

BLUNSDON ST. ANDREW – EAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

ON BEHALF OF BLUNSDON PARISH COUNCIL

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 With the increasing need to accommodate growth and regeneration of settlements whilst at the same time making those same settlements more sustainable, the importance of countryside, landscapes and green spaces becomes ever greater. Landscape and green space are at the heart of sustainable development, contributing to the environmental dimension of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹. They also form the setting for communities and the people who define them, as set out in the European Landscape Convention (ELC)².
- 1.2 Landscape is defined by the ELC thus:
- “Landscape is an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.”**
- 1.3 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3)³ notes that it is not just ‘designated’ landscapes (National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty etc.) that are important, but also the **“ordinary and the everyday – the landscapes where people live and work, and spend their leisure time”**.
- 1.4 GLVIA3 notes:
- “When the interrelationship between people [...] and the landscape is considered, this introduces related but very different considerations, notably the views that people have and their visual amenity – meaning the overall pleasantness of the views they enjoy of their surroundings.”**
- 1.5 The distinction between landscape and visual amenity is an important one, though the two are of course inextricably linked.

Purpose of this Report

- 1.6 As a result of the public consultation process, consideration is being given as to whether there is potential for some carefully-sited, small-scale residential development within and immediately surrounding the village of Blunsdon. The public consultation process also indicated some concern that large-scale development might result in adverse effects on the local landscape character and on visual amenity as experienced from within the local area.

¹ Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012

² Council of Europe, 2004

³ Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment, 2013

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- 1.7 Connected Landscapes, a landscape planning and landscape architecture practice, was commissioned by Blunsdon Parish Council to undertake a visual sensitivity analysis for a number of key views from within and around the village.

2. METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 This sensitivity analysis has been undertaken with regard to best practice, as outlined in published guidance:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) - Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)
 - GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13 – Landscape Institute (2013)
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment – Natural England, October 2014
 - Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual assessment (2011) - Landscape Institute Advise Note 01/11
- 2.2 The detailed methodology is set out in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 The extent of the study area is shown at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.4 The analysis considers the sensitivity of the landscape and selected views to residential development, though the same sensitivity may be equally relevant to other forms of development.

3. IDENTIFICATION OF IMPORTANT VIEWS

- 3.1 The viewpoints and associated views which are considered in this report were identified by members of the local community, through the Neighbourhood Plan consultation process, as being **“of merit and worthy of preservation”**.
- 3.2 The Draft Neighbourhood plan contains two policies relating to landscape and preservation of views. Both Policy 12 and Policy 5 are of relevance and the position is summarised from Policy 12 which states:

“Landscape setting is an important part of this area, as the views of the surrounding land are a significant input to its character which reinforces the distinctive identity as a rural settlement on land above the Thames plain. There are spectacular views both from and into the village from many viewpoints. Northwards, there are some exceptional panoramic views over the Thames valley towards the Cotswolds, and back inwards towards the village.

Southwards, the views are blocked by new developments; nevertheless, some open views of fields are visible and provide some evidence of the settlement’s pastoral origins, helping to depict its rural location. And there are good views from the public footpath from Broadbush to the tributary of the Bydemill Brook.”⁴

- 3.3 These views are shown on the Viewpoint Location Plan (see **Appendix 3** and **Figure 3.1** below), and listed in **Table 3.1**:

Table 3.1: Sensitive Viewpoints

VP No.	OS Grid Reference	Description
VP1	SU 15745 91115	Public footpath crossing Castle Hill, looking north/north-west
VP2	SU 15467 90819	Field gateway on Burytown Lane, looking north-west
VP3	SU 15577 90733	Blunsdon Cemetery, looking south-east
VP4	SU 15250 90832	Field gateway on Churchway, looking north-west
VP5	SU 14264 92064	South-east end of Little Rose Lane, looking south-east
VP6	SU 15714 90242	Public footpath heading south-east from Broadbush, looking south-east
VP7	SU 16093 90748	Public footpath on Stubb’s Hill, looking east and south

⁴ Sensitivity analysis briefing note/draft Neighbourhood Plan Policy 12, Blunsdon Parish Council, 2017

VP8	SU 15979 89880	Public footpath to north of Kingsdown Lane, looking north-east
VP9	SU 14933 90926	Junction of Back Lane and Ivy Lane, looking north

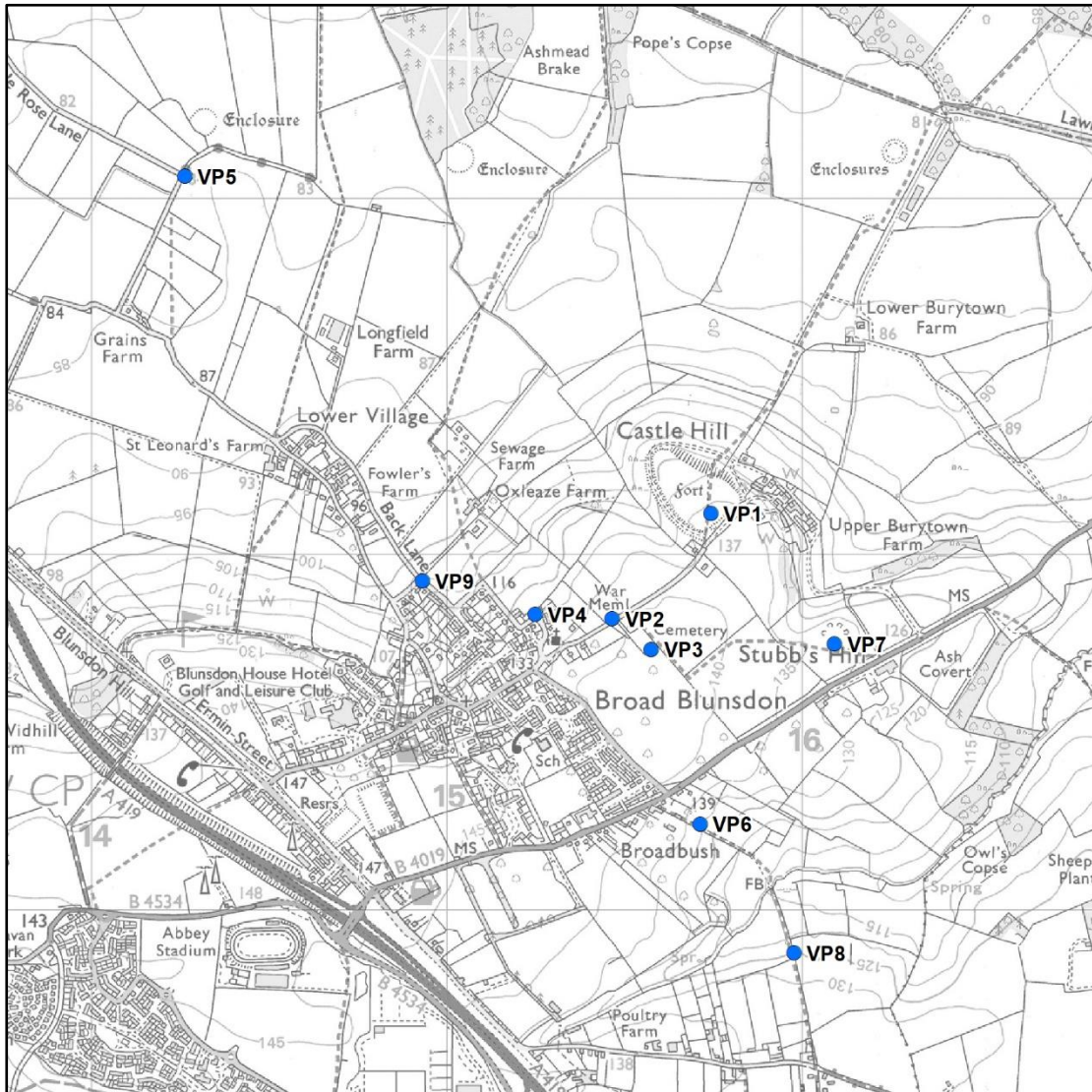


Figure 3.1: Extract from Viewpoint Location Plan (Not to Scale)

4. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SENSITIVITY

National (Landscape) Character Areas

- 4.1 National Landscape Character Areas (NCAs) were originally prepared by the former Countryside Agency but are now managed by Natural England. Although they typically cover quite large areas, these Character Assessments identify a number of key landscape characteristics for each area. Broad Blunsdon is located at the western end of NCA 109 – Midvale Ridge (see **Appendix 4: Landscape Character Areas**), with this NCA extending in a relatively narrow north-east to south-west aligned band. Broad Blunsdon is also very close to the boundary with NCA 108 – Upper Thames Clay Vales, which surrounds NCA 109. Indeed, Lower Village lies within NCA 108.
- 4.2 A full description of the Midvale Ridge NCA can be found at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5792154>
- 4.3 Key relevant characteristics of the Midvale Ridge NCA are described as:
- **“Low, irregular wooded limestone ridge giving way to a series of isolated steep-sided tabular hills in the east which rise from the surrounding clay vales;**
 - **Contrast between the moderately elevated limestone hills and ridges and the surrounding low-lying clay vales;**
 - **Drained mostly by small springs and streams which run into the Thames, Thame and Ock;**
 - **Well wooded – a third of the woodland is designated ancient woodland;**
 - **Mixed pastoral and arable landscape with large, geometric fields divided by hedges and regularly spaced hedgerow trees punctuated by blocks of woodland;**
 - ...
 - **Evidence of previous land use such as iron-age and Romano-British settlements and ridge and furrow through to old quarries still visible in the landscape;**
 - ...
 - **Settlement pattern of nucleated villages on the hill tops and along the springline with low density of dispersed settlement...”**
- 4.4 Statements of Environmental Opportunities include SEO1:

“Maintain the historic environment and cultural character of the Midvale Ridge by ensuring that permitted development is well integrated to preserve local distinctiveness and sense of place and providing green space and recreational opportunities for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.”

