



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

LAND AT BOXWORTH ROAD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

FOR



DECEMBER 2021

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LANDSCAPE & VISUAL ANALYSIS

LAND AT BOXWORTH ROAD, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is a Landscape and Visual Analysis (LVA) of the proposed allocated site S/RRA/SAS identified in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan (GCLP) First Proposals.

The Landscape and Visual Analysis has been prepared by Indigo Landscape Architects on behalf of [REDACTED]. It should be noted that this is not a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. This analysis is a brief review of the potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed allocation and is provided as additional information in response to the GCLP consultation. We have endeavoured to provide sufficient information, level of detail and analysis to explain the likely effects of the proposed allocation at a level suitable to the proposal and location.

1.1 METHODOLOGY

The methodology and guidelines used in the preparation of this analysis have been developed from the following:

- An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, Natural England, 2014; and
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA), Third Edition, Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013.

The approach to the Analysis has involved the following steps:

- Recording and analysis of the existing landscape elements (physical features), landscape character and visual amenity associated with the Allocation Site and surrounding area through desk based study and field appraisal;
- Appreciation of the form and scale of the Proposed Allocation having regard to the landscape and visual context;
- Identification and evaluation of the sensitivity of the existing landscape and visual receptors likely to be affected by the Proposed Allocation;
- An assessment of the level of effect likely to result from implementation of the Proposed Allocation.

As such, this report aims to assess the effects of the Proposed Allocation on the existing landscape and views / visual amenity, having regard to the potential harm or benefit to the receiving environment and sensitive receptors.

The visual analysis was carried out from a range of publicly accessible points in the surrounding landscape to establish the possible extent of visual influence of the Proposed Allocation. While public views are generally given more weight due to the greater number of people likely to experience the view, private / not publicly accessible locations have also been considered using a combination of desktop study and observation from the nearest publicly accessible location.

The site was visited on 29 November 2021 and the weather was dry and partly cloudy. Representative photographs are taken from the position where the proposal site is likely to be most visible where many similar view points were available. The photographs demonstrate the potential extent of the development's visual envelope.

Photographs were taken with a Nikon D3500 digital SLR camera with a fixed focal length Nikon 35mm lens.

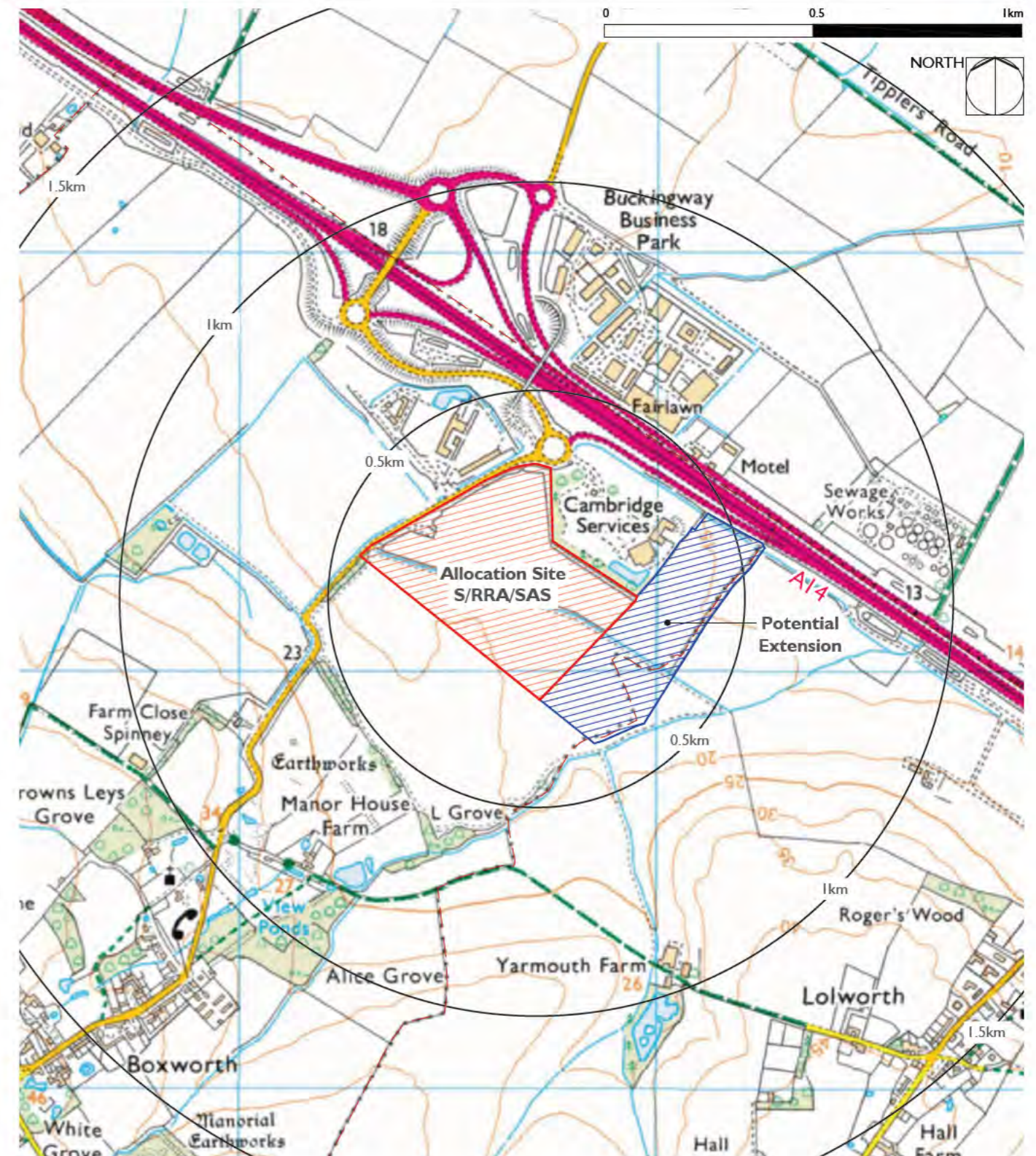


FIG. 1 - SITE LOCATION PLAN

2.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

This analysis is prepared in response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan - First Proposals which were issued for consultation between 1st November and 13 December 2021.

The proposed Allocation Site, designated as S/RRA/SAS in the First Proposals documentation, extends to 18.6 hectares and is located south of the A14 Cambridge Services accessed from Boxworth Road. The Site is located within Cambridgeshire County and Boxworth Civil Parish and is being considered for Class B2 General Industrial and Class B8 Storage or Distribution uses with ancillary supporting uses.

Key points of the Proposed Policy Direction are:

Employment

S/RRA/SAS Land to the south of the A14 Services

- Suitable for the following uses: Class B2 (General Industrial) or Class B8 (Storage or Distribution) providing a range of small and medium sized units.
- Warehousing and distribution should focus on meeting sub regional needs. Site meeting evidenced outstanding demand for warehousing and distribution units located close to the strategic road network.
- Site boundaries to provide landscape buffers of a minimum of 25m wide of native tree and understorey planting.

3.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL BASELINE

3.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

THE SITE

The proposed Allocation Site is an approximately 18.6 hectare site located south of the A14 Cambridge Services. The allocation site is made up of two existing parcels. The northern parcel, approximately 10.5 hectares, has recently been used by the Department of Transport as a staging site for the A14 roadworks and is currently being reinstated to field. The southern parcel, approximately 8.1 hectares is an existing cultivated field. Both parcels are generally level and are separated by a shallow grassy ditch with sporadic low hedging. The northern and western edges of the proposed Allocation Site are formed by the Cambridge Services site and Boxworth Road respectively, whilst the proposed eastern edge aligns with the east edge of the Services site. The southern edge of the proposed Allocation Site runs through the centre of a field and does not align with existing or historic features.

TOPOGRAPHY

The proposed Allocation Site, adjacent Services, and business park lie within a relatively flat area at the base of a low ridge. To the north the landscape remains low and flat, transitioning to the Fens National Character Area further north. To the south the immediate landscape rises ±40m transitioning into a gently undulating plateau characteristic of the Cambridgeshire Claylands National Character Area. This low ridge generally encircles the proposed allocation site, cutting off views further south.

