



Grimbledeston Farm Trustees

**Grimbledeston Farm, Longridge**

# **LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT APPRAISAL**

February 2015

**FPCR Environment and Design Ltd**

Registered Office: Lockington Hall, Lockington, Derby DE74 2RH

Company No. 07128076. [T] 01509 672772 [F] 01509 674565 [E] [mail@fpcr.co.uk](mailto:mail@fpcr.co.uk) [W] [www.fpcr.co.uk](http://www.fpcr.co.uk)

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This is a Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal prepared by FPCR Environment & Design Ltd, for the proposed residential development at land at Grimbledeston Farm, Longridge. The site location and its context are shown in **Figures 1-25**.
- 1.2 The report refers to the application site as the 'site' and the development proposals as presented by the outline planning application and the Masterplan as the 'proposed development'.
- 1.3 The purpose of the report is to provide an assessment of the proposed development and the resulting landscape and visual effects on the receiving landscape and visual resource. The landscape and visual effects have been considered in relation to the proposed land uses and parameters that are defined on the application's Masterplan.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### Principles and Overview

2.1 The report is undertaken as a standalone 'appraisal' and is based upon the guidance contained within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3)<sup>1</sup>, published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, April 2013.

2.2 In summary the GLVIA3 states :

*"Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of, and the effects of, change resulting from development on both landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity (1.3)"*

*LVIA may be carried out either formally as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), or informally, as a contribution to the 'appraisal' of development proposals and planning applications. Both are important and the broad principles and the core of the approach is similar in each case (1.3).*

*As a standalone 'appraisal' the process is informal and there is more flexibility, but the essence of the approach -specifying the nature of the proposed change or development; describing the existing landscape and the views and the visual amenity in the area that may be affected; predicting the effects, although not their likely significance; and considering how these effects might be mitigated- still applies (3.2)*

2.3 There are two components which are described separately within this report:-

- Assessment of landscape effects; assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right; and
- Assessment of visual effects; assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.

2.4 The GLVIA3 recognises that professional judgement is a very important part of the process, and states that whilst there is some scope for quantitative measurements of some relatively objective matters, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements (para 2.23).

2.5 In terms of baseline studies, the assessment provides an understanding of the landscape in the area to be affected, its constituent elements, character, condition and value. For the visual baseline this includes an understanding of the area in which the proposed development may be visible, the people who may experience views, and the nature of views.

2.6 Effects are determined by making judgement about two components:-

- The nature of the receptor likely to be affected (known by the shorthand 'sensitivity') and;
- The nature of the effect likely to occur (known by the shorthand 'magnitude').

2.7 Judgements on sensitivity are made by considering:-

- The susceptibility of the receptor to the type of change arising from the specific proposal; and
- The value attached to the receptor.

2.8 Judgements on magnitude are made by considering:-

<sup>1</sup> Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, April 2013

- The size and scale of the effect, for example whether there is a complete loss of a particular element of the landscape or a minor change;
  - The geographical extent of the area that will be affected; and
  - The duration of the effect and its reversibility.
- 2.9 In terms of mitigation, primary measures to prevent/avoid, reduce and, where possible, offset or remedy any adverse effects are developed through the iterative design process of the proposed development. This is described by the report and is included within the overall assessment of effects.

### **Assessment of Landscape Effects**

- 2.10 GLVIA3 states that
- “An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource”.*
- 2.11 The baseline landscape is described by reference to existing landscape character assessments, and by a description of the site and its immediate context.
- 2.12 A range of landscape effects can arise through development. These can include:
- Change or loss of elements, features, aesthetic or perceptual aspects that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
  - Addition of new elements that influence character and distinctiveness of the landscape; and
  - Combined effects of these changes.
- 2.13 These are discussed in the assessment.

### **Susceptibility to Change and Value of the Landscape Receptor**

- 2.14 The characteristics of the existing landscape resource are considered in respect of the susceptibility of the landscape resource to the change arising from the development.
- 2.15 The value of the existing landscape is also considered. GLVIA3 indicates information that contributes to understanding landscape value. This information is set out in paragraph 5.20 of the GLVIA3 and includes:-
- Information about areas recognised by statute such as National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
  - Information about Heritage Coasts, where relevant;
  - Local planning documents, for local landscape designations;
  - Information on individual or groups of features such as conservation areas, listed buildings, special historic or cultural sites;
  - Art and literature identifying value attached to particular areas or views; and
  - Material on landscape of local or community interest.
- 2.16 Where there is no clear existing evidence on landscape value, an appraisal is made based on the following factors, based on the guidance in GLVIA3:-

- Landscape quality (condition);
- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation interest;
- Recreation value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations.

### **Magnitude of Landscape Effects**

- 2.17 Each effect on landscape receptors is assessed in terms of size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility.
- 2.18 The judgement takes account of the extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost or changed, and the degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects or key characteristics of the landscape will be altered by removal or addition of new elements. This assessment describes scale and size by reference to the terms of 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low'.
- 2.19 The geographical extent of the effect is described by reference to the site, its immediate context and wider landscape character areas. The duration and reversibility of effects are also described.

### **LANDSCAPE EFFECTS**

- 2.20 The overall landscape effects are determined by considering the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of effect on the landscape.
- 2.21 The landscape sensitivity is determined by considering the susceptibility to change and the value of the landscape receptor. Judgements about the susceptibility to change are recorded on a scale of 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low'. The value of the landscape is recorded on a scale of 'National', 'Regional' or 'Local'. The magnitude of landscape change is defined in terms of 'High', 'Medium', 'Low' or 'Negligible'.
- 2.22 The GLVIA3 notes, at paragraph 5.46, that there can be complex relationships between the value attached to landscape receptors, and their susceptibility to change. As an example, a nationally valued landscape does not automatically have a high susceptibility to all types of change. Final conclusions regarding landscape effects are drawn from the assessment components.

### **Assessment of Visual Effects**

- 2.23 An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change on the views available to people and their visual amenity.
- 2.24 Field evaluation has been used to establish a series of viewpoints and representative viewpoints. The viewpoints include:-
- Views to aid description of the site itself (where considered appropriate);
  - Public viewpoints, including rights of way and open access land;
  - Public locations representing residential areas (where possible);

- Transport routes; and
- Places where people work.

2.25 The views also represent what can be seen from a variety of distances from the proposed development, and thus different viewing experiences.

### **Sensitivity of Visual Receptors**

2.26 For each affected viewpoint the assessment considers both susceptibility to change in views and the value attached to views.

2.27 The visual receptors most susceptible to change are generally likely to include:-

- Residents at home;
- People engaged in outdoor recreation, including use of public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focused on the landscape or particular views;
- Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions, where views of surroundings are an important contributor to the experience; and
- Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area.

2.28 Travellers on road rail or other transport routes tend to fall into an intermediate category of susceptibility to change. Where travel involves recognised scenic routes, awareness of views is likely to be higher.

2.29 Visual receptors less likely to be sensitive to change include:-

- People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the landscape; and
- People at their place of work whose attention may be focused on their work or activity, not on their surroundings.

2.30 Judgements about susceptibility to change are recorded in this appraisal on a scale of 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low'.

2.31 Judgements on the value attached to views experienced, take account of:-

- Recognition of the value attached to particular views, for example in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations; and
- Indicators of the value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or visitor maps.

2.32 Judgements on visual value in this assessment are noted in terms of 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low'.

### **VISUAL EFFECTS**

2.33 Each of the visual effects is evaluated in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration or reversibility.

2.34 In terms of size or scale, the magnitude of visual effects takes account of:-



- The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development;
- The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics; and
- The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpsed (minimal).

2.35 The geographical extent of the visual effect in each viewpoint is likely to reflect:-

- The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and
- The extent of the area over which the changes will be visible.

2.36 As with landscape effects, the duration of the effect could be short to long term or permanent and the same definitions apply.

### OVERALL LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

2.37 The final conclusions on effects, whether adverse or beneficial, are drawn from the separate judgements on the sensitivity of the receptors and their magnitude, alongside reasoned professional judgement.

2.38 The GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification<sup>2</sup> states that:

*“For Non-EIA Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal*

*In carrying out appraisals, the same principles and process as LVIA may be applied but, in so doing, it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant given that the exercise is not being undertaken for EIA purposes. The emphasis of ‘significant effects’ in formal LVIA stresses the need for an approach that is proportional to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its likely effects. The same principle - focussing on a proportional approach – also applies to appraisals of landscape and visual impacts”*

2.39 For this assessment, the following descriptive thresholds have been used with regard to effects:-

- **Major:** an effect considered very important in the decision making process.
- **Moderate:** an effect that is notable and is to be considered in the decision making process.
- **Minor:** an effect that will be noticed, but is not considered to be an important factor in the decision making process; and
- **Negligible:** an effect that will be discernible, but of very limited consequences.

### STUDY AREA

2.40 The Study Area for this report has been defined by the field work undertaken as part of the baseline field work stage. The Study Area includes the site and the surrounding local landscape, together with the wider landscape where there may be potential landscape and visual effects as a result of the proposed development. The Study Area is shown in **Figure 1: Site Location**.

<sup>2</sup> GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13, 10th June 2013

### 3.0 BASELINE CONDITIONS

#### Site Description

- 3.1 The site is outlined in red on **Figure 2, the Aerial Photograph**.
- 3.2 It comprises a number of grassed fields enclosed by hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. A power line crosses the site, with several pylons located within the site boundaries. A small number of ponds are present within the fields and a small watercourse passes through the site, defined by a hedge line.
- 3.3 There is no public access to the site, although a public footpath adjoins part of the western boundary.

#### Site Context

- 3.4 The site is bordered to the north by the settlement of Longridge. Longridge extends on rising ground to the north east of the site towards the edge of the Forest of Bowland AONB at Longridge Fell.
- 3.5 Three reservoirs (Alston Reservoirs), contained by large scale grassed earthworks lie just to the north east of the site. Playing fields adjacent to the southern settlement edge adjoin the western site boundary.
- 3.6 The remainder of the western and southern site boundary adjoins fields. Preston Road defines the eastern site boundary. Scattered properties and farmsteads are accessed directly from the road.

#### Topography

- 3.7 The following text should be read in conjunction with **Figure 3, the Topography Plan**.
- 3.8 The site is located on gently rising land, which rises steadily from around 22 metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) adjacent to the Ribble River located some distance to the south.
- 3.9 The site is located approximately between 80 and 85 metres AOD. It rises from south to north, where it meets the Longridge settlement edge.
- 3.10 The landform continues to rise steadily through Longridge, steepening towards Longridge Fell. Longridge Fell rises steeply from the surrounding landscape context to over 280 metres AOD.

#### Landscape Character

- 3.11 The following section details published Character Assessments of relevance to the site and its local setting. This should be read in conjunction with **Figure 4: Landscape Character**.

#### National Landscape Character

- 3.12 The National Character Areas (NCAs), mapped by Natural England, divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision making framework for the natural environment.

- 3.13 The Natural England assessment provides a broad contextual understanding of extensive landscape areas and it establishes the general characteristics of the wider landscape.
- 3.14 The site, and the Study Area, lies at the western edge of the NCA 35: Lancashire Valleys<sup>3</sup>.

*“The Lancashire Valleys broadly consist of the wide vale of the rivers Ribble and Calder and their tributaries, running north-east to south-west between the natural backdrops of Pendle Hill and the Southern Pennines. This visually contained landscape has a strong urban character”.*

- 3.15 Key characteristics for this NCA 35 are:-

- *Broad valleys of the rivers Calder and Ribble and their tributaries run northeast to south-west between the uplands of Pendle Hill and the Southern Pennines.*
- *A Millstone Grit ridge extends between the Ribble and Calder catchments (including the Mellor Ridge and part of Pendle Hill).*
- *A broad trough underlain by Carboniferous Coal Measures provided the basis for early industrialisation.*
- *Field boundaries are regular to the west and more irregular to the east. They are formed by hedges with few hedgerow trees and by stone walls and post and-wire fences at higher elevations.*
- *Agricultural land is fragmented by towns, villages and hamlets, industry and scattered development, with pockets of farmed land limited to along the Ribble Valley, the fringes of Pendle Hill, the area to the west of Blackburn, and in the north around Skipton.*
- *Farmed land is predominantly pasture for grazing livestock, with areas of acid and neutral grassland, flushes and mires. There is some upland heath and rough pasture on Pendle Hill and the higher land to the south.*
- *Small, often ancient, broadleaved woodlands of oak, alder and sycamore extend along narrow, steep-sided cloughs on the valley sides - for example, at Priestley Clough, Spurn Clough and south of Blackburn.*
- *There are numerous large country houses with associated parklands, particularly on the northern valley sides away from major urban areas.*
- *There are many examples of proto-industrial heritage, including lime hushings, important turnpike and pack-horse routes involved in the early textile trade, and rural settlements with handloom weavers’ cottages.*
- *There is evidence of a strong industrial heritage associated with the cotton weaving and textile industries, with many common artefacts such as mill buildings, mill lodges and ponds, and links to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.*
- *The many towns, including Blackburn, Accrington and Burnley, which developed as a result of the Industrial Revolution give the area a strong urban character.*
- *Robust Victorian architecture of municipal buildings contrasts with the vernacular sandstone grit buildings of the quiet rural settlements on the valley sides.*

<sup>3</sup> National Character Area Profile 35: Lancashire Valleys, Natural England, 16 July 2013

- Numerous communication routes run along the valley bottoms, including the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the Preston-Colne railway and the M65 motorway.