- 4.5 The full description of the Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA can be found at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6557755053703168>
- 4.6 Key relevant characteristics of the Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA are described as:
- **“Low-lying clay-based flood plains encircle the Midvale Ridge. Superficial deposits, including alluvium and gravel terraces, spread over 40 per cent of the area, creating gently undulating topography. The Upper Jurassic and Cretaceous clays and the wet valley bottoms give rise to enclosed pasture, contrasting with the more settled, open, arable lands of the gravel;**
 - ...
 - **Woodland cover is low at only about 3 per cent, but hedges, hedgerow trees and field trees are frequent. Watercourses are often marked by lines of willows and, particularly in the Aylesbury Vale and Cotswold Water Park, native black poplar;**
 - ...
 - **Wet ground conditions and heavy clay soils discourage cultivation in many places, giving rise to livestock farming. Fields are regular and hedged, except near the Cotswolds, where there can be stone walls...**
 - ...
 - **Settlement is sparse on flood plains, apart from at river crossings, where there can be large towns, such as Abingdon. Aylesbury and Bicester are major urban centres, and the outer suburbs of Oxford and Swindon spread into this NCA. Market towns and villages are strung along the springlines of the Chilterns and Downs...”**
- 4.7 Views to the north, east and south are generally across the Midvale Ridge NCA, while those to the west are generally across the Upper Thames Clay Vales NCA. However, the scale of the NCAs means that they are of limited value when considering landscape character in relation to the setting of relatively small settlements such as Blunsdon.

County Landscape Character Areas

4.8 At a county level, the 2005 Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment places Broad Blunsdon within Landscape Character Area (LCA) 8A: Swindon-Lyneham Limestone Ridge, within Landscape Character Type (LCT) 8: Limestone Ridge. The key characteristics of the LCT are described as:

- **“Rolling upland landscape formed by a linear outcrop of Stanford and Coral Rag Formation limestone;**
- **Level hill tops contrast with steep slopes down to the surrounding clay lowland;**
- **Predominantly a pastoral landscape with some arable fields;**
- **Large fields with a network of hedgerow with numerous hedgerow trees;**
- **Scattered tree clumps and woodland blocks, with some ancient woodland;**
- **A settled landscape with a number of large villages, several smaller settlements and scattered farmsteads;**
- **A variety of building styles from distinctive stone buildings in historic village centres to modern development using a mix of materials;**
- **Urban influences due to the proximity of Swindon and other settlements, military complexes and the busy A3102 road;**
- **An intricate network of rural roads connects the villages and farms;**
- **Panoramic views from higher ground, particularly from the western scarp slopes.”**

4.9 LCA 8A is described thus:

“The Swindon-Lyneham Limestone Ridge Character Area is a belt of Coral Rag Formation limestone hills emerging from the lower clay vales. The land form of the area undulates, rising sharply along the western boundary to form a steep scarp slope in places. To the east the transition to the lower clay areas is more gradual. Land cover is predominantly pastoral farmland although there are pockets of arable and horse pasture. The fields are fairly large and divided by a network of hedgerows with numerous hedgerow trees and intermittent woodland clumps, although the hedgerows have become flailed and more open in places. Smaller, more sinuous

fields indicative of medieval enclosure are also present in more isolated areas. Settlement has a considerable influence over the area: the Swindon-Lyneham Limestone Ridge is divided into two sections by the large urban mass of Swindon and other large settlements also have a visual influence such as Highworth and Purton, which are highly visible from surrounding lower areas. The RAF airfield at Lyneham, dominates the southern central part of the area. Smaller settlements have also been affected by urban influences with ribbon development expansion and a proliferation of signage along the more popular transport routes, such as the A3102. Building materials and styles vary throughout, with local stone buildings and more modern estates on the periphery. Within the area views are intermittent, but from the peripheral slopes there are panoramic views. Around Swindon the town dominates but further south and in the very north of the area the views out across the rural clay vales create a more remote feel.”

4.10 Inherent landscape sensitivities of the LCT are identified as:

- **“Views to and from the lower surrounding clay vales;**
- **The areas of peaceful pastoral landscape;**
- **The hedgerow network and hedgerow trees;**
- **Scattered woodland blocks particularly the ancient woodlands of high ecological value;**
- **Isolated areas of hay meadow and permanent pasture;**
- **The traditional structure of villages;**
- **The rural lanes.”**

4.11 The landscape of the LCT is assessed as being of moderate overall condition, with moderate strength of character.

4.12 Lower Village and land to the north-west of Broad Blunsdon lie within LCA 12A: Thames Open Clay Vale, within LCT 12: Open Clay Vales. The relevant key characteristics of the LCT are described as:

- **“Level land form with wide open skies and views to ridges and downs;**
- **Pastoral land use with some arable;**
- **Large scale geometric fields with hedgerows or open drainage channels defining boundaries;**

- **Presence of rivers, tributaries, drainage channels and open water bodies;**
- **Watercourses lined with riparian vegetation with prominent lines of willows (some pollarded);**
- **Floristically rich hay meadows;**
- **Settlement pattern varies from large towns and small scattered villages to sparse farmsteads;**
- **Buildings in varied materials of brick, render and stone;**
- **Crossed by major transport corridors, and a network of minor roads linking settlements;**
- **Historic use for transport evident in canals.”**

4.13 LCA 12A is described thus:

“Area 12A: Thames Open Clay Vale is a low lying area centred on the River Thames and its floodplain. It is a largely tranquil, rural landscape, predominantly level, with vertical elements of lines of willow and other wetland trees. The agricultural use of the area combines arable and wet pasture, with open water ditches as well as hedgerows defining boundaries. Field patterns vary from small and irregular to larger, geometric fields often in arable use on dryer or drained gravel areas. A major feature of the area is the large extent of open water resulting from gravel extraction and afterwards put to leisure use as the Cotswold Water Park. The many water bodies with their varied vegetation are of national significance as scarce marl waters (Cotswold Water Park SSSI). There are also a number of hay meadows of high ecological interest. The presence of water is felt throughout this area in the rivers, tributaries, drainage ditches with frequent lines of willows and other wetland vegetation. Settlement is sparse in the Thames Open Clay Vale with a few small settlements such as the village of Ashton Keynes and the town of Cricklade, but mainly scattered isolated farmsteads. Vernacular building materials are brick and stone. Although the Roman Ermine Way, now the busy trunk road of the A419, runs through the area, most of the roads are minor rural routes with small bridges crossing the waterways and ditches.”

4.14 Inherent landscape sensitivities of the LCT are identified as:

- **“Rural tranquillity;**

- **Hedgerow pattern;**
- **Water bodies and water ways of varied character and ecological value;**
- **Streamside willows and other riparian vegetation;**
- **Remnant hay meadows;**
- **Wide open views;**
- **Settlement pattern of nucleated villages with variety of vernacular building materials.”**

4.15 The landscape of the LCT is assessed as being of moderate overall condition, with moderate strength of character.

District Landscape Character Areas

4.16 Broad Blunsdon lies within LCA vii: Mid Vale Ridge of the 2004 Swindon Borough Council Landscape Character Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance, while Lower Village lies within LCA i: Thames Vale, with the boundary between the two LCAs lying along the north-western edge of Broad Blunsdon.

4.17 The Mid Vale Ridge LCA is described thus:

“The Midvale Ridge is characterised by two distinct areas, one to the north-east and one to the south of Swindon. The southern Midvale Ridge area comprises the area of land to the south of Swindon that encompasses Coate Water and the open land to the west of Coate Water and is bounded by the M4 motorway, the eastern edge of Coate Water and Swindon’s settlement boundary. The other Midvale Ridge Area contains the hilltop settlements of Blunsdon, Hannington and Highworth, which run along the Corallian Ridge. Included within the Corallian Ridge are the small valley settlements of Stanton Fitzwarren, Sevenhampton and South Marston. This Midvale Ridge area enjoys views over the surrounding lower clay vales, particularly northwards over the Thames Vale...”

4.18 Views across the Thames Vale towards the Cotswolds are particularly noted.

4.19 Development considerations are noted as:

- **“Ensure that non-developed hilltops remain free from development to preserve the prominence and quality of existing hilltop settlements;**

- **Where opportunities arise, provide for additional tree planting that maintains the scale and dispersed pattern of existing woodlands;**
- ...
- **Provide planting to contain the development within a discrete area, reflecting the undulations of the landscape;**
- **Retain the perception of distinctiveness and separation from Swindon within the Rural Buffer areas identified in the Local Plan.”**

4.20 The overall condition of the LCT is considered to be moderate, with moderate strength of character. Of particular relevance to this sensitivity analysis are the management objectives to:

- **“Discourage intrusive development along the visually sensitive ridgeline; and**
- **Limit further uncontrolled spreading of settlement and ribbon development concentrating new development within existing settlements.”**

4.21 The Thames Vale LCA is described as:

“By definition, the Thames Vale comprises the alluvial plain adjoining the river Thames. Water plays an important role in forming this landscape, which includes a proliferation of ditches. Willows are an important tree in the floodplain. In conjunction with the existing hedgerows, there are occasional blocks of tree planting, punctuating the landscape. Although development has taken place within this area, it is dominated by a series of small settlements with scattered, isolated groupings making up the remainder.”

4.22 Extensive views across to the Midvale Ridge and Highworth are considered to be particularly important.

4.23 Development considerations are noted as:

- **“Ensure that the scale and massing of development does not adversely affect the area’s perception of remoteness;**
- **Retain views and vistas to key local settlements and landmarks, for example local churches (Lechlade);**

- **Where appropriate, provide planting that reinforces existing hedgerows, compensating for the trees lost to Dutch Elm disease during the 1970's;**
- **Ensure that any woodland planting does not prejudice existing vistas;**
- **Reflect the high visibility of this area from the Midvale Ridge;**
- **Where appropriate, restore former landscape features such as meandering river channels, where these would benefit the landscape and its wildlife."**

4.24 Published management objectives include:

- **"Consider developing guidance for built development to ensure both future construction and changes to existing buildings are designed to integrate with the existing character and structure of settlements; and**
- **Consider screening views to intrusive urban edges through planting new woodland.**

Author's Own Assessment of Local Landscape Character

4.25 The published national, county and district landscape character assessments provide a general impression of landscape character of the Application Site and the surrounding area. A detailed assessment of the local landscape character shows:

Landscape Designations

4.26 Broad Blunsdon and its environs are not covered by any landscape designations at either the local or national level. The Cotswolds AONB lies approximately 13km to the north of the village.

Landscape Scale

4.27 The agricultural fields surrounding Broad Blunsdon are generally medium-sized, smaller closer to the settlement boundary and sometimes larger within the Thames Vale. The landscape is of medium scale, though some views across the Vale create the perception of a larger scale landscape

Landform and Enclosure

4.28 The landform around Broad Blunsdon falls into two distinct forms – the flatter Thames Vale, and the rising/higher ground of the Mid Vale Ridge. This landform is relatively uncomplicated.

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- 4.29 Field boundary vegetation is generally strong, creating a strong sense of enclosure within the areas of flatter topography, but with longer views still available where the landform drops away to the Vale.