LAND USE

The proposed Allocation Site is located on the southern edge of the Cambridge Services site and opposite the Buckingham Business Park site located on the north side of A14 / A1307. The Site has good access from Boxworth Road to the A14 via the recently finished A14 roadworks. Beyond this built up employment area, the surrounding landscape generally consists of cultivated fields with low hedge boundaries and occasional tree belts or woodland blocks. Two small villages, Boxworth and Lolworth, are located south and east of the Site respectively.

THE POTENTIAL EXTENSION AREA

A 10.8 hectare area, located to the east of the proposed Allocation Site and Cambridge Services is available for inclusion, should the Local Authority be minded to extended the allocation area. The area shares similar landscape and visual characteristics to the Allocation Site and is within the control of the Allocated Site's owners. The area is composed of two cultivated fields bound by a 10m wide hedgerow along it's eastern boundary.



FIG. 2 - EXISTING CONDITIONS

- KEY:
- Allocation Site
 - Potential Extension
 - - - Public Footpath / Bridleway
 - - - Cycleway
 - ▲ Listed Building
 - Ancient Woodland

0 0.5 1km
 KILOMETRES SCALE 1:12,500@A3
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3.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is the process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features (characteristics) that make landscapes distinctive.

PUBLISHED LANDSCAPE CHARACTER STUDIES

A number of landscape character studies have been completed for the region looking at different landscape scales. Brief outlines are included here to bring out landscape elements and character features relevant to the proposal and site environs.

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA

The proposed Allocation Site is located in NCA Profile 88, the 'Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands'. The main characteristic of the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands is a broad, gently undulating, lowland plateau dissected by shallow river valleys that gradually widen as they approach the Fens NCA to the north. The character area is predominantly an arable and commercially farmed landscape. The key characteristics of NCA 129 are identified as:

- Gently undulating, lowland plateau divided by shallow river valleys that gradually widen to the north.
- Underlying geology of Jurassic and Cretaceous clays overlain by more recent Quaternary glacial deposits of chalky boulder clay (till) and sand and gravel river terrace deposits within the river valleys. Lime-rich, loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage predominate, with better drained soils in the river valleys.
- The River Great Ouse and its tributaries meander slowly across the landscape. Three aquifers underlie the NCA and a large manmade reservoir, Grafham Water, supplies water within and outside the NCA.
- Variable, scattered woodland cover comprising smaller plantations, secondary woodland, pollarded willows and poplar along river valleys, and clusters of ancient woodland, particularly on higher ground to the north-west represent remnant ancient deer parks and Royal Hunting Forests.
- Predominantly open, arable landscape of planned and regular fields bounded by open ditches and trimmed, often species-poor hedgerows which contrast with those fields that are irregular and piecemeal.
- Wide variety of semi-natural habitats supporting a range of species, some notably rare and scarce, including designated sites for species associated with ancient woodland, wetland sites important for birds, great crested newt and species of stonewort, and traditional orchards and unimproved grassland supporting a rich diversity of wildflowers.
- Rich geological and archaeological history evident in fossils, medieval earthworks, deserted villages and Roman roads. A number of historic parklands, designed landscapes and country houses.
- Diversity of building materials including brick, render, thatch and stone. Locally quarried limestone features in villages such as Lavendon, Harrold and Turvey on the upper stretches of the River Great Ouse.
- Settlements cluster around major road and rail corridors, with smaller towns, villages and linear settlements widely dispersed throughout, giving a more rural feel. Small villages are usually nucleated around a church or village green, while fen-edge villages are often in a linear form along roads.

DESIGNATED LANDSCAPES

The Application Site does not sit within any statutory designations of national, regional or local importance and is not in the immediate proximity of any historic buildings, world heritage sites, battlefields or gardens. The nearest landscape of ecological statutory designation is the Overhall Grove Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), approximately 2.25 km south of the proposed Allocation Site. A cluster of seven Listed Buildings are located within Boxwood to the south, the closest being the Parish Church of St Peter, a Grade II listed building approximately 1.0 km south of the proposed Allocation Site. Another group of Listed Buildings is located in Lolworth to the south-east approximately 1.3 km from the proposed Allocation Site. No Listed Buildings are visible from the site.

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

At a county level, the application site and surrounding landscape is covered by the Greater Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment (Chris Blandford Associates, February 2021). The application site itself sits at the edge of the Wooded Claylands (LCA 4A & 4B) and the Fen Edge Claylands (LCA 2A). This can be observed in the change in local topography, rising from low farmlands to the north, to a gently rolling elevated landscape to the south. Given the character site's low lying landscape character with large-scale open fields, it is judged that the Site is most consistent with the Fen Edge Claylands (LCA 2A). The LCA describes the Fen Edge Claylands have a moderate landscape condition and moderate strength of character whilst the Wooded Claylands have a good landscape condition and strong strength of character.

Key characteristics of the Fen Edge Claylands are identified as:

- Low-lying, gently undulating landscape with extensive vistas and large skies
- Gradually rising landform, south from the edge of The Fens
- Large-scale open field system defined by a hierarchy of drains, ditches and lodes
- Predominantly arable farmland supplemented with small scale pastoral field patterns around settlements
- Little vegetation cover, limited to dispersed fragments of deciduous woodland
- Hedgerows, shelterbelts and small clumps of trees create a distinctive vegetation pattern

Key characteristics of the Wooded Claylands are identified as:

- Gently rolling, elevated arable landscape forming a lowland clay plateau
- Minor streams which create shallow depressions or valleys that dissect the landscape
- Wooded landscape with substantial areas of deciduous and mixed woodland particularly at higher altitudes and associated with parkland and farm estates
- Strong evidence of medieval settlement, including deserted medieval villages, substantial earthworks and green lanes and several moated sites
- Low density settlement, comprising small linear or nuclear villages interspersed with farms and woodlands
- Open, peaceful and rural landscape

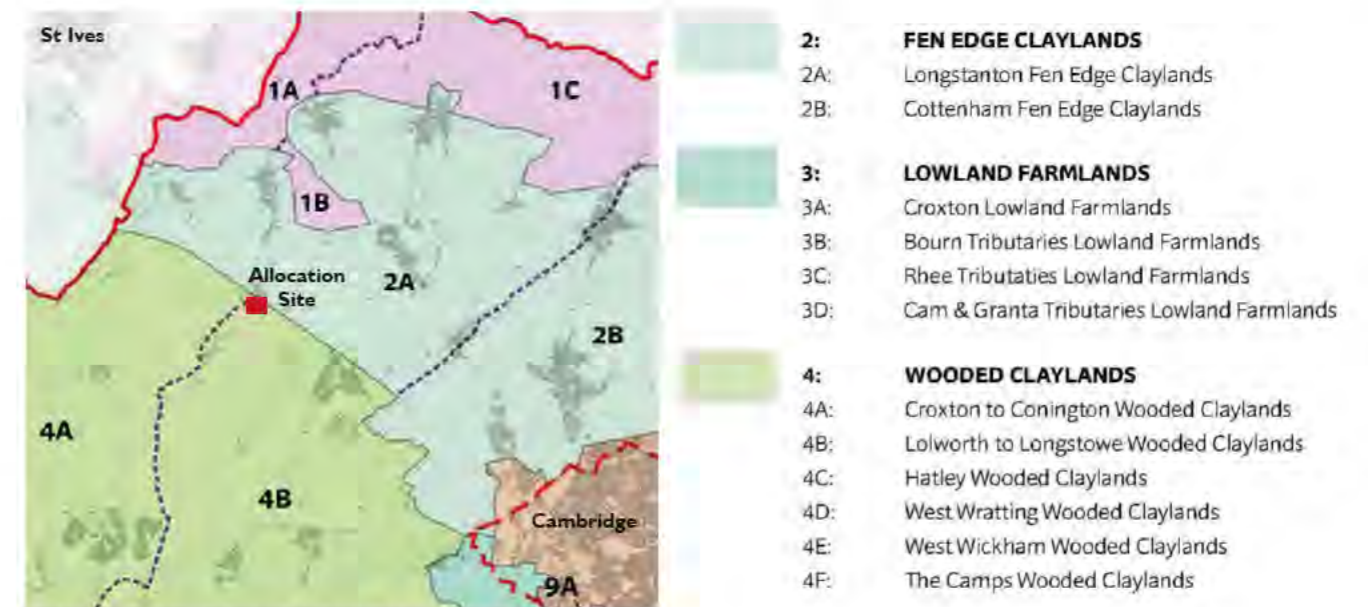


FIG. 3 - LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

4.0 VISUAL ANALYSIS

The site was visited on 29 November 2021 and the weather was dry and partly cloudy.