3.16 The NCA includes a number of 'statements of environmental opportunity' and those potentially most applicable to the proposed development are set out below:

*SEO 2: Increase the resilience and significance of woodland and trees, and manage and expand existing tree cover to provide a range of benefits, including helping to assimilate new infrastructure; reconnecting fragmented habitats and landscape features; storing carbon; and providing fuel, wood products, shelter and recreational opportunities.*

*For example by:*

- *Creating new woodlands to assimilate urban development and to enhance rural character and tranquillity where appropriate.*

*SEO 4: Conserve and manage the distinction between small rural settlements and the densely urban areas and ensure that new development is sensitively designed to contribute to settlement character, reduce the impact of the urban fringe and provide well-designed green infrastructure to enhance recreation, biodiversity and water flow regulation.*

*For example by:*

- *'Designing in' green infrastructure principles with housing expansion, business park developments (associated with key road intersections), expansion of water treatment facilities and associated changes such as horsiculture.*
- *In urban areas, protecting important views to the hills from the impact of new development,*
- *Seek opportunities to develop sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in urban areas in particular in new development, to improve infiltration and manage surface water.*
- *Improving the urban-rural fringe through careful design and integration of green infrastructure with housing and industry, through linking new developments with the wider countryside and sustainably manage urban activities within agricultural areas. Improving, maintaining and expanding semi-natural habitats on farmland, such as meadows, pastures, wetlands and clough woodlands, which may increase the sense of tranquillity in the urban fringes, for example by planting new woodlands and shelter belts, and ensuring new developments are sensitively designed to reduce any visual and infrastructure impacts on rural areas and the urban fringe.*
- *Ensuring new woodland screens urban fringes to enhance rural character and tranquillity and contributes to recreational value by providing appropriate access to encourage public engagement with and enjoyment of nature.*

## **County Context**

3.17 The landscape has been considered at a county level in *A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire*<sup>4</sup>. This sub-divides Lancashire into 21 Landscape Character Types (LCTs), which are further divided into Landscape Character Areas (LCAs).

<sup>4</sup> A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire, Lancashire County Council, December 2000

- 3.18 The document has been prepared as two separate reports; a Landscape Character Assessment and a Landscape Strategy. The Landscape Character Assessment is intended to provide an understanding of the area's landscape and to form a basis for the landscape strategy and guidelines. At the time it was written the study as a whole was undertaken to inform the new Structure Plan and local plan policies on landscape, as well as supplementary planning guidance.
- 3.19 From the broad-scale mapping associated with the publication, it is difficult to ascertain in which LCA the site lies. Figure 4 shows an interpretation of the mapping at a more detailed scale. The site falls within LCT 5: Undulating Lowland Farmland. It lies between LCA 5c Lower Ribble and LCA 5h Goosnargh-Whittingham. The boundary between LCAs 5c and 5h is not clear.
- 3.20 Overall landscape character for LCT 5 is described as follows:

*“Generally below 150m, the Undulating Lowland Farmland lies between the major valleys and the moorland fringes. The underlying geology is largely masked by heavy boulder clays and hedgerows predominate over stone walls. This lowland landscape is traversed by deeply incised, wooded cloughs and gorges. There are also many mixed farm woodlands, copses and hedgerow trees, creating an impression of a well wooded landscape from ground level and a patchwork of wood and pasture from raised viewpoints on the fells. Some of the most picturesque stone villages of the county occur within this well settled landscape type. The towns of Longridge and Clitheroe also occur within this type, but are not typical of the settlement pattern. The area also has many country houses whose boundary walls and designed landscapes add to the species diversity and visual appeal. There is a high density of farms and scattered cottages outside the clustered settlements, linked by a network of minor roads”.*

- 3.21 LCA 5c is summarised as:

*“The Lower Ribble is an area of lowland gritstone farmland between Longridge Fell to the north and Mellor Ridge to the south. It has a distinctive broad valley landform; the north and south valley sides are separated by a flood plain which contains the meandering course of the River Ribble. There is a particularly distinctive pattern of wooded cloughs which descend the valley sides, their streams emptying into the Ribble. A complex pattern of hedges and woodland form links to these wooded cloughs, giving an overall impression of a well wooded landscape. Although a rural valley, the area is well settled; a dense network of winding country lanes and tracks link the large number of stone farm buildings. Other features of this area are the country houses and designed landscapes, for example Stonyhurst College, Huntingdon Hall and Showley Hall. The Roman settlement of Ribchester is sited at an historic crossing point of the Ribble, a tranquil village in the centre of the valley”.*

- 3.22 LCA 5h is summarised as:

*“The undulating lowland farmland on the north-east fringes of Preston forms a transitional landscape between the upland landscape of the Bowland Fells to the north-east and the agricultural Amounderness Plain to the west. It is an historically interesting area on the fringe of the Forest of Bowland AONB. The landform gently descends from 150m at the moorland fringe of Beacon Fell to the 30m contour (approximately) which defines the edge of the sandstone agricultural plain of the Fylde. However, this is not a clear boundary and the visual transition from one to the other occurs across a broad area between the M6 and main Preston to Lancaster railway line. As a result of this gradual transition it demonstrates characteristics of both the Fylde and the Bowland fringes. It is a pastoral landscape which is relatively open and intensively*

*farmed with much hedgerow loss and few trees or woodlands although hedgerows along the network of lanes are important landscape features. There are often clear views over the plain below. The area is under pressure from built development as a result of its proximity to Preston. Vernacular buildings are of local stone, although a number of incongruous materials are seen throughout the area. The area is rich in evidence for Roman occupation”.*

- 3.23 Neither character description makes reference to the settlement of Longridge and the landscape character specific to the site and its context. Nevertheless the landscape strategy refers to LCT 5 as a whole and does not provide recommendations for separate LCAs.
- 3.24 The Strategy lists ‘Key Environmental Features’ as: wooded river corridors and gorges, hedgerows and hedgerow trees, small mixed woodlands, historic villages, stone bridges and stone walls, limestone outcrops and knolls, roman remains and roads, historic drove roads and country houses and estates. Not all are applicable to the site.
- 3.25 Under the heading ‘forces for change’ increasing pressures for residential development on the edges of settlements are recognised.
- 3.26 The recommendations made for LCT5 under the heading ‘Landscape Strategy for Undulating Farmland’ of most relevance to the proposed development are:
- *Conserve the distinctive rural hedgerow network*
  - *Conserve the lowland herb-rich haymeadows and unimproved neutral grasslands*
  - *Conserve the distinctive settings to rural settlements*
  - *Enhance the wooded character of the lowland landscape*
- 3.27 Under the heading ‘Conserve the distinctive settings to rural settlements’ the following recommendations are included:
- *ensure new development on the edges of villages reflects the characteristic clustered form; development should be sited to retain views to landscape features and landmarks, such as church towers on the approaches to villages.*
  - *avoid ribbon development which would disrupt the characteristic clustered form of settlements and the rural character of local roads*
  - *encourage tree planting as an integral part of new development, creating links with existing farm woodlands and the network of hedgerows*
- 3.28 Under the heading ‘Enhance the wooded character of the lowland landscape’ the following recommendations are included:
- *promote the planting of new woodland to link existing woods and hedgerows, aiming for a continuous network of trees, hedgerows and woods where this does not conflict with other habitats of biodiversity significance*
  - *encourage planting of small farm woodlands which are a feature of the lowland agricultural landscape and provide ‘stepping stones’ for wildlife between larger woodlands*
  - *promote the restoration where appropriate of semi-natural habitats to increase the resource and to develop linkage and corridors for wildlife*

- *encourage use of species which are typical of the area such as lowland oak woods, alder in wetter places and ash woodland where the soils are moist and/or base-rich.*

### **Landscape Designations**

- 3.29 The following text should be read in conjunction with **Figure 5: Designations Plan**.
- 3.30 This section considers only the relevant landscape designations and strategies in the context of the landscape and visual issues of the site, the study area and the proposed development.
- 3.31 There are no landscape related designations applicable to the site or its local landscape context. Listed buildings are scattered throughout the wider rural landscape, however there are none in close proximity to the site.
- 3.32 A Conservation Area is located within the northern part of Longridge. This is separated from the site by intervening settlement areas.
- 3.33 The Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located to the north east of Longridge and the site and incorporates Longridge Fell.

### **Local Landscape Character**

- 3.34 Although the published landscape character assessments provide descriptions of the key characteristics of landscape character at a National and County level, they do not seek to evaluate landscape sensitivity. Similarly there are no landscape designations present within the site or its immediate local context to provide an indication of sensitivity.
- 3.35 The landscape in which the proposed development would be located draws on the character of the National 'Lancashire Valleys' (NCA 35) and the County 'Undulating Lowland Farmland' (LCT5), but is also influenced by local landscape and townscape characteristics.
- 3.36 In the absence of a published assessment of landscape sensitivity, the following brief assessment of local character includes an assessment of sensitivity based upon local site survey and analysis (as recommended at paragraph 5.28 of the GLVIA3). Sensitivity is determined by considering the susceptibility to change and the value of the landscape receptor.

### **The Site**

- 3.37 The site comprises grassed fields contained by hedgerows with mature trees. The character of the site is dominated by the adjoining settlement edge on the northern boundary. In this location the site boundary comprises an assortment of rear garden boundaries and properties under construction. Longridge is located on gently rising ground above the site and therefore strongly influences its character. Pylons passing though the site close to the settlement edge provide a local detractor. Large scale grassed earthworks associated with the Alston reservoirs lie to the north east.
- 3.38 The local landscape character of the site differs slightly between the north-western and the south-eastern portion.
- 3.39 The north-western area closely relates to the settlement edge and includes a fairly intact, but gappy network of hedgerows with trees. A small number of field ponds are present, one with trees. This area is contained adjacent to the settlement edge by a robust hedgerow alongside the outer site boundary. Residential development could be readily absorbed within the existing

landscape structure, supplemented with new native planting to a new settlement edge. Landscape features within this area are of higher sensitivity and should be retained where possible within any masterplan proposals.

- 3.40 The south eastern area is separated from the north-western area by an intervening small watercourse with a good hedgerow field boundary. The northern part of this area relates to the settlement edge. Internal field boundary hedgerows have been removed and there is a lack of landscape features in this area. This creates a relatively open aspect across this part of the site. A significant part of this area adjoins Preston Road. A good and tall hedgerow marks the boundary along Preston Road and largely prevents views in. Although this area lacks landscape features of value, this also means that its ability to absorb development is lower than the adjacent part of the site. Any development proposals within this area would need to be accompanied by a robust green infrastructure proposal to recreate the landscape framework and enhance the local landscape characteristics recommended by the Landscape Character publications.
- 3.41 Overall the site has been assessed as having a **medium susceptibility** to change.

#### **The local townscape context**

- 3.42 Within the context of the site the town of Longridge is located on gradually rising land extending towards Longridge Fell to the north east. Adjacent to the site, the urban area comprises modern residential housing estates with some industry further to the north-west and north. Playing fields at the settlement edge adjoin a part of the north-western site boundary and housing under construction, accessed off Preston Road adjoins a part of the northern site boundary. Several church towers punctuate the wider urban context. The susceptibility to change of the adjacent townscape context to the site has been assessed as **low**.

#### **The local landscape context**

- 3.43 To the south-west, south and east of the site the landscape comprises flat to gently sloping grazed fields of varying size enclosed by a network of low hedgerows with occasional trees. This results in places in a visually very open landscape. Parts of Preston Road are lined with scattered properties and larger groups of buildings provide a settled character. Buildings include traditional properties and farmhouses built with local materials and larger complexes including modern farm sheds. Detached from the settlement edge, this area has a more rural feel. It does however contain man made features including various reservoirs and the course of a former rail line as well as visually detracting modern farm sheds. It is assessed as having a **medium susceptibility** to change overall. Although it contains few landscape related designations (listed buildings) it is overall an open landscape of intrinsically rural character and quite open in nature.
- 3.44 More distantly the relatively remote and elevated moorland landscape of the Forest of Bowland AONB is assessed as having a **high susceptibility** to change.

#### **Visual Context**

- 3.45 Visibility of the site is explored using a series of key viewpoints from nearby settlements, properties, or local lanes, footpaths and roads. These are shown on **Figure 6**. These views represent views from specific receptors. In each case, the viewpoint seeks to represent the maximum potential visibility of the site and the potential future development. **Figures 7-25** show the representative photographic viewpoints to support the following descriptions. The photographs were taken during late October 2014 and in January 2015.



- 3.46 Viewpoints 1 to 5 are taken from within and around the peripheries of the site and are not from publicly accessible viewpoints.

**Viewpoints 1-3: View south across the site from the Longridge settlement edge**

- 3.47 These photographs represent the view for adjacent residents at the Longridge settlement edge. The settlement edge is visible, with properties under construction and modern properties separated from the site by a boundary hedgerow. There are open views across the fields within the site to overlapping hedgerows and trees on the skyline. The landscape appears flat. There are glimpses of rural properties close to Preston Road through gaps in vegetation cover. Pylons dominate the local view.

**Viewpoints 4-5: 180 degree views from the western site boundary**

- 3.48 These photographs show the current view from the western site boundary and the level of visual containment within this part of the site. There is a view over the boundary hedgerow to the adjacent playing fields which are contained by trees alongside the dismantled rail line beyond. The settlement edge adjacent to the playing fields is visible. To the west the site boundary hedgerow screens much of the view out, with hedgerows and tree tops forming the skyline beyond. To the north pylons and the properties at the settlement edge adjacent to the northern boundary of the site are visible.

