east. The reef knolls and drumlins are characteristic of the area of rolling, undulating landscape within the broad valley of the River Ribble, contrasting with the open moorland and fell of Pendle Hill approximately 7 kilometres to the south-east and the Bowland Fells to the north. The valley is mainly pastoral in character, with small to medium sized fields bounded by hedgerows and with mature hedgerow trees, creating a sense of intimacy in contrast to the surrounding fells.
- 2.2 The site is accessed by agricultural vehicles from Back Commons on the southern boundary and from the western corner and eastern boundary off Waddington Road.

The Physical Characteristics of the Site and its Surroundings (Baseline Environs)

- 2.3 The characteristics of the site are indicated on **Figure TAG 2 – Site Characteristics Plan**. A photographic survey (viewpoints) are within **Appendix 3**. The viewpoints of the photographs and the ZVI (Zone of Visual Influence) are indicated on **Figure TAG 3**. The site itself is gently undulating with a rise from the northern boundary towards the urban settlement of approximately 3 metres. The Site comprises of five field parcels of semi-improved grassland of inconsistent size which are defined by trimmed and untrimmed hedgerows which are gappy in places. A number of mature trees are scattered along the boundaries. The land surrounding the site can be described in a series of distinct zones as follows:

Land to the north and immediate north east

- 2.3.1 Land beyond the site to the north and north east is pastoral with a slight rise in the landscape before falling steeply toward the river channel. The river Ribble itself is located in a deep gorge and is overlooked on the far side by Waddow Hall. This is a large stone built manor house of the 17th Century set in spacious well landscaped ground with rolling lawns. The house is currently used for private Girl Guide camping and outdoor activities and as a conference centre. Between the river and the northern boundary of the site is the cemetery which is set out in a pattern of access road with burial places. A recent extension to the south west of the cemetery has provided for green burial and is generally more landscaped to the boundaries with trees and shrubs. A footpath follows the boundary of the cemetery and connects into the wider footpath network following the course of the river channel. The cemetery is proposed for a further extension which would see the boundary of the cemetery land abutting the proposed development site along approximately half of the length of the northern boundary. The church and older burial ground are located towards the north of the site (Waddington Road) with a small field used as horse and poultry pasture forming an intervening land parcel. The burial ground associated with the building church is a graveyard of older burials with the larger separate cemetery on the opposite side of Waddington Road set out for more recent interments and memorial stones.

Land to the west and north-west

- 2.3.2 Land to the north east and east is pastoral with the land again gently sloping towards the river channel. Untrimmed hedgerows and mature and semi mature hedgerow trees edge the field boundaries providing a patchwork of field parcels.

Land to the south, east and north east

- 2.3.3 Residential housing directly abuts the site to the south, east and north east which forms the urban edge of Clitheroe in this area. Housing to the north east is older stone terraced property built between 1860 and 1914 together with a cul-de-sac (Brungerley Avenue) of semi-detached properties built in the intermediate post war years. Towards the southern side of the site residential housing off Swan Meadow and Kirkmoor Close is of the late 20th Century with larger detached properties in spacious gardens overlooking the site (Back Commons). The grain of the urban landscape is moderate to high density with the railway line and stone built station and the more recent Booth's store forming distinctive built urban features in relatively close proximity to the Site.

Footpaths

- 2.4 The site is accessible to the public by a public footpath which bisects the site from north-west to south east. This footpath allows access from the town to the wider countryside beyond and was observed as being used by local walkers, dog owners and people taking longer walks beyond the town environs. There is a footpath which follows the western boundary and turns to the west and south beyond the Site.
- 2.5 Internally, the site is visually enclosed when viewed from the north towards the town with boundary and internal hedgerows and trees to the boundaries providing visual interruption along field boundaries. Trees are generally mature native specimens forming lines of vegetation. Views towards the north are more expansive with open vistas to the rising landscape of the Bowland Fells and Longridge Fell.

Ecology and Trees

- 2.6 A separate study has been undertaken for the planning application by Penny Anderson Associates Ltd. The study concludes that the Site comprised of species poor semi-improved grassland fields bordered and cut across by species poor hedgerows and scattered mature trees. Of other interest, a two storey stone barn, a stream running through the centre of the Site and a water course bordering the north-western boundary were identified. The barn is recommended to be surveyed for bats and the water course for water vole habitat, both species requiring the need for licensing and mitigation should the species be present.
- 2.7 The trees have been assessed by Bowland Tree Consultancy as being of variable condition; four trees are allocated with high retention category values of 'A', thirteen trees and one group are allocated moderate retention category 'B' and ten trees, four groups and eight hedges are allocated low retention categories of 'C'. In addition, eight trees are allocated 'U' category grades due to a short projected remaining life expectancy and are therefore unsuitable for retention.¹
- 2.8 Since the Appeal two category 'A' groups of trees, both on neighbouring land to the north-west have been removed by RVBC in connection with the Cemetery extension. The Inspector's report recognises that there was the approach to retrain a wildlife corridor running through the development proposals and this is replicated in the new development masterplan. This will allow for the retention of the majority of 'A' and 'B' trees on the Site.

¹BSI Standards Publications, 2012. *BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations.* (Core Doc. Ref: CD10)

The Inspector reported that “*there is nothing to suggest that the arboricultural issues constitutes an impediment to the proposed development*”. (para. 73)

Agricultural Land Quality

- 2.9 The Site does not fall within a registered farm holding nor has it done so for many years. It is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land² which is defined as moderate quality agricultural land capable of producing moderate yields of a narrow range of crops or lower yields of a wider range of crops. The Site's value in agricultural terms is therefore limited and if undeveloped its use will continue to be that for the grazing of livestock or mown for silage and hay.

² Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales. MAFF, 1988. (Core Doc. Ref: CD11)

3.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND QUALITY

3.1 For the purposes of this assessment 'Landscape' is defined by the European Landscape Convention, 2000 (ELC) as:

"... an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors."

3.2 In the context of this definition the LVIA process seeks to consider the effects in an objective and systematic approach whilst recognizing the emotive and sometimes subjective response to the landscape (e.g. a landscape may figure in a famous artwork and therefore can produce feelings of sentiment or recognition of heritage). The definition also acknowledges the effect of man on the landscape character.

3.3 The impact of the Site development on the landscape will be discussed in chapter 4.0 and the process will deal with separate but interlinked issues of:

Landscape Character: The potential effects of the development upon discrete character area and/or character types comprising features possessing a particular quality or merit.

Landscape Features: The potential effects of the development on existing physical features which may in turn alter the character of a landscape.

Visual Amenity: The potential effects of the development on views from visual receptors and upon the amenity value of the views.

3.4 This chapter will discuss the landscape character of the Site in a national and local context. It is important to consider character so that any changes to the fabric of the landscape can be fully understood and discussed. This in turn will inform the landscape and mitigation strategy at later design detail stages of the scheme.

3.5 The Landscape Character Assessment Guidance³ defines landscape character as:
"A distinct, recognizable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape and makes landscape different from one another, rather than better or worse."

Characterisation is the process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character. This process does not mean that the character is uniform across an area as there may be variation in character and changes

³ Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency, (2002). *Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland*.

both subtle and abrupt in dominance of the elements in the landscape which affect visual amenity directly.

3.6 **Regional Assessment – Landscape Character Areas**

The 'Character of England' is a nationwide assessment of landscape character prepared by the then Countryside Commission in 1998 (now managed by Natural England). The proposed site falls within the National Landscape Character Area 33, Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill (**Appendix 1**). The key characteristics within the National Assessment are given as:

- **This is an undulating, rolling landscape, with local variation created by numerous river valleys and by the moorland outliers of Beacon Fell, Longridge Fell and Pendle Hill.** (My emphasis).
- **The Bowland Fells provide a dramatic backdrop to the north, with extensive views across the river valleys and Lancashire plain below.** (My emphasis).
- On the northern edge of the area, drumlins are characteristic, while on the south, strong mounded outcrops or 'reef knolls' of limestone form distinct landscape features in the Ribble and Hodder valleys.
- Semi-natural woodland, much of which is ancient, occurs in the main valley bottoms, side valleys and ridges, and is dominated by oak, ash and alder.
- **Small to medium-sized fields are defined by hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees. Drystone walls are also common in some areas. Metal railings around estate boundaries and highway corners and junctions are characteristic of the southern and western edges of the NCA.** (My emphasis).
- Land use is mainly permanent, improved pasture for livestock and dairy farming.
- To the west, this NCA includes part of the Bowland Fells Special Protection Area (SPA), designated for its important populations of hen harrier, merlin and lesser black-backed gull.
- There are species-rich hay meadows, including several that are nationally and internationally designated.
- Rough grazing, rushy pasture and traditionally managed meadows at higher elevations are of national importance for breeding waders such as redshank, lapwing, curlew and snipe. These are also important habitats for breeding skylark.
- There are numerous rivers of importance for many protected species, including bullheads, salmon, trout, eels, otters, kingfishers and dippers. There are also many brooks and small reservoirs.

- There are many archaeological sites, particularly on the moorland fringes and in valleys where agriculture has been less intensive.
- A network of winding, hedge-lined lanes connect small, often linear, villages, hamlets and scattered farmsteads, mostly in local stone. Traditional stone barns are commonplace on higher ground, and are of stone with slate or stone flag roofs.
- Isolated country houses set in formal parkland are typical of the area, and may be enclosed by belts of woodland and estate fencing.
- **The relatively urban areas of Clitheroe, Bentham and Longridge provide a contrast to the rural feel of the area.** (My emphasis).

3.7 The above key characteristics cover a wide area but it does provide an appreciation of the specific characteristics which are considered to be evident at the proposed development Site and surrounding land uses. The Site is located in countryside but this is contrasted by its proximity to the urban landscape of Clitheroe. The Bowland Fells also provide dramatic views beyond the urban edge and are flanked by an agricultural landscape of hedgerow enclosed fields and small woodlands which extent far beyond the edges of the town.

Borough Landscape Character Assessment

3.8 A Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment published by Lancashire County Council and the former Countryside Agency in 2000 places the area with Landscape Character Type 5e, the Lower Ribblesdale (Clitheroe to Gisburn), 'Undulating Lowland Farmland' (**Appendix 1**) and describes the area as being particularly well settled with good communication routes along the Ribble Valley (railway and A59). This Lancashire County Council's adopted SPD. It also refers to the communication network as encouraging built development and industry with the large cement works to the immediate north of Clitheroe, being a prominent visual landmark for miles around.

5e Lower Ribblesdale

This area forms the southern valley side of the Ribble, between Copster (Clitheroe to Green and Gisburn, on the lowland fringes of Pendle Hill. It is a Gisburn) particularly well settled area and provides a corridor for communication routes along the Ribble Valley. The A59(T) runs the length of the area, linking the settlements of Copster Green, Whalley, Clitheroe, Chatburn and Gisburn. The railway links the valley to Blackburn and Yorkshire. This communication structure has encouraged built development and industry; the large cement works at Clitheroe is a prominent visual landmark for miles around. This character area is

underlain by limestone and has some good examples of limestone reef knolls, particularly around Clitheroe;

Clitheroe Castle is located on top of one of these knolls.