Photographs were taken with a Nikon D3500 digital SLR camera with a fixed focal length Nikon 35mm lens at a normal eye level view at 1.6 meters. Photographs are presented for context only and have not been prepared at a sufficient scale / resolution to fully represent the views found on site.

The photographs demonstrate the potential extent of the development's visual envelope. Where many similar viewpoints were available, representative photographs were taken from the position where the proposal site is likely to be most visible.

The visual analysis was carried out from a range of publicly accessible points in the surrounding landscape to establish the possible extent of visual influence of the proposed Allocation Site. While public views are generally given more weight due to the greater number of people likely to experience the view, private / not publicly accessible locations have also been considered using a combination of desktop study and observation from the nearest publicly accessible location.

The Viewpoint Analysis includes the proposed Allocation Site and also additional 'extension' land that is within the landowners' control and available should the Local Authority consider extending the Draft Allocation.

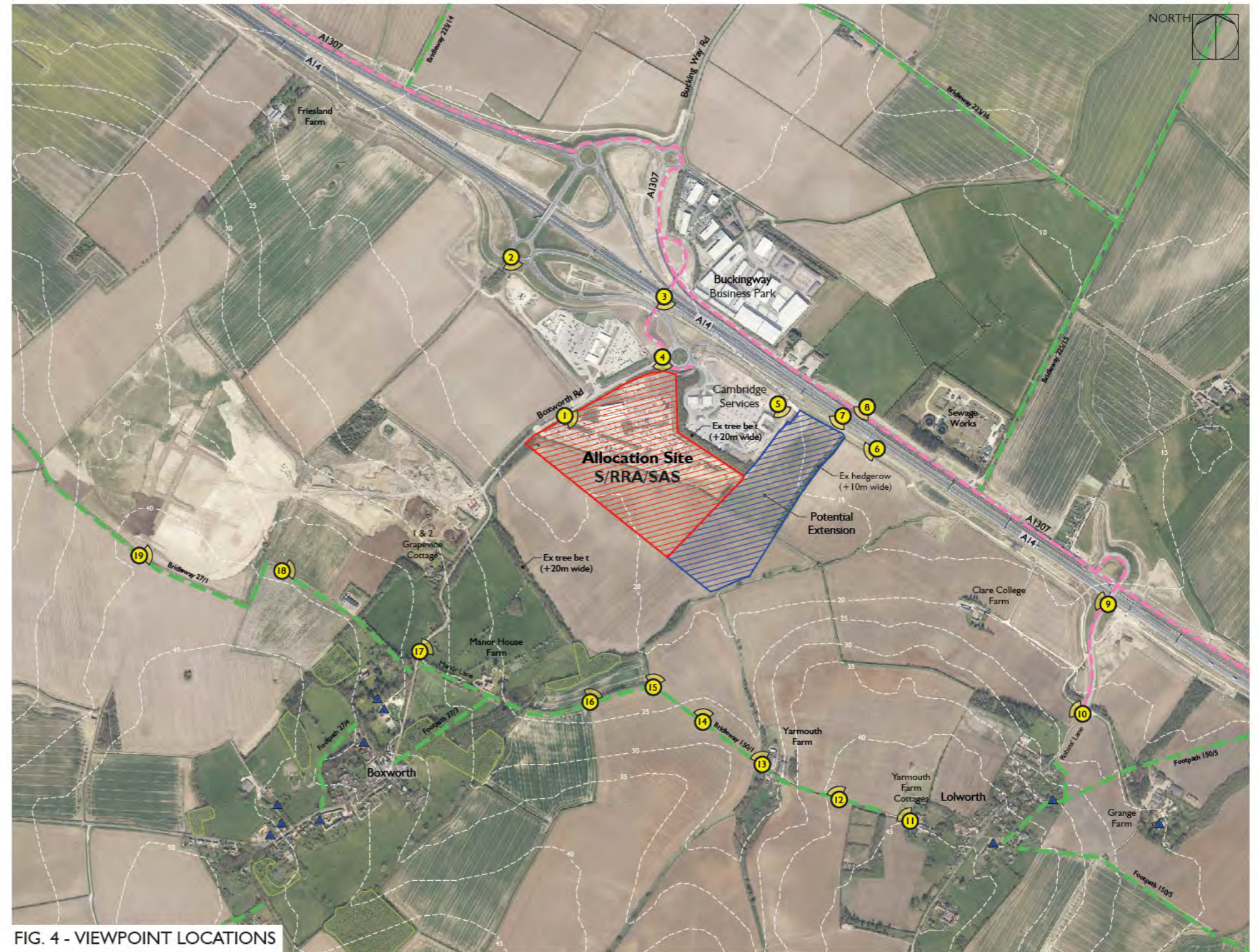
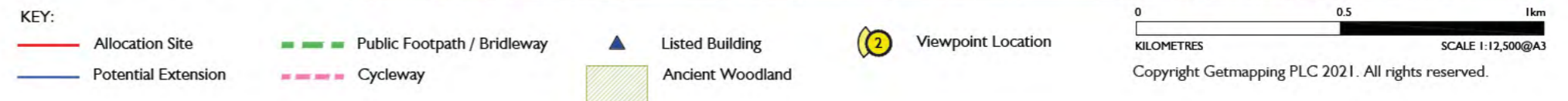


FIG. 4 - VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS



4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 01A - View from Boxworth Road at the existing site entrance



Viewpoint 01B - View from Boxworth Road at the existing site entrance

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

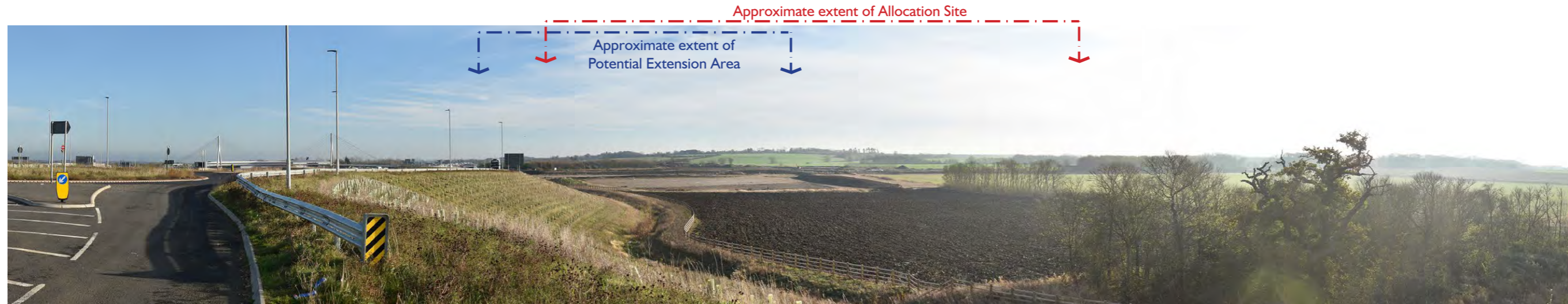
Existing View

This close-range view, immediately along the Allocation Site’s western boundary, approximates the view experienced by receptors traveling on Boxworth Road. The entirety of the Allocation Site and portions of the Potential Extension Area are clearly visible within this view. The view is seen for a short duration while traveling past the Site on Boxworth Road and is experienced in relation to the Cambridge Services and busy A14 roadway junction.