- 3.49 Viewpoints 6 to 11 are taken from Preston Road to the east of the site.

**Viewpoint 6: View south west towards the site from Preston Road, adjacent to the entrance to Water Meadows**

- 3.50 This represents the view for road users. The view to the east is contained by the high grassed banks of the Alston Reservoirs. There is a glimpse view between properties and filtered by trees to the north eastern corner of the site.

**Viewpoint 7: View west across the site from Preston Road, adjacent to two properties on Preston Road**

- 3.51 This photograph represents the view from two properties on Preston Road close to the southern Longridge settlement edge. Both properties have direct and open views across the fields within the east of the site. Construction equipment is visible above a hedgerow beyond the site in the view. The view includes pylons.

**Viewpoint 8: View west across the site from Preston Road, adjacent to two properties on Preston Road**

- 3.52 This photograph is representative of the view for road users and for residents of two properties that adjoin the site. It is difficult to ascertain the extent of the site that would be visible from the properties as they appear contained within well vegetated grounds. The photograph is taken from a point on Preston Road where the boundary hedgerow to the site is absent. There is an open view to the south west across the eastern part of the site.

**Viewpoint 9: View west towards the site from the junction of Preston Road and Pinfold Lane (Bridleway)**

- 3.53 This represents the view for users of the roads and bridleway. A tall hedgerow alongside the road generally prevents views into the site. There is a glimpse view through a field gate across the site.

**Viewpoint 10: View north west across the site from Preston Road adjacent to a property on Preston Road**

- 3.54 This photograph is representative of any potential views from side windows or the garden of the property. The main aspect of the property is towards the road and away from the site. There is a fleeting view across the south eastern part of the site to the adjacent settlement edge for road users. To the north the road side hedgerow screens views into the site.

**Viewpoint 11: View north towards the site from Preston Road, Alston**

- 3.55 This represents the view from Alston and for road users on the approach to Longridge and the site. Both Longridge and the site are largely screened from view by intervening trees and buildings
- 3.56 Viewpoints 12-18 represent views from the rural area and settlement edge immediately to the south and west of the site.

**Viewpoint 12: View north towards the site from the public footpath north of Daniel's Farm**

- 3.57 This represents the view for users of the public footpath and for residents of the farm house behind. There is an open view across fields to a wooded skyline to the west and to trees and housing at the settlement edge on the skyline to the north. In views across the site properties adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site on Preston Road are visible.

**Viewpoint 13: View north east across the site from the public footpath where it adjoins the site boundary.**

- 3.58 This represents the view for users of the footpath. In the view north west towards the site the western part of the site is filtered by the site boundary hedgerow with glimpses through gaps within the hedgerow. There are glimpse views of the settlement edge beyond the site. To the north east where hedgerows are absent there is a more open view across the site to properties and trees alongside Preston Road on the skyline.

**Viewpoint 14: View east towards the site from the public footpath at the southern edge of the playing fields**

- 3.59 This represents the view for users of the footpath and the playing fields. Trees alongside the dismantled rail line contain the view to the west, the settlement edge lies to the north at the edge of the playing field and there are filtered views to the north western part of the site through gaps in the site boundary hedgerow. Properties at the southern edge of Longridge adjacent to the site are visible beyond the site.

**Viewpoint 15: View south east towards the site from the car park adjacent to the southern settlement edge**

- 3.60 This view is representative of the view for residents of properties that back on to the playing fields and for users of the playing fields. There is likely to be a view from rear upstairs windows of properties only. The current view across the playing field is largely contained by boundary vegetation. In views towards the site, trees and the boundary hedgerow generally screen the site from view, there are glimpse views only through gaps in the hedgerow.

**Viewpoints 16-18: View north east towards the site from public footpaths**

- 3.61 These photographs represent the general view towards the site from public footpaths within the rural area to the south west. Viewpoint 16 is taken from the dismantled rail line and is slightly

elevated. Views of the site are filtered variously by intervening tree and hedgerow cover, particularly towards the western part of the site. The settlement edge and properties along Preston Road are distantly visible beyond the site through gaps within hedgerows and on rising land just above the hedgerow lines.

- 3.62 Viewpoints 19 to 21 are taken from the rural area east of the site and Preston Road.

**Viewpoints 19 and 20: View west towards the site from a field gate on Pinfold Lane (public bridleway)**

- 3.63 These represent glimpse views towards the site for users of Pinfold Lane and the bridleway. Hedgerows on the near skyline screen the site from view beyond. The landscape appears flat and distant tree tops are visible above the hedgerows. Properties and trees on Preston Road are positioned in front of the site. Pylons feature in the view.

**Viewpoint 21: View north west towards the site from the public bridleway adjacent to Manor House**

- 3.64 The view is across a flat landscape to hedgerows and trees on the skyline. Buildings adjacent to Preston Road are just discernible amongst trees in front of the site. In the direction of the site there is a distant view of the Longridge settlement edge above the site.

- 3.65 Viewpoints 22 to 23 represent long distance views towards the site.

**Viewpoint 22: View north east towards the site from the northern edge of Grimsargh**

- 3.66 This represents the view from the public footpath and properties at the northern edge of Grimsargh and is from a slightly elevated position. There are open views towards the site and Longridge across fields with overlapping trees and hedgerows. There are glimpses of properties within the fields within this view. Elevated parts of Longridge are visible distantly rising towards Longridge Fell. The site on lower ground is not discernible, due to its lower elevation and intervening trees and hedgerows.

**Viewpoint 23: View south west towards the site from Higher Road, close to Dilworth Upper Reservoir, Longridge Fell**

- 3.67 This represents the clearest identified and closest view towards Longridge and the site from the Forest of Bowland AONB. Longridge is largely screened by the landform and intervening woodland. . The site lies at the far southwestern edge of Longridge and is not discernible at this distance. Fields south of the site are visible with Preston in the distance.

## 4.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

- 4.1 The following considers the relevant planning and legislative framework in the context of landscape and visual issues. Not all policies are referred to or listed in full but those of greatest relevance to the application site and nature of the proposed development are included.

### National Context

#### National Planning Policy Framework<sup>5</sup>

- 4.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for good design, promoting healthy communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 4.3 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for open countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives are to protect valued landscapes and, where possible, provide net gains in biodiversity.

#### National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG 2014)<sup>6</sup>

- 4.4 The NPPG came into force on the 6th March 2014 and is part of the Government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible. It is an online planning resource and provides guidance on the NPPF. The NPPF continues to be the primary document for decision making.

### Local Context

#### Draft Core Strategy 2008-2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley<sup>7</sup>

- 4.5 The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2014. It includes a number of landscape related policies, which have been considered as part of this appraisal:
- EN2: Landscape
  - DMG1: General Considerations
  - DME1: Protecting Trees and Woodlands
  - DME2: Landscape and Townscape Protection
- 4.6 These policies require development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, to reflect local distinctiveness and vernacular style, and to protect trees, woodlands, hedgerows and landscape features including ponds.
- 4.7 Policies EN2 and DME2 replace the previous adopted Ribble Valley Local Plan<sup>8</sup> policies ENV3 (Open Countryside) and ENV13 (Landscape Protection).

<sup>5</sup> The National Planning Policy Framework, 27 March 2012

<sup>6</sup> National Planning Practice Guidance, 27 March 2014

<sup>7</sup> Ribble Valley Borough Council, Core Strategy 2008-2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley, Adopted December 2014

<sup>8</sup> Ribble Valley Borough Council, Districtwide Plan 1991-2006, Adopted 1999

**Other planning matters: Lancashire Woodland Vision 2006-2016<sup>9</sup>**

- 4.8 This is listed as an evidence base document in Ribble Valley Council's Core Strategy Submission Draft. The publication utilises the landscape character types (LCTs) defined in the Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment. Within the Undulating Lowland Farmland (LCT5) the 'Vision and Objectives' are defined as:

*"To secure the existing woodland resource through active management, particularly Ancient Woodlands. To buffer existing woodlands with native planting, priority being given to wet woodland planting on the valley floors, community woodland planting on the urban fringe and planting along major transport corridors".*

- 4.9 The 'Opportunities' identified of relevance to the site include:

- *Increase the percentage of lowland oak and mixed woodlands.*
- *Link existing woodlands and hedgerows to create a continuous woodland network to reverse habitat fragmentation.*
- *Encourage tree planting as an integral part of any new development.*
- *Increase woodland cover and improve existing resources within urban fringe locations, and manage them as a community recreational resource.*
- *Create new hedgerows and regenerate existing hedges to maintain and enhance key landscape linkages.*

- 4.10 Under the heading 'Challenges' the following is recommended:

- *Ensure that semi-natural habitats are safeguarded and linked to woodlands through ecological corridors and 'stepping stones'.*

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<sup>9</sup> Lancashire County Council, Lancashire Woodland Vision 2006-2016

## 5.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND MITIGATION

- 5.1 The development proposals comprise the proposed development of up to 305 dwellings and associated infrastructure. A more detailed development description is set out in the Design and Access Statement and Supporting Planning Statement accompanying the planning application.
- 5.2 The illustrative masterplan is landscape-led and a number of landscape proposals/mitigation measures form an inherent part of the development proposals. These are shown on the Green Infrastructure Plan (drawing reference 6526-L-01A) and are discussed in greater detail below.

### Landscape Proposals

#### Green Infrastructure

- 5.3 An appropriate landscape framework is an integral part of creating a sustainable scheme appropriate to both the site landscape and its context.
- 5.4 In broad terms, the landscape proposals will incorporate private and public open space including retained ponds, meadow grassland and sustainable drainage areas, with native tree, woodland, and hedgerow planting, with further trees used where appropriate within the proposed street layout.
- 5.5 In accordance with planning policy and the recommendations of the published landscape character assessment documents and Lancashire Woodland Vision it is proposed to retain landscape features on the site wherever possible, supplementing and connecting these within a framework of new hedgerow, tree and woodland planting. The proposed planting will provide a linked network of habitats through the site, soften the settlement edge and provide green corridors for recreational use.
- 5.6 Loss of landscape features will be limited to internal gappy hedgerows within the north western part of the site and sections of peripheral hedgerow that would need to be removed to provide for access. One remnant internal hedgerow will be retained along a boundary between rear gardens and whilst this is a positive design intention, it cannot be assumed that residents would retain the hedgerow. Therefore the green infrastructure proposals ensure that elsewhere the proposed development will be positioned within a comprehensive network of connecting landscaped greenways that incorporate additional tree and hedgerow planting.
- 5.7 The development proposals would result in a gain in locally characteristic landscape features and green infrastructure provision on the site. This includes,
- Strengthening of existing retained hedgerows through gapping up with native planting and allowing hedgerows to grow taller and thicker where appropriate, particularly along the site boundaries;
  - New native hedgerow planting to provide a continuous substantial hedgerow boundary and green edge around the site and new settlement edge;
  - Planting of standard native trees along hedgerow corridors;
  - Small areas of copse woodland and tree belt planting within field corners and connected to the retained network of hedgerows;

- Swathes of connected meadow grassland that provide public biodiversity benefits, open space and recreational corridors;
- Retained ponds are located within the connected meadows;
- New ponds and areas of scrub and tree planting within meadow grassland within the south of the site to be designed to provide new habitat opportunities.

### **Built Development**

- 5.8 Generally it is intended that the proposed development will be predominantly two storeys in height. Bungalow properties are proposed within the south western part of the site adjacent to the rural edge and backing on to the Stables close to the access from the adjacent Miller Homes development. Some bungalows are also proposed close to the main entrance on Preston Road, including a frontage property closest to an existing property on Preston Road. Some three storey properties are indicated within the central and northern parts of the site. .
- 5.9 In terms of density, lower density properties will be located within the southern and eastern parts of the proposed built development area adjacent to the rural edge. Higher density properties will be located within the north and centre of the proposed development area closest to the existing settlement edge.
- 5.10 This assessment assumes that the choice of materials will reflect the colours of local residential property building materials so that the built development blends visually with the settlement characteristics.

### **Construction**

- 5.11 Unnecessary removal of vegetation besides that necessary to create the site access should be avoided. Protective fencing will be installed in accordance with BS5837:2012. Further information is provided within the tree report.
- 5.12 Site hoarding should be carefully considered to restrict views of the works around the Site, in particular in views from nearby properties. Any temporary hoarding, barriers, traffic management and signage will be removed when no longer required.
- 5.13 Lighting of the Site will be restricted to agreed working hours and those necessary for security and all machinery and materials will be stored tidily during the works and kept away from the boundaries of existing residents.
- 5.14 Storage of materials and/or waste on site will be within designated areas, which are well screened as far as is appropriate and practicably possible. Any waste disposal off site is to be in accordance with a waste management strategy, so as not to cause potential off site landscape or visual effects.

### **Landscape Management**

- 5.15 All of the landscape areas and features would be managed and maintained in the long term. This would be achieved through the implementation as appropriate of a Landscape Management Plan (LMP) to ensure the successful establishment and continued thriving of the planting proposals. It is envisaged that the content of an LMP would be subject to a planning condition and agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation.