3.9 The proposed development Site is also within the study area covered by the landscape characterization work undertaken for the 'Forest of Bowland AONB Landscape Character Assessment (September 2009) (**Appendix 1**). Although the Site is located outside the AONB boundaries it is categorised as lying within 'Landscape Character Type J2: Ribble. The key characteristics are set out as being:

- *Open, flat, fertile plain encompassing a patchwork of pastoral fields which are delineated by a combination of hedgerows, wooden fencing, post and wire fencing or stone walls;*
- *The gently meandering course of the river Ribble is defined by the steep wooded bluffs and terraces which enclose the floodplain;*
- *Lush green fields of semi-improved pasture are grazed by sheep and cattle. The large regular fields are defined by gappy hedgerows;*
- *Mature floodplain trees are notable features in this Landscape Character Area; ash and oak stand in the floodplain, their silhouettes striking against the open landscape;*
- *General absence of settlement within the floodplain itself, but a number of large farms and country halls are positioned along the edges of the floodplain;*
- *There are a number of historic crossing points which coincide with these settlements where old stone bridges are important historic features of the floodplain;*
- *Panoramic, open views towards the central Bowland Moorland Hills and Plateau to the north and Pendle Hill to the south;*
- *In the south of the area, the small village of Great Mitton is nestled within the valley corridor, at the point at which a minor road corridor crosses the river;*
- *There is a relatively strong sense of remoteness within much of the river corridor, which is slightly interrupted when it meanders around the northern edge of Clitheroe;*
- *Buildings associated within the Castle Cement works are dominant landmarks within views to and across this area.*

3.10 The Site also abuts the settlement boundary of Clitheroe which is categorised as 'Landscape Character Type H1: Clitheroe and Charburn'. The key characteristics are set out as being:

- Landscape pattern within this Landscape Character Area is dominated by the large town of Clitheroe, which is situated at the convergence of major road and railway corridors;
- These corridors introduce a source of noise and visual intrusion and disturb the overall sense of tranquility;
- Clitheroe contains an assortment of housing (much of which is terraced and built from local stone) and commercial buildings;
- The tower of Clitheroe Castle (situated on a limestone outcrop above the town) is a landmark within views towards this area;
- At the eastern edge of the area, the small village of Chatburn, with its rows of terraced cottages, further contributes to settlement pattern;
- Large-scale quarries and associated works (including tall vertical chimneys) to the east of Clitheroe and west of Chatburn are a dominant human influence within views to this landscape from surrounding Landscape Character Types and Areas;
- Views northwards, across the corridor of the River Ribble are dominated by the rising mass of the central Moorland Hills and Plateau, whilst Pendle Hill contributes to recognisable sense of place within views southwards;
- At the edges of the urban development, patchworks of predominantly pastoral fields are delineated by, in places, remnant hedgerows with frequent hedgerow trees.

Sensitivities and Capacity for Change

- 3.11 The AONB Landscape Character Assessment outlines sensitivities and capacity for change.

“The ecological sensitivity of the Landscape Character Type H is represented by the combination of hedges, hedgerow trees and diverse narrow stream corridors. There is also a rich built heritage within the main towns and villages. In addition, the landscape displays a mature structure of hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Overall, landscape character and visual sensitivity is considered to be moderate. In places, hedgerows limit views, whilst there is strong intervisibility with the Unenclosed and Enclosed Moorland Hills, which provide a backdrop to most views from this lower landscape. Industrial chimneys and other industrial buildings at the edges of Clitheroe are also visible within most views to this Landscape Character Type from adjacent Landscape Character Types and Areas within the AONB.”

3.12 The Ribble Landscape Type is considered to have limited capacity for change. The Landscape Type description relates to the wider open valley floodplains and wooded bluffs and terraces which enclose the floodplains, rather than the areas closely influenced by urban settlements. The Site relates very closely to the urban settlement of Clitheroe. It is considered that the capacity for change is heavily influenced by the urban features of the town including associated industry and infrastructure and that changes to the landscape becomes less significant where people experience development on a more frequent basis within towns. At some 3.00 kilometres from the boundary of the Forest of Bowland to the north-west, the Proposed development Site has a limited relationship, other than forming a part of the settlement character of Clitheroe. From the Site itself, the distant rising Fells and moorland will remain a dominant and notable features.

3.13 In order to manage landscape change, the assessment states:

“There is also a need to ensure that potential new development at the edges of urban areas, utilises local vernacular limestone and gritstone and includes a robust planting structure of native tree and shrub species, particularly at the edges. Opportunities also exist to screen existing urban edges using native trees and shrubs.

Open views towards the Unenclosed and Enclosed moorland hills Landscape Character Types, and framed views across the River Ribble should also be conserved.

Clitheroe Historic Town Assessment

3.14 This assessment charts and describes the historical development of the town and discusses urban character and the significance of archaeological resource. The Site is not included in the study area but it should be noted that it describes the surrounding countryside as:

“.....an area of rolling, undulating landscape within the broad valley of the River Ribble, contrasting with the open moorland and fell of Pendle Hill to the south-east and the Bowland Fells to the north. The valley is mainly pastoral in character, with small to medium sized fields bounded by hedgerows and with mature hedgerow trees, creating a sense of intimacy in contrast to the surrounding fells.”

Scheduled Monument – Clitheroe Castle

3.15 The report also identifies one scheduled monument as the Castle, curtain wall and bailey.

“Clitheroe Castle is the most prominent feature, not just of the town, but of the surrounding countryside of the Ribble valley. The keep, although very small, is perched on the highest point of the limestone knoll, and is surrounded by open land, mostly landscaped parkland. Originally sited on the hill top for its defensive properties, the castle now provides panoramic views across the town and the surrounding countryside, with the former castle yard and associated buildings to the north. The area is now a well-used open space, with the Castle and yard dedicated to museums and the public display of the monument, and the surrounding open land landscaped as public park with recreation grounds, tennis courts, bowling greens and open-air auditorium. The entire area forms a substantial public space at the centre of Clitheroe’s modern urban area.”

Clitheroe Conservation Area

- 3.16 There is one conservation area within Clitheroe covering some 8 hectares within the town’s historic core. It also comprises the area of late nineteenth century housing between the town centre and the railway line, as well as the open area to the east of the Roman Catholic church and the whole of Castle Park.
- 3.17 The Site lies outside the conservation area with substantial buildings, railway, railway line and supermarket between it and the central core of the town. The Castle is a prominent feature and can be seen from the proposed development Site and to land beyond to the north-west. Views of the Castle diminish substantially with distance.

Landscape Character of the proposed development Site

- 3.18 There are no statutory or local landscape designations applicable to the proposed development Site with the land lying outside but abutting the urban boundary as defined on the Proposal Map of the Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan, adopted in June 1998. To the north, south and south east of Clitheroe and the Ribble Valley the land is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is a nationally protected landscape managed by a partnership of landowners, farmers, voluntary organisations, wildlife groups, recreation groups, local councils and government agencies, who work to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of this special areas. Clitheroe itself benefits from the beauty of the surrounding landscape and with most of the town enjoying the views of the surrounding undulating landscape and fells. This is confirmed by the Inspector’s report for the Appeal at para. 208;

“Currently, whereas the appeal site does not fall within an agricultural holding, it is all in agricultural use and comprises several fields used primarily for grazing

and hay/silage. None of the appeal site is in the Green Belt. Although close to and seen together in views from some key vantage points, such as Clitheroe Castle and grounds, neither is it in the Trough of Bowland AONB. Nor has it been granted any particular local landscape designation. Its landscape value is defined in the Landscape Character Assessment for the area.”

3.19 The Site itself is currently formed by five fields of semi-improved grassland. It is pastoral in character with the small sized fields visually divided by hedgerows and limited mature trees. It relates to the wider countryside landscape towards the northern and north-western boundaries with extended views towards the more open countryside of the Bowland Fell fringes but is influenced by strong urbanizing features to the south, east and north east, particularly residential buildings from the late nineteenth century to modern times and Waddington Road where the easterly field boundary meets the main Waddington Road. To the north east and north the character is influenced by ‘urban fringe’ features where the landscape interfaces more subtly with urban features. There is a degree of visual disturbance when viewing the Site from the north-west towards the Clitheroe town. In summary, it is considered that there are two character types which influence the Site – that of the urban residential areas and that of more rural grassland with hedgerows and scattered trees. These both relate to the character types which are discussed in the published Landscape Assessments for the Lancashire region.

3.20 The characteristics of the site and the local environs are shown on **Figure TAG 2**.

Interim Conclusions

3.21 The proposed development Site has an insular and intimate character which is strongly influenced by urban features within the existing settlement of Clitheroe.

3.22 The wider landscape, particularly that of the open moorland and Bowland Fells to the north contrast with the valley landscape. These views are can be observed from Clitheroe Castle and would not be interrupted by the proposed development at the Site.

3.23 The value of the proposed development Site is not designated in landscape terms and is set outside the AONB. It has the ability to absorb change and to allow the process of development and mitigation to assimilate development into the adjacent character. This is reiterated by the Inspector in his report at para. 62 which states that;

“The value of the appeal site in landscape terms represents a minor sensitivity receptor outside the AONB and one influenced heavily by the urban features of

thhe Town close by. The appeal site has the ability to absorb change change in relation to the adjoining residential context."

The vegetation which defines the Site boundaries is characteristic of the 'undulating lowland farmland' and can be retained and enhanced as part of the development proposals.

4.0 THE DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The current development proposals, which apart from access are illustrative at this stage and are shown on the landscape (development) masterplan, **Figure TAG 4**. The proposals include for the construction of 275 new residential properties, including **30% affordable housing**. The height of the proposed new buildings within the application area would be 2.0 to 2.5 storeys for the residential buildings. The field pattern and existing landscape features have provided a strong driver for the development of an outline scheme. The built environment would follow good practice guidance such as recommended within 'Manual for Streets 2', produced by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transport⁴ and supported by Design Council/CABE. This publication aims to better standards in building and new development and landscaping generally.
- 4.2 The development of the masterplan has been landscape led and considers both the landscape features and attributes of the site as well as the potential impact on visual amenity and landscape character of the adjoining countryside.

Existing brook (Photographic viewpoint 7)

- 4.3 The existing brook provides a beneficial opportunity for enhancement of the biodiversity of the site and provides a strong delineation of green space running through the site. It is anticipated that this corridor can be widened and. The existing water course which runs through the Site will be integrated into the proposals to provide a wide area of public open space. This will allow a strong tract of undeveloped land which will maintain views of the Castle in the town centre and views across the Site to Waddow Hall and form a continuous link from the town to the wider countryside to the north and north-west This will also serve to substantially divide and break up building mass and allow for the enhancement of biodiversity and wildlife in the area.