Landscape Pattern and Complexity

- 4.30 The fields around Broad Blunsdon are geometric in shape, with generally rectilinear boundaries. The field boundaries are sometimes more sinuous where they relate to watercourses such as the tributary of the Bydemill Brook which flows to the south of the B4019. Their small to medium size results in a landscape pattern of moderate complexity, with this complexity increased where built form and infrastructure are more prominent.

Existing Built Infrastructure and Human Influence

- 4.31 The small hilltop village of Broad Blunsdon itself is the main area of built form within the study area. The large and expanding conurbation of Swindon lies close by, while the town of Highworth lies to the north-east, separated from Blunsdon by approximately 4km. The A419 dual-carriageway and associated road junctions, together with built form ranging from the Swindon greyhound track to isolated farmsteads are further examples of the strong human influences in the area. Within the Thames Vale, arable farming is a separate form of human influence.
- 4.32 Overall Broad Blunsdon and the surrounding area exhibit clear signs of long-term and on-going human influence.

Settlement Pattern

- 4.33 The local settlement pattern comprises a mix of isolated farmsteads and houses, smaller villages (such as Broad Blunsdon and Stanton Fitzwarren), larger villages and towns (such as Highworth), and the large and expanding conurbation of Swindon. This expansion has the potential to result in coalescence between settlements, though local planning policy includes some measures to prevent this from happening by designating certain areas as 'non-coalescence areas'.

Skylines

- 4.34 Local skylines are varied. Where strong field boundary vegetation is present, this can itself form the skyline to many views, while in longer views across the Thames Vale the skyline is formed by the distant Cotswold Hills.

Inter-visibility

- 4.35 Levels of inter-visibility are variable, depending on topography and levels of vegetation within the landscape. Rising ground of the Mid Vale Ridge allows long distance views across the Thames Vale, yet from less undulating ground within the

Vale and elsewhere views can sometimes be limited by boundary vegetation to within one or two fields.

Tranquillity

4.36 Tranquillity mapping undertaken by the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE)⁵ considered the local area to be of moderate tranquillity – less tranquil within the main part of Broad Blunsdon and towards the A419, and more tranquil in areas to the north and east with less built form and infrastructure (roads etc.).

Assessment of Landscape Character Sensitivity

- 4.37 The published county and, particularly, district level landscape character assessments are considered to accurately reflect the character of the landscape surrounding Broad Blunsdon and Lower Village. Views to and from the higher ground where Broad Blunsdon is located are noted as being both important and sensitive (see also **Appendix 5: Topography**).
- 4.38 The landscape is undesignated at either national/statutory or local/non-statutory levels (see **Appendix 6: Environmental Designations and Local Plan Policies**), but is nevertheless an attractive edge-of-settlement agricultural landscape with strong field boundary vegetation. The latter results in sometimes limited inter-visibility, though elsewhere the topography allows long views across the Thames Vale. The local landscape is therefore considered to be of medium value.
- 4.39 Outside of the main settlements, built form is generally sparse, limited to farmsteads and occasional isolated residential properties. The balance between built form and the more natural environment (albeit one that is heavily managed through agriculture) which characterises the local landscape is of medium susceptibility to small-scale, appropriately-sited residential development, but of high susceptibility to large-scale development and/or development outside of the existing settlement boundaries or on the rising slopes visible from the Thames Vale. This results in an overall medium sensitivity to appropriately-located small-scale development, but high sensitivity to large-scale development, especially any which substantially extends or lies outside of the existing settlement boundary.

⁵ National Tranquillity Mapping Data 2007 developed for Campaign to Protect Rural England and Natural England by Northumbria University. OS Licence number 100018881.

5. VISUAL SENSITIVITY

- 5.1 All visual receptors are people. Visual sensitivity is therefore a combination of the susceptibility of a person or group of people at a specific viewpoint to changes in that view (which may in turn depend on the type of change experienced), and the value attached to that view.
- 5.2 Susceptibility is mainly a function of the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations, and the extent to which their attention or interest is focussed (or otherwise) on the view. This is explained further in the detailed methodology in Appendix 1, but for the purposes of this analysis the most sensitive receptors are likely to include:
- occupants of residential properties (especially those with rural views);
 - users of Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) whose focus and attention is likely to be on the surrounding landscape; and
 - visitors to particular locations where the views of the landscape are a component of most visitors' enjoyment of the location.
- 5.3 At the other end of the spectrum, receptors likely to be least sensitive to changes in the view include:
- those travelling on main roads and motorways; and
 - people at their place of work whose attention is not focussed on their surroundings.

Assessment Process

- 5.4 The "important views" identified through the Neighbourhood Plan consultation process were visited during September 2017.
- 5.5 Panoramic photographs were taken from each viewpoint using a full-frame DSLR fitted with a 50mm lens and mounted on a levelled panoramic tripod. The panoramic photos were taken with an arc of view of approximately 75, 145 or 215 degrees (depending on the view available from each viewpoint).
- 5.6 To ensure consistency of analysis, a proforma was completed at each viewpoint, recording a range of criteria for each view (see **Appendix 7**):
- topography and skylines;
 - landscape scale;
 - landscape pattern and complexity;
 - aesthetic and perceptual quality; and
 - views, visual character and inter-visibility.

5.7 Information recorded on the proforma was then combined with professional judgement and an analysis of the panoramic photos to assess the sensitivity of each of the views to residential development.

Assessment of Visual Sensitivity

5.8 The photoviews and detailed analysis of visual sensitivity are provided at **Appendix 8**, and summarised in **Table 5.1** below:

Table 5.1: Summary Visual Sensitivity of Important Views

VP No.	Receptor Type	View into or out of the village	Value of the View	Susceptibility of Receptors	Sensitivity
VP1	PRoW users	Out of village	Medium	High	High
	Residential occupiers		Medium	High	High
VP2	Minor road users	Out of village	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Cemetery visitors		Medium	Medium	Medium
VP3	Cemetery visitors	Out of village	Medium	Medium	Medium
VP4	Minor road users	Out of village	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Residential occupiers		Medium	High	High
VP5	Minor road users	Into village	Medium	Medium	Medium
VP6	PRoW users	Out of village	Medium	High	High
	Residential occupiers		Medium	High	High
VP7	PRoW users	Out of village	Medium	High	High
VP8	PRoW users	Into village	Medium	High	High
VP9	Minor road users	Out of village	Medium	Medium	Medium
	Residential occupiers		Medium	High	High

5.9 The majority (six of nine) of the important views have been assessed as being of high sensitivity, with the remaining three assessed as being of medium sensitivity.

6. SUMMARY

- 6.1 As part of the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, Blunsdon Parish Council commissioned Connected Landscapes to undertake a landscape and visual sensitivity analysis for the village and surrounding landscape.
- 6.2 The landscape which surrounds the hilltop village is undesignated at either national/statutory or local/non-statutory levels, but is nevertheless an attractive edge-of-settlement agricultural landscape with strong field boundary vegetation. The latter results in sometimes limited inter-visibility, though elsewhere the topography allows long views across the Thames Vale. Outside of the main settlements, and particularly on the sloping ground that drops away from the village, built form is generally sparse, limited to farmsteads and occasional isolated residential properties.
- 6.3 The balance between built form and the more natural environment (albeit one that is heavily managed through agriculture) which characterises the local landscape is assessed as being of medium sensitivity to appropriately-located small-scale development, but high sensitivity to large-scale development, especially any which substantially extends or lies outside of the existing settlement boundary.
- 6.4 As part of the neighbourhood plan consultation process, nine 'important views' were identified in the landscape surrounding the village that are considered **"of merit and worthy of preservation"** because they provide the undeveloped setting to the hilltop village. These views have been assessed for their visual sensitivity, having been recognised, both by the Parish Council and in published landscape character assessments, as being both important and potentially sensitive.
- 6.5 Six of the nine views are assessed as being of high sensitivity to residential development, with the remaining three views considered to be of medium sensitivity.

APPENDIX 1: DETAILED METHODOLOGY

Introduction

- 1.1 This assessment has been undertaken with regard to best practice, as outlined in published guidance:
 - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) - Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)
 - GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13 – Landscape Institute (2013)
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment – Natural England, October 2014
 - Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual assessment (2011) - Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11
- 1.2 The field survey work was undertaken in September 2017 when tree and hedgerow vegetation was generally still in leaf. Consideration has also therefore been given to the potential for greater visibility of the during the winter months when deciduous vegetation is not in leaf.

Landscape Character Sensitivity Methodology

- 1.3 The landscape character analysis considers landscape character and landscape value. The analysis identifies landscape receptors, and assesses the sensitivity of them.
- 1.4 The susceptibility of **landscape character is an expression of the landscape's ability** to accommodate change. It varies depending on factors such as the existing land use, pattern and scale of the landscape, the degree of openness, condition, the value placed on the landscape and any designations that may apply. In most cases the landscape components in the immediate surroundings strongly influence the landscape character more so than distant elements or features. However, at elevated viewpoints it is possible to feel a sense of exposure or remoteness due to the absence of nearby features.
- 1.5 Landscape value is considered in terms of factors such as the condition and quality of the landscape, the scenic quality, the rarity of the landscape in the locality and at a larger scale, the representativeness of the landscape, the recreation or amenity value of the landscape, its perceptual aspects such as wildness or tranquillity, and any associations that may exist between the local landscape and historical people or events. This list is not necessarily exhaustive or definitive. (GLVIA3, page 84).
- 1.6 Sensitivity of landscape character is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a landscape and the susceptibility of the landscape character to change – see Pages 88-90 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed as high, medium or low.