## 6.0 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

### Construction Effects

- 6.1 Some short term landscape and visual effects will occur from alterations to the landscape during the construction period of the development. These effects would be temporary and restricted in nature. Effects would be limited to the site and / or adjacent highway works on Preston Road associated with construction of the proposed access.
- 6.2 Key landscape and visual impacts resulting from construction include:
- The loss of farm land;
  - The stripping and storage of topsoil;
  - The excavation and creation of new ponds;
  - The removal of any sections of hedgerow and trees required for the proposed development including works associated with access construction;
  - The construction of new buildings, infrastructure and the planting of public open spaces and structural landscape areas;
  - The construction of a new junction on Preston Road;
  - Service connections to the site;
  - Storage of materials and installation of a contractors compound;
  - Temporary traffic and pedestrian management arrangements;
  - Traffic movements into and out of the site;
  - Views of construction machinery; and
  - Lighting associated with construction and security.
- 6.3 The location and design of any temporary site compounds, signage and perimeter screen fencing, combined with effective project management would seek to ensure that the potential landscape and visual effects are mitigated and minimised during the construction phase.
- 6.4 It is anticipated that the construction working methods would seek to adopt best practices wherever practicable and be agreed with the Local Planning Authority and Statutory Bodies prior to commencement.
- 6.5 Inevitably, the nature of the effects will vary throughout the construction period and would be influenced by the sequencing and phasing of the development. The visual effects in particular, would vary subject to the relative location and intensity of the construction activity within the site.

### Visual Effects

- 6.6 Construction activities and plant movements within the site would be visible from surrounding receptors. The closest and clearest views towards these activities and plant movements would be experienced by users of Preston Road adjacent to the proposed access, the public right of way adjacent to the site, users of the playing fields and from properties immediately surrounding the site peripheries at the Longridge settlement edge and alongside Preston Road. The greatest visual effects for these receptors would occur as construction occurs close to the receptor.



Assessed construction effects range from **Major to Minor Adverse** depending on the existing extent of view. Views will include plant movement, construction operations, materials storage etc.

- 6.7 Away from the immediate periphery of the site, overlapping hedgerows would screen the majority of lower level construction activities within the site and intervening trees, hedgerows and buildings will filter remaining views. Activities would be at a distance and where visible would be seen in the context of the adjacent settlement edge. The assessed effects on views from the public rights of way to the south west and from receptors to the east of Preston Road are likely to be **minor adverse**.
- 6.8 For the two long distance views identified towards the site, from the northern edge of Grimsargh and from Longridge Fell at the edge of the Forest of Bowland AONB the assessed effect is **negligible**.

### Landscape Effects

- 6.9 In landscape terms, the changes arising from construction would reflect the overall change to the character of the site at year 1 as outlined in the subsequent Landscape Effects section.
- 6.10 Overall and relative to the local urban context there would be **minor adverse** and **minor/moderate adverse** effects respectively during construction on the National (NCA35: Lancashire Valleys) and County (LCT5: Undulating Lowland Farmland) scale landscape character areas as a whole.
- 6.11 The more sensitive Forest of Bowland AONB landscape some distance to the north east of the site is separated by the intervening settlement area of Longridge, as such construction activities are unlikely to result any discernible change to the settling of the AONB. The assessed effect during construction is assessed as **negligible**.
- 6.12 The site does not form a visible part of the context of the Longridge Conservation Area and construction activities would result in **no change** to this designated area.
- 6.13 It is concluded for the local landscape character assessment undertaken as part of this appraisal that during construction the activities would result in a **moderate adverse** effect on the landscape features of the site as a result of the removal of two internal gappy hedgerows and a length of the roadside hedgerow adjacent to Preston Road. The effect on the overall character of the site is assessed as **moderate/major adverse** with a substantial portion of the site retained for green infrastructure provision. The effect on the settlement edge would be **minor adverse** during construction with **moderate adverse** effects on the local landscape context.
- 6.14 Given that the greatest construction effects are focussed within the site coupled with the fact that predicted impacts are considered to be of a temporary nature, construction effects should be mitigated sufficiently through careful management and programming, best practice and agreed working methods and through dialogue with surrounding residents that there would not be any unacceptable landscape or visual effects during the construction period.

### Operational Phase

- 6.15 This section details the landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development of the site. The assessment is based upon the plan entitled 'Proposed Residential Development Grimbaldston Farm Longridge', prepared by Campbell Driver Partnership and upon the Green

Infrastructure Proposals (drawing reference 6526-L-01A). The assessment of landscape effects is summarised within the Landscape Effects Table at **Appendix A**.

### Landscape Effects

- 6.16 The introduction of a residential development, associated infrastructure and open space would result in permanent changes in the landscape.
- 6.17 Permanent changes include:
- Change of land use from agricultural to residential;
  - The creation of new vehicle access onto Preston Road.
  - Introduction of up to 305 new houses, access roads, lighting and their associated activity; and
  - Introduction of new green infrastructure including public open space, combined foot/cycle ways, meadow grassland, native tree, scrub and hedgerow planting and ponds.
- 6.18 The predicted effects are considered with reference to the planning policy and landscape designations, landscape character assessments and landscape features and components.
- 6.19 The existing landscape characteristics of the site and surroundings are largely shaped by the combination of the existing built development adjacent to the site, roads and other infrastructure, the localised and wider topography and the current uses associated with the site.
- 6.20 The landscape features of highest landscape value within the site comprise the peripheral hedgerows and associated trees, field ponds, a small watercourse and associated vegetation. Many internal hedgerows have been removed or are gappy and unmanaged.
- 6.21 The site adjoins Preston Road at its eastern edge and is closely related to the existing built up area of Longridge at its northern edge. Pylons pass through the site and provide a visual detractor.
- 6.22 Development of the site would involve the loss of some agricultural land on the edge of Longridge. The most sensitive landscape features would be retained and supplemented with new hedgerow and tree planting. Where internal hedgerows are proposed to be removed to facilitate the development and a length of hedgerow alongside Preston Road to provide access, mitigation planting would be undertaken. Retained landscape features will be incorporated within extensive areas of new green infrastructure comprising linked meadows with wetland, hedgerow, tree and woodland planting.
- 6.23 At the National scale the Natural England Character Assessment locates the site within the ‘*Lancashire Valleys*’ (NCA 35). The Natural England assessments consider only the very broad context of the landscape and cover extensive landscape areas. As such, and given the settlement fringe nature of the site, it is considered that landscape effects upon the National Character Area would be **negligible** at year 1. The NCA profile recommendations include:
- “Creating new woodlands to assimilate urban development and to enhance rural character and tranquillity where appropriate” and*
- “Conserve and manage the distinction between small rural settlements and the densely urban areas and ensure that new development is sensitively designed to contribute to settlement*

*character, reduce the impact of the urban fringe and provide well-designed green infrastructure to enhance recreation, biodiversity and water flow regulation”.*

- 6.24 This is proposed as part of the green infrastructure for the proposed development and would provide some local **minor beneficial** effects as a whole at year 15.
- 6.25 At a county scale the site, its local and wider landscape fall within LCT5: Undulating Lowland Farmland. Landscape Strategy recommendations include;
- “Conserve the distinctive rural hedgerow network, Conserve the lowland herb-rich haymeadows and unimproved neutral grasslands, Conserve the distinctive settings to rural settlements, and Enhance the wooded character of the lowland landscape”.*
- 6.26 The proposed development would result in little change to the character of this area overall. At year 1 following completion, the proposed development would form an extension of the existing settlement area of Longridge, increasing its presence slightly in the local landscape only and assessed effects are **minor adverse**. At year 15 GI proposals would enhance the local landscape characteristics in accordance with the recommendations of the publication and provide a soft settlement edge in this location, the assessed effects are **minor beneficial**.
- 6.27 The more sensitive Forest of Bowland AONB is located to the north east of Longridge some distance from the site. There are wide reaching views from the edge of the AONB some of which include parts of Longridge, although the site and the part of Longridge adjacent to the site is not discernible. Given the distance and that the proposed development is located on lower land at the other side of Longridge, it would not result in any discernible change to the landscape and townscape context of the wider AONB setting.
- 6.28 The Longridge Conservation Area is located within the northern part of Longridge and is urban in character. Views described within the Conservation Area Appraisal<sup>10</sup> produced by Ribble Valley Council do not include the site as part of the context. The development of the site would not have an effect on the character of the conservation area. The assessed effect at years 1 and 15 is therefore **none**.
- 6.29 An assessment of effects on local character has been undertaken as part of this LVIA.
- 6.30 Within the site the proposed development would result in a change from grassed fields to residential with the loss of some internal hedgerows. However the peripheral hedgerows and internal ponds and trees would be connected via a network of retained meadow areas and supplemented with native hedgerow, tree and woodland planting which would provide containment of the development, settlement edge and enhancement of local landscape characteristics as it matures. A large area of land within the south of the site would be maintained as grassland with new ponds, hedgerow, woodland, scrub and tree planting and managed for biodiversity enhancement. The green infrastructure proposals would partially offset the effects of the extension of the settlement edge within this landscape. The assessed effects on the site as a whole at year 1 are **moderate adverse** and these would reduce at year 15 to **minor/moderate adverse**.
- 6.31 Within the context of the site the urban area comprises modern residential housing estates with some industry further to the north-west and north. The development proposals would extend this area southwards slightly. Green infrastructure proposals associated with the proposed

<sup>10</sup> Ribble Valley Borough Council, Longridge Conservation Area Appraisal, November 2005

development would result in a beneficial effect on the settlement edge character in this location providing better integration with the landscape context. The effect on this settlement area at year 1 is assessed as **negligible**. At year 15 as the GI matures there may be **minor beneficial** effects.

- 6.32 The local landscape context comprises flat to gently sloping grazed fields of varying size enclosed by a network of low hedgerows with occasional trees with properties and large farm complexes accessed from Preston Road. The proposed development would initially increase the presence of the settlement locally within this area, however as green infrastructure proposals associated with the proposed development mature they would integrate the proposed development and the settlement edge within the local landscape and introduce new locally characteristic landscape features that would deliver some local landscape benefits and partially offset any adverse effects resulting from the built development. The effect on the local landscape at year 1 is assessed as **minor/moderate adverse**. At year 15 as the GI matures there may be **minor beneficial** effects.
- 6.33 Although the proposed development would result in changes in the character and use of the site landscape, equally, well planned and designed development on the site does represent a logical and appropriate solution. In character terms, the site is already influenced by the adjacent settlement edge and other urbanising elements. Furthermore it is anticipated that best practice architectural solutions taking inspiration from local distinctiveness would be employed to minimise impact on local character and to provide a more appropriate green edge to the settlement than is currently presented by the adjacent settlement edge.
- 6.34 Within the proposed green infrastructure planting proposals would utilise native locally occurring species to maximise biodiversity opportunities. All of the new landscape areas would be underpinned by an appropriate Landscape Management Plan (LMP) which would ensure the successful establishment and long term success of the landscape. In the longer term this would also generate some localised landscape benefits.
- 6.35 Given the relationship of the site with the existing urban edge of Longridge and its relationship with the surrounding landscape, the nature of the proposed development and its associated green infrastructure provision the proposed development would not lead to any unacceptable landscape harm.

### Visual Effects

- 6.36 A visual appraisal of the proposed development has been undertaken to determine the potential effects upon surrounding receptors. Using the methodology outlined at the beginning of this appraisal, receptors with potential views to the proposed development have been assessed in terms of sensitivity, proposed changes to the view and resulting overall effect.
- 6.37 Two assessments have been conducted for all receptors. The first considers the effects upon completion of the proposed development in year 1 and in the winter period (i.e. the screening effects of any deciduous foliage is not taken into account) and the second predicts the effects 15 years after completion and in the summer period (thus enabling the effectiveness of any planting to be evaluated). The assessment of individual receptors is included within the Visual Effects Table at **Appendix B**.

- 6.38 **Figure 6** provides the locations of the photographs referenced within the visual appraisal. The description of existing views is outlined in section 4 of this document and the accompanying Photo Viewpoints (**Figures 7 – 25**) should also be referred to in conjunction with the following description of effects. The results of the visual assessment are described and summarised below.

### Effects upon Visual Receptors

#### Settlement and Properties Summary

- 6.39 The site assessment revealed that there are few residential receptors from where views of the proposed development are likely.
- 6.40 Properties around the site periphery at the Longridge settlement edge (receptor A, Appendix B) and alongside Preston Road (receptor B) have the most potentially open views. The effects at year 1 are assessed as **major to moderate adverse** depending upon the extent of the existing view and the magnitude of change to the view from each property. A range of mitigation proposals are inbuilt into the masterplan. They include retention of green infrastructure adjacent to properties with relatively open views and woodland edge planting, which as it matures would in the longer term reduce visual effects for some receptors to **minor or moderate adverse**.
- 6.41 Properties at the southern edge of Longridge that back on to the playing fields west of the site (receptor F) would be subject to oblique views of the western edge of the development beyond the retained boundary hedgerow and trees. The open view across the playing field would remain. It is likely that views would only be possible from upstairs rear windows. The assessed effects at year 1 are **moderate adverse**. As the proposed tree and hedgerow infill planting matures this would soften and screen the view of properties at the western edge of the development, further assimilating them within the landscape framework. The assessed effect at year 15 is **minor adverse**.
- 6.42 Within the rural area east of the site there are a small number of scattered farmsteads and properties (receptor H). At ground level from public rights of way close to the properties views towards the site are filtered by intervening hedgerows and trees, although a distant view to the site and settlement edge is possible from the bridleway close to Manor House (viewpoint 21).. There may be similar views for nearby properties. Some properties within the eastern part of the proposed development may be seen within this context and given the distance and intervening vegetation would likely result in a low magnitude of change. The assessed effect is **minor adverse**. At year 15, for all receptors, as proposed woodland and tree planting matures it would screen the view and increase the presence of woodland on the skyline. The resultant effects would be **negligible**.