Existing public right of way (Photographic viewpoint 17)

- 4.4 The existing public right of way is a well used footpath from the town linking into the wider footpath network and to Waddow Hall beyond the River Ribble. It is recommended that this footpath route remains in its current alignment within a wide semi rural parkland setting. This will allow for pedestrian movement through an attractive environment which reflects the current circumstances and links seamlessly with the widespread footpath network beyond the site's boundary.

⁴ Manual for Streets 2, The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation, September 2010.

Existing 'important' hedgerow and perimeter hedgerows (**Photographic viewpoint 12**)

- 4.5 The hedgerow to the south western portion of the site is considered to be an 'important' hedgerow under the criteria of the Hedgerow Regulation 1997. This hedgerow is part of a field system pre-dating 1845 and the Enclosure Act and is recorded within artwork of local significance. The retention of this hedgerow would help define the landscape heritage of the site and provide a distinct character in this part of the development. Whilst there is limited ecology on the Site, the perimeter hedgerows will be retained to maintain the character of the open countryside together with the ancient important hedgerow.

Housing density

- 4.6 The topography of the Site is gently undulating giving a flat appearance but with the lowest areas to the west/ south west. The envisaged denser development would be allocated to the east where it abuts the settlement boundary. Density and character have also been important development strategies and the architects have taken a 'transitional' approach. The development is envisaged as being lower on the western and south western fringes, medium on the easterly fringes and higher on the north eastern edges. To allow for a 'positive' edge to the open countryside an appropriate density would be required with outward facing properties which can provide an open and well landscaped frontage.

Housing Grain

- 4.7 Consideration will be made to the grain and age of adjacent existing properties so that there is connection with the local architectural character along the settlement edges, i.e. established low density detached dwelling along Swan Meadows in contrast to the post 20th Century urban edge and recently outline consented housing site off Milton Avenue, east of the Site.

Landscape structure proposals

- 4.8 A range of green spaces are indicated on the masterplan in order to provide amenity space, mitigate for any visual impact of the development in the surrounding landscape, provide enhanced wildlife habitat and provide local distinctiveness.
- 4.9 The western edge is low lying in relation to the edge which abuts the settlement. It is proposed that a wide buffer is introduced to assimilate the development within the surrounding countryside and to compliment the edge of the cemetery which abuts the site to the north-west. Similarly a wide buffer is proposed between the edge of development and those properties facing Back Commons in order to provide a screening and mitigation to the views from these properties.

- 4.10 The development proposals will have a hierarchy of streets and routes including a local distributor road which will be set against the brook corridor. A small central village green is proposed to provide a focal point. This will add to the local character of the site and allow for a distinctive built form to front the development in this area. Streets to the northern edge are proposed to have tree lined verges which reflect the village character with all development cells adopting a strong tree'd and hedgerow roadside landscape. Tree planting throughout the development will aid in filtering views and breaking up the built form from longer distance viewpoints.
- 4.11 The inclusion of a green square has been identified within the eastern portion of the site which will reflect the denser grain of the surrounding existing settlement and reflect a more urban pocket park identity. This will be easily accessible on foot by local and surrounding residents, being well within walking distance of any local residential property.
- 4.12 Existing hedgerows and trees to all the boundaries will be retained, gapped up where necessary and enhanced for wildlife. The development proposals account for these features and provides for generous setbacks and additional landscape strips. Along the south western edge an integrated footpath will be proposed. Retained hedgerows will provide amenity value and aid with screening the development and assimilating built form into the surrounding landscape.
- 4.13 A strong landscape structure will be created by the retention of existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees, and perimeter landscape planting of native species trees and shrubs. Large buffer zones of native tree planting would be provided to the north-western and eastern boundaries to maintain visual amenity and assimilate the development into the adjacent landscape, particularly the rural edge and cemetery area to the north-west. Such planting could be undertaken in advance of the main development taking place. Access roads and internal lanes would be hedge lined with careful consideration of vista terminations at the open space area. An irregular street layout with frontage parking will allow a network of tree planting which will assist in breaking up the built environment and create an identifiable sense of place.

Access and Movement

- 4.14 Cycleways will be created within the landscape setting. Open aspects across the development would therefore be retained with no 'Secure by Design' issues due to the immediate proximity of housing.

- 4.15 Access arrangements have been agreed with Lancashire County Highways with vehicular access being provided from Waddington Road at the northerly end of the Site.

Overview of Proposals

- 4.16 The development at this location fulfills a considerable number of sustainable landscape objectives. It enables incorporation of existing natural and ecological features into the landscape strategy, in particular the water course and boundary hedgerows and trees. It will allow the introduction of SuDS to manage flood risk by the introduction of attenuation features within the open space areas. Amenity and biodiversity will be enhanced through the provision of greater number of trees and the creation of planted garden spaces throughout the development. The development will facilitate good connections to the public transport system due to the close proximity of the railway station and allow easy pedestrian access to both the town's resources and employment opportunities and to the adjacent countryside.

5.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT CRITERIA

- 5.1 The impact is considered in terms of three separate elements: (A), landscape impacts – the irreversible loss of natural features such as habitats and vegetation, (B) visual impact as the result of the development on a range of receptors and (C) any adverse change in the character of the landscape. In summary the findings of the LVIA for both the construction and completion phases are set out in the following sections.

Landscape Effects

- 5.2 In considering the effects on the landscape the degree of change in respect of the loss or impact on natural landscape assets or features such as trees or hedges, manmade features such as walls or the modification of the topography and quality of existing features is assessed. This is known as '*landscape impact*'.

Visual Effects

- 5.3 The '*visual impact*' of the proposed development on the general public is assessed. Such impacts could be the result of visual intrusion into an important viewpoint or the direct obstruction of views into the wider landscape. Visual receptors that have a greater awareness of the view, such as walkers and residential occupiers will notice the introduction of new features more than those who are not absorbing it. However, it must be remembered that in respect of residential occupiers that within planning law there is no right to a view. The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed site, the duration of the impact, the scale and massing of the proposed development and the elevation of the proposed feature from the viewpoint are all assessed to determine the degree of impact.

Character Effects

- 5.4 An assessment to establish the '*character impact*' is made to assess the degree of change affecting both the site and the wider environs. Adverse changes in landscape character can occur as the result of the loss of landscape features which are acknowledged components of local distinctiveness, or the construction of new features that do not match those that already exist.
- 5.5 To assess the significance of the potential effects/impacts the degree or magnitude of change (sometimes referred to as the nature of change), both adversely and beneficially, acting on the baseline conditions and the sensitivity of receptors is objectively considered. This is considered with and without mitigation based on prescribed criteria.

Landscape Effects

- 5.6 The following criteria were used to determine the impacts on landscape features:
1. The ability of the landscape to accommodate the loss of features (sensitivity).
 2. The quality and value of existing features.
 3. The scale and degree of change.

TABLE i - CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY (NATURE)

Landscape Type	High	Medium	Low
Landscape designation	A landscape of distinctive character susceptible to relatively small changes. Includes national or regionally designated landscapes e.g. Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), National Scenic Area. Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes on the National Register	A landscape of moderately valued characteristics, including local landscape designations.	A landscape of relative unimportance, the nature of which is tolerant to substantial change. No landscape designation.
Landscape resource	Important landscape resources or landscapes of particularly distinctive character and therefore likely to be subject to national designation or otherwise with high values to the public. Is vulnerable to minor changes.	Moderately valued characteristics reasonably tolerant of change with a gradation between High and Low	Relatively unimportant/ immature or damaged landscapes tolerant of substantial change.
Scale and enclosure	Small intimate landscape.	Medium scale landscape.	Large scale open landscape.
Landform and topography	Mountainous or large dominating hills and valleys. Intimate small scale landscapes defined through easily identifiable elements in the immediate landscape.	Rolling landform with small hills and valleys. Some intimacy and human scale through landscape elements such as hedgerows and woodland copses.	Large scale open landscape. Little intimacy or human scale, few character elements or features.
Settlement	Organic land cover pattern	A gradation between High and Low	Grid like linear land cover pattern
Landmarks and visible built structures	Landscape with symbolic or important features	A gradation between High and Low	Landscape with no recognised individual features or elements
Remoteness and tranquillity	Remote location, little evidence of human activity	A gradation between High and Low	Highly developed countryside areas with continuous evidence of human activity
Landscape Quality and Value	A landscape of exceptional or high quality and/or high value.	A landscape of good or ordinary quality and /or good or moderate value	A landscape of low or poor quality and value

TABLE ii - CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING LANDSCAPE QUALITY

Landscape Quality	Definition	Typical Example
Exceptional	<p>Strong landscape structure, characteristics, patterns, and/or clear urban grain identifiable with a historic period or event;</p> <p>Appropriate management for land use and land cover and/or a well maintained urban environment of distinction;</p> <p>Distinct features worthy of conservation, historic architectural grain;</p> <p>Sense of place exceptional local distinctiveness;</p> <p>No detracting features.</p>	<p>Internationally or nationally recognised.</p> <p>World Heritage Sites, National Parks, National Scenic Area, Special Landscape Area.</p>
High	<p>Strong landscape structure, characteristic patterns and/or clear urban grain;</p> <p>Appropriate management for land use and land cover, but potentially scope to improve;</p> <p>Distinct features worthy conservation;</p> <p>Sense of place;</p> <p>Occasional detracting features.</p>	<p>Nationally, regionally recognised e.g. parts of National Scenic Area, Conservation Area or Listed status;</p> <p>Registered Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes</p>
Good	<p>Recognisable landscape structure and/or urban grain;</p> <p>Scope to improve management for land use and land cover;</p> <p>Some features worthy of conservation;</p> <p>Sense of place;</p> <p>Some detracting features.</p>	<p>Regionally recognised e.g. localised areas within National Park, National Scenic Area, AGLV.</p>
Ordinary	<p>Distinguishable landscape structure, characteristics, patterns of landform and land cover often masked by land use;</p> <p>Fractured urban grain with patterns of use difficult to distinguish;</p> <p>Scope to improve management of vegetation;</p> <p>Some features worthy of conservation;</p> <p>Some detracting features</p>	<p>Locally recognised landscape without specific designation.</p> <p>Landscape often a settlement with no other designation</p>
Weak	<p>Weak landscape structure, characteristic patterns of landform and land cover are missing, little or no recognisable urban grain;</p> <p>Mixed land use evident;</p> <p>Lack of management and intervention has resulted in degradation;</p> <p>Frequent detracting features.</p>	<p>A landscape without note or one singled out as being degraded or requiring improvement.</p>
Very Weak	<p>Degraded landscape structure, characteristic patterns and/or urban grain missing;</p> <p>Mixed land use or dereliction dominates;</p> <p>Lack of management/ intervention has resulted in degradation;</p> <p>Extensive detracting features.</p>	<p>A landscape likely to be singled out as needing intervention or regeneration.</p>

TABLE iii - CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING LANDSCAPE VALUE

Landscape Value	Definition	Typical Example
High	An iconic landscape or element(s) held in high regard both nationally, regionally and by the majority of the local community; A landscape or element(s) widely used by both the local community and a broader visiting community; Features of particular historical protected significance; Landscape or space which defines or is closely associated with a community and its life and livelihood.	Nationally, regionally recognised e.g. parts of National Park, National Scenic Area, Special Landscape Area; Conservation or Listed status; Registered Historic Garden and Designed Landscape
Good	A landscape or element(s) recognised regionally and locally as important; A landscape widely used by the local community; Features or elements widely used or visited and held in association with the area or community.	Part of an AGLV
Moderate	A landscape of local importance ; A landscape widely used by the local community; A sense of place recognisable and associated with the local area.	Area of local landscape importance.
Low	A landscape without particular noted significance; A landscape or elements infrequently used by the local community; A landscape which is not distinct and does not add to the overall context of the area.	