Anticipated view

The western edge of development will be a prominent new element, occupying the majority of the frame of view. This will be mitigated by the proposed 25m landscape buffer planting which will increasingly filter and screen views of development in the medium to long term as the buffer establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 02 - View from the A14 overpass (southern roundabout)

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

Existing View

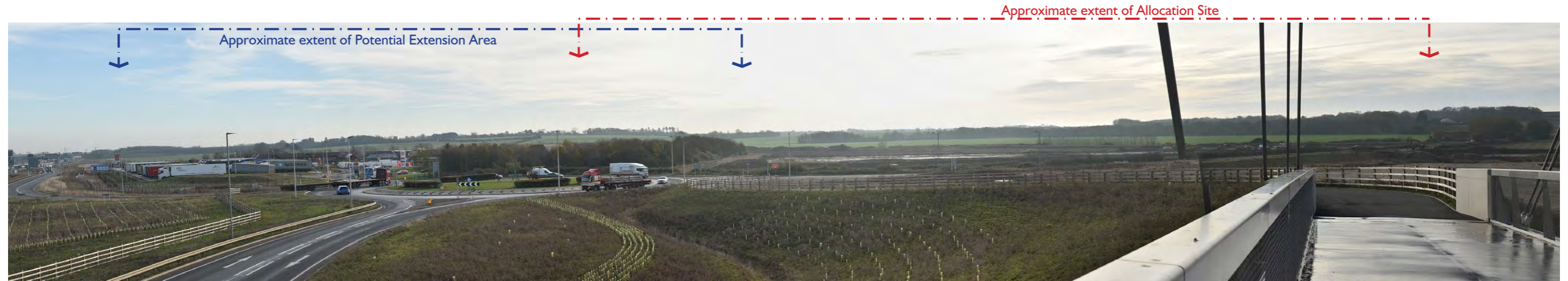
This viewpoint taken from the southern roundabout at the A14 overpass looks east toward the Allocation Site over cultivated fields and the previous Department of Transport A14 Staging Area which is currently being reinstated to field. The majority of the proposed Allocation Site is visible in the middle of the view, however the potential Extension Area is largely out of sight beyond the A14 Cambridge Services site. The A14 cycleway bridge and Buckingway Business Park can be seen to the left. Lolworth and Boxworth villages, located on the ridge line in the distant centre and far right of the view, are both screened from view by existing trees and vegetation. The view is seen for a short duration while traveling along the roadway.

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

Anticipated view

The western edge of development will be immediately apparent across the centre of the view, however this will be mitigated by the proposed 25m landscape buffer planting which will increasingly filter and screen views of development in the medium to long term as the buffer establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 03 - View from the A14 cycleway bridge



Viewpoint 04 - View from the A14 cycleway approaching Boxworth Road

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

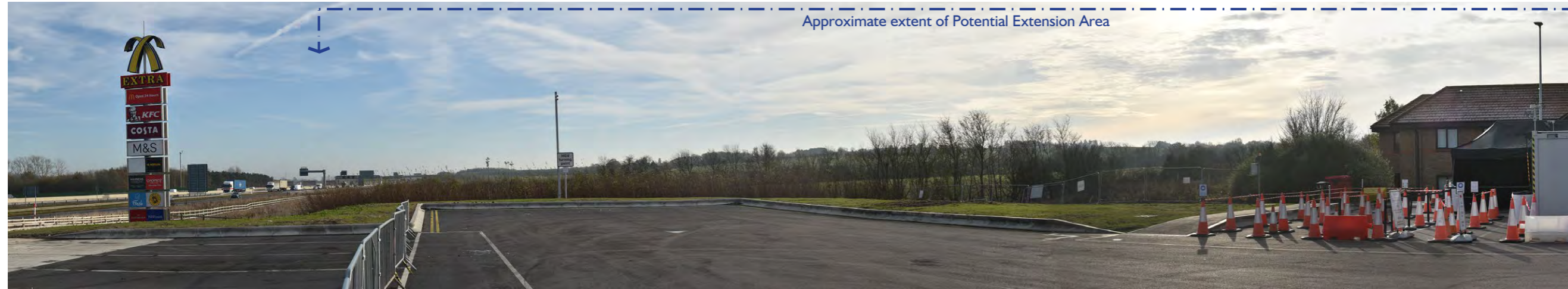
Existing View

These views are taken from the A14 cycle way approaching the Cambridge Services and the proposed Allocation Site. The Cambridge Services site can be seen to the with the majority of the proposed Allocation Site is clearly visible in the centre of the view. The potential Extension Area is out of sight beyond the Cambridge Services development and the 20m wide landscape buffer along the Services south and west boundaries (for reference the existing buffer planting is approximately 25 yrs old). The view is seen for a short duration while cycling or a medium duration while walking along the cycleway and is experienced in relation to the Cambridge Services and busy A14 roadway junction..

Anticipated view

The western edge of development will be a prominent new element, occupying a large portion of the frame of view alongside the Cambridge Services site. In the medium to long term the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 05 - View from the Cambridge Services lorry parking facility

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

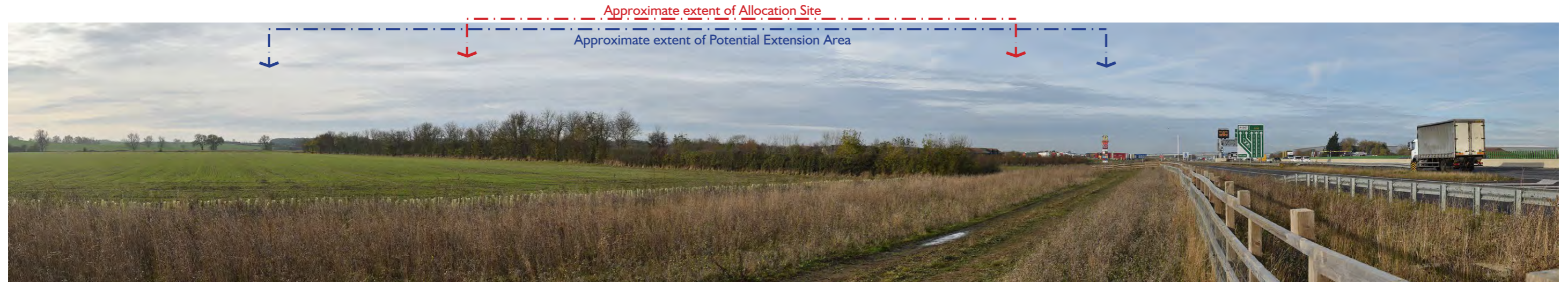
Existing View

This view, taken from the lorry parking facility at the Cambridge Services, overlooks the potential Extension Area to the east of the Services site. The proposed Allocation Site is not visible from this viewpoint, screened by the Cambridge Services development and the 20m wide landscape buffer along the Services site's south and western boundaries. The potential Extension Area is directly ahead in the view, with the A14 to the left and the Ramada hotel to the right. Existing vegetation along the Services east boundary and a 10m wide hedgerow along the potential Extension Area's east boundary filter views of the countryside further east. The view is seen by a limited number of receptors, potentially for a medium to longer term duration while stopped at the lorry parking facility. The experience of the view is negatively impacted by noise and activity from heavy vehicle traffic along the A14.

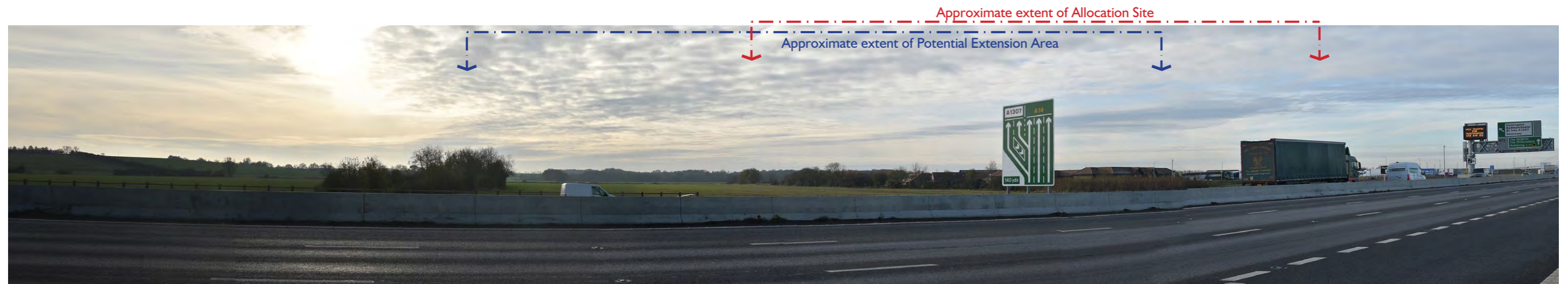
Anticipated view

The western edge of development in the potential Extension Area will be immediately apparent across the majority of the view, however this will be seen in context of the Cambridge Services site and traffic along the A14 as well as Buckingham Business Park north of the A14. In the medium to long term the landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 06 - View from west bound A14 approaching the Site