#### Public Rights of Way Summary

- 6.43 The clearest views will be from the public footpath adjoining a part of the south western site boundary (receptor D). The view from the footpath is currently open across the south eastern part of the site and filtered by the boundary hedgerow across the western part of the site. At year 1 new landscaping within the foreground would not screen views of proposed development further north within the east of the site, effectively the existing settlement edge view would be brought closer to the receptor and resulting in a **moderate/major adverse** effect. In the longer term as new planting approaches maturity this would largely screen views of the proposed development and provide an enhanced landscape within the foreground and the effect would

balance to **minor adverse**. To the south on public rights of way (receptor G) at increasing distance from the site views towards the site are filtered by intervening hedgerows and trees. The settlement edge is visible beyond the site. Development would initially bring the settlement edge closer to the receptor. As proposed woodland, tree and hedgerow infill planting matures around the western boundaries of the site this would screen the development and the settlement edge from view. The assessed effects are **minor/moderate adverse** at year 1 reducing to **minor adverse** at year 15.

- 6.44 From public rights of way to the east of the site (receptor H) current views towards the site across fields are generally filtered by intervening hedgerows, trees and buildings on Preston Road and by the boundary hedgerow on Preston Road, which will be retained and supplemented with tree and woodland planting. A distant view to the site and existing settlement edge is possible from the bridleway close to Manor House (viewpoint 21). Properties will be set back within the site beyond the proposed tree and woodland planting. As this matures it would screen views of the proposed development and present a wooded skyline. The assessed effects at year 1 are **minor adverse** and **negligible** at year 15.

#### Recreation Summary

- 6.45 Playing fields at the edge of Longridge (receptor E) adjoin the north western site boundary. From here the site is partially screened by a boundary hedgerow and trees and is seen in the context of the adjacent settlement edge. The construction activities and the western edge of the proposed development would initially be visible beyond the retained boundary hedgerow as an extension of the settlement edge resulting in **minor/moderate adverse** effects. As the proposed tree and hedgerow infill planting matures this would soften and screen the view of properties at the western edge of the proposed development, further assimilating them within the landscape framework and reducing the assessed effects to **minor adverse** at year 15.

#### Public Roads Summary

- 6.46 Views from Preston Road (receptor C) vary. On the approaches to the site from the north and south the site is not apparent. It is only as the road passes alongside the site where there are transitional glimpse views across the site. The majority of views from the road are screened by the tall boundary hedgerow or roadside properties with trees. Where there are gaps in the hedgerow, there are glimpse open views across the fields within the eastern part of the site. Visual effects are likely to be greatest adjacent to the proposed access point at the time of construction, when a section of hedgerow would be removed and would temporarily open up views into the site. At year 1 properties will be set well back within the site, beyond retained and proposed landscape areas. Only a handful of properties at the proposed access will relate to Preston Road, thus the proposed development conserves and replicates the existing built character along Preston Road on the Longridge approach. With the exception of the entrance point, the intervening retained hedgerow and new tree and woodland planting will screen views of the proposed development as it matures. Assessed effects at year 1 are **minor/moderate adverse** and would reduce to **negligible** at year 15 as the green infrastructure proposals mature.

#### Long Distance Views

- 6.47 From a slightly elevated position at the northern edge of Grimsargh (receptor I) there are open views towards the site and Longridge across fields with overlapping trees and hedgerows. There are glimpses of properties within the fields within this view. The elevated parts of Longridge are

very distantly visible rising to Longridge Fell, however the site is on lower ground below and it is unlikely that the proposed development would be visible or present a discernible change to the view at this distance. Nevertheless the proposed boundary woodland, tree and hedgerow infill planting would screen the development and settlement edge in the view as it matures. The assessed effects are **negligible** at year 1 and **none** at year 15.

- 6.48 A single wide panoramic view from an elevated viewpoint on Higher Road at the southern edge of the AONB (receptor J) has been identified across Longridge. The site and much of Longridge appear to be screened by intervening vegetation. Nevertheless if any of the site forms a part of the view, at this distance the construction activities and the proposed development would not be readily discernible. The proposed boundary woodland, tree and hedgerow infill planting would further assimilate the development as it matures. The assessed effects are **negligible** at year 1 and **none** at year 15.

## 7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The site lies at the southern edge of Longridge. It is bounded to the north by the settlement edge and the east by a tall hedgerow alongside Preston Road. The southern and western edges adjoin farmland, hedgerows and a public right of way follow parts of these boundaries. Longridge extends on rising ground to the north east of the site towards the edge of the Forest of Bowland AONB at Longridge Fell. Three reservoirs (Alston reservoirs), contained by large scale grassed earthworks, lie just to the north east of the site. Playing fields adjacent to the southern settlement edge adjoin the western site boundary.
- 7.2 The site comprises a number of grassed fields enclosed by hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. A power line crosses the site, with several pylons located within the site boundaries. A small number of ponds are present within the fields and a small watercourse passes through the site, defined by a hedge line. There is no public access to the site.
- 7.3 The Illustrative Masterplan for the site proposes that up to 305 dwellings would be constructed within a green infrastructure framework, comprising public open space with play facilities, combined foot/cycle paths, meadow grassland, tree, woodland and hedgerow planting. The landscape proposals are shown on the Green Infrastructure Plan (drawing reference 6526-L-01A). This plan takes into account the recommendations of the published landscape character assessments and the Lancashire Woodland Vision that are analysed within earlier sections of this LVIA.
- 7.4 Vehicle access to the site would be from Preston Road and from the adjacent settlement edge. Some internal gappy hedgerows and a section of hedgerow on Preston Road would be removed to facilitate the development and replacement native hedgerow and tree planting would be undertaken within the site.

### Summary of Residual Landscape Effects

- 7.5 At the national scale the Natural England Character Assessment locates the site within the '*Lancashire Valleys*' (NCA 35). The Natural England assessments consider only the very broad context of the landscape and cover extensive landscape areas. As such, and given the settlement fringe nature of the site, it is considered that the introduction of GI proposals in accordance with the NCA recommendations would provide some residual local **minor beneficial** effects on the area as a whole.
- 7.6 At a county scale the site, its local and wider landscape fall within LCT5: Undulating Lowland Farmland. The GI proposals would enhance the local landscape characteristics in accordance with the recommendations of the publication and provide a soft settlement edge in this location, the assessed residual effects are **minor beneficial**.
- 7.7 The more sensitive Forest of Bowland AONB is located to the north east of Longridge some distance from the site. The proposed development is located on lower land and may distantly and slightly extend the settlement area within the wider setting of the AONB. However this change would not be readily discernible and residual effects are assessed as **negligible**.
- 7.8 The development of the site would not have an effect on the character of the Longridge Conservation Area. The assessed residual effect is therefore **none**.



- 7.9 The local assessment undertaken within this LVIA concludes that within the site itself, the proposed development would change the existing land use and there would be a loss of some internal hedgerows and a section of hedgerow alongside Preston Road to facilitate the access. Retained peripheral hedgerows and internal ponds and trees would be connected via a network of retained meadow areas and supplemented with new ponds, native hedgerow, tree and woodland planting which would provide containment of the development, settlement edge and enhancement of local landscape characteristics as it matures, as well as delivering biodiversity benefits. The proposed green infrastructure would partially offset the effects of the extension of the settlement edge within this landscape. The assessed residual effect on the site as a whole at is **minor/moderate adverse**.
- 7.10 Within the context of the site the urban area comprises modern residential housing estates with some industry further to the north-west and north. The development proposals would extend this area southwards slightly. Green infrastructure proposals associated with the proposed development would result in a beneficial effect on the settlement edge character in this location providing better integration with the landscape context. As the GI matures there may be **minor beneficial** residual effects.
- 7.11 The proposed development would initially increase the presence of the settlement within the local landscape context, however as green infrastructure proposals associated with the proposed development mature they would integrate the proposed development and the settlement edge within the local landscape and introduce new locally characteristic landscape features that would deliver some local landscape benefits and partially offset any adverse effects resulting from the built development. As the GI matures there may be **minor beneficial** residual effects.
- 7.12 Given the relationship of the site with the existing urban edge of Longridge and its relationship with the surrounding landscape, the nature of the proposed development and its associated green infrastructure provision the proposed development would not lead to any unacceptable landscape harm. The most notable effects are limited to the site itself.

### Summary of Residual Visual Effects

- 7.13 In the context of the visual impact appraisal the potential effects are considered to be relatively limited in their extent. New residential development would most often not be seen in isolation but in the context of an existing urban fringe and filtered by intervening hedgerows and trees.
- 7.14 At the outset the greatest visual effects would be on the existing receptors at the site boundary; the residential settlement edge (receptor A), properties adjacent to Preston Road (receptor B) and the public right of way that adjoins a part of the south western site boundary (receptor D). For these receptors at the outset the effects would range from **moderate to major adverse**, however with the maturing of the green infrastructure proposals they would reduce to **minor adverse** at year 15 for the majority of receptors with **moderate adverse** remaining only for a small number of peripheral properties which previously had clear open views across the site.
- 7.15 For users of Preston Road (receptor C) the proposed development will not be generally apparent, it is set well back within the site, beyond retained and proposed green infrastructure. Only a handful of properties at the proposed access will relate to Preston Road, thus the development conserves and replicates the existing built character along Preston Road on the Longridge approach. With the exception of the entrance point, the intervening retained hedgerow and new tree and woodland planting will screen views of the proposed development as it matures. The

effects are assessed as **minor/moderate adverse** at the outset and **negligible** as the proposed landscaping matures.

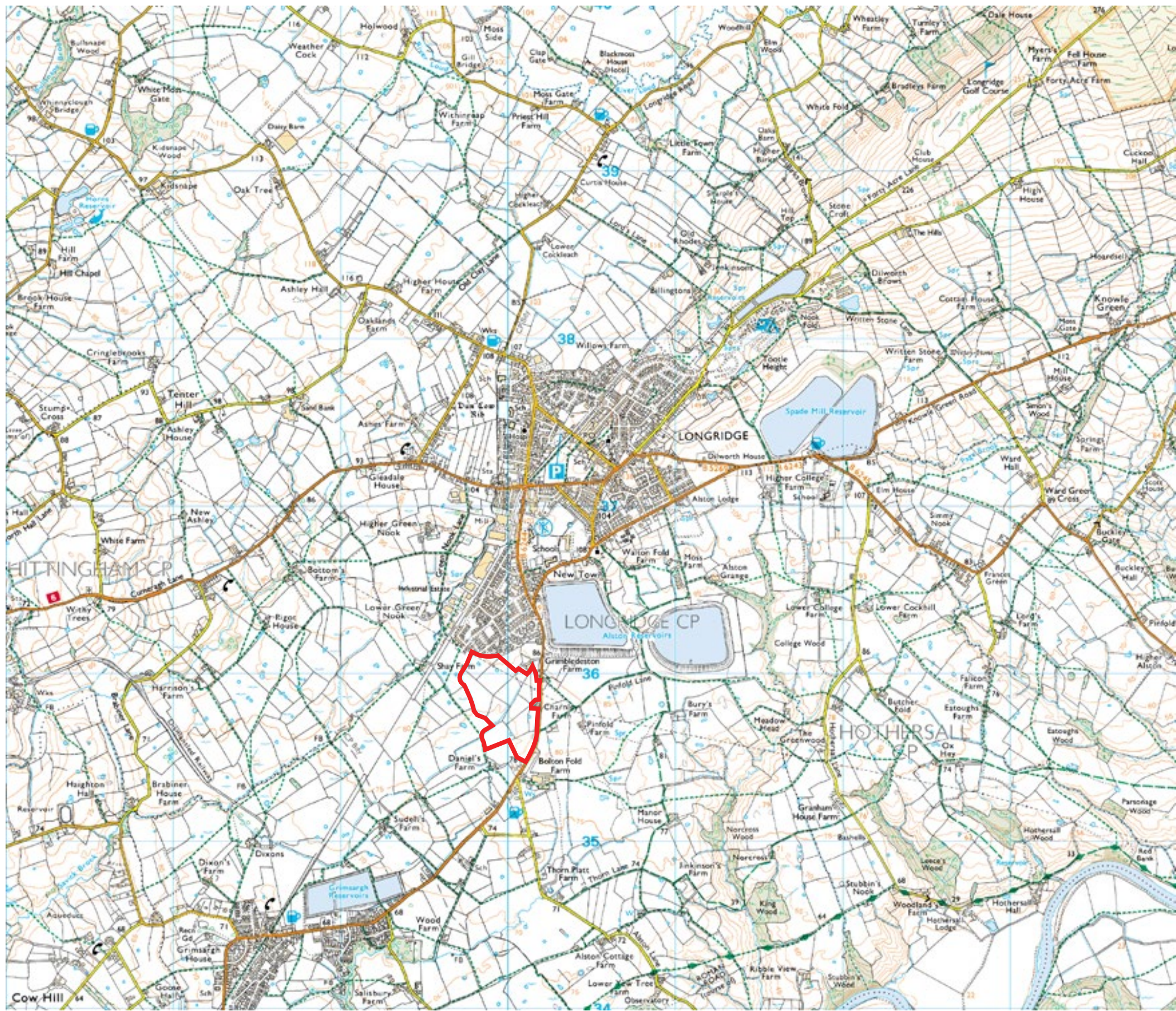
- 7.16 Beyond the residential receptors with a direct adjacency to the site, the visual effects quickly diminish as the site becomes increasingly screened by the effects of intervening hedgerows trees and properties. The clearest views would be from public rights of way within the local landscape to the south west of the site (receptor G), although these views would be fairly distant. Visual effects are assessed as **minor/moderate adverse** as the settlement edge is brought closer to the receptor but would remain distant and filtered by hedgerows and trees. Elsewhere where the view is more heavily filtered (receptor H), the assessed effects are lower. At year 15 as woodland and tree planting becomes established residual effects reduce to **minor adverse or negligible**.
- 7.17 The potential for long distance views from the edge of the Forest of Bowland AONB (receptor J) and from the northern edge of Grimsargh (receptor I) has been assessed. The site is not discernible and it is unlikely that proposed development would be discernible at year 1, the assessed effect is **negligible**. At year 15 the maturing green infrastructure would further assimilate the proposed development within its landscape context and the assessed effect is **none**.