TABLE iv – MAGNITUDE (NATURE OF EFFECT) OF CHANGE/IMPACT AND TYPICAL DESCRIPTORS (LANDSCAPE)

Magnitude of Change	Examples
Large/Substantial adverse	The development would result in a prominent change to the landscape character (degrade). Major alteration to significant elements or features or the removal/introduction of substantial elements that cannot be replaced within a time scale of 25 years. The alteration of a landscape to substantially increase/decrease both the landscape value and quality.
Medium adverse	The development would result in a change to the landscape character (degrade). Alteration to elements or features or partial removal/introduction. The alteration of a landscape to decrease both the landscape value and quality. Features are considered to be over mature (organic elements) or lacking visual diversity
Small adverse	The development would result in a slight change to the landscape character (enhance or degrade). Alteration to minor elements or features or the removal/introduction. The alteration of a landscape to increase/decrease both the landscape value and quality.
Negligible	A very minor change which is not uncharacteristic and maintains the quality and value of the landscape or features can be readily replaced.
No change	No noticeable loss, damage or alteration to features or elements.
Negligible beneficial	Barely noticeable improvement of character by the restoration of existing features and elements, and/or the removal of uncharacteristic features and elements, or by the addition of new characteristics that are deemed acceptable to the overall character.
Small beneficial	Slight improvement of character by the restoration of existing features and elements, and/or the removal of uncharacteristic features and elements, or by the addition of new characteristics that are deemed acceptable to the overall character.
Medium beneficial	Partial or noticeable improvement of character by the restoration of existing features and elements, and/or the removal of uncharacteristic features and elements, or by the addition of new characteristics that are deemed acceptable to the overall character.
Major beneficial	Large scale improvement of character by the restoration of existing features and elements, and/or the removal of uncharacteristic features and elements, or by the addition of new characteristics that are deemed acceptable to the overall character.

TABLE v - SUMMARY TABLE TO DETERMINE SIGNIFICANCE OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

		Magnitude of Change			
		Substantial	Medium	Small	Negligible
Sensitivity	High	Major	Moderate-Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Moderate-Major	Moderate	Minor-Moderate	Negligible
	Low	Minor	Minor-Moderate	Minor	Negligible

The summary of effects on landscape can be expressed as an adverse or beneficial effect depending on the assessor's view regarding the nature and quality of the existing resource and how this has been changed. In some circumstances the change may be described as a neutral change if the expectation of the viewer or the fundamental nature and characteristics of a landscape appear unaffected.

Negligible is the accepted terminology for effects that cannot be seen or distinguished.

TABLE vi – DESCRIPTORS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS CATEGORIES

Significance Category	Typical Descriptors of Effect
Major beneficial (positive) effect	<p>The project would provide an opportunity to enhance the landscape because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It fits very well with the scale, landform, pattern and appearance of the landscape. • There is potential, through mitigation or design, to create or enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements partially lost or diminished as the result of changes resulting from inappropriate management or development. • It enables a sense of place to be enhanced through good design and/or well designed mitigation measures. • It facilitates national and local policy objectives to regenerate degraded countryside or urban areas.
Moderate beneficial (positive) effect	<p>The project would provide an opportunity to enhance the landscape because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It fits very well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. • There is potential, through mitigation, to enable the restoration of characteristic features and elements, partially lost or diminished as the result of changes resulting from intensive farming or inappropriate development. • It will enable a sense of place to be restored or enhanced through beneficial mitigation and sensitive design. • It furthers national and local policy objectives to regenerate degraded countryside or urban areas.
Minor beneficial (positive) effect	<p>The project would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape by maintaining or enhancing the existing character. • Enable some sense of place to be restored through well designed mitigation measure. • Maintain or enhance existing landscape character. • Avoid conflict with national and local policy towards protection of the countryside or protection/enhancement of urban areas.
Neutral effect	<p>The project would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. • Incorporate measure for mitigation to ensure that the project will blend in well with surrounding landscape features and elements. • Avoid having an adverse effect on the current level of tranquillity of the landscape. • Maintain existing landscape character and enable a sense of place to be retained through beneficial and sensitive design. • Avoid conflict with national and local policy towards protection of the countryside or protection/enhancement of urban areas.
Minor adverse (negative) effect	<p>The project would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not quite fit the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. • Be unable to be completely mitigated because of the nature of the project itself or the character of the landscape. • Affect an area of recognized landscape quality. • Conflict with local authority policies for protecting the local character of the countryside of the protection/enhancement of urban environments.
Moderate adverse (negative) effect	<p>The project would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be out of scale with the landscape or conflict with the local pattern and landform. • Be unable to be fully mitigated (i.e. mitigation will not prevent the scheme from damaging the landscape in the longer term). • Have an adverse impact on a landscape of recognized quality or on vulnerable and important character feature or elements. • Be in conflict with national and local policies to protect open land and nationally recognized countryside, or to protect/enhance the urban environment.
Major adverse (negative) effect	<p>The project would be very damaging to the landscape because it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is at considerable variance with the landform, scale, pattern and appearance of the landscape. • Is likely to degrade, diminish or even destroy the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements. • Will be substantially damaging to a high quality or highly valued landscape, causing it to change and be considerably diminished in quality. • Cannot be adequately mitigated. • Is in serious conflict with national and local policy for the protection of nationally recognized countryside or for the protection/enhancement of the urban environment.
Very large adverse (negative) effect	<p>The project would result in exceptionally severe adverse impact on the landscape because it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is at complete variance with the landform, scale, pattern and appearance of the landscape.

- Would permanently damage or degrade, badly diminish or even destroy the integrity of characteristic feature and elements.
- Would cause a very high quality or highly valued landscape to be permanently changed and its quality very considerably diminished.
- Cannot be mitigated (i.e. there are no measure that would protect or replace the loss of a nationally important landscape).
- Cannot be reconciled with national and local policy for the protection of nationally recognized countryside or for the protection/enhancement of the urban environment.

Visual Amenity Effects

5.7 The nature of the impact is described in terms of its significance and the significance of the impact is a product of the sensitivity of the 'receptor' which could be someone viewing the site or the landscape feature itself and the magnitude of the change that might take place. An assessment was made in terms of the significance of perceived impact by the following criteria:

TABLE vii - CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING VISUAL SENSITIVITY (NATURE)

Sensitivity	Type of Visual Receptor	Justification
High	Observers whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape and recognized views in particular.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many people. ▪ Long periods of time observing view. ▪ Sedentary views e.g. seat. ▪ Noted in literature or art, identified on maps or guides. ▪ Designed views. ▪ Recognised/Important views.
	Private residential dwelling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sensitive residential views from windows. ▪ Views occupied during daylight/waking hours. ▪ Age of property and ability to absorb change. ▪ Long length of time looking at view or time spent in a garden.
	Public rights of way (PRoW). Open Access land. National Trust Land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heavily used. ▪ Views focused on the landscape because of activity. ▪ Recreational trails.
Medium	Tourist spots, Country Parks, documented viewpoint locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Frequently used. ▪ Moderate length of stay. ▪ Attention not always focused on landscape due to activity e.g. undertaking outdoor sport. ▪ Known as a local viewpoint.
	Private residential dwelling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Views from rooms unoccupied during daylight/waking hours e.g. first floors. ▪ Partially filtered or screened views.
	Public rights of way (PRoW). Open Access land. National Trust Land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Frequently used. ▪ Transitory. ▪ Moderate length of time spent in local area.
	Public road network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transitory e.g. country road. ▪ Users of roads have clear open views across the landscape.
Low	General views around the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not known as a definable viewpoint.
	Drivers and passengers of vehicles on highways, train lines and water course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rapid transit. ▪ Focus of attention is on the traffic conditions and the road ahead. ▪ Attention is focused on the activity of driving.
	Receptors involved in recreational or other activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus of attention solely on activity.
	Private residential dwelling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No views from any window or garden area. ▪ Filtered, densely screened or oblique views.
	Public rights of way (PRoW). Open Access land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Infrequently used. ▪ Used by few people.

	National Trust Land.	
	Places of employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attention not focused on landscape as part of job. ▪ Activity is mainly indoors.
	Agricultural and farming activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Views associated with outdoor farming which is considered to be of a nature of which is potentially tolerant of visual changes.
Negligible	Public rights of way (PRoW). Open Access land. National Trust Land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rarely used by few people.
	Drivers and passengers of vehicles on highways, train lines and water course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rarely used by few people. ▪ Very rapid transit at high speed.

TABLE viii – CRITERIA FOR DESCRIBING VISUAL QUALITY

View Quality	Description
High	Iconic views or skylines which are individual character elements in their own right. Protected views through Supplementary Planning Guidance or development framework. View mentioned in the listing for a conservation area, listed building or scheduled monument as being important with regard to its setting. Wide panoramic distant views of a valued landscape(s).
Moderate	Views with strong and distinctive features. Uninterrupted views. Views over a landscape of recognised character and quality
Poor	Restricted views or views over a landscape of low value and quality.