Table 1: Sensitivity of Landscape Character

	Value			
Susceptibility		High	Medium	Low
	High	High	High	Medium
	Medium	High	Medium	Low
	Low	Medium	Low	Low

Table 2: Criteria for Landscape Character Value

	Criteria
High	<p>Designated areas at an International, Regional or National (including but not limited to World Heritage Sites, National Parks, AONBs etc.) and also considered an important component of the country's character, experienced by a high number of people.</p> <p>Landscape condition is good and components are generally maintained to a high standard.</p> <p>In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence/absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has an elevated level of tranquillity.</p> <p>Rare or distinctive elements and features are key components that contribute to the character of the area.</p>
Medium	<p>Local or district-level formal designation (SLA etc.), or (typically) rural landscapes important to the setting of villages etc. and also considered to a distinctive component of the regional/county character experienced by a large proportion of its population. May also include larger public open spaces such as parks or key green infrastructure elements within urban areas.</p> <p>Landscape condition is fair and components are generally well maintained.</p> <p>In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence/absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has a moderate level of tranquillity.</p> <p>Rare or distinctive elements and features are notable components that contribute to the character of the area.</p>
Low	<p>No formal designations but a landscape of local relevance. Also green infrastructure and smaller open spaces within residential/urban areas likely to be visited and valued by the local community.</p> <p>Landscape condition may be poor and components poorly maintained or damaged.</p> <p>In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence/absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has limited levels of tranquillity.</p> <p>Rare or distinctive elements and features are not notable components that contribute to the character of the area.</p>

Table 3: Criteria for Landscape Susceptibility

	Criteria
High	<p>Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form etc.</p> <p>Nature of land use – landscapes with no or little existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed.</p> <p>Nature of existing elements – landscapes with components that are not easily replaced or substituted (e.g. ancient woodland, mature trees, historic parkland etc.).</p> <p>Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features or major infrastructure is not present or where present has limited influence on the landscape.</p>
Medium	<p>Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a medium capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed owing to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover, built form etc.</p>
Low	<p>Nature of land use – landscapes with some existing reference or context to the type of development being proposed.</p>

Visual Sensitivity Methodology

- 1.7 The sensitivity of receptor groups depends on factors such as duration of view, the angle at which they would see the Application Site and the nature of the viewer e.g. resident, tourist or worker. In general, residential receptors, tourists, recreational users of public rights of way and views from recognised vantage points are considered to have a higher sensitivity to change than people travelling along highways or at places of work.
- 1.8 Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a view and the susceptibility of the receptor to changes in that view – see Pages 113-114 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed as high, medium or low.
- 1.9 The value attached to a view includes a recognition of value through formal designations (for example landscape designations), and indicators of value attached to views by visitors (for example inclusion on maps or within guidebooks, provision of facilities, presence of interpretation etc.).

Table 4: Criteria for Assessing the Value of Views

	Criteria
High	Views with high scenic value within nationally-designated landscapes including but not limited to World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, etc. Likely to include key viewpoints on OS maps or reference within guidebooks, provision of facilities, presence of interpretation boards, etc.
Medium	Views with moderate scenic value within undesignated landscapes or those falling under local (non-statutory) designations, including urban fringe and rural countryside.
Low	Views with unremarkable scenic value within undesignated landscape with partly degraded visual quality and detractors.

Table 5: Criteria for Susceptibility for Visual Receptors

	Criteria
High	Includes occupiers of residential properties and people engaged in recreational activities in the countryside such as using Public Rights of Way.
Medium	Includes people engaged in outdoor sporting activities and people travelling through the landscape on minor roads and trains.
Low	Includes people at place of work e.g. industrial and commercial premises and people travelling through the landscape on A roads and motorways.

Table 6: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

	Value			
		High	Medium	Low
Susceptibility	High	High	High	Medium
	Medium	High	Medium	Low
	Low	Medium	Low	Low

1.10 The viewpoints identified through the consultation process were visited and photographs taken using a digital SLR (Canon EOS 6D) fitted with a 50mm focal length lens and mounted on a levelled tripod with a panoramic head. Viewpoint locations have been recorded using a Garmin 64s hand-held GPS.

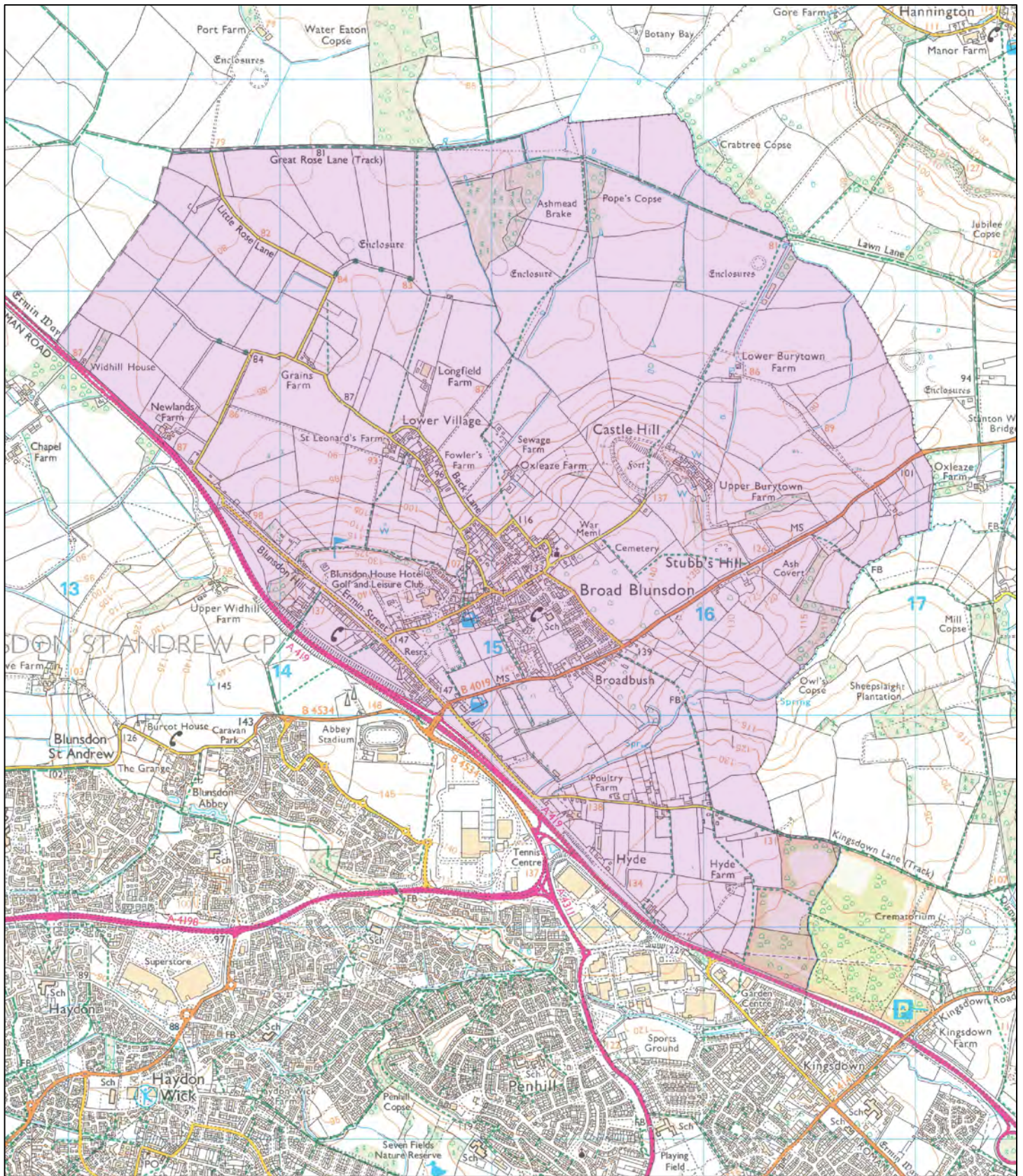
1.11 All of the representative viewpoints have been taken at 1.6m above ground level. However, where relevant, assumed views from the upper floors of buildings have also been considered. Viewpoints include, where relevant, residential properties, highways, public footpaths, bridleways, recreation and places of work. The baseline data for the viewpoints includes:

- Location of viewpoint;
- Nature of visual receptor;


- Description of the existing view from each viewpoint; and
- Sensitivity of visual receptor.


1.12 A proforma was completed at each viewpoint to ensure that the analysis was undertaken in a consistent manner for each viewpoint – see Appendix 7.


APPENDIX 2:
BLUNSDON EAST NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA



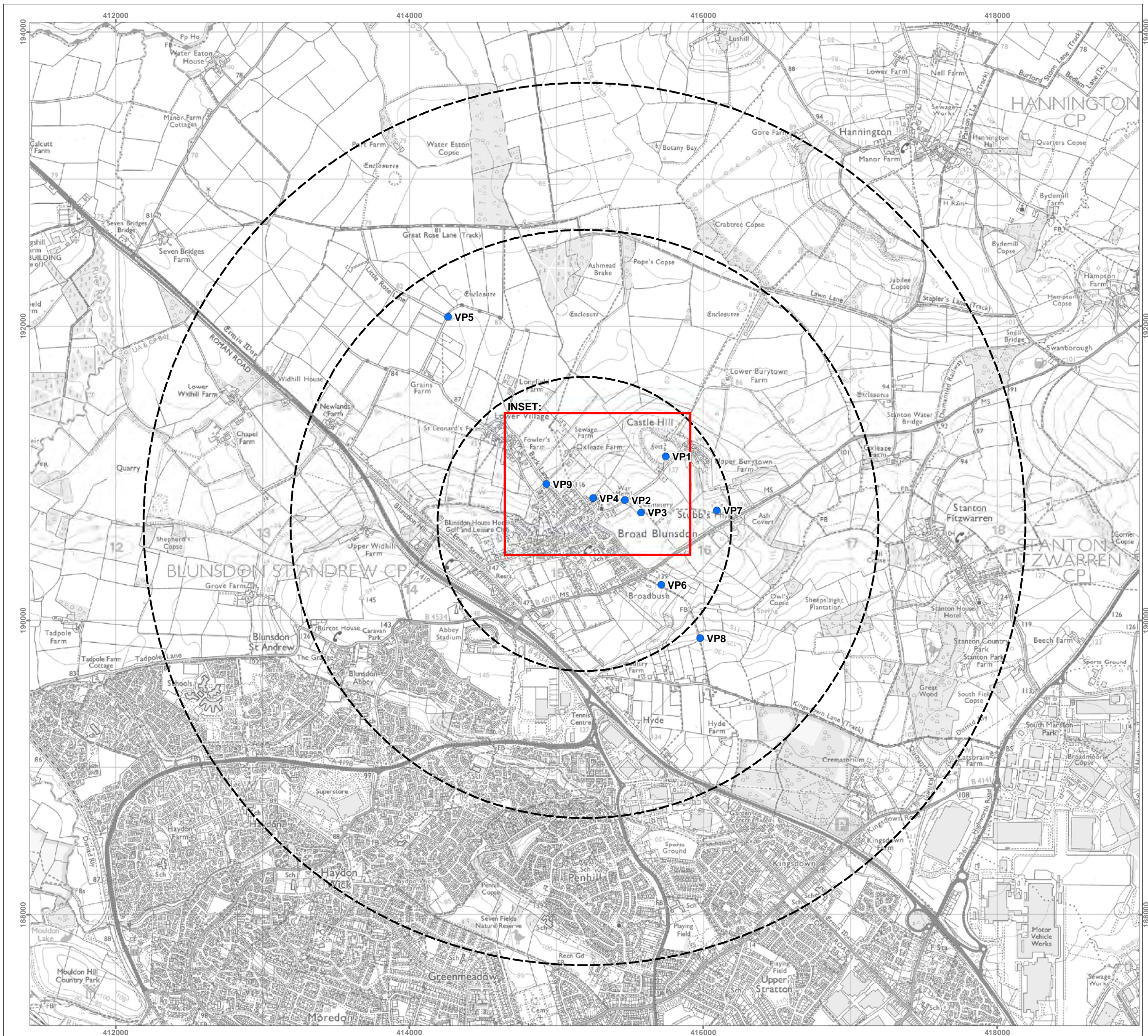
KEY:

 EXTENT OF STUDY AREA



Client		Blunson East Parish Council	
Project		Blunson Neighbourhood Plan Sensitivity Analysis	
Drawing Title		Study Area	
Scale	1:25,000 @ A4	Date	30/11/2017
Drawn by	RP	Checked by	IJ
Drawing No.	17-003-002	Rev	
			
<small>M: 07976 257010 T: 01242 890571 E: rob@connectedlandscapes.co.uk</small>			

APPENDIX 3:
VIEWPOINT LOCATION PLAN

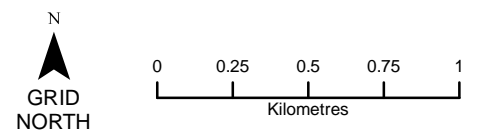
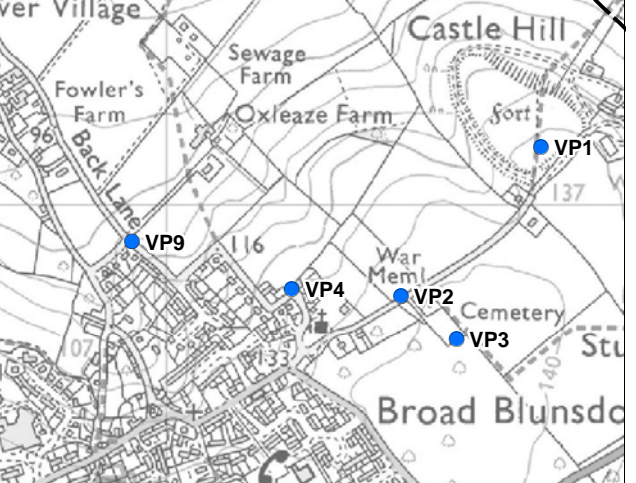


Key

- 1km, 2km & 3km Study Areas
- Viewpoint

VP No.	OS Grid Reference	Description
VP1	SU 15745 91115	Public footpath crossing Castle Hill, looking north/north-west
VP2	SU 15467 90819	Field gateway on Burytown Lane, looking north-west
VP3	SU 15577 90733	Blunsdon Cemetery, looking south-east
VP4	SU 15250 90832	Field gateway on Churchway, looking north-west
VP5	SU 14264 92064	South-east end of Little Rose Lane, looking south-east
VP6	SU 15714 90242	Public footpath heading south-east from Broadbush, looking south-east
VP7	SU 16093 90748	Public footpath on Stubb's Hill, looking east and south
VP8	SU 15979 89880	Public footpath to north of Kingsdown Lane, looking north-east
VP9	SU 14933 90926	Junction of Back Lane and Ivy Lane, looking north

INSET:



PROJECT TITLE
Blunsdon Neighbourhood Plan Sensitivity Analysis

DRAWING TITLE
Viewpoint Locations Plan

SCALE **1:25,000 @ A3** DRAWING NUMBER **CLS_010_04**

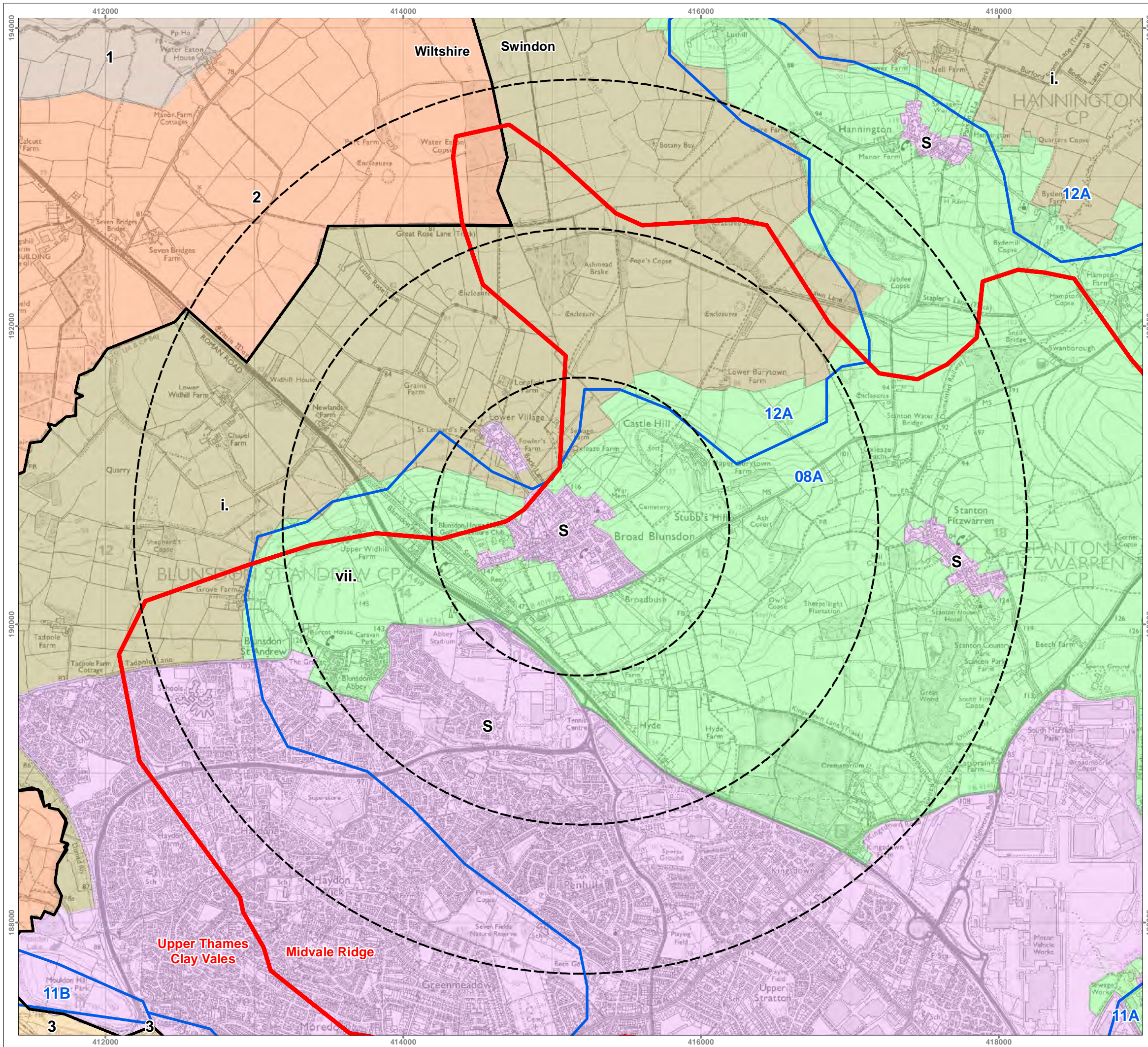
DRAWN BY DB	APPROVED BY RP	REVISION -	SHEET -	DATE 20/09/2017
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COORDINATE SYSTEM / DATUM
British National Grid / Newlyn Datum (AOD)

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APPENDIX 4:
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS



Key

- 1km, 2km & 3km Study Areas
- National Character Areas
- Local Authority Boundary

Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2005)

- Landscape Character Areas

North Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment (2004)

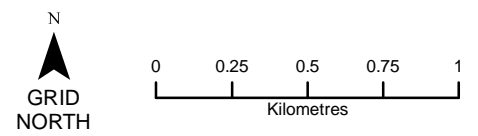
Landscape Character Areas

- 01: Thames Valley Floor
- 02: Thames Valley Lowland
- 03: Swindon Fringe

Swindon Borough Council Landscape Character Areas (2004)