### Conclusion

- 7.18 In conclusion, it is assessed that with the introduction of a comprehensive locally characteristic green infrastructure framework, the site has the ability in which to absorb development of the scale and type proposed without causing any unacceptable landscape and visual harm. It is considered that a high quality urban design solution can be delivered on the site which is in keeping with best practice and current Government Guidance and which would make a positive contribution to the local landscape and townscape.

**FIGURES**





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Application Boundary



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SITE LOCATION



1:25,000 @ A3 GJH / SLS February 2015

Figure 1





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Application Boundary



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Longridge

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH



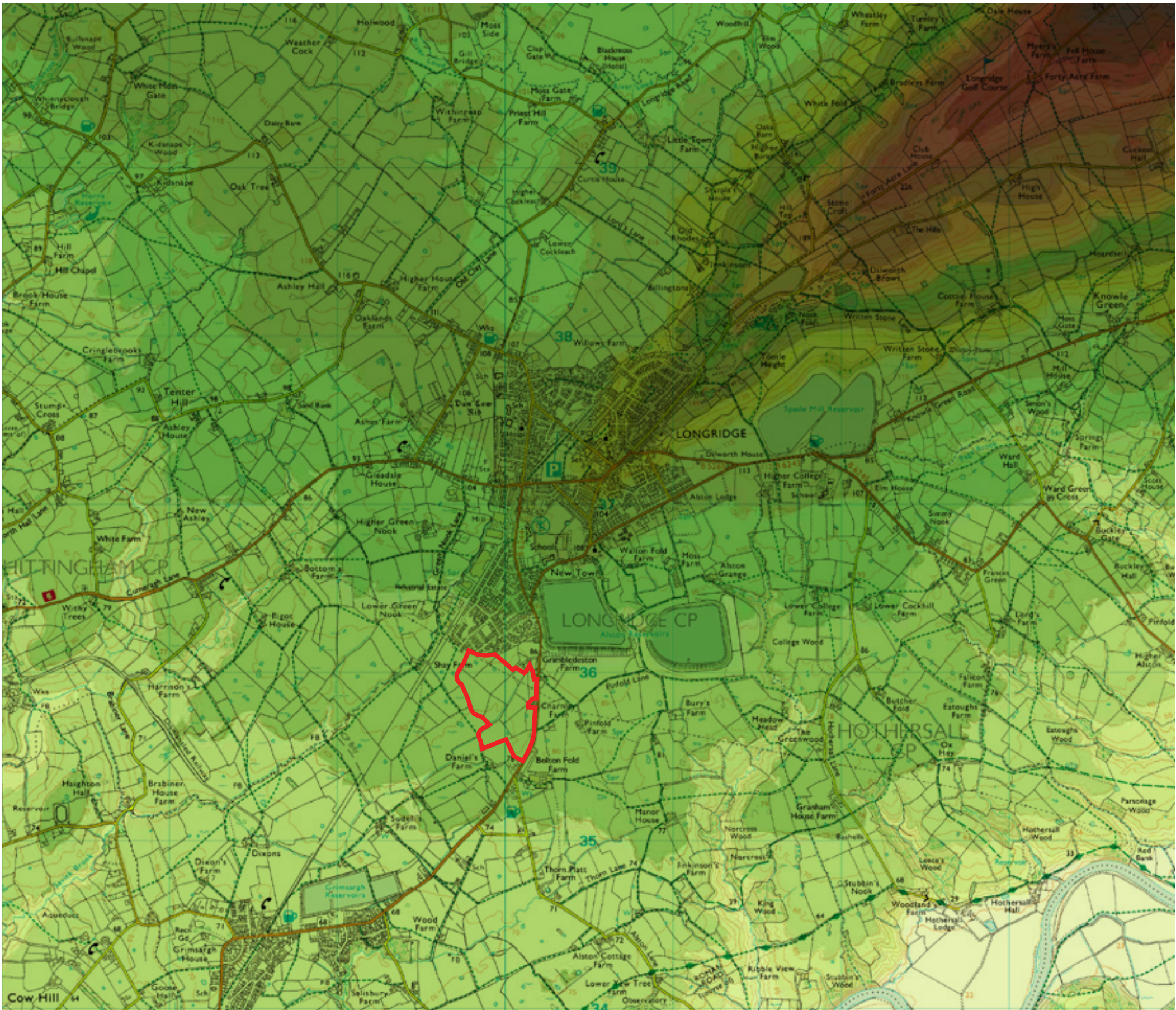
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GJH / SLS

February 2015

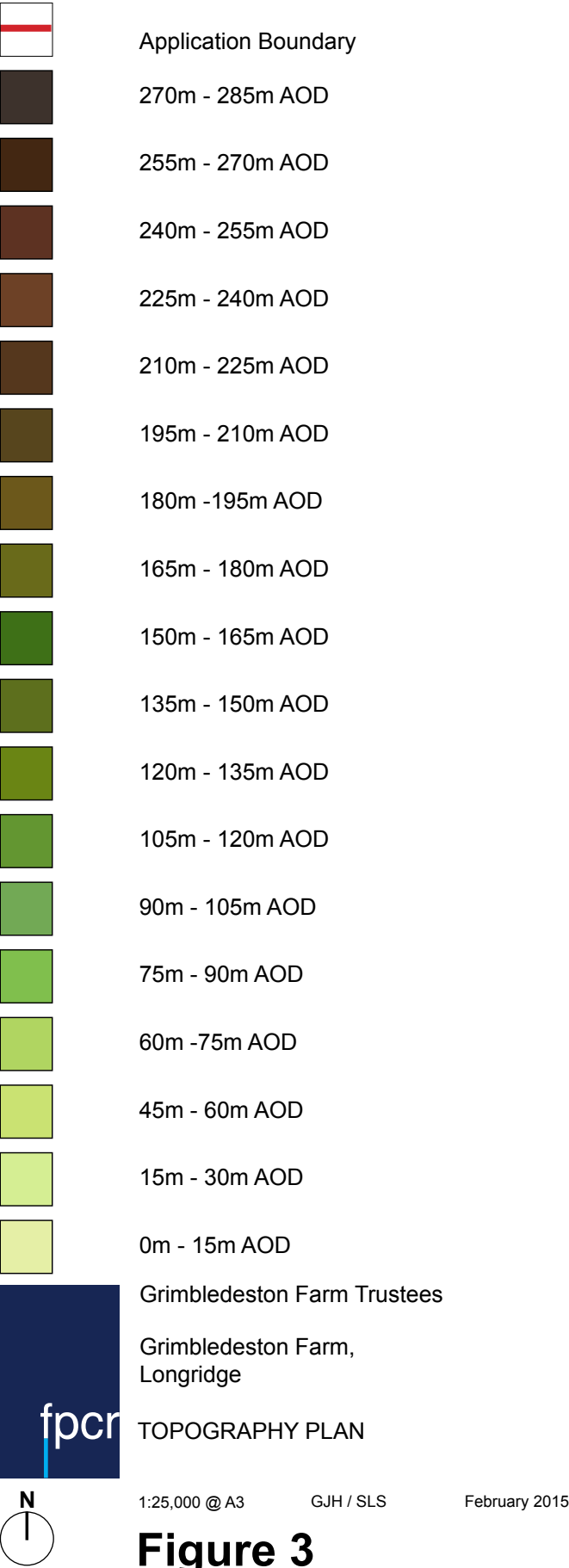
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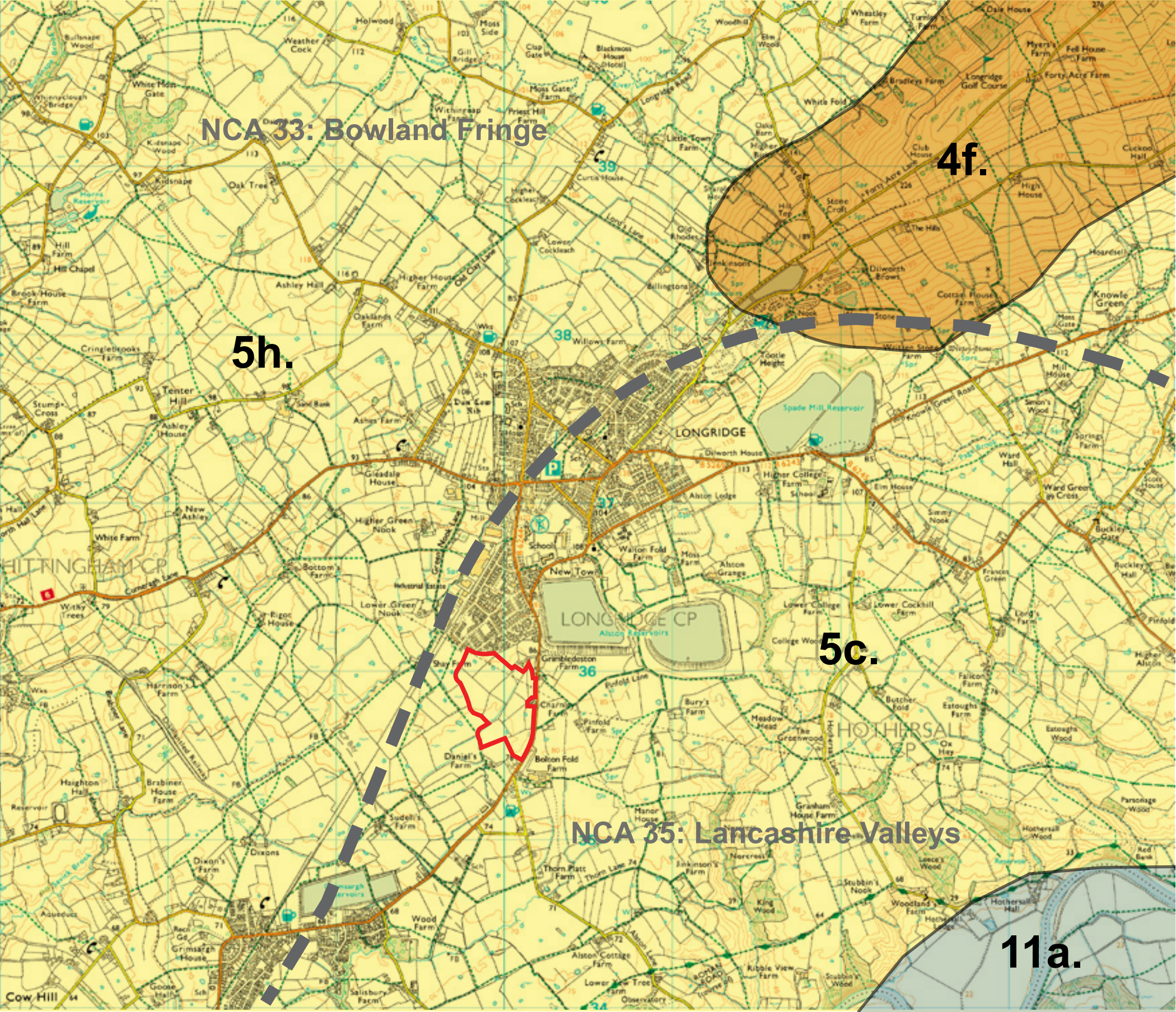


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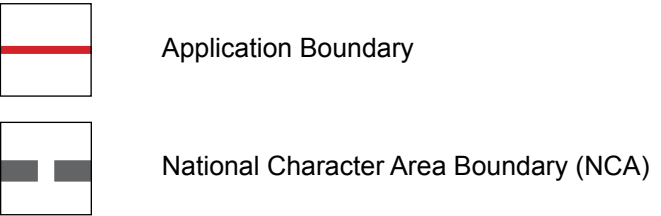




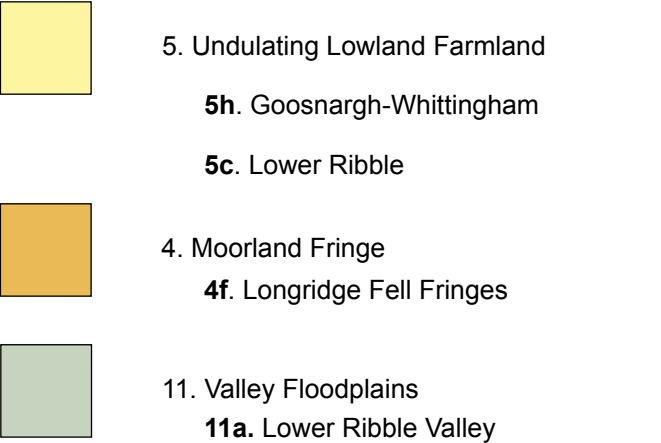



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
**A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire 2000  
Landscape Character Types and Landscape  
Character Areas**