TABLE ix – MAGNITUDE (NATURE OF EFFECT) OF CHANGE/IMPACT (VISUAL)

Magnitude	Justification
Large/Substantial adverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Total loss or major alteration to key or primary elements/features/characteristics of the baseline existing) landscape or view, and/or the introduction of totally uncharacteristic elements with the receiving landscape. ▪ Development will dominate view or directly faces viewpoint. ▪ Development fills whole of site or a substantial proportion of it. ▪ Site is within an open view with few or no intervening factors. ▪ Very close proximity to view – less than 1 kilometre. ▪ 24 hour use of lighting. ▪ Development at construction phase, and of a temporary but lengthy duration, i.e. over 5 years.
Medium adverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the existing landscape or view and/or the introduction of elements that may be prominent but not uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape. ▪ Development is moderately close to views – 1-2 kilometres away. ▪ Site is a notable component of the view. ▪ View in general direction of development. ▪ Approximately 50% of development can be viewed. ▪ View is limited by intervening factors. ▪ Use of lighting for part of the night. ▪ Development at construction phase, therefore of a moderate temporary duration, i.e. between 2-5 years.
Small adverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the existing landscape or view and/or the introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic within the receiving landscape. ▪ The development is a small part of a wider or panoramic view. ▪ Development is over 3 kilometres away. ▪ Development fills half to a small proportion of the site. ▪ View of development is largely obscured by intervening factors. ▪ Development blends well with its surroundings. ▪ Occasional use of lighting.
Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements/features/characteristics of the existing landscape or view and/or the introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic within the receiving or adjacent landscape – approximating to 'no change' situation. ▪ Site is over 4 kilometres away. ▪ Site is barely visible to views. ▪ Development is only identified by one or two of its components. ▪ Intervening and screening factors detract from seeing or noticing development – view severely restricted. ▪ Development will be indistinguishable from its surroundings or adjacent land uses. ▪ No use of lighting.

TABLE x – SUMMARY TABLE TO DETERMINE SIGNIFICANCE OF VISUAL EFFECTS

		Magnitude of Change			
		Substantial	Medium	Small	Negligible
Sensitivity	High	Major	Moderate-Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Moderate-Major	Moderate	Minor-Moderate	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor-Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral/None

The summary of effects can be expressed as an adverse or beneficial effect depending on the assessor's view regarding the nature and quality of the existing resource and how this has been changed. In some circumstances the change may be described as a neutral change if the expectation of the viewer or the fundamental nature and characteristics of a view appear unaffected.

Negligible is the accepted terminology for effects that cannot be seen or distinguished.

TABLE xi - DESCRIPTORS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF VISUAL EFFECT CATEGORIES

Significance	Typical Criteria
Major Beneficial	The project would lead to a major improvement in a view from a highly sensitive receptor.
Moderate Beneficial	The proposals would cause obvious improvement to a view from a moderately sensitive receptor, or perceptible improvement to a view from a more sensitive receptor.
Minor Beneficial	The project would cause limited improvement to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, but would still be a noticeable element within the view, or would cause greater improvement to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity.
Negligible Beneficial	The project would not significantly change the view but would still be discernible, and the effect would be beneficial.
Neutral	No change in the view.
Negligible Adverse	The project would not significantly change the view but would still be discernible, and the effect would be adverse.
Minor Adverse	The project would cause limited deterioration to a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, or cause greater deterioration to a view from a receptor of low sensitivity, and would be a noticeable element in the view.
Moderate Adverse	The project would cause obvious deterioration to a view from a moderately sensitive receptor, or perceptible damage to a view from a more sensitive receptor.
Major Adverse	The project would cause major deterioration to a view from a highly sensitive receptor, and would constitute a major discordant or dominant element in the view.

Landscape Character Effects

- 5.8 The following criteria were used to determine the impacts on landscape character:
1. The ability of the landscape to absorb new features.
 2. The scale and degree of change.

TABLE xii - DESCRIPTORS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHARACTER EFFECT CATEGORIES

Significance	Typical Criteria
Major Beneficial	The proposed scheme would improve the quality and character and fit in well with the scale, land-form and pattern of the landscape.
Moderate Beneficial	The proposed scheme would improve the quality of the landscape and. it would strengthen the landscape character.
Minor Beneficial	The proposed scheme would fit well with the landscape character.
Negligible Beneficial	An imperceptible change in landscape character. The proposed scheme would be absorbed into the wider landscape type and the existing landscape quality would be maintained.
Neutral	No noticeable loss, damage or alteration to landscape character.
Negligible Adverse	Changes in character of very local significance. The proposed scheme may not be easily absorbed into the landscape type but could be readily mitigated.
Minor Adverse	Changes in character of very local significance. The proposed scheme may not be easily absorbed into the landscape type but could be readily mitigated.
Moderate Adverse	The proposed scheme would be out of scale and not fit into local landscape patterns and land-forms but could be mitigated.
Major Adverse	Proposals would be at complete variance with the land form, scale and pattern of landscape. They would permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of valued, characteristic features, elements and/or their setting. Impacts would cause a very high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished.

6.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Sensitivity

- 6.1 The proposed development site has no landscape designation with only moderately valued characteristics that are considered tolerant of change, although the brook corridor running across the site has potential as a landscape and wildlife resource which is in itself would be intolerant of change in the short term. It is considered that the landscape is of **low to medium sensitivity**.

Quality

- 6.2 The proposed Site is a locally recognised landscape but without specific designation. There is a distinguishable landscape structure with characteristics and patterns of landform with some landscape features which are worthy of retention. The quality is considered to be **ordinary**.

Value

- 6.3 The landscape of the proposed site is of local importance but without particular note and moderately used by the local community and visitors to the area. The value of the site is considered to be **low**.

Construction Phase

Phasing

- 6.4 It is uncertain at this stage as for how long the construction phase will last, but it is envisaged that the construction of the proposals would be broadly in the following sequence:

- Placement of protection measures for any vegetation to be retained.
- Construction of access road and infrastructure.
- Building out of the residential properties and hard areas.
- Where appropriate, structure planting could be undertaken prior to the commencement of building operations especially on landscape buffer strips between the development and existing housing adjacent to the site and against the northern boundary where it abuts the open countryside.

Predicted Impacts

- 6.5 An assessment of the potential impacts of the construction phase have been based on the proposals put forward in the illustrative Masterplan put forward by GreenSky

Architecture. It is important to note that some of the impacts during this phase would be temporary in nature. The predicted impacts are as follows:

Predicted Landscape Effects/Impacts

Removal of existing trees and hedgerows and loss of grassland pasture

6.6 The proposed development will involve the removal of a limited number of trees internally. These consist of five trees of retention category 'B', three trees, three groups and three hedges of retention 'C' category. Internal hedgerows will be removed to accommodate the built arrangement. These are assessed as intact but species poor and generally unmanaged. There should be no impact on hedgerows to the boundaries with the exception of breaking through the very gappy hedge and vegetation off Waddington Road and off Kilmoor Road to create the access points into the proposed development. There is also the opportunity at this access point to increase and enhance pedestrian routes and linkages from Waddington Road to the town centre. The pre-existing footpath which crosses the site will be accommodated within the development layout and will remain on its current alignment. The areas of pasture grassland will be removed to accommodate the development but the existing brook and associated bankside features will be retained. An area of grassland, approximately 20-30 metres in depth, will be retained on the northern boundary where it abuts the open countryside beyond. The existing footpath within the site may be temporarily closed or rerouted during the course of construction.

6.7 The total loss of the landscape resource prior to mitigation would be **moderate adverse impact** in terms of the direct loss of a landscape element. In terms of replacement this could be readily mitigated by extensive new planting on the site, which would also enhance the biodiversity of the site from its current position. But there would also be adverse impact in both visual and character terms as the removal of the vegetation until new planting takes effect, increase prominence of the site with new buildings and infrastructure from certain viewpoints.

Predicted Visual Impacts

Visual Envelope (ZVI)

6.8 Based on field analysis and with reference to existing screening, including built structures and vegetation identified from mapping and air photography a predicted zone of visual influence (ZVI) of the development has been prepared. The ZVI is shown on figure **TAG 3 - Zone of Visual Influence** plan within the Appendices. The ZVI is indicative of the part

of the landscape from which views of the proposed development might be gained. It does not imply that views would be possible from all points within the area delineated nor does it indicate that all the developments might be seen or that the development would be highly perceivable.

Visual amenity of users of the footpaths (Photograph Viewpoints 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 14, 16 and 19)

- 6.9 Users of the footpaths are considered to be sensitive users. The proposals include the removal of some trees and internal hedgerows, some modification to land levels (considered not significant), change in the context of the existing footpath through the site and the construction of new houses with associated infrastructure. The impact will reduce with distance. The views from the footpath within the Site and the adjacent footpaths to the south and north-west will be from close quarters. The current views will be replaced with new housing vistas with integrated open space and landscape. There will be a loss of a view over open fields. No new properties would be higher than 2.5 stories and the visual appearance of the new dwellings can be subject to planning condition. All views gained from the north west will be in the context of the existing townscape of Clitheroe. Substantial planting belts are proposed for the boundaries together with the retention of boundary hedgerows and trees. These operations would result in a **moderate adverse impact** on close distance views from the public footpath network within and around the site.

Views from adjacent residential properties (Photograph Viewpoints 1, 2, 15, 17, 18 and 19 – representative views)

- 6.10 Views from adjacent houses immediately abutting the site will be private views in the context of their own garden surrounds. Visual impact will vary in degrees depending on the alignment of dwellings and the location of windows. 2no. properties which directly overlook the site are located on Brungerley Avenue and which will have views from rear elevation windows. Other properties on this roads are aligned at 90 degrees to the Site with side elevations towards the Site. These views are restricted and obscured by other properties. These will also be influenced by residential development which is permitted off Milton Avenue. Properties on Back Common and Kirkmoor Close will be impacted upon by the changes with views predominately from front elevations and similarly public views gained directly from Back Common which is closest to the new access construction. The property (Albion House) at the end of Kirkmoor Road will be influenced the greatest by the proposed development. The front elevation to the property is south easterly facing, away front the Site. It is understood that this property is currently let. These are considered to be **moderate to major adverse**.

- 6.11 Properties on Milton Avenue, Cowper Avenue and Chester Avenue to the east of the Site are terraced streets of the early 20th century era with limited direct views from house rooms to the Site. Users of these roads will have obstructed views due to the permitted development on the adjacent land parcel.
- 6.12 Significant new planting within an appropriately landscape buffer area on the north western boundary, in advance of the main construction phase would reduce the visual impact of the proposed development from residential views. Similarly, internal planting associated with the road network, gardens and areas of open space would reduce longer term impacts on sensitive receptors in close up views. It will not be possible to observe the full extent of any new development other than in close views, as the rise and crest of the land obscures views when approaching from the river. The new buildings are likely to average 7-8 metres in height and will not breach the general height of the surrounding houses within the urban settlement. The juxtaposition of the houses clusters with intervening new planting and landscaping will serve to integrate the proposals into the adjacent settlement and reduce impact.
- 6.13 There will be opportunities to mitigate the visual impact of the building by the choice of materials and colour, which will have immediate effect on the completion of construction prior to any screen planting becoming established. The degree of retention of existing trees and hedgerows to the boundaries is important in assessing the extent of the visual impact on all sensitive receptors, since some of the trees perform a screening function already.