Viewpoint 07 - View from the A14 at the corner of the NE corner of the Extension Area

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

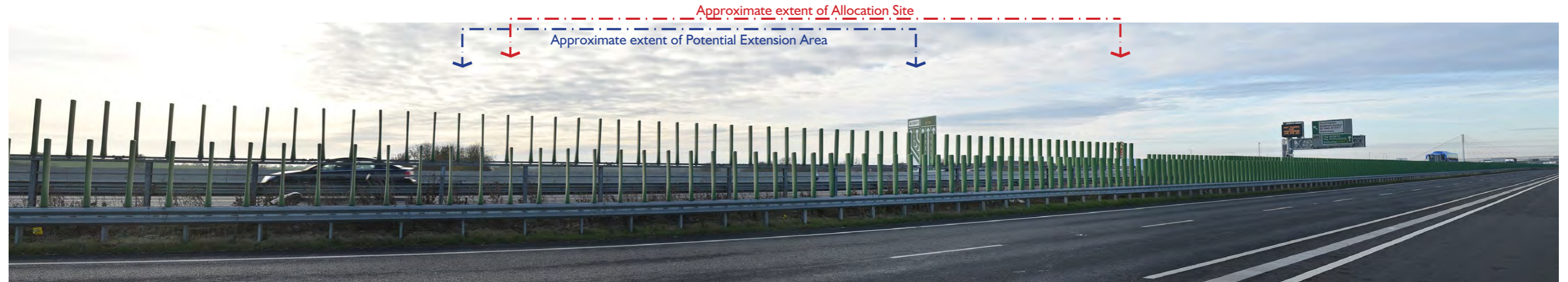
Existing View

These viewpoints represent a sequence of views seen while traveling west on the A14 approaching the Cambridge Services. An existing 10m wide hedgerow along the Extension Area's east boundary filters and screens views of the Site on approach and the Extension Area can only be seen for a brief moment while passing the Site. The views are experienced for a short duration while traveling along the A14.

Anticipated view

Development within the potential Extension Area will be visible above the existing hedgerow while approaching the Site and will become more prominent while passing the Site, however this will be seen in context of the Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park sites to either side of the roadway and heavy vehicle traffic along the A14. In the medium to long term the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 08 - View from west bound A14 approaching the Site

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

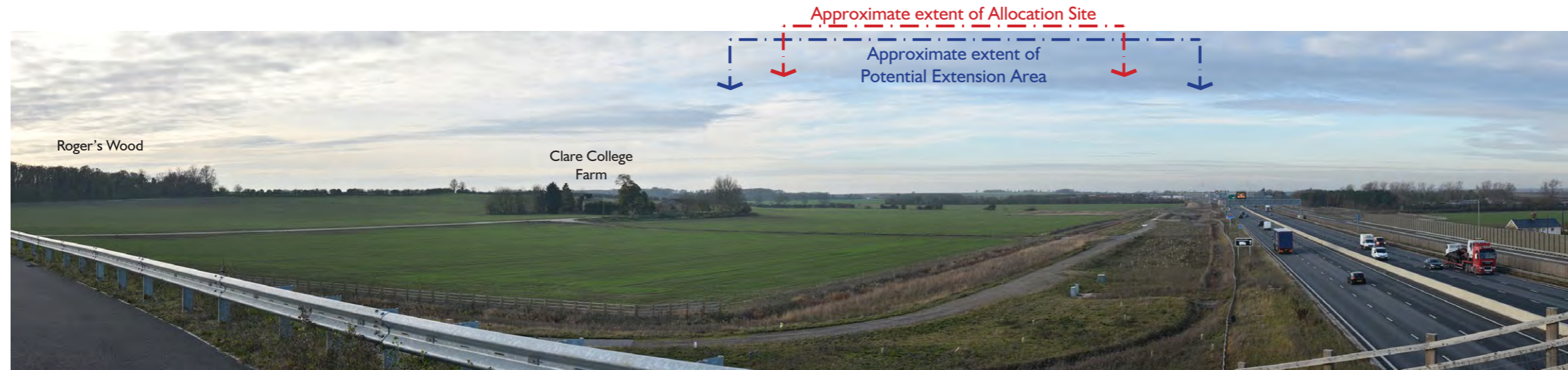
Existing View

This viewpoint represents the experience of traveling along the A1307 north of the A14 roadway. Views to looking south toward the potential Extension Area and proposed Allocation Site are largely blocked by highway glare screens with the exception of a brief glimpse of the 10m wide hedgerow on the east boundary of the potential Extension Area while passing the Site. The views are experienced for a short duration by vehicles traveling along the A1307 and for a medium duration for receptors using the cycleway.

Anticipated view

Development within the potential Extension Area may be visible above the highway glare screens for a short period while traveling along the A1307 and seen more fully for a brief period while driving past the Site. Receptors using the cycleway will see similar views, potentially for a short to medium duration. In the medium to long term the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 09 - View from Robin's Lane overpass above the A14

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

Existing View

This more distant viewpoint looks west across cultivated fields to the Site from the cycleway alongside Robin's Lane at its overpass with the A14 which can be seen to the right side of the view. Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park can be glimpsed on the right beyond intervening vegetation. Clare College Farm is visible left of centre with Roger's Wood on the far left. The south east corner of the Site can be seen beyond Clare College Farm, however the majority of the Allocation Site is out of view beyond the Cambridge Services and the potential Extension Area is screened by the hedgerow along its east boundary. The view is seen for a short duration while travelling along Robin's Lane.

Anticipated view

In the short term, development in the south east corner of the site will be visible in the distance and buildings within the potential Extension Area may be visible above the existing hedgerow, however this will be seen in context of the Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park sites to either side of the A14. In the medium to long term the landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 10 - View from Robin's Lane at the entrance to The Grange

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

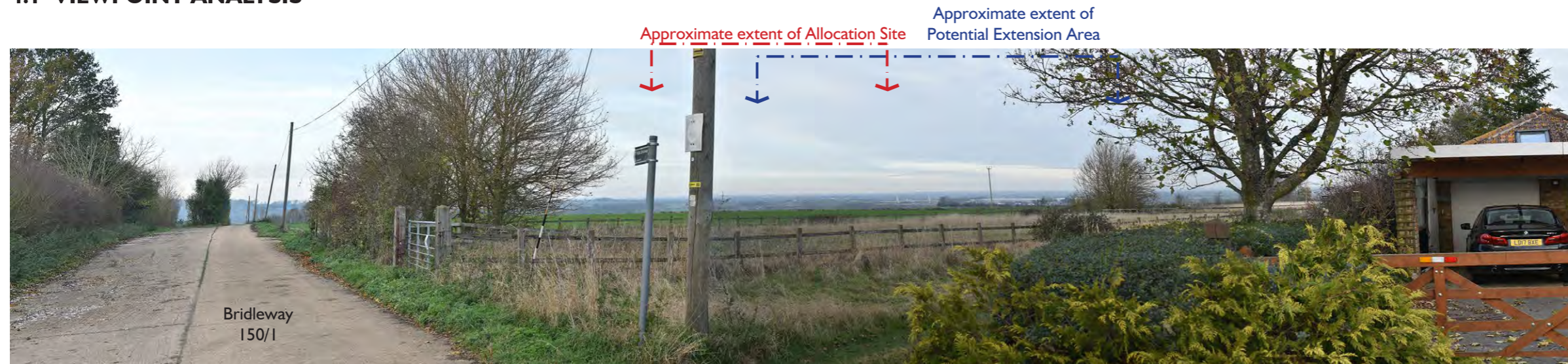
Existing View

View looking west from Robin's Lane at the entrance to Clare College Farm and the Grange Farm. Roger's Wood can be seen on the left. Rising ground blocks most views to the west and the Site cannot be seen from this section of Robin's Lane.