Landscape Character Areas

- S. Settlement
- i. Thames Vale
- vii. Mid Vale Ridge



PROJECT TITLE
Blunsdon Neighbourhood Plan Sensitivity Analysis

DRAWING TITLE
Landscape Character Areas

SCALE **1:25,000 @ A3** DRAWING NUMBER **CLS_010_01**

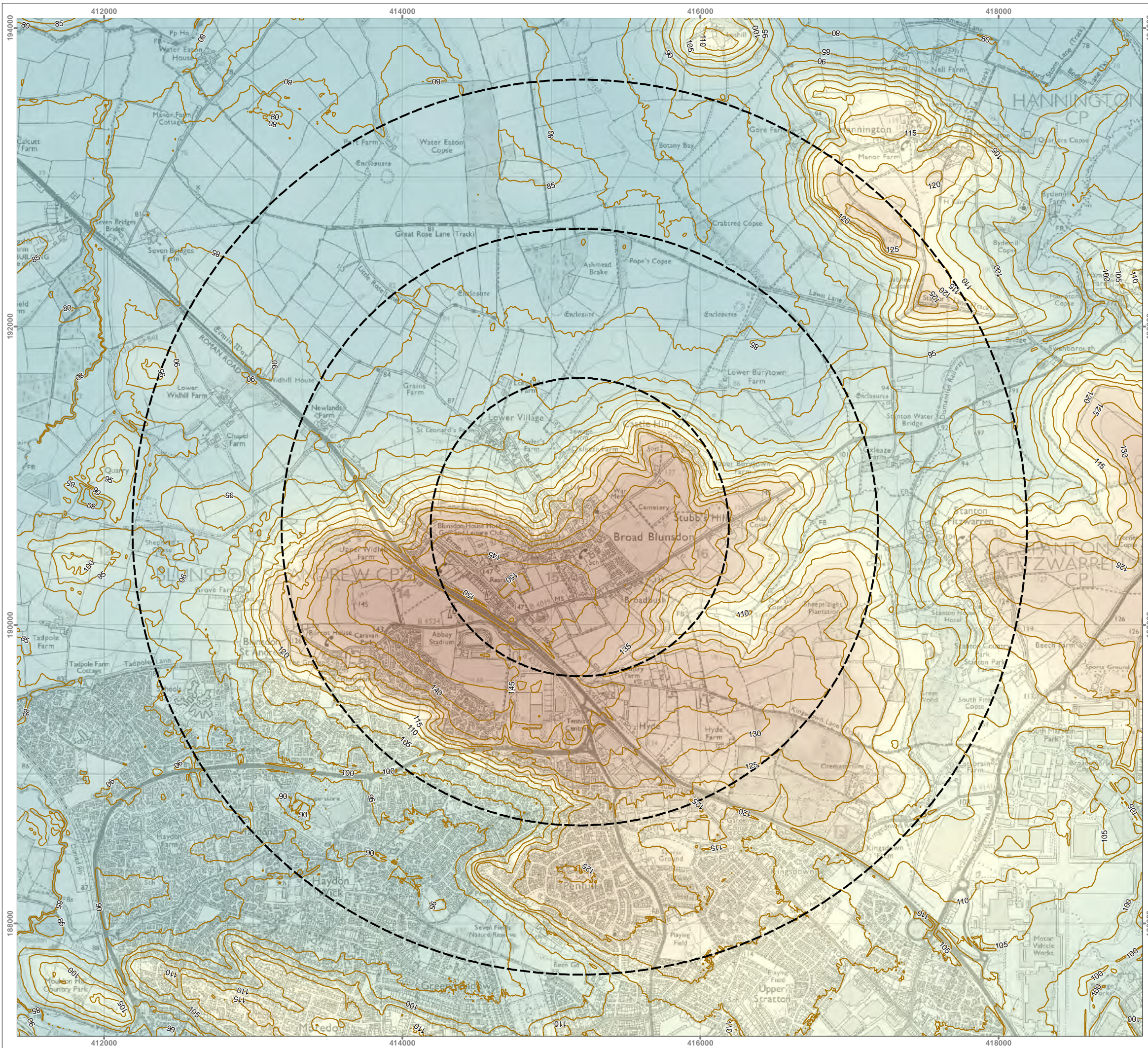
DRAWN BY DB	APPROVED BY RP	REVISION -	SHEET -	DATE 17/09/2017
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COORDINATE SYSTEM / DATUM
British National Grid / Newlyn Datum (AOD)

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APPENDIX 5:
TOPOGRAPHY



Key

- 1km, 2km & 3km Study Areas
- 5m Contour

DTM (metres above ordnance datum)

High : 152.958

Low : 73.2263

N

GRID NORTH

0 0.25 0.5 0.75 1

Kilometres

PROJECT TITLE

**Blunston Neighbourhood Plan
Sensitivity Analysis**

DRAWING TITLE

Topography Plan

SCALE **1:25,000 @ A3** DRAWING NUMBER **CLS_010_03**

DRAWN BY DB	APPROVED BY RP	REVISION -	SHEET -	DATE 17/09/2017
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COORDINATE SYSTEM / DATUM
British National Grid / Newlyn Datum (AOD)

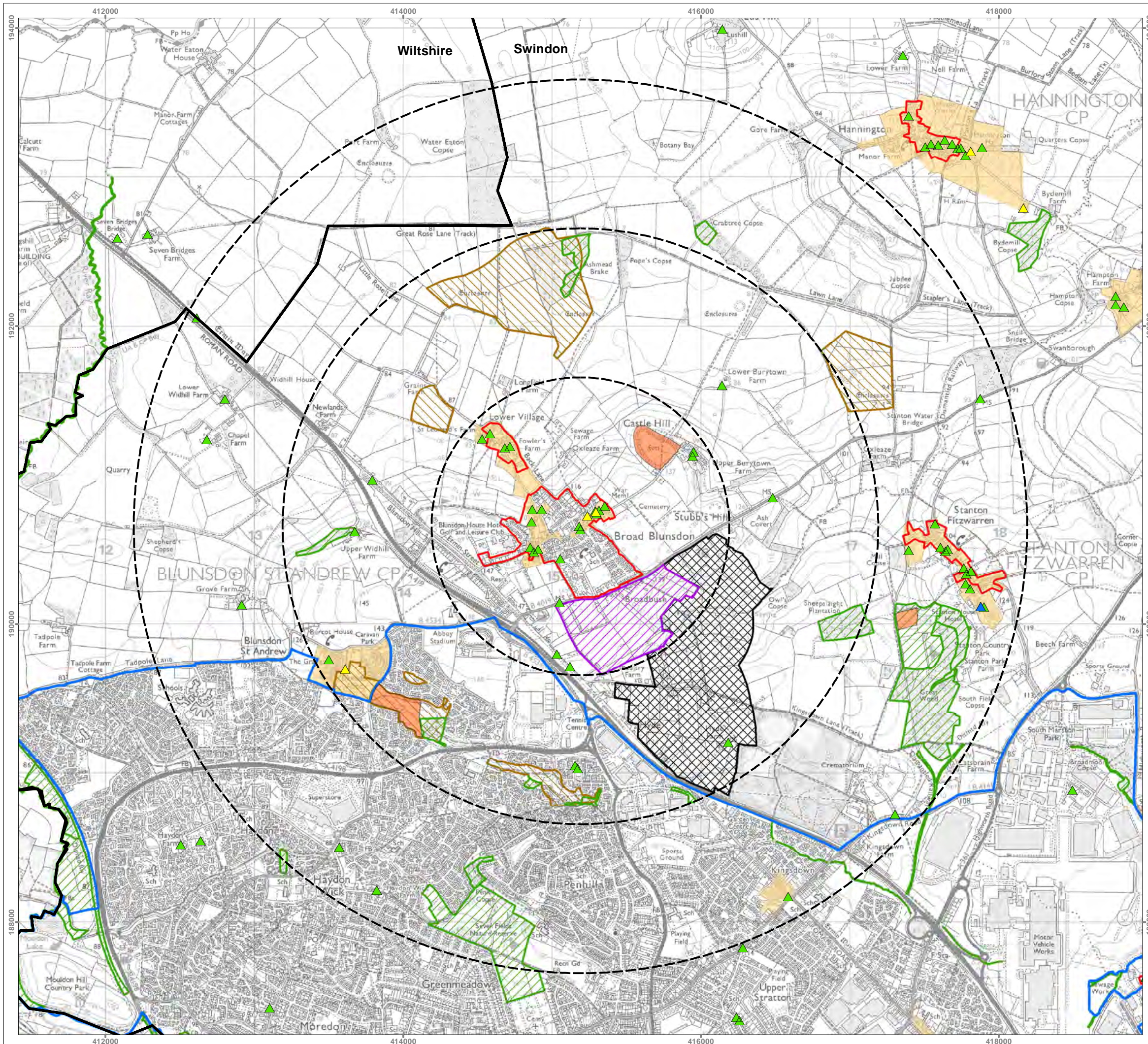
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Frentier
GeoConsulting

**connected
landscapes**

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APPENDIX 6:
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATIONS
AND LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

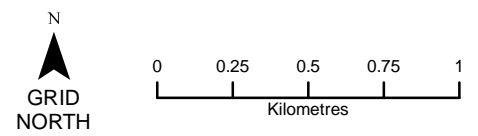


Key

- 1km, 2km & 3km Study Areas
- Local Authority Boundary
- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building
- Scheduled Monument

Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, Policies

- Swindon Urban Area Boundary SD2
- Rural Settlement Boundary SD2
- County Wildlife Sites EN4
- Significant Unscheduled Archaeological Features EN10
- Indicative Non Coalescence Areas NC1, NC2, NC3 & NC5
- Kingsdown NC5
- Conservation Areas EN10 Oct 2016



PROJECT TITLE				
Blunsdon Neighbourhood Plan Sensitivity Analysis				
DRAWING TITLE				
Environmental Designations and Local Plan Policies				
SCALE		DRAWING NUMBER		
1:25,000 @ A3		CLS_010_02		
DRAWN BY	APPROVED BY	REVISION	SHEET	DATE
DB	RP	-	-	17/09/2017
COORDINATE SYSTEM / DATUM				
British National Grid / Newlyn Datum (AOD)				
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APPENDIX 7:
VISUAL SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS PROFORMA

LOCATION:	
Criterion	Description
Topography and skylines	
Landscape scale (landform and component landscape features)	
Landscape pattern and complexity (including sense of time-depth)	
Aesthetic and perceptual quality (including landscape experience and tranquility)	
Views, visual character and inter-visibility	

Notes

Aesthetic: scale, enclosure, diversity, texture, form, line, colour, balance, movement, pattern

Perceptual/experiential: security, stimuli, tranquility, movement, naturalness, noise

APPENDIX 8:
PHOTOVIEWS AND
DETAILED VISUAL SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS



Description of View

The view is across an area of rough pasture and nettles (which covers the Scheduled Monument site) in the foreground, and then across the Thames Vale towards the Cotswold Hills in the distance. The distant skyline is formed by the Cotswold Hills, though some closer skylines are formed by trees and tall hedgerows.

The topography falls away from the viewpoint, becoming very gently undulating within the Thames Vale, with **occasional more defined hills such as Luss Hill**. In the distance the landform rises again to the Cotswold Hills.

This is a medium-scale agricultural landscape with strong **field boundary vegetation, and often irregular field shapes**. The landscape is generally of moderate complexity, including elements of built form such as the large, light-coloured buildings at RAF Fairford, and a solar farm. The settlement of Cricklade is partially visible to the west, while other smaller settlements such as Castle Eaton and Kempford are also partially visible. Overall, tree cover means that built form appears relatively infrequently in the view, though the agricultural landscape is still clearly a managed one.

The landscape is relatively tranquil, with traffic movement generally hidden from view by intervening vegetation. Depending on the wind direction there can sometimes be **limited background noise from traffic on the A419**.

From Castle Hill, the rising topography allows very long views and high levels of inter-visibility across the Thames Vale. From the lower ground of the Vale, views within the **Vale are often more limited due to strong field boundary vegetation**, though the rising ground of the Mid-Vale Ridge is generally visible from the Vale.

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesignated **farmland, albeit with some visible human influences** such as RAF Fairford and the solar farm. The nationally-designated Cotswold AONB is visible in the far distance, but views from the AONB are unlikely to be notably **affected by potential development in the vicinity of Bluntdown**.