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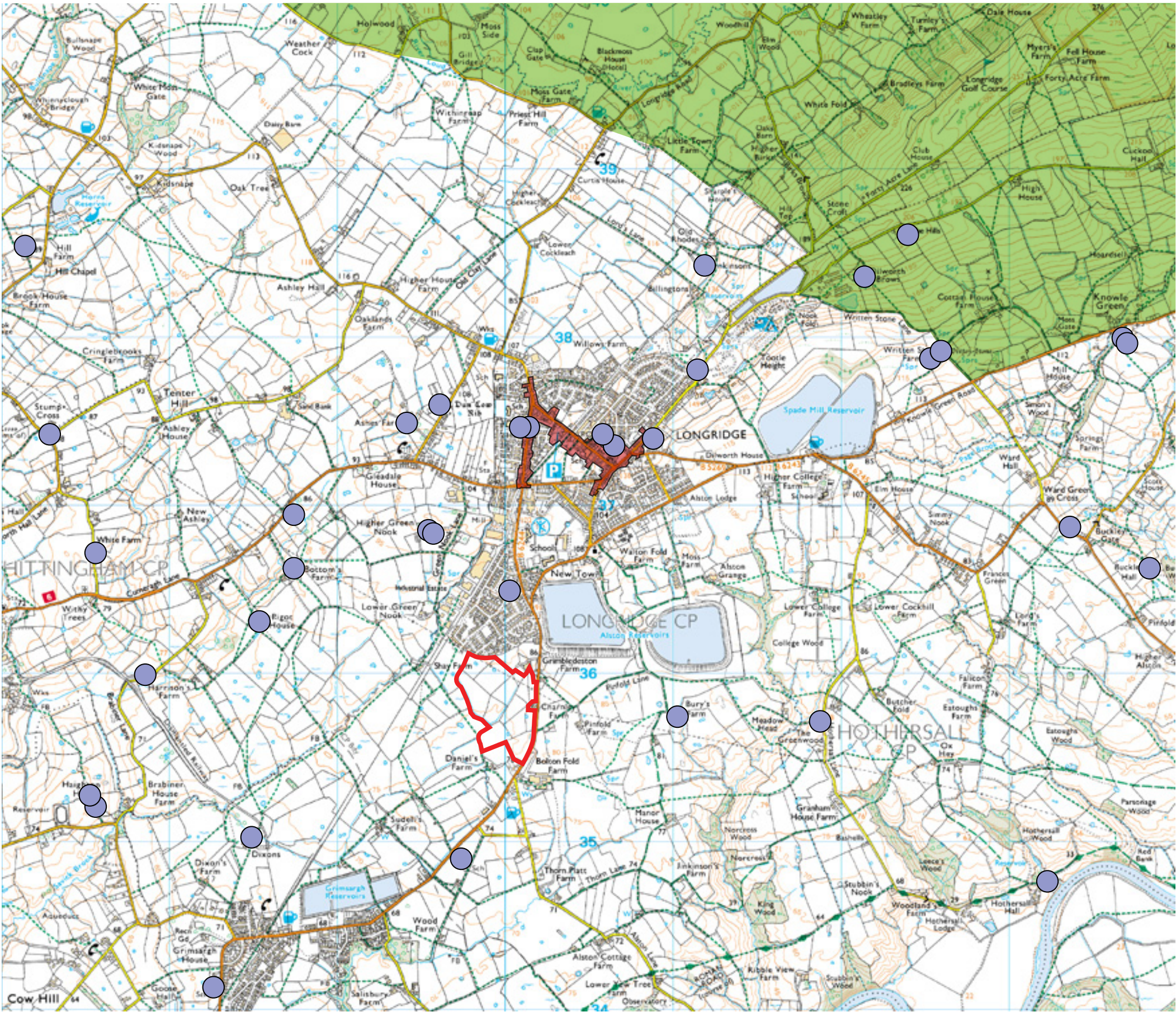
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER



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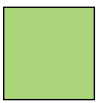
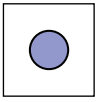
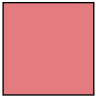
**Figure 4**






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-  Application Boundary
-  Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
-  Listed Buildings \*
-  Longbridge Conservation Area \*\*

\* Source: <http://www.magic.gov.uk>

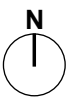
\*\* Source: Ribble Valley Local Plan



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DESIGNATIONS



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# Figure 5





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Application Boundary



Photo Viewpoint



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN



NTS @A3

MST / SLS


February 2015

Figure 6





**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 1:** View south across the site from the Longridge settlement edge (Taken January 2015)



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Grimbledeston Farm, Longridge


PHOTO VIEWPOINT 1

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**Figure 7**



**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 2:** View south across the site from the Longridge settlement edge (Taken January 2015)



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 2


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**Figure 8**





**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 3:** View south across the site from the Longridge settlement edge (Taken January 2015)



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 3

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**Figure 9**



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 4: 180 degree views from the western site boundary (Taken October 2014)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 4 Cont'd



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 4

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Figure 10






PHOTO VIEWPOINT 5: 180 degree views from the western site boundary (Taken October 2014)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 5 Cont'd



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 5

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Figure 11






PHOTO VIEWPOINT 6: View south west towards the site from Preston Road, adjacent to the entrance to Water Meadows (Taken October 2014)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 6 Cont'd



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 6 Cont'd



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 6

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Figure 12






PHOTO VIEWPOINT 7: View west across the site from Preston Road, adjacent to two properties on Preston Road (Taken October 2014)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 7 Cont'd



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 7


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# Figure 13





**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 8:** View west across the site from Preston Road, adjacent to two properties on Preston Road (Taken January 2015)



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 8


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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 9: View west towards the site from the junction of Preston Road and Pinfold Lane, Bridleway (Taken October 2014)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 9 Cont'd



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 9


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# Figure 15





**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 10:** View north west across the site from Preston Road adjacent to a property on Preston Road (Taken January 2015)



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 10

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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 11: View north towards the site from Preston Road, Alston (Taken January 2015)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 12: View north towards the site from the public footpath north of Daniel's Farm (Taken January 2015)



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Grimbledeston Farm, Longridge

PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 11 & 12

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# Figure 17






PHOTO VIEWPOINT 13: View north east across the site from the public footpath where it adjoins the site boundary (Taken October 2014)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 13 Cont'd



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 13 Cont'd



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 13

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**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 14:** View east towards the site from the public footpath at the southern edge of the playing fields (Taken January 2015)



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 14

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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 15: View south east towards the site from the car park adjacent to the southern settlement edge (Taken October 2014)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 15 Cont'd



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 15

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Figure 20



**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 16:** View north east towards the site from the public footpath (Taken October 2014)



**PHOTO VIEWPOINT 16 Cont'd**



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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 16

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PHOTO VIEWPOINT 17: View north east towards the site from the public footpath (Taken January 2015)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 18: View north east towards the site from the public footpath (Taken January 2015)



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PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 17 & 18

NTS @ A3      MST / SLS      February 2015

Figure 22






PHOTO VIEWPOINT 19: View west towards the site from a field gate on Pinfold Lane (public bridleway) (Taken January 2015)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 20: View west towards the site from a field gate on Pinfold Lane (public bridleway) (Taken January 2015)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 21: View north west towards the site from the public bridleway adjacent to Manor House (Taken January 2015)



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Grimbledeston Farm, Longridge

PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 19, 20 & 21

NTS @ A3      MST / SLS      February 2015

Figure 23






PHOTO VIEWPOINT 22: View north east towards the site from the northern edge of Grimsargh (Taken January 2015)



PHOTO VIEWPOINT 23: View south west towards the site from Higher Road, close to Dilworth Upper Reservoir, Longridge Fell (Taken January 2015)



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Grimbledeston Farm, Longridge

PHOTO VIEWPOINTS 22 & 23

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**APPENDIX A**

LANDSCAPE BASELINE & EFFECTS TABLE (LBET)									
Landscape Type and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape (Nature of receptor likely to be affected)		Judged Magnitude of Landscape Change & Effect (Nature of the effect likely to occur)		Commentary	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect at Year 1	Overall Effect at Year 15	
	Susceptibility to Change (Sensitivity)	Landscape Value	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major	Major	Major	
						Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	
	High	National	High	Yes		Minor	Minor	Minor	
	Medium	Regional	Medium	No		Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	
	Low	County District Local	Low Negligible None	NA		None	None	None	
National Landscape Character¹									
Natural England, National Character Area Profile (NCA)	Low/Medium	Regional	Construction: Low Year 1: Negligible Year 15: Low	N/A	The site and the study are lie within NCA35: Lancashire Valleys. The NCA covers the wide vale of the rivers Ribble and Calder and their tributaries and is located between the backdrops of Pendle Hill and the southern Pennines. It is described as a visually contained landscape with a strong urban character and includes a number of towns and post-industrial landscapes. Farmed land between these areas is predominantly pasture. No assessment of sensitivity is given within the NCA profile. Statements of Environmental Opportunity identified include “ <i>Creating new woodlands to assimilate urban development and to enhance rural character and tranquillity where appropriate</i> ”, and “ <i>Conserve and manage the distinction between small rural settlements and the densely urban areas and ensure that new development is sensitively designed to contribute to settlement character, reduce the impact of the urban fringe and provide well-designed green infrastructure to enhance recreation, biodiversity and water flow regulation</i> ”. The proposed development would result in little change to the character of this area overall. There would be limited adverse effects during construction as a result of loss of some limited landscape features and the presence of construction activities. At year 1 following completion the proposed development would form an extension of the existing settlement area of Longridge, increasing its presence slightly in the local landscape only. At year 15 GI proposals would enhance the local landscape characteristics in accordance with the recommendations for the NCA and provide a soft settlement edge in this location.	Minor Adverse	Negligible	Minor Beneficial	
Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) County/District²									

<sup>1</sup> There will be variations in sensitivity and landscape value within the NCA. An overall professional judgment is reached.

<sup>2</sup> Where sensitivity and value has been described by the LCA this is included within the table. Where this is not the case, professional judgment on sensitivity and landscape value has been determined.

LANDSCAPE BASELINE & EFFECTS TABLE (LBET)									
Landscape Reference	Type and	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape (Nature of receptor likely to be affected)		Judged Magnitude of Landscape Change & Effect (Nature of the effect likely to occur)		Commentary	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect at Year 1	Overall Effect at Year 15
		Susceptibility to Change (Sensitivity)	Landscape Value	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High Medium Low	National Regional County District Local	High Medium Low Negligible None	Yes No NA		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
LCT5: Undulating Lowland Farmland		Medium	County	Construction: Low Year 1: Low/ Negligible Year 15: Low	N/A	This applies to the broad area of low lying landscape within the local and wider context of the site. Its character description includes: “There are also many mixed farm woodlands, copses and hedgerow trees, creating an impression of a well wooded landscape from ground level and a patchwork of wood and pasture from raised viewpoints on the fells...The towns of Longridge and Clitheroe also occur within this type, but are not typical of the settlement pattern...There is a high density of farms and scattered cottages outside the clustered settlements, linked by a network of minor roads”. Landscape Strategy recommendations include; “Conserve the distinctive rural hedgerow network, Conserve the lowland herb-rich haymeadows and unimproved neutral grasslands, Conserve the distinctive settings to rural settlements, and Enhance the wooded character of the lowland landscape”. The proposed development would result in little change to the character of this area overall. There would be limited adverse effects during construction as a result of loss of some limited landscape features and the presence of construction activities. At year 1 following completion the proposed development would form an extension of the existing settlement area of Longridge, increasing its presence slightly in the local landscape only. At year 15 GI proposals would enhance the local landscape characteristics in accordance with the recommendations of the publication and provide a soft settlement edge in this location.	Minor/Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse	Minor Beneficial
Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment (LCA)									
Forest of Bowland AONB		High	National	Construction: Negligible Year 1: Negligible Year 15: Negligible	N/A	This sensitive landscape area is located to the north east of Longridge some distance from the site. There are wide reaching views from the edge of the AONB some of which include parts of Longridge although the site and the part of Longridge adjacent to the site is not discernible. Given the distance and that the proposed development is located on lower land at the other side of Longridge, it would not result in any discernible change to the landscape and townscape context of the wider AONB setting.	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

LANDSCAPE BASELINE & EFFECTS TABLE (LBET)									
Landscape Reference	Type and	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape (Nature of receptor likely to be affected)		Judged Magnitude of Landscape Change & Effect (Nature of the effect likely to occur)		Commentary	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect at Year 1	Overall Effect at Year 15
		Susceptibility to Change (Sensitivity)	Landscape Value	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major	Major	Major
							Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
						Minor	Minor	Minor	
						Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	
						None	None	None	
		High	National	High	Yes	Adverse	Adverse	Adverse	
		Medium	Regional	Medium	No	Beneficial	Beneficial	Beneficial	
		Low	County District Local	Low Negligible None	NA				
Longridge Conservation Area		High	District	Construction: None Year 1: None Year 15: None	N/A	This designated settlement area is located within the northern part of Longridge and is urban in character. Views described within the Conservation Area Appraisal produced by Ribble Valley Council do not include the site as part of the context. The development of the site would not have an effect on the character of the conservation area.	None	None	None
Local Landscape Character									
The Site		Medium	Local	Construction: Medium/High Year 1: Medium Year 15: Medium/Low	N/A	The north western part of the site includes a good peripheral network of hedgerows and gappy internal hedgerows, with occasional hedgerow trees. These divide a number of grassed fields. A small number of field ponds are located within the fields. Pylons provide a visual detractor through the fields. The area is strongly influenced by the adjacent settlement edge and residential construction site. The proposed development would extend this character into the site. Some internal hedgerows would be lost, however the peripheral hedgerows and internal ponds and trees would be connected via a network of retained meadow areas and supplemented with native hedgerow, tree and woodland planting.	Moderate/Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor/Moderate Adverse
						The south eastern part of the site is similar in character but lacks landscape features other than a tall peripheral hedgerow alongside Preston Road. With the exception of the northern part of this area it is relatively removed from the settlement edge. The proposed development would extend the settlement edge into the northern part of area only, with the southern area retained as part of the proposed green infrastructure. Development would be set back from Preston Road beyond the roadside hedgerow which would be retained within a green corridor and incorporate new native tree planting. Within the south of the site new hedgerows, woodland, scrub and ponds within retained meadow grassland are proposed to be managed for biodiversity.	Moderate/Major Adverse	Moderate Adverse	Minor/Moderate Adverse
						The green infrastructure proposals for the site are proposed to provide containment of the proposed development, settlement edge and enhancement of local landscape characteristics as they mature, this would partially offset the effects of the extension of the settlement edge within this landscape.			