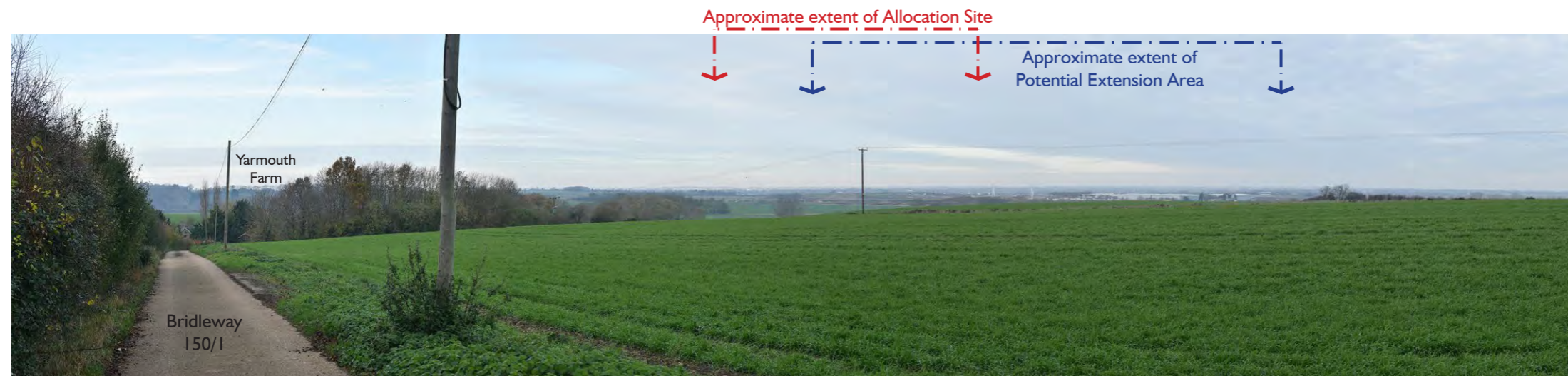
Anticipated view

The view will be unchanged.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 11 - View looking west the end of Redlands Rd / Bridleway 150/1 leaving Lolworth



Viewpoint 12 - View from Bridleway 150/1 looking west between Lolworth and Yarmouth Farm

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

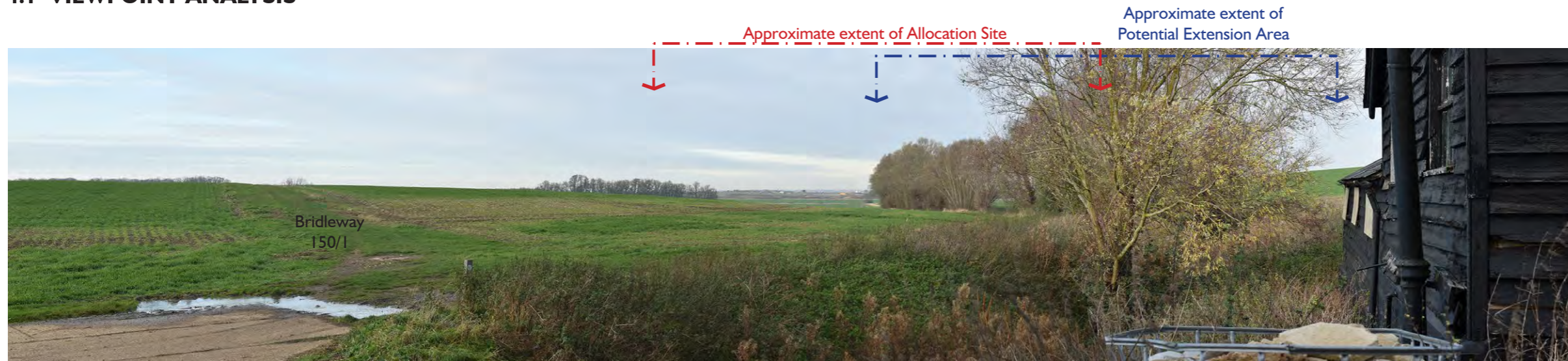
Existing View

These viewpoints represent a sequence of views seen while traveling west on Bridleway 150/1 between Lolworth and Yarmouth Farm. Setting off from Lolworth (Viewpoint 11), the majority of the site is out of view, hidden by rising ground in the foreground however a portion of the Cambridge Services site and Buckingham Business Park can be glimpsed with the A14 cycleway bridge pylons beyond. A larger portion of the Allocation Site is gradually revealed while traveling west along the bridleway (Viewpoint 12) until approaching Yarmouth Farm where the woodland block and farm buildings block views of the Site. The view is seen for a medium duration in the distance while traveling along the bridleway.

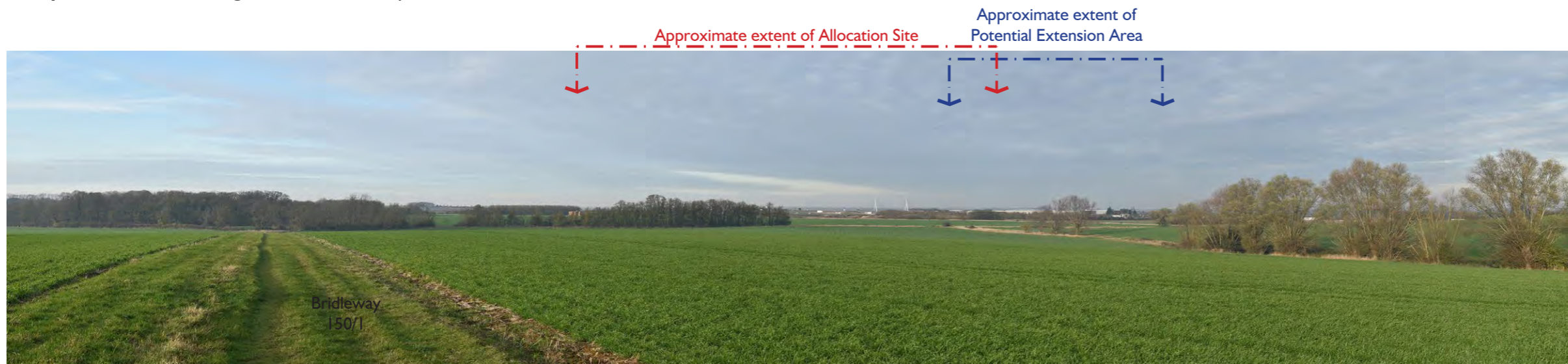
Anticipated view

Development within the central and east portion of the proposed Allocation Site will be visible in the distance in the short term, however this makes up a small portion of the overall view and is seen in context of the Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park development. In the medium to long term the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 13 - View looking west from Bridleway 150/1 at Yarmouth Farm



Viewpoint 14 - View from Bridleway 150/1 looking west between Yarmouth Farm and Boxworth

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

Existing View

These viewpoints represent a sequence of views seen while traveling west on Bridleway 150/1 between Yarmouth Farm and Boxworth. Leaving Yarmouth Farm (Viewpoint 13), rolling terrain and trees block the majority of westward views however the north east portion of the proposed Allocation Site can be seen in the distance with the A14 Cambridge Services overpass beyond. Further along the Bridleway (Viewpoint 14) the path crosses over the crest of the ridge and a larger portion of the proposed Allocation Site and the southern end of the potential Extension Area become visible. Buildings within Buckingham Business Park can be seen in the distance with the A14 cycleway bridge pylons beyond however the majority of the Cambridge Services site is out of view behind the existing 20m wide landscape buffer. The view is seen for a medium duration while traveling along the bridleway.