The susceptibility of users of Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) is considered to be high as views of the surrounding



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 10:42	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 135m
OS grid reference - SU 15745 91115	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Bluntdown East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 1 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 1A

Public footpath crossing Scheduled Monument at Castle Hill, looking north-west



countryside are an important component of users' experience and enjoyment of the route. The sensitivity of PRoW users is therefore assessed as high.

The view is also partially representative of those obtained from nearby residential properties at Upper Burytown Farm and the cottages to the south-west of Castle Hill, though such views are partially restricted by trees and other vegetation within the gardens of those properties.

The susceptibility of occupiers of residential properties with rural views is assessed as high as the views obtained

are a component of occupiers' enjoyment of their homes. The sensitivity of such residential receptors is therefore assessed as high.

The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is considered to be high.



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 10:42	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 135m
OS grid reference - SU 15745 91115	

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PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 2 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 1B
Public footpath crossing Scheduled Monument at Castle Hill, looking north



Description of View

The view is through a field gateway in a strong, 2.5-3m tall native hedgerow. The foreground is a pasture field, with the view then extending across the Thames Vale towards the Cotswold Hills in the distance. The distant skyline is formed by the Cotswold Hills, while foreground skylines are formed by field boundary hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

The topography falls away from the viewpoint, becoming very gently undulating within the Thames Vale. In the distance the landform rises again to the Cotswold Hills.

This is a medium-scale agricultural landscape of moderate complexity. With strong field boundary vegetation and generally irregular field shapes, the view includes elements of built form such as large modern agricultural buildings, and a solar farm. Overall, the strong tree cover means that built form appears relatively infrequently in the view, though the agricultural landscape is still clearly a managed one.

The landscape is relatively tranquil, with traffic movement generally hidden from view by intervening vegetation. Depending on the wind direction there can sometimes be limited background noise from traffic on the A419.

From this point on Burytown Lane, the rising topography allows very long views across the Thames Vale. From the lower ground of the Vale, views within the Vale are often more limited due to strong field boundary vegetation, though the rising ground of the Mid-Vale Ridge is generally visible to the south/south-east.

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesignated farmland, albeit with some visible human influences. The nationally-designated Cotswold AONB is visible in the

far distance, but views from the AONB are unlikely to be notably affected by potential development in the vicinity of Bluntdown.

The susceptibility of minor road users is considered to be medium as the generally slower speed of travel means that views across the surrounding countryside are more easily obtained (unless restricted by roadside vegetation). The sensitivity of minor road users is therefore assessed as medium.

This view is also obtained by pedestrians using Burytown Lane to access the cemetery as they pass the gateway.



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 13:08	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 141m
OS grid reference - SU 15467 90819	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Bluntdown East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 3 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 2
Field gateway on Burytown Lane, opposite Bluntdown cemetery, looking north-west

Such pedestrians are considered to of similar medium susceptibility as although the views of the surrounding countryside are no doubt important, such views are not the primary purpose of their visit. The sensitivity of pedestrian visitors to the cemetery is therefore assessed as medium.

The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is considered to be medium, though it should be noted that views from the majority of other locations along **Burytown Lane** are restricted by roadside hedgerows and hedgerow trees.




VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 13:08	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 141m
OS grid reference - SU 15467 90819	

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VIEWPOINT 2 (CONT.)
Field gateway on Burytown Lane, opposite Blunsdown cemetery,
looking north-west

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By: 
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 4 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	Rev:



Description of View

The view is over the wall at the rear of the cemetery and **across a single arable field, bounded by strong deciduous trees along the B4019**. The view is generally limited to **the arable field by strong field boundary vegetation**, though there are some very limited views towards the **Marlborough and Lambourn Downs where the trees along the B4019 are slightly lower**.

The skyline is generally formed by the field boundary vegetation, except where the Downs are visible.

With the view predominantly limited to the arable field immediately beyond the cemetery wall, the visible landscape is one of medium scale but low complexity. Other than the cemetery wall, built form is not noticeable in the view, with residential development along **Sams Lane (to the south-west) being generally hidden by roadside tree cover**.

The landscape is relatively tranquil, though there is some **traffic movement visible on the B4019**. Depending on the wind direction there can sometimes also be limited **background noise from traffic on the A419**.

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesignated **farmland, albeit with some visible human influences**. Very limited parts of the nationally-designated North Wessex Downs AONB are visible in the far distance, but **views from the AONB are unlikely to be notably affected** by potential development in the vicinity of Bluntdown.

This view represents that obtained by visitors to the cemetery. Such receptors are considered to of medium susceptibility as although the views of the surrounding

countryside are no doubt important, such views are not the primary purpose of their visit. The sensitivity of visitors to the cemetery is therefore assessed as medium.

The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is considered to be medium.



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 13:32	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 142m
OS grid reference - SU 15577 90733	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Bluntdown East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 5 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 3
Rear of Bluntdown cemetery, looking south-east



Description of View

The view is through a field gateway between two groups of residential properties on Churchway. The foreground is a pasture field, with the view then extending across the Thames Vale towards the Cotswold Hills in the distance. Recently constructed properties to the left (south-west) of the view help to frame the view. The distant skyline is formed by the Cotswold Hills, while boundary trees on the north-west side of the foreground field also break the skyline.

The topography falls away from the viewpoint, becoming

very gently undulating within the Thames Vale. In the distance the landform rises again to the Cotswold Hills.

This is a medium-scale agricultural landscape of moderate complexity. With strong field boundary vegetation and generally irregular field shapes, the view includes elements of built form such as large modern agricultural buildings, and a solar farm. Overall, the strong tree cover means that built form appears relatively infrequently in the view, though the agricultural landscape is still clearly a managed one.

The landscape is relatively tranquil, with traffic movement

generally hidden from view by intervening vegetation. Depending on the wind direction there can sometimes be limited background noise from traffic on the A419.

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesignated farmland, albeit with some visible human influences. The nationally-designated Cotswold AONB is visible in the far distance, but views from the AONB are unlikely to be notably affected by potential development in the vicinity of Blunsdon.

This view represents that obtained by road users passing the gateway on Churchway. The susceptibility of minor road users is considered to be medium as the generally slower speed of travel means that views across the surrounding countryside are more easily obtained (unless restricted by roadside vegetation). The sensitivity of minor road users is therefore assessed as medium.

The view is also partially representative of those obtained from nearby residential properties. The susceptibility of occupiers of residential properties with rural views is assessed as high as the views obtained are a component



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 13:58	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 130m
OS grid reference - SU 15250 90832	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 6 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 4

Field gateway between residential properties on Churchway, looking north-west

of occupiers' enjoyment of their homes. The sensitivity of such residential receptors is therefore assessed as high.

The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is considered to be high.




VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

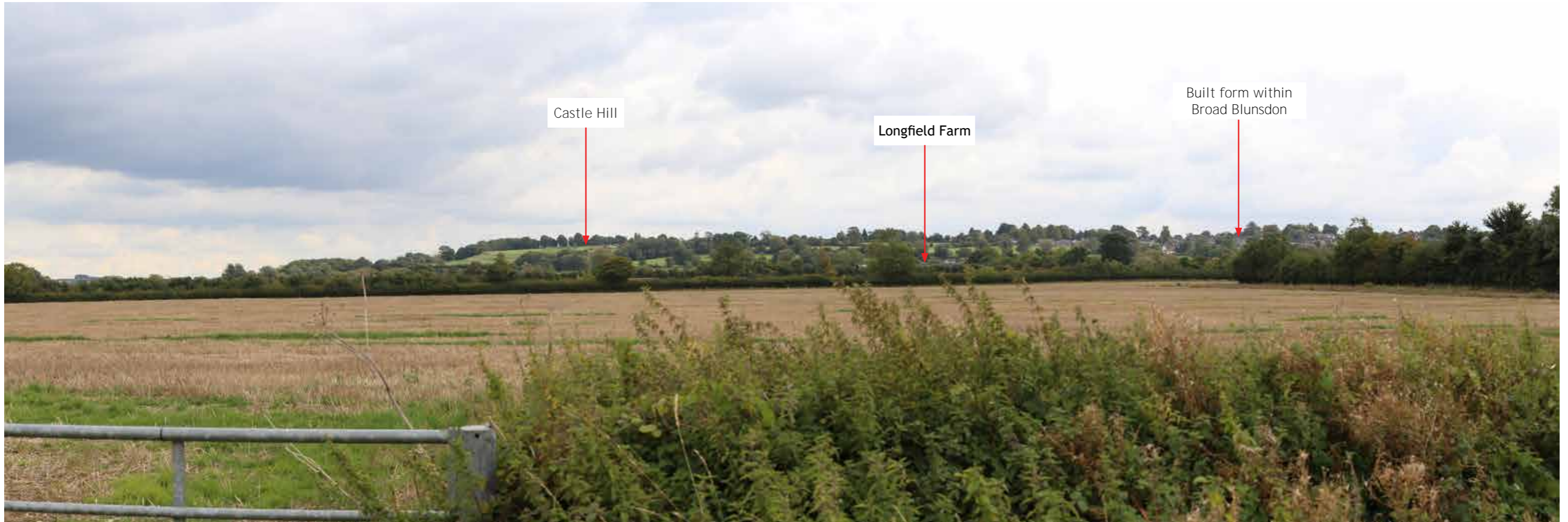
Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 13:58	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 130m
OS grid reference - SU 15250 90832	

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VIEWPOINT 4
Field gateway between residential properties on Churchway, looking north-west

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By: 
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 7 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	Rev:



Description of View

The view is over a low section of roadside hedgerow and a field gate, and across arable farmland towards the rising ground on which the main part of Broad Blunsdon is located.

The skyline is predominantly formed by trees and built form on the rising ground of Broad Blunsdon, though to the left (east) and right (south), the skyline is formed by tree cover within the Thames Vale.

The foreground topography is broadly flat to very gently

undulating, and then rises to approximately 140-145m AOD around the main part of Broad Blunsdon.

This is a medium-scale, agricultural landscape of moderate complexity, though located close to the edge of Broad Blunsdon. The built form of Broad Blunsdon is a notable feature within the local landscape, though strong field boundary and other vegetation helps the settlement to fit within the landscape. Outside of the settlement boundaries, the agricultural landscape is still clearly a managed one.

The landscape is relatively tranquil, with traffic movement

generally hidden from view by intervening vegetation. Depending on the wind direction there can sometimes be limited background noise from traffic on the A419. Built form within Broad Blunsdon does add busyness to the view and thereby reduces the perceived tranquillity of the view.

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesignated farmland, albeit with a clear presence of built form set amongst strong tree cover.