Views from the Castle (Photograph Viewpoint 20)

- 6.14 From the more elevated position of Clitheroe Castle viewing balcony a panoramic view of the site is possible and, as an historic environment and scheduled listed building within the Conservation Area, is accepted as a sensitive receptor in landscape terms. The Castle is situated on a steep limestone rock outcrop which rises some 39m above the valley floor, thus the castle commands extensive views over the surrounding area. Views can be of short or long duration and the location is popular with tourists who wish to view the landscape of the Bowland Fells. In the context of the overall landscape the Site sits within the open land on the edge of the settlement but is viewed from the castle as a narrow strip of land directly behind the properties between the railway corridor and the south eastern edge of the Site. The Site is considered in this context to be a narrow belt of development set within the edge of the urban settlement. Views from the Castle are naturally drawn to the wider landscape of the AONB beyond and the expanse of the

landscape beyond the immediate urban edge. There is considered to be no visual relationship between the Site and the Castle from this viewpoint. Indeed the main focus of attention to foreground urban elements is Booth's store and the linear expanse of car parking between the store building and the railway station. However, due to the elevation of the Castle it will not be possible to totally screen the proposed development and its construction would be visible as a middle distance view. The selection of building and roofing materials will give opportunities for mitigation together with screen planting.

Views from Waddow Hall and Grounds

- 6.15 Waddow Hall is a 17th-century Grade II listed building within a 178-acre (72 ha) wooded estate that serves as a conference and activity centre for Girlguiding UK. It has been managed by Girlguiding since 1927. The Hall sits just above the River Ribble channel on the 70 metre contour with the land rising locally to approximately 100 aOD behind the Hall with wooded slopes. The frontage elevation faces towards Clitheroe town. Looking south east towards the proposed Site the views from ground level and lower stories are substantially obscured by close mature vegetation and by the rise of the land which forms a slight crest before a gentle fall in the land towards the Clitheroe settlement. Beyond a middle distance line of mature trees it is considered that the roofscape of the nearest properties would be visible. A screen belt of vegetation and native trees would be planted along this edge which will over time serve to filter views. The Photograph viewpoint also illustrates that there is intervisibility between the Hall and Clitheroe Castle which would not be interrupted by the proposed development.

Views from the newer Cemetery (Photographic viewpoint 5)

- 6.16 Views from the cemetery area to the west of Waddington Road will be restricted and partially screened by the existing vegetation around the edges. People visiting the cemetery and older burial grounds will have some intermittent views of the site although this is filtered by fairly dense vegetation and trees within the grounds and on the boundary to the site along Waddington Road. Visitors to the cemetery are generally tending graves and less inclined to observe the wider landscape. Areas to the immediate south west and south east are currently approved for an extension to the cemetery and will, it is assumed, be landscaped in a similar manner to the existing area to the boundary of the proposed Site. The Inspector's report for the Appeal stated that:

"Even with the recent loss of some feature trees, the views from the Cemetery would be restricted and partially screened and filtered by existinf and new planting." (para. 66).

Views from Waddington Road (Photograph Viewpoints 3 and 4)

- 6.17 Views from Waddington Road and the old cemetery are screened by existing intervening vegetation and the field parcels although the construction of the new access has the potential to open up views into the site from Waddington Road to the east of the site. The Inspector's report for the Appeal states that:

"The appeal proposals would also invite no marked visual impact from the lower floors and grounds of Waddow Hall. Whereas there would be some perception from upper floors, the intention of strengthening the tree landscape belt to the north and west of the appeal site should filter these views in time. Nevertheless, as agreed by the Appellants, with the residential development proposed, the character of the area would change and this would be a negative factor to be weighed in the balance." (para. 211).

Some views into the approach of the proposed development will be visible from this point and views of the access will be possible from the grounds and approach path to the older burial grounds. Views from passing vehicles will be exceptionally fleeting to the south west of the Site by vehicle users. The new access will be created onto Waddington Road. New landscaping will be created to the north of the junction fronting Waddington Road and there will be a substantial 6-10 metre strip of landscaping to the south side of the access road as it enters the site along the undeveloped adjacent field parcel. This landscaping will join with the open and wetland habitat area which runs through the development following the course of the existing stream.

Longer distance views

- 6.18 Views from longer distance and from the AONBs are severely limited by intervening topography and tall tree vegetation and hedgerows. The site is generally lost to view at approximately 0.25 kilometres distance from the site. At greater distance from the site and within the AONB areas the site is lost in the general townscape features given its close and tight proximity to the urban settlement.

Predicted Landscape Character Impacts

- 6.19 The character of the surrounding landscape has two contrasting characters; pastoral and urban townscape. The capacity for the site to absorb the development needs to be viewed in the context of both character types. The proposed temporary change of character due to the construction phase would be of a scale that would be discordance

with the surrounding countryside character and without mitigation is evaluated as **moderate adverse**. The proposed development, however, adjacent to existing residential and commercial land within the nucleated town which already has an urbanising impact on the adjacent landscape. Whereas a new development in isolation might be considered to be unacceptable in landscape character terms, this proposed development will be an extension to an existing town scene in an enclave of land which is wrapped around on two sides by existing residential development. Moreover, the parcel of land to the west of the railway car park is a site with outline consent for residential which will be directly overlooked by existing properties on Kirkmoor Road, Milton Avenue and Chester Avenue and thus influence the degree of visual impact and instigate a change in landscape character in the short term in this part of the town.

Mitigation Measures

6.20 The construction phase would bring about changes to the landscape and visual amenity. Whilst some of these are inevitable and of a temporary nature it is beneficial to mitigate them where appropriate. Proposed mitigation is likely to include the following:

6.20.1 The phasing of the site operations such as the advance planting carried out at the earliest opportunity to provide buffers between existing houses and the open countryside.

6.20.2 The detailed design of features in the context of retention of as much on-site vegetation as possible and the development of a carefully designed primary access with landscape features which reflect the character of the immediate surroundings and land use.

6.20.3 Appropriate protection and management of existing boundary hedgerows and trees to be undertaken in line with recognised best practice.

Operational Phase

Predicted Impacts

6.21 For the purposes of the assessment the operational phase is classified as the period when all the new buildings, infrastructure and associated landscape works have been completed. Predicted impacts are likely to be more **long term** in this phase. The following assessments are based on the consideration of the proposals as a whole, including the

new access, the internal road and footpath system, the movement of vehicles within the site and the night time impacts of lighting on the wider landscape.

Predicted Visual Amenity Impacts

Visual amenity of users of the footpaths

6.22 Without mitigation the visual impact of the proposals on the public footpaths outside and adjacent to the site would be **moderate adverse**, though development would be seen in the context of the townscape in views from the northwest. Mitigation measures are therefore required, mainly in the form of new landscape features and areas of open grassland integrated throughout the development. It is also important for the detailing of the new properties and their juxtaposition to be thoroughly addressed to allow opportunities for landscaped areas of open space, pockets of trees and new hedgerow lines to be integrated throughout the development and to prevent the coalescence of built forms in a visual massing. Wide buffer zones of open grassland and planted areas to the boundaries would also aid in the screening and assimilation of views of the existing townscape. The relationship between the existing footpath within the site and the new development would be a changed experience for users to a degree as views out of the site will be more restricted. It is however, proposed to locate the footpath within a linear open space of a semi rural and parkland landscape which would provide a positive experience in amenity terms.

6.23 New landscape planting will grow from planted heights over the years. During the winter months during establishment close views will be possible to a degree through the planting, but it is anticipated that the planting would assimilate views all year round after a 15-20 year period. Overall the long term impact on the users of the local footpath network is evaluated as **minor beneficial** as the planting would moderate views of the existing properties.

Visual amenity of views from adjacent residential properties/public roads

6.24 The proposed development would have a **moderate adverse** impact of the visual amenity of receptors from close adjacent properties due to their physical proximity. These views would primarily be a combination of houses, roads and garden areas, although approximately 50% of these receptors would already be viewing residential development on the land off Milton Avenue. Receptors from Waddington Road and the adjacent older burial grounds would see an opening up and the urbanising effect of development of a currently pastoral setting on this part of Waddington Road. This is also considered to have a moderate adverse impact. The impacts would be off set by mitigating landscape

and tree planting and sensitive design of the new primary access and it is considered that impact on these receptors would be over the long term **minor adverse**.

- 6.25 The Inspector makes reference to the loss of outlook and privacy within his report for the Appeal decision. He states that:

“The outlook question was touched on earlier in this report. A few residents would suffer a significant loss of view, but not of such magnitude as to justify withholding planning permission. Buildings and planting would have to be laid out such that there would be no inordinate sense of overbearing or undue loss of light or privacy. Although a couple of pinch points can be identified, within the terms of an outline planning permission, there should be no difficulty in achieving acceptable standards. Having said this, the loss of view for a limited number of residents does constitute a minor level of objection to the scheme. While this may seem harsh having regard to the present situation, it has to be remembered that no-one has the right to an uninterrupted view.” (para. 288)

Visual amenity of views from the Castle

- 6.24 The views from the historic centre of the town would impact on the amenity that the public currently enjoy from this vantage point by the extension of urban features further into the open land beyond the current town edge. However, views from this point would see the new development as a narrow band of building set in the context of urban features to the immediate south side and forming a ‘closed edge’ to built form as it wraps around to meet with properties along Waddington Road. The Inspector for the Appeal report that:

“From further afield, views from the Castle would not see any significant change, with the appeal scheme appearing only as a narrow strip of additional built development within the wider panoramic views of the Bowland Fells.” (para. 66)

Mitigation by means of internal tree planting would allow the proposed development to assimilate well with the existing scene, particularly at roofscape level. The impact is considered to be **moderate adverse** moving towards **minor adverse** over the longer term as the development is accepted as part of the whole townscape.

Night time Impacts

- 6.25 Street lighting and lighting from houses would impact on the amenity of existing receptors to a minor degree. Footpaths are not generally used to the same extent as in daylight hours and views from existing houses are generally inverted as occupiers close their curtains to the darkness. However, a degree of intrusions would exist from the baseline of

no lighting which is considered **minor adverse**. The use of appropriate down lighters to reduce light spillage and the specification of lighting columns to reflect the scale and character of the town would help to mitigate this issue.

Cumulative impact

- 6.26 The existing townscape can currently be seen in views from the north and north west. The addition of a further parcel of residential development would not significantly increase the bulking effect of building or have any further impact on the character of the town if the detailing of the built forms is adequately addressed. It is therefore anticipated that there would be a **negligible cumulative impact**.

Local Landscape Character

- 6.27 The proposals would involve the building of a new residential area of some 275 houses. Once built and established in the overall landscape scene and with appropriate screening it is considered that it would not adversely impact on the character of the existing wider open countryside beyond its boundaries. The Inspector's report for the Appeal states that:

"Looking at the Landscape Character Assessment for the area including the appeal site, it is typical of undulating lowland farmland, comprising semi-improved grassland. While it is influenced by the neighbouring residential and urban uses from some public vantage points, such as the Castle and grounds, its main public asset value is for users of the footpath system crossing and bounding the site when looking outward from the Town. Despite arguments from locals that the urban influence has been overstated by the Appellants, it is very clear that when viewed from the Castle and grounds, the appeal site in total appears only as a relatively minor additional incursion into the open countryside."