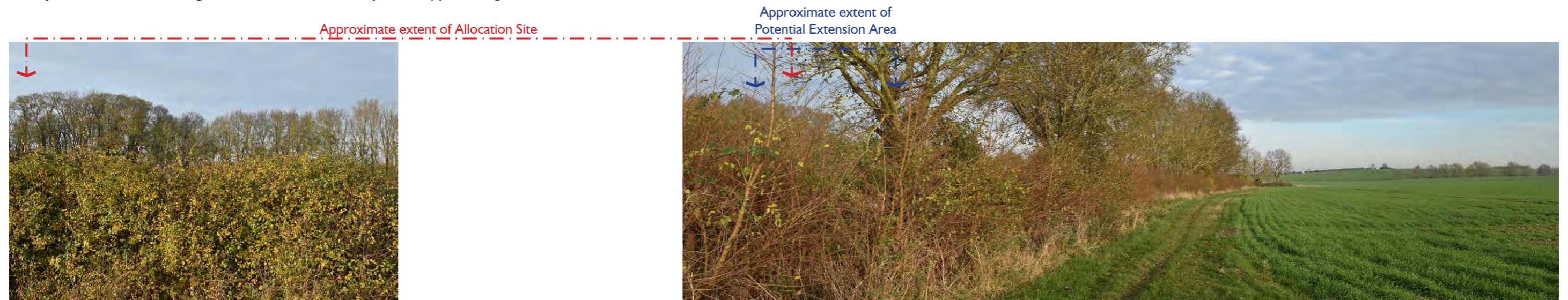
Anticipated view

Development within the north east portion of the Allocation Site and southern portion of the Extension Area will be visible in the distance. The extent of development visible changes from a distant glimpse near Yarmouth Farm (Viewpoint 13) to an immediately apparent element while travelling along the bridleway (Viewpoint 14) before becoming more filtered and screened again while approaching Boxworth (Viewpoint 15). In the short term, development will be a noticeable element, however it will make up a small portion of the overall view experienced to either side of the bridleway and will be seen in the context of the existing development at Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park. In the medium to long term the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures, ultimately forming a new tree belt in keeping with surrounding field boundaries.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 15 - View looking north-west from Bridleway 150/1 approaching Boxworth



Viewpoint 16A - View looking north from Bridleway 150/1 near Boxworth

Viewpoint 16B - View looking north-east from Bridleway 150/1 near Boxworth

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

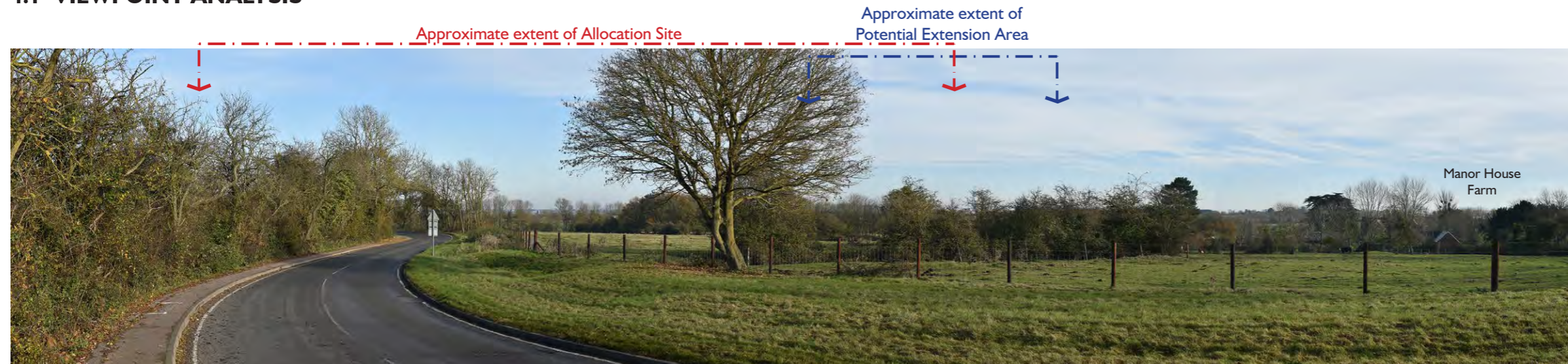
Existing View

These viewpoints represent a sequence of views seen while traveling on Bridleway 150/1 near Boxworth. Leaving Boxworth traveling east toward Lolworth (Viewpoint 16A & 16B), several layers of hedgerows and woodland blocks fully screen views of the Site to the north. Further east along the bridleway (Viewpoint 15), gaps open in the foreground hedgerow and tree belt beyond allowing filtered glimpses of the proposed Allocation Site and an open view of the southern end of the potential Extension Area with the A14 beyond. The view is seen for a medium duration while traveling along the bridleway.

Anticipated view

Development within the proposed Allocation Site will largely be screened from view along this section of the bridleway, although in the short term the south east corner of development will become visible near Viewpoint 15. In the medium to long term the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures and ultimately form a new tree belt in keeping with surrounding field boundaries.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 17 - View looking north-west from Boxworth Road at the north edge of Boxworth village

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

Existing View

This view looks north along Boxworth Road, from a position just north of Manor Lane. Manor House Farm can be seen to the right through existing vegetation beyond the foreground pasture. Views to the north are largely blocked by layers of trees and vegetation with some filtered glimpses of the proposed Allocation Site just to the right of Boxworth Road. Views to the west are blocked by the roadside hedgerow. This view is seen for a short duration while traveling north along Boxworth Road, leaving Boxworth village.

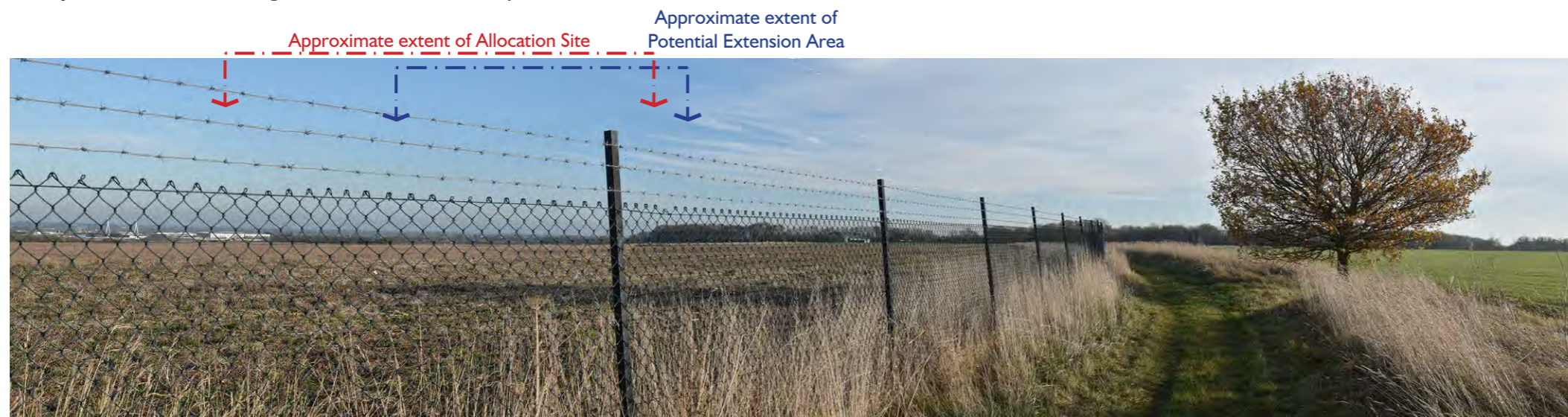
Anticipated view

The majority of the Site is not visible from this location, screened by intervening vegetation, however some filtered glimpses will be possible through the tree belt in winter. In the medium to long term the landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures.

4.1 VIEWPOINT ANALYSIS



Viewpoint 18 - View looking north-east from Bridleway 27/1 west of Boxworth



Viewpoint 19 - View looking north-east from Bridleway 27/1 at the crest of the ridge line

VIEWPOINT COMMENTARY

Existing View

These viewpoints represent a sequence of views looking east from Bridleway 27/1 west of Boxworth village. Portions of the north west corner of the proposed Allocation Site are visible in the distance to the left of centre with the Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park beyond, however the rest of the Site is screened from view by terrain and existing vegetation. Further west along the bridleway, the path drops to the far side of the ridge line and the Site is completely blocked from view. The view is seen for a medium to long duration in the distance while traveling along the bridleway.

Anticipated view

Development within the north west portion of the proposed Allocation Site will be visible in the distance in the short term, however this makes up a small portion of the overall view and is seen in context of the Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park development. In the medium to long term the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of development as this establishes and matures.

4.2 VISUAL ANALYSIS - SUMMARY

4.2.1 RECEPTORS TRAVELING ON ROADS / ACCESSING CAMBRIDGE SERVICES

The proposed Allocation Site is located in an area designated for business uses including the Cambridge Services site and Buckingham Business Park and is accessed from the A14 via Boxworth Road. The A14 junction has been recently expanded and includes a significant road / ramp network with earthworks, elevated cycleway bridge and cycleway. Receptors using these facilities are considered to be of low sensitivity to the type of development proposed and representative views are discussed in Viewpoints 2 - 8. The proposals are considered to have a low adverse effect on receptors using the A14, the A14 junction and the Cambridge Services site.