Built form within Broad Blunsdon

This view represents that obtained by road users passing the gateway at the end of Little Rose Lane. The susceptibility of minor road users is considered to be medium as the generally slower speed of travel means that views across the surrounding countryside are more easily obtained (unless restricted by roadside vegetation). The sensitivity of minor road users is therefore assessed as medium.

The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is considered to be medium.



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 15:20	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 85m
OS grid reference - SU 14264 92064	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 8 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 5
Field gateway at south-east end of Little Rose Lane, looking south-east



Description of View

The view is across the valley of a tributary of the Bydemill Brook. The view to the north and east comprises neatly mown horse paddocks in the foreground, with the tree lined stream in the bottom of the valley and arable farmland on the opposite side of the valley. The view to the south and south-east is restricted by a strong hedgerow with frequent, sometimes continuous, hedgerow trees. Where views to the south are possible (here over a field gateway), the view is across further pasture fields with strong field boundary vegetation.

The skyline is predominantly formed by trees, either on the rising ground on the far side the valley or, in some directions, by those in the foreground. The topography drops away to the tree-lined stream in the bottom of the valley, and then rises again beyond.

This is a medium-scale, agricultural landscape of moderate complexity. Field sizes are variable - smaller horse paddocks and larger arable fields, while tree cover and topography are the dominant features within the landscape. The agricultural landscape is still clearly a managed one, with fences and parked farm machinery

adding complexity to the view.

The landscape is relatively tranquil, with traffic movement generally hidden from view by intervening vegetation. Depending on the wind direction there can sometimes be limited background noise from traffic on the A419. Built form along Broadbush (behind the viewpoint) reduces the perceived tranquillity of the landscape, adding an edge-of-settlement feel.

Land on the nearside of the valley (including the viewpoint) lies within the Swindon Borough Local Plan

Non-Coalescence Area, while visible land on the far side of the valley lies within the Kingsdown Allocated Site (Policy NC5).

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesigned farmland with strong tree cover.

The susceptibility of users of PRoWs is considered to be high as views of the surrounding countryside are an



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 12:36	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 133m
OS grid reference - SU 15714 90242	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 9 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

important component of users' experience and enjoyment of the route. The sensitivity of PRoW users is therefore assessed as high.

The view is also partially representative of those obtained from nearby residential properties on the south-east side of Broadbush. The susceptibility of occupiers of residential properties with rural views is assessed as high as the views obtained are a component of occupiers' enjoyment of their homes. The sensitivity of such residential receptors is therefore assessed as high.

The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is

considered to be high.



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 12:36	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 133m
OS grid reference - SU 15714 90242	

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PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 10 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 6 (CONT.)
Public footpath to south-east of Broadbush,
looking south-east



Description of View

The view is across a field of rough grassland and nettles/thistles towards trees lining the B4019. The strength of this roadside vegetation means that views are generally restricted to within the foreground field, though there are some very limited views towards higher ground to the east (where the view is over a lower section of hedgerow) and to the south (through small gaps in the roadside trees). Traffic passing the field on the B4019 is occasionally visible through the trees, and this visibility is likely to increase during the winter months when the deciduous vegetation is not in leaf.

Limited built form is visible from sections of this footpath further to the west (in the form of former military structures), and farm buildings on the south side of the B4019 may also be visible through the trees during the winter months when the deciduous roadside vegetation is not in leaf.

The skyline is predominantly formed by trees around the boundary of the foreground and adjoining fields, though in some views to the east the landform itself forms the skyline.

This is a medium-scale, managed agricultural landscape

of moderate complexity. Field sizes and shapes are variable, while tree cover is the dominant feature within the landscape when viewed from this location.

The landscape is moderately tranquil, though traffic movement is partially visible through the intervening roadside vegetation and traffic noise from the road is very evident.

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesignated

farmland with strong field boundary vegetation.

The susceptibility of users of PRoWs is considered to be high as views of the surrounding countryside are an important component of users' experience and enjoyment of the route. The sensitivity of PRoW users is therefore assessed as high.

The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is considered to be high.



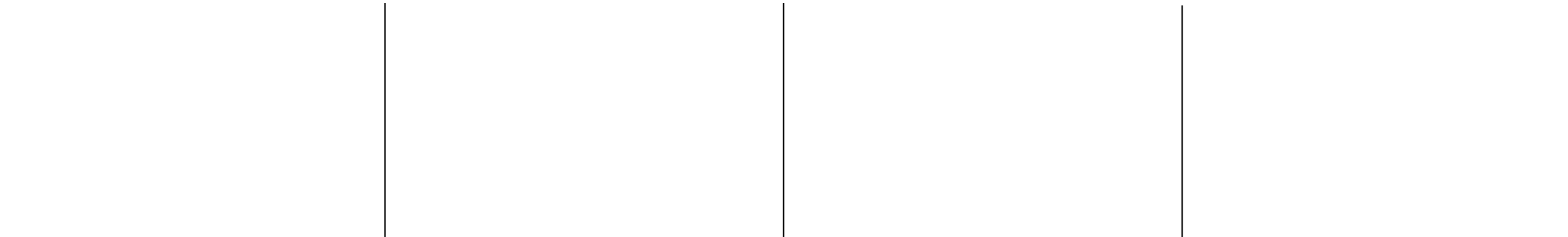
VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 11:55	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 130m
OS grid reference - SU 16093 90748	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 11 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	


VIEWPOINT 7A
Public footpath crossing Stubbs Hill,
looking east



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 11:55	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 130m
OS grid reference - SU 16093 90748	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By: 
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 12 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	Rev:

VIEWPOINT 7B
Public footpath crossing Stubbs Hill,
looking south-east



Trees lining B4019




VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 11:55	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 130m
OS grid reference - SU 16093 90748	

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PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By: 
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Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	Rev:

VIEWPOINT 7C
Public footpath crossing Stubbs Hill,
looking south



Trees lining tributary of the Bydemill Brook

Description of View

The view is across the valley of a tributary of the Bydemill Brook, looking north-west towards the residential properties on the south-east side Broadbush. The **foreground to the view comprises grass fields/paddocks** on either side of the valley, and a strong belt of riverine trees lining the tributary of the Bydemill Brook at the bottom of the valley.

The skyline is formed by trees (and occasional residential properties amongst them) on the far side the valley or,

in some directions, by hedgerows with hedgerow trees in the foreground. Inter-visibility is limited to within the valley. The topography drops away to the tree-lined stream in the bottom of the valley, and then rises again beyond to Broadbush.

This is a medium-scale, agricultural landscape of moderate complexity. Field sizes are variable, while tree cover and valley topography are the dominant features within the landscape. The pastoral landscape is clearly a **managed one, influenced by built form on the south-east edge of Broad Blunsdon/Broadbush.**

The landscape is relatively tranquil, though there can **sometimes be limited background noise from traffic on the A419**, depending on the wind direction. Built form along Broadbush reduces the perceived tranquillity of the landscape, adding an edge-of-settlement feel.

Land on the far side of the valley lies within the Swindon Borough Local Plan Non-Coalescence Area, while land on the nearside of the valley (including the viewpoint) lies within the Kingsdown Allocated Site (Policy NC5).

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesignated farmland, with strong tree cover and limited elements of built form.

The susceptibility of users of PRoWs is considered to be high as views of the surrounding countryside are an important component of users' experience and enjoyment of the route. The sensitivity of PRoW users is therefore assessed as high.



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 28/09/2017 @ 10:10	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 126m
OS grid reference - SU 15979 89880	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 14 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 8A
Public footpath between Broadbush and Kingsdown Lane, looking west



The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is considered to be high.



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 28/09/2017 @ 10:10	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 126m
OS grid reference - SU 15979 89880	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 15 of 17	
Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 8B
Public footpath between Broadbush and Kingsdown Lane,
looking north-west



Description of View

The view is across the Thames Vale towards the Cotswold Hills. Roadside and field boundary hedgerows partially restrict views, though growth patterns suggest that these are regularly trimmed. Land use is predominantly pastoral close to Broad Blunsdon, but arable farming is also present.

There is limited built form within the view to the north - isolated farmsteads and large industrial-type buildings at RAF Fairford. Powerlines mounted on timber poles cross

the foreground, while traffic on Back Lane and Ivy Lane is also obviously visible.

The altitude of the viewpoint, though lower than the main part of Broad Blunsdon, is still sufficient to still allow long views across the Vale with little interruption from intervening field boundary vegetation.

The skyline is generally formed by tree cover or by the Cotswold hills in the far distance.

This is a medium-scale, managed agricultural landscape

of moderate complexity. Field sizes and shapes are variable, while tree boundary vegetation and the distant Cotswold Hills are the dominant features within the landscape.

The landscape is moderately tranquil, though traffic passing on Back Lane/Ivy Lane is obviously very evident. Depending on the wind direction, there may also be some background noise from traffic on the A419 to the south-west.

Sensitivity

The view from this location is considered to be of medium value as it is of not unattractive but undesignated farmland with strong field boundary vegetation. The nationally-designated Cotswold AONB is visible in the far distance, but views from the AONB are unlikely to be notably affected by potential development in the vicinity of Blunsdown.

This view represents that obtained by road users passing between Broad Blunsdon and Lower Village. The



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 15:04	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 106m
OS grid reference - SU 14933 90926	

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
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Drawn By: RP	Approved By: IJ	Date: 29/09/2017	

VIEWPOINT 9
Back Lane, at junction with Ivy Lane, looking north

susceptibility of minor road users is considered to be medium as the generally slower speed of travel means that views across the surrounding countryside are more easily obtained (unless restricted by roadside vegetation). The sensitivity of minor road users is therefore assessed as medium.

The view is also representative of those obtained by the occupants of nearby residential properties. The susceptibility of occupiers of residential properties with rural views is assessed as high as the views obtained are a component of occupiers' enjoyment of their homes.

The sensitivity of such residential receptors is therefore assessed as high.

The overall sensitivity of receptors observing this view is considered to be high.



VIEWPOINT INFORMATION

Camera make & model - Canon 6D with 50mm lens	
Date & time of photograph - 18/09/2017 @ 15:04	Viewpoint height (AOD) - 106m
OS grid reference - SU 14933 90926	

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VIEWPOINT 9 (CONT.) Back Lane, at junction with Ivy Lane, looking north

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Blunsdon East Neighbourhood Plan - Visual Sensitivity Analysis			Produced By:
Drawing Title: Visual Sensitivity	Dwg. No: 17-003-001	Sheet No: 17 of 17	
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