Similarly, the proposed development would not adversely impact on the existing townscape of Clitheroe. The impact on local landscape character and of the wider landscape is considered **negligible**.

Mitigation Measures

- 6.28 The operational phase would bring about changes to the landscape and visual amenity. Mitigation which is shown illustratively on the Masterplan would allow the development to be more easily assimilated into the landscape. The inclusion of new hedgerow features,

hedgerow trees and a strong treescape for the development as a whole will reduce the impacts significantly. Appropriate planting to buffer zones would become effective within a 5-7 year period and reduce perception of both the proposed buildings and ancillary features. It is envisaged that new tree planting would assimilate all views after approximately 15 years. Proposed planting would use native species of a local provenance wherever possible with management and maintenance undertaken to ensure that future viability and quality is retained.

6.29 Materials and colours for building would be carefully selected to integrate with the type and character of buildings within the town. Any effects of proposed lighting could be minimised by sensitive location of external lighting and the use of low glare directional lighting design. Proposed landscape trees would also aid in the reduced perception of any light glare.

6.30 In terms of enhanced biodiversity the site would benefit positively from this type of development where a vastly increased range of plant species can be introduced for wildlife enhancement. The development of internal wildlife zones and associated wetland areas and attenuation ponds would add to the increased value of the site in ecology terms.

Summary of Impacts

6.31 A summary of the residual landscape and visual impact in terms of significance as included in the Landscape and Visual impact Assessment following the construction to operational stage when houses and infrastructure are completed is set out below. The significance of impacts at construction stage are discussed within the Landscape and Visual Impact assessment. However, the final significance of the development that endures within the landscape is considered in the following table.

Table 5.4

Landscape Impact					
Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance	Mitigation	Residual Effect
Loss of vegetation - trees	Local importance - Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Mitigation with tree planting	Minor beneficial
Loss of grassland	Local importance - Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Provision of open space with mitigation planting and improved biodiversity	Minor - moderate beneficial
Use of existing public footpath through Site	Frequently used - Medium	Medium	Moderate Adverse	Integration into newly landscaped setting	Minor beneficial

Visual Amenity Impact					
Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Significance	Mitigation	Residual Effect
Visual amenity of users of close footpaths and existing footpaths within the Site	High	Medium	Moderate adverse	Screen/buffer planting.	Negligible to minor beneficial
Visual amenity of distant footpaths	High	Low	Neutral	Screen/buffer planting with landscaping integral within development.	Negligible
Views from adjacent residential properties – Back Commons	High	High - medium	Major-moderate adverse	Screen/buffer planting with landscaping integral within development. Good design of development in terms of building layout, open space provision, materials, colours and juxtaposition of built elements.	Minor adverse
Views from adjacent residential properties – Kirkmoor Close	High	High - medium	Major-moderate adverse	Ditto	Minor adverse
Views from adjacent residential properties – Swan Meadows, Kirkmoor Road	High	Low	Minor adverse	Ditto	Minor adverse
Views from adjacent residential properties – Bungereley Avenue	High	Medium	Moderate adverse	Ditto	Minor adverse
Views from adjacent residential properties – Mitton Avenue, Cowper Avenue, Chester Avenue	High	Low	Minor adverse	Screen planting along south eastern boundary.	Minor adverse
Views from Clitheroe Castle	High	Medium	Moderate adverse	Screen/buffer planting with landscaping integral within development. Good design of development in terms of building layout, open space provision, materials, colours and juxtaposition of built elements.	Minor adverse
Views from Waddow Hall	Medium	Low	Minor adverse	Screen/buffer planting to north western boundary.	Negligible
Views from the cemetery	Low	Low	Minor adverse	Screen/buffer planting to north western boundary.	Negligible
Views from Waddington Road and older cemetery	Low	Low	Minor adverse	Adequate landscaping to new access junction	Minor adverse

Significance of Effect (Impact) Criteria

Table 5.5

Magnitude	Justification
Major	Effects cannot be mitigated and are at variance with landscape characteristics, damaging the integrity of that landscape visual amenity (adverse), or strongly complement landscape characteristics (beneficial). For existing highly sensitive, high quality landscape changes or high magnitude tend to result in adverse effects, but this may not always be the case.
Moderate	Effects are at variance with some of the landscape characteristics, adversely affecting the character and/or visual amenity (adverse), or fitting well with the landscape characteristics but changing their emphasis for improvement (beneficial).
Minor	Not quite fitting the characteristics of the landscape or have local/limited scale adverse impact on visual amenity (adverse), or locally improving or adding to the quality of the landscape (beneficial).
Neutral	Complementing the landscape characteristics and maintaining the existing landscape character, visual amenity and quality landscape features.

Interim Conclusions

- 6.32 The visibility of the Site is contained in part by the local topography and the surrounding settlement of Clitheroe. Views of the site from sensitive receptors are generally at close quarters with a vantage point from Clitheroe Castle. The views from the Castle provide natural vistas to the wider landscapes beyond the Site.
- 6.33 Overall, many of the surrounding visual receptors will experience moderate adverse effects moving to minor adverse – negligible following mitigation. Receptors most affected will be from the local footpath network within the Site and properties closest to the proposed development. Appropriate design methods will be engaged to provide vegetation screening, appropriate off-set distances and good landscape design to enhance the experience of users of the footpath network.

Summary

- 6.34 Clitheroe sits within the lower Ribble valley close to areas of outstanding natural beauty and within the countryside rolling pastoral fringes of Pendle Hill. The town is nucleated settlement with an historic core and a Castle located on an elevated knoll. In modern times the town has developed and spread and offers good communication lines by means of the railway and station and the A59 by pass.
- 6.35 The proposed residential development site lies to the north west of the urban settlement and abuts the settlement boundary and a parcel of land which is the subject of a current outline application for residential development. The site consists of semi improved grazing land with limited internal hedgerows, a brook, a public right of way and surrounding hedgerows with trees.
- 6.36 The proposed development would result in the loss of a number of existing landscape resources but would retain existing boundary hedgerows and trees and the internal brook

and its bankside features. The proposals would affect the visual amenity of users of the site and from views that are generally at close quarters as seen by walkers using the nearby public footpath network, from existing residential properties rather than longer distances where the proposals are lost in the general townscape of Clitheroe, from the users of a short section of Waddington Road on the east side and from the older burial grounds on the north side of Waddington Road. Both the construction phase and the operational phase would see some changes to the character of the site and these are seen in the context of both the existing townscape and the adjacent countryside.

- 6.37 The Inspector's report for the Appeal makes pertinent and relevant conclusions relating to landscape matters and visual amenity as follows:

"All in all, this loss represents a localised moderate to minor effect. Even then, it needs to be considered alongside the benefits that a residential development would offer in terms of increased public access to the wider country beyond the site, areas of public open space, increased planting to both structure and screen planting and roadside trees. All these landscape benefits would enhance the biodiversity of the area from the present baseline environs in accordance with the LCC landscape strategy requirements Supplementary Planning Document. (para. 67).

"There are good opportunities to provide mitigation for all identified impacts. The planting of significant landscape buffer areas and the introduction of an integrated landscape and tree planting scheme and extensive open space areas would serve to settle the new homes and associated features into the adjacent settlement. It would also provide a significant screen and fringe of landscape against the adjacent countryside, softening the hard edge of the Town. Proposed development orientation, colouring of materials and roofscape would sit well in the existing scene. The impact of the new development would further diminish over time, as the new landscape matures." (para. 68).

"As for the residential amenity of existing houses around the site, the new development would have a moderate adverse impact on the receptors close-by, due to their physical proximity. The new views would primarily be of houses, garden areas and roads, though 50% of those affected already entertain views of existing development and the Cemetery. With the planting and other mitigating effects, the impact on these receptors would be minor adverse. Bearing in mind that no-one has a right to an open view, the screen planting proposed may be seen as a benefit, rather than an intrusion. New houses would be positioned so that no loss of privacy would ensue." (para.69).

6.38 In the Inspector's overall balance and conclusions he states that:

“As for the other material circumstances, the one relied on by the Council in a reason for refusal was the harm to the rural landscape. However, the appeal site has no special designation and, while there would be some harm, there is acceptance that some countryside around Clitheroe would have to be forfeit. Inevitably, this means that the boundaries of the Town will need to be revised. Put briefly, the modest harm to the countryside landscape, its usage and public and private views thereof do not constitute a cogent reason for dismissing this appeal.” (para. 300).

6.39 There are good opportunities to provide mitigation for all the impacts that may be predicted on the landscape and visual amenity of the site and its affect on the adjacent land. The planning of significant landscape buffer areas and the introduction of an integrated landscape and tree planting scheme to the development will serve to integrate the new houses and associated features into the adjacent settlement and provide a significant screen and fringe of landscape against the adjacent countryside. With sensitive choice of building materials and the careful planning of the housing clusters the development will be assimilated into the town and views from more sensitive receptor will be significantly reduced and diminished over time as new landscaping matures. Overall it is considered that the landscape and visual impact will, with mitigation, be minor adverse to negligible/minor beneficial with new landscaping providing an enhance biodiversity within the locality.

7.0 RELEVANT LANDSCAPE POLICIES

7.1 Planning policy and issues in respect of the development application in the context of the emerging policies of the Council's Core Strategy is discussed within the planning statement. Key landscape and visual related issues and the relevant Ribble Valley Borough Council policies are as follows:

National Planning Policy Framework

7.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and presumes in favour of sustainable development unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF at Paragraph 7 defines 'sustainable development' as having 3 dimensions:

- Economic – building a strong, responsive and competitive economy to support growth and innovation;
- Social - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities and responding to local needs; and
- Environmental – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

7.3 Sustainable development underpins the aspirations of the Framework to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimize waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

7.4 Paragraph 14 of the NPPF says that where the development plan is absent, silent or policies are out of date, permissions should be granted unless *“any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against policies in this Framework taken as a whole, or where specific policies in this Framework indicated that development should be restricted”*.

7.5 The NPPF is centred on a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The Site, whilst outside the town's settlement boundary, is not in a Green Belt designation, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a Site of Special Scientific Interest or Local Green Space, all of which would indicated that development could be restricted. In landscape terms the Site accords with the NPPF and is not prejudicial to Ribble Valley Borough Council's Core Strategy emerging policies.

7.6 Paragraph 109 of the NPPF also states that *“the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- *Protecting and enhancing **valued** landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;”* (My emphasis).

7.7 The NPPF does not define what is meant by a valued landscape but it is generally identified by the provision of a designation which is provided for within Planning Authorities Local Plans in order to protect, enhance and manage networks of green space and locally important landscapes. The Landscape Character Assessments supports the definition of the term valued landscape through the application of a national or local designation⁵, although it can be valued by different communities of interest for other more subjective reasons. Paragraph 170 supports the use of landscape character assessments, and for areas where there are major expansion option assessments of landscape sensitivity. Therefore the NPPF is focused on valued landscapes. Again, there are no such designations or valued landscapes present in respect of the Site.