Receptors along Boxworth Road are addressed in Viewpoint 1 and will experience a major adverse effect in the short term due to the proximity of the development, falling to a moderate adverse effect in the medium term and a low adverse effect in the long term as the landscape buffer establishes and matures.

It is therefore considered that the proposal will have a moderate to low adverse effect on road users.

4.2.2 RECEPTORS TRAVELING ALONG PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

Receptors using Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the surrounding landscape are considered to be of high sensitivity to the type of change proposed. PRoW north of the A14, including the cycleway along the A1307, are strongly influenced by the A14 and existing business / industrial development and the proposals will be scarcely appreciated in the overall view (Viewpoint 8).

The principal PRoW south of the A14, Bridleways 150/1 and 27/1, cross the area east / west through Lolworth and Boxworth villages south of the proposed Allocation Site and potential Extension Area and are represented by Viewpoints 11 - 19. Viewpoints along these paths are elevated between 5m and 20m above the Site however rolling terrain and intervening vegetation generally limit and screen views of the proposed development. The proposals will be most visible from Bridleway 150/1 near Viewpoint 14 where the path crests a low ridge and the central and south east portion of the proposals Site will be seen in the mid-ground. The proposals will be immediately apparent from this vantage point in the short term, having a moderate detrimental effect on the scene, however development will make up a small portion of the overall view experienced to either side of the bridleway and will be seen in the context of the existing development at Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park. In the medium to long term the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of the development as this establishes and matures, reducing the effect to low adverse.

It is therefore considered that the proposal will have a moderate to low adverse effect on receptors using PRoW south of the proposals Site.

4.2.3 PRIVATE / RESIDENTIAL VIEWPOINTS

Residential receptors, particularly upper storey views, are considered to be of medium to high sensitivity to change. Five residences, 1 & 2 Grapevine Cottages, Manor House Farm, Yarmouth Farm, and Clare College Farm are located within 0.5-0.6 km of the application and are reviewed in greater detail below. The closest of these residential properties, Nos. 1 & 2 Grapevine Cottages, are located along Boxworth Road approximately 0.5km south of the Application Site. The general viewing aspect of these properties is to the south east from the front elevation, with north west views to the rear. The proposed Allocation Site, located north east of the residences, is generally out of view beyond three layers of trees and vegetation, although there is potential for filtered glimpses of the development from the garden in winter. This is considered to be a low adverse effect in the short to medium term, receding to a neutral effect in the long term as the Site's proposed landscape buffer matures.

Manor House Farm, located near Viewpoint 17 is approximately 0.5km south of the proposed Allocation Site, accessed from Boxworth Road. The residence's front elevation is oriented to the south west with north east views from the rear aspect over a large garden and associated pasture towards the Site. A 20m wide mature tree belt generally screens views north, although filtered glimpses of the proposed Allocation Site may be possible, particularly in winter. This is considered to be a low adverse effect, having a slightly detrimental effect on the character of the scene in the short to medium term, receding to a neutral effect in the long term as the Site's proposed landscape buffer matures.

Yarmouth Farm, is located 0.5km south east of the potential Extension Area near Viewpoint 13. The residence is oriented to the east with western views from the rear. The residence is surrounded by a small garden with large mature trees and two large farm buildings to the north. The proposed Allocation site and potential Extension Area are not visible from the residence, although there is potential for distant filtered views from the garden, particularly in winter. This is considered to be a negligible detrimental effect in the short to medium term, receding to a neutral effect in the long term as the Site's proposed landscape buffer matures.

Clare College Farm is located 0.6km east of the potential Extension Area and can be seen in Viewpoint 9. The general viewing aspect of the property is to the east from the front elevation with views to the west, toward the Site, from the rear. The residence is set within a small garden with large mature trees to the north and south and smaller trees along the west boundary with stables and a large barn located north west of the residence. The view west, toward the Site, will include the stables and barn to the side and will be filtered through the rear garden trees and an existing intermediate field hedgerow. In the short term, the proposed development will be a visible element in the scene however this will be increasing filtered and screened as the 25m landscape buffer establishes and matures. This is considered to be a medium adverse detrimental effect in the short term receding to a low adverse effect in the medium term and a negligible effect in the long term as the Site's proposed landscape buffer matures.

Other residential properties in the local area include Yarmouth Farm Cottages and residences along Robin's Lane in Lolworth village. The visual effects on these residences are comparable to those described in Viewpoint 11 and are considered to be a low adverse effect in the short to medium term, receding to a negligible effect in the long term as the Site's proposed landscape buffer and woodland block mature.

Further afield, Friesland Farm is located 1.2km north west of the proposed Allocation Site and is well screened by existing barns, mature trees and vegetation and the development proposals will, on balance, have little effect on the residence.

It is therefore considered that the proposal will have a low to negligible adverse effect on residential receptors.

5.0 LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

5.1 EFFECTS ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The application site sits on the edge of the Wooded Claylands (LCA 4A & 4B) and Fen Edge Claylands (LCA 2A) local landscape character areas. Given the character site's low lying landscape character with large-scale open fields, it is judged that the Site is most consistent with the Fen Edge Claylands (LCA 2A) whilst the surrounding gently rolling elevated landscape south and east of the proposal Site lies within the Wooded Claylands (LCA 4A & 4B).

At a local level, the development proposal is considered to have a consistent land use, material and scale with surrounding business and large scale commercial development already found in the immediate area. Seen within the context of the Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park, the proposed development would not cause any loss to the defining characteristics of the local character or result in any substantial additional feature over and above those which already exist. Over time, as the landscape buffer matures, a new field boundary will be formed south and east of the Site, in effect shifting the current landscape buffered boundary around the Cambridge Services site south and east. Key characteristics of the local character areas would therefore remain unaffected beyond the current baseline condition in the long term.

It is therefore judged that the proposed development would have no significant effects upon the existing landscape character.

5.2 EFFECTS ON DESIGNATED LANDSCAPE IN THE AREA

The Application Site does not sit within any statutory designations of national, regional or local importance and is not in the immediate proximity of any historic buildings, world heritage sites, battlefields or gardens. The nearest landscape of ecological statutory designation is the Overhall Grove Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), approximately 2.25 km south of the proposed Allocation Site. A cluster of seven Listed Buildings are located within Boxwood to the south, the closest being the Parish Church of St Peter, a Grade II listed building approximately 1.0 km south of the proposed Allocation Site. Another group of Listed Buildings is located in Lolworth to the south-east approximately 1.3 km from the proposed Allocation Site. No Listed Buildings are visible from the site.

It is therefore judged that there would be no significant landscape or visual effects upon statutory designations as a result of the proposed development.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this landscape and visual appraisal are summarised below:

- The scheme will principally exert a localised area of influence in terms of landscape and visual effects, seen in context with the existing Cambridge Services and Buckingham Business Park sites from a limited number of locations within 0.5 - 1 km of the proposal site.
- The proposal will not have significant landscape or visual effects upon any statutory designations.
- The site land use will change from that of brownfield and arable land to a commercial and industrial development, however the proposed development would not cause any loss to the defining characteristics of the local character or result in any substantial additional feature over and above those which already exist and no key landscape characteristics would be harmed by the proposal.
- The proposal is judged to have a moderate to low adverse visual effect on receptors in the medium to long term.
- Over time, the 25m landscape buffer around the Site perimeter will increasingly filter and screen views of the development as the buffer establishes and matures. This will ultimately replace the existing landscape buffer surrounding the Cambridge Services site, forming a new field boundary in keeping with local landscape character.

It is therefore anticipated that there would be no significant effect upon any of the landscape or visual resources that the development proposal is likely to have an influence over.

The proposed development, experienced in the context of the existing Cambridge Services site and Buckingham Business Park is consistent with the local landscape setting and would not cause any loss to the defining characteristics of the LCA or result in any substantial additional feature over and above those which already exist.

The proposed development would also not constitute an uncharacteristic element within views available at a local level and will, on balance, have limited effect on the overall scene in the medium to long term. Any change would be seen in the context of similar development and will be filtered and screened over time as the 25m landscape buffer matures. Consequently it is judged the development proposal would be a slightly detrimental alteration that would not significantly change baseline views in the long term.

In conclusion, it is considered that the Application Site is a suitable location to accommodate the proposed development.