LANDSCAPE BASELINE & EFFECTS TABLE (LBET)								
Landscape Type and Reference	Judged Sensitivity of Landscape (Nature of receptor likely to be affected)		Judged Magnitude of Landscape Change & Effect (Nature of the effect likely to occur)		Commentary	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect at Year 1	Overall Effect at Year 15
	Susceptibility to Change (Sensitivity)	Landscape Value	Scale or Size of the Degree of Change including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project	Where applicable, are the Effects Reversible?		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None Adverse Beneficial	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None Adverse Beneficial	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None Adverse Beneficial
Local townscape context	Low	Local	Construction: Low Year 1: Negligible Year 15: Low	N/A	Within the context of the site the town of Longridge is located on gradually rising land extending towards Longridge Fell to the north east. The main context of the site the urban area comprises modern residential housing estates with some industry further to the north-west and north. Playing fields at the settlement edge adjoin a part of the north-western site boundary and housing under construction, accessed off Preston Road adjoins a part of the northern site boundary. Church towers punctuate the urban context. The development proposals would extend this area southwards slightly. Green infrastructure proposals associated with the proposed development would result in a beneficial effect on the settlement edge character in this location providing better integration with the landscape context.	Minor Adverse	Negligible	Minor Beneficial
Local landscape context	Medium	Local	Construction: Medium Year 1: Medium/Low Year 15: Low	N/A	To the south-west, south and east of the site the landscape comprises flat to gently sloping grazed fields of varying size enclosed by a network of low hedgerows with occasional trees. This results in a visually very open landscape. Preston Road is in places urban in character and is lined with scattered properties. These include traditional properties and farmhouses built with local materials and larger complexes including modern farm sheds. Detached from the settlement edge, this area has a more rural feel. It does however contain man made features including various reservoirs and the course of a former rail line as well as visually detracting modern farm sheds. The proposed development would initially increase the presence of the settlement locally within this area, however as green infrastructure proposals associated with the proposed development mature they would integrate the proposed development and the settlement edge within the local landscape and introduce new locally characteristic landscape features that would deliver some local landscape benefits and partially offset any adverse effects resulting from the built development.	Moderate Adverse	Minor/ Moderate Adverse	Minor Beneficial



**APPENDIX B**

VISUAL BASELINE & EFFECTS TABLE (VBET)											
Ref	Location & Receptor Type	Sensitivity of Visual Receptor <sup>1</sup>		Magnitude of Visual Change & Effects <sup>2</sup>				Commentary	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect at Year 1	Overall Effect at Year 15
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Distance from site Boundary (approx. m/km)	The nature of the view and the extent of the built development that would be experienced	Are views transient?	Size/Scale of Visual Change/Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High High-Medium Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Minimal None	Yes No	High Medium Low Negligible None		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
A	Longridge southern settlement edge  Residents (photos 1-3)	High	Medium	At boundary	Full	No	Medium to High (construction) Medium to High (Year 1) Medium to Low (Year 15)	The photographs show properties at the settlement edge currently with views from upper floors over the site boundary hedgerow or across the building site. The effects will vary depending upon the extent of the current available view and the position of each property relative to the proposed development. Where a view across open space to the proposed development will be retained, the effect will be slightly less than where new rear gardens are proposed to back on to existing properties. Within the east of the site along the northern boundary woodland edge screen planting is proposed and will screen views as it matures.	Major to Moderate Adverse	Major to Moderate Adverse	Moderate to Minor Adverse
B	Properties adjacent to the eastern site boundary on Preston Road  Residents (photos 7-10)	High	Medium/ High	At boundary	Full	No	High (construction) High (Year 1) Medium (Year 15)	A small number of properties back on to the site and will have views to varying extents and distances from front, rear or side windows. The view from some properties and gardens will be filtered by garden boundary vegetation. Elsewhere there are open views across the site. Woodland edge planting is proposed around the edge of the development and would contain and screen views from the receptors as it matures.	Major Adverse (where views are open) to moderate adverse	Major Adverse (where views are open) to moderate adverse	Moderate to minor Adverse
C	Preston Road  Road Users  (photos 6-11)	Medium	Medium	At boundary	Minimal	Yes	High (construction) Medium/Low (Year 1) Negligible (Year 15)	Views from Preston Road vary. On the approaches to the site from the north and south the site is not apparent. It is only as the road passes alongside the site where there are transitional glimpse views across the site. The majority of views from the road are screened by the tall boundary hedgerow or roadside properties with trees. Where there are gaps in the hedgerow, there are glimpse open views across the fields within the eastern part of the site which will be retained as part of the green infrastructure proposals. Visual effects are likely to be greatest	Moderate / Major Adverse	Minor/Moderate Adverse	Negligible

<sup>1</sup> The following approach has been adopted for the sensitivity of visual receptors: **High**= Residents at home/ Communities/Valued landscapes/Heritage assets/Important recognised viewing points/ Users of recognised long distance recreational routes; **High-Medium** = Users of Public Rights of Way/Users engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is focussed on the landscape ; **Medium** =Vehicle Users /Users of footways alongside highways; **Low** = People at their place of work focussed on their work and activity/Users engaged in outdoor sport or recreation. Variations may occur for receptors and, if this is the case, then they are explained within the table and the narrative text of the LVIA.

<sup>2</sup> The professional assessment of change and effects on visual receptors is in relation to the type and scale of the Development proposed.

VISUAL BASELINE & EFFECTS TABLE (VBET)											
Ref	Location & Receptor Type	Sensitivity of Visual Receptor <sup>1</sup>		Magnitude of Visual Change & Effects <sup>2</sup>				Commentary	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect at Year 1	Overall Effect at Year 15
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Distance from site Boundary (approx. m/km)	The nature of the view and the extent of the built development that would be experienced	Are views transient?	Size/Scale of Visual Change/Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High High-Medium Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Minimal None	Yes No	High Medium Low Negligible None		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
								adjacent to the proposed access point at the time of construction, when a section of hedgerow would be removed and would temporarily open up views into the site. At year 1 properties will be set well back within the site, beyond retained and proposed landscape areas. Only a handful of properties at the proposed access will relate to Preston Road, thus the development conserves and replicates the existing built character along Preston Road on the Longridge approach. With the exception of the entrance point, the intervening retained hedgerow and new tree and woodland planting will screen views of the proposed development as it matures.			
D	Public footpath adjoining the south western site boundary  PRoW users  (photos 12-13)	High	Medium/High	At boundary	Full	Yes	High (construction) Medium (Year 1) Low (Year 15)	The view from the footpath is currently open across the south eastern part of the site and filtered by the boundary hedgerow across the western part of the site. Construction activities would be clearly visible within the site and a pond construction in the foreground within the view. At year 1 new landscaping within the foreground would not screen views of proposed development further north within the east of the site, effectively the existing settlement edge view would be brought closer to the receptor. In the longer term as new planting approaches maturity this would largely screen views of the proposed development and provide an enhanced landscape within the foreground.	Major Adverse	Moderate/Major Adverse	Minor Adverse
E	Playing fields adjacent to the northern site boundary  Recreational users  (photos 14-15)	Low-Medium	Low	At boundary	Partial	No	Low/Medium (construction) Low/Medium (Year 1) Low (Year 15)	The site is partially screened by a boundary hedgerow and trees and is seen in the context of the adjacent settlement edge. The construction activities and the western edge of the development would initially be visible beyond the retained boundary hedgerow as an extension of the settlement edge. As the proposed tree and hedgerow infill planting matures this would soften and screen the view of properties at the western edge of the development, further assimilating them within the landscape framework.	Minor/Moderate Adverse	Minor/Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse
F	Properties at the	Medium-High	Medium	Up to 150m	Partial	No	Low/Medium	Any views towards the site from these properties would be from upstairs	Moderate	Moderate	Minor Adverse

VISUAL BASELINE & EFFECTS TABLE (VBET)											
Ref	Location & Receptor Type	Sensitivity of Visual Receptor <sup>1</sup>		Magnitude of Visual Change & Effects <sup>2</sup>				Commentary	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect at Year 1	Overall Effect at Year 15
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Distance from site Boundary (approx. m/km)	The nature of the view and the extent of the built development that would be experienced	Are views transient?	Size/Scale of Visual Change/Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High High-Medium Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Minimal None	Yes No	High Medium Low Negligible None		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
	southern edge of Longridge adjacent to the playing fields  Residents  (photo 15)			approx.			(construction) Low/Medium (Year 1) Low (Year 15)	rear windows and the view across the playing field to the site would be filtered by the retained hedgerow at construction and year 1. As the proposed tree and hedgerow infill planting matures this would soften and screen the view of properties at the western edge of the development, further assimilating them within the landscape framework.	Adverse	Adverse	
<b>G</b>	Land south west of the site  Users of PRoWs  (photos 16-18)	High	High	Up to 1km approx.	Partial	Yes	Medium/Low (construction) Low(Year 1) Low/Negligible (Year 15)	Views towards the site are filtered by intervening hedgerows and trees. The settlement edge is visible distantly beyond the site. Development would initially bring the settlement edge closer to the receptor but it would remain distant. As proposed woodland, tree and hedgerow infill planting matures around the western boundaries of the site this would screen the development and the settlement edge from view.	Moderate Adverse	Minor/Moderate Adverse	Minor Adverse
<b>H</b>	Land east of Preston Road  Users of PRoWs  Residents  (photos 19-21)	High	High	250-875m approx.	Minimal	Yes	Low (construction) Low (Year 1) Negligible (Year 15)	Current views towards the site across fields are generally filtered by intervening hedgerows, trees and buildings on Preston Road and by the boundary hedgerow on Preston Road, which will be retained and supplemented with tree and woodland planting. A distant view to the site and settlement edge is possible from the bridleway close to Manor House (viewpoint 21). Generally construction activities are unlikely to be visible except when construction is undertaken towards the eastern edge of the site and upper floors are under construction. Properties will be set back within the site beyond retained fields and the proposed tree and woodland planting. As this matures it would screen views of the proposed development and present a wooded skyline. From properties within this area there may be oblique views from property windows, however the primary orientation appears to be away from the site. Views are likely to be similar to those from the public rights of way.	Minor Adverse	Minor Adverse	Negligible

VISUAL BASELINE & EFFECTS TABLE (VBET)											
Ref	Location & Receptor Type	Sensitivity of Visual Receptor <sup>1</sup>		Magnitude of Visual Change & Effects <sup>2</sup>				Commentary	Overall Effect at Construction Phase	Overall Effect at Year 1	Overall Effect at Year 15
		Susceptibility to Change	Value	Distance from site Boundary (approx. m/km)	The nature of the view and the extent of the built development that would be experienced	Are views transient?	Size/Scale of Visual Change/Effect (including degree of contrast/integration) at Stages of Project		Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None	Major Moderate Minor Negligible None
		High High-Medium Medium Low	High Medium Low		Full Partial Minimal None	Yes No	High Medium Low Negligible None		Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial	Adverse Beneficial
I	Northern edge of Grimsargh  Residents  (photo 22)	High	Medium/ High	2.1 km approx	Minimal	No	Negligible (construction) Negligible (Year 1) None (Year 15)	From this slightly elevated position there are open views towards the site and Longridge across fields with overlapping trees and hedgerows. The elevated parts of Longridge are very distantly visible rising to Longridge Fell, however the site is on lower ground below and it is unlikely that the proposed development would be visible or present a discernible change to the view at this distance. Nevertheless the proposed boundary woodland, tree and hedgerow infill planting would screen the development and settlement edge in the view as it matures.	Negligible	Negligible	None
J	Higher Road, Longridge Fell (within the Forest of Bowland AONB)  Recreation  (photo 22)	High	High	3km approx..	Minimal	Yes	Negligible (construction) Negligible (Year 1) None (Year 15)	There is a wide panoramic view from this elevated viewpoint across Longridge. The site and much of Longridge appear to be screened by intervening vegetation. Nevertheless if any of the site forms a part of the view, at this distance the construction activities and the proposed development would not be readily discernible. The proposed boundary woodland, tree and hedgerow infill planting would further assimilate the development as it matures.	Negligible	Negligible	None