Regulation 22 – Draft Core Strategy: 2008-2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley

DMG1: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

7.8 The Core Strategy Submission Draft seeks a sequential preference to the principles of mitigation hierarchy.

- *“CONSIDER THE DENSITY, LAYOUT AND REALTIONSHIP BETWEEN BUILDINGS, WHICH IS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE, PARTICULAR EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED ON VISUAL APPEARANCE AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDINGS, INCLUDING IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, AS WELL AS THE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON EXISTING AMENITIES.*
- *NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE”*

7.9 Consideration has been given to the above through the process of the Landscape and Impact Assessment prepared for the application and the urban design strategy developed by the architectural consultants. The illustrative layout masterplan has also given consideration to the provisions of this policy.

⁵ Scottish Natural Heritage and The Countryside Agency. (2002) *Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland*, p.53.

DMG2: STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.10 The Core Strategy Submission Draft requires that development proposals should be in accordance with the Core Strategy development strategy and should support special vision.

“DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS IN DEFINED SETTLEMENTS SHOULD CONSOLIDATE, EXPAND OR ROUND OFF DEVELOPEMNT SO THAT IT IS CLOSELY RELATED TO THE MAIN BUILT UP AREAS, ENSURING THIS IS APPROPRIATE TO THE SCALE OF, AND IN KEEPING WITH, THE EXISTING SETTLEMENT.

“WITHIN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIERD TO BE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE SPECIAL QUALITY OF THE AREA BY VIRTUE OF ITS SIZE, DESIGN, USE OF MATERIALS, LANDSCAPING AND SITING ...”

- 7.11 In this regard the proposed development at the detail design stage will need to be in keeping with the character of the adjoining townscape by virtue of its anticipated use of materials, landscaping and siting. The western side of the town is an eclectic mix of buildings which range from late 19th century terrace houses through to intermediate post war housing and late 20th century housing. The grain of density and material colours are elements which unify the urban fabric in this area and define its urban character. Older historic elements are identified within the central core around the castle. The development of new housing will have regard to materials and massing in order to reflect the adjacent residential area of similar type. Whilst the proposed development is outside the AONB, due regard will be made of the proximity of this designation and the views out of town and the proposed residential Site to this area. In all respects, it is considered that there would be no lasting significant detriment to the views to or from the AONB.

DME2: LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE PROTECTION

- 7.12 The Draft Core Strategy Document requires that development does not significantly harm important landscape features.

“DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE REFUSED WHICH SIGNIFICANTLY HARM IMPORTANT LANDSCAPE OR LANDSCAPE FEATURES.

HEDGEROWS AND INDIVIDUAL TREES (OTHER THAN IN EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE SATISFACTORY WORKS OF MITIGATION OR ENHANCEMENT WOULD BE ACHIEVED, INCLUDING REBUILDING, REPLANTING AND LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT TOWNSCAPE ELEMENTS SUCH AS SCALE, FORM AND MATERIALS THAT CONtribute TO THE CHARACTERISTIC TOWNSCAPES OF THE AREA”

- 7.13 No landscape feature as listed in the policy would be harmed by the proposed development. Of the hedgerows that would be lost, they have been assessed by independent consultants and are considered to be outgrown and species poor hedgerows. Trees that will require removal number seven trees of retention category ‘B’, three trees and three groups of category ‘C’ and three hedgerows of category ‘U’. Tree loss would be more than compensate for by new tree planting as illustrated on the landscape masterplan **Figure TAG 5**. In considering mitigation for loss of trees and any visual impact the potential cumulative impacts of a development will be considered where recent development has already taken place within the settlement boundary.

KEY STATEMENT EN2: LANDSCAPE

- 7.14 *“The landscape and character and the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area.*

The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced.

As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials”.

- 7.15 The Site does not lie within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with a distance of approximately 1.5 kilometres at its closest point. The Site therefore does not contribute to the function or setting of the AONB. The intrinsic value of the AONB is protected by virtue of its designation and not by the value of adjacent landscapes. However, the illustrative proposals of the Site indicates that the landscape features accord with the provisions of the policy statement and that the character of the AONB will not be significantly harmed in terms of long distance views of the AONB from areas in close proximity to and from within the town of Clitheroe.

**Local Planning Policy: Ribble Valley District Wide Local Plan (adopted June 1998)
with saved policies September 2007**

- 7.16 The Draft Core Strategy contains policies that are intended to supersede the saved policies within the district wide local plan and these policies will no longer continue to be saved upon adoption of the Core Strategy.
- 7.17 At a local level the Site is not covered by Policy G6 (Essential Open Space) and it is not designated as part of the AONB. The Site is also beyond the Green Belt (Policy ENV4) and is not listed as 'Open Land' (Policy ENV5). There is also no designation of 'Local Green Space' for the Site but should this be a consideration as a future designation then local policy for managing development within Local Green Space should be consistent with policy for Green Belts.
- 7.18 The reasons for refusal state that the proposals are contrary to policies G1, G2 and ENV3 of the Ribble Valley Local Plan. G1 and G2 are saved policies which will be replaced by DMG1 and DMG2 in the Core Strategy and which I have addressed above.

POLICY G2

- 7.19 Policy G2 of the Local Plan is concerned with the scale of development in terms of consolidation of development, expansion and rounding off.

"Clitheroe – consolidation and expansion of development and rounding off development. In all cases this must be on sites wholly within the settlement boundary and must be appropriate to the town's size and form".

- 7.20 It is accepted that the Site development is outside the settlement boundary of Clitheroe. However, it is considered that the development is appropriate to the town's size and structure. The Site provides a natural extension to the development proposals at land off Milton Avenue (Appeal Decision 4th February 2013, Ref: APP/T2350/A/12/2181354) and would extend to cover approximately 9.2 hectares with existing settlement features on two boundaries. When viewed from the north and north west the Site does not significantly increase the expanse of town and does not materially alter the character of the settlement pattern. The Site would be visually linked to the urban form. The development also forms a natural link with other land uses outside the settlement, specifically the cemetery and its proposed extension

POLICY ENV3

- 7.22 In accordance with ENV3 of the Local Plan, a full landscape and visual assessment of the proposals based on the parameters of the development, has been undertaken, and details of which are contained within the Design and Access Statement. It is accepted that landscape and visual impacts will accrue but that appropriate measures will mitigate these issues so that they will be acceptable and that development can successfully be assimilated into the surrounding landscape. The development design process recognises that adjacent open countryside is worthy of conservation and must seek to respond to the local characteristic landscape features. Important features of the Site will be retained including the watercourse, boundary hedgerows and trees and these will be enhanced to provide a strong landscape infrastructure, informal screening belts of native trees on the perimeter of the Site and specifically where sensitive receptors have been identified. Wildflower and grassland areas will be proposed within open space provision. Details of all these matters would be subject to scrutiny at Reserve Matters stage.
- 7.23 The Site has the ability to absorb change as it does not represent the most valued attributes of an AONB or any other locally designated landscape. The development would offer a high quality settlement edge which is contained in tight proximity to the existing settlement boundary, with improved public access, whilst safeguarding many features which currently define its character by the creation of public open space, additional footpath networks and enhanced trees planting, all of which will contribute to enhanced biodiversity. The masterplan layout demonstrates the Sites ability to become part of the urban fabric without contributing to urban sprawl into areas that are visually remote from the influence of the existing settlement.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The Site itself is located with 'open countryside' and is not protected by a specific landscape designation. It abuts the settlement edge of Clitheroe to the south, south east and east. Clitheroe sits within the lower Ribble Valley close to areas of outstanding natural beauty, views of which can be seen from viewpoints such as Clitheroe Castle which look out over the town to the expansive Bowland Fells to the north and north west. Whilst the central area of Clitheroe around the castle has historic roots, in modern times the town has developed and spread and offers good communication lines by means of the railway, station and the A59 bypass.
- 8.2 The value of the site in landscape terms represents a minor sensitivity receptor outside the AONB and influenced heavily by the urban features of the town due to its close proximity. The Site has the ability to absorb change in relation to the adjoining residential context. The vegetation which defines the Site boundaries is characteristic of the 'undulating lowland farmland' and can be retained to all the boundaries and substantially enhanced to provide filtering and screening to development.
- 8.3 The development will result in an alteration of the existing character of the Site and the loss of a number of low value existing landscape resources. However, this loss represents a localized moderate to minor effect. This needs to be considered alongside the benefits that a residential development will offer in terms of increased public access to the wider country beyond the site, areas of public open space, increased planting to both structure screen planting and roadside trees. All these landscape benefits will enhance the biodiversity of the area from the present baseline environs in accordance with SPD landscape strategy requirements.
- 8.4 The proposed development would affect the visual amenity of users of the site and from views that are generally at close quarters as seen by walkers using the nearby footpath network, from existing residential properties and from the Castle. These are local views rather than longer distances where the proposals are lost in the general townscape of Clitheroe. Both construction and operational phases would see some changes to the character of the Site but these are seen in the context of both the existing townscape and the adjacent countryside which has no landscape designation. Views from the Castle would not see any significant change to the wider panoramic views for the Bowland Fells and views towards Waddow Hall would not be interrupted from within the proposed development Site.

- 8.5 There are good opportunities to provide mitigation for all identified impacts that may be predicted on the landscape and visual amenity of the Site and its affect on adjacent land and close receptors. The planning of significant landscape buffer areas and the introduction of an integrated landscape and tree planting scheme and extensive open space areas will serve to integrate the new houses and associated features into the adjacent settlement and provide a significant screen and fringe of landscape against the adjacent countryside. Proposed development orientation, colouring of materials and roofscape will sit well within the existing scene. New development will be further screened and diminish in mass over time as new landscaping matures.
- 8.6 The importance of landscape is generally valued by its condition, location, rarity, historically connections and through policy and designation. For Clitheroe, heritage is confined to its historic core around the Castle. Valued landscapes in the borough are protected by the AONB designation. In a planning context, new housing development will need to be explored on non-designated land in sustainable locations that has the ability to absorb change in a manner which provides the least 'resistance' in landscape terms. Other guiding policy and objectives will secure a sensitive approach to new development in area such as found at the Site. It is considered that the illustrative proposals would not intrude into the wider part of the AONB or into any significant views from the Castle.
- 8.7 The illustrative masterplan proposals have responded to the landscape opportunities and constraints of the Site and surrounding area. Whilst there will be some change to the character of the Site and impact on views from certain receptors, these are not considered significant and detrimental to cause harm to the character and visual amenity of the local or wider landscape. Any such changes in appearance to the character of the landscape and visual amenity are outweighed by other public benefits and the need to secure a 5-year land supply of deliverable housing land.

end
