

Land south-east of Brickyard Lane roundabout,
Melton, East Riding of Yorkshire
Hacheston, Suffolk

**Review of landscape and visual aspects
of planning application**

for

North Ferriby Parish Council

Planning | 16th December 2020

Contact:

Simon Neesam
Technical Director

The Landscape Partnership

The Granary, Sun Wharf
Deben Road
Woodbridge
Suffolk, IP12 1AZ

t: 01394 380 509

w: thelandscapepartnership.com

The Landscape Partnership Ltd is a practice of Chartered Landscape Architects, Chartered Ecologists and Chartered Environmentalists, registered with the Landscape Institute and a member of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment and the Arboricultural Association.

Registered office

The Landscape Partnership

Greenwood House
15a St Cuthberts Street
Bedford
MK40 3JG
Registered in England No. 2709001

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the review

- 1.1.1 The Wykeland Group has applied to the East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) for full planning permission for the erection of a single building with a total gross internal area of 186,940m² and a main parapet height of 22.667m, with two small roof access areas extending to a height of 25.617m. The building would be used for warehousing and distribution and the site would be accessed at two locations from Brickyard Lane, the industrial estate access road which lies to the west of the site.
- 1.1.2 The application was submitted to ERYC on 27.10.2020 and validated the same day as planning application No. 20/03555/STPLF. It is currently pending decision.
- 1.1.3 The site is located to the south of Monks Way East and its junction with the A63, and east of Brickyard Lane, in the civil parish of Welton, Hull. The settlement of North Ferriby is located to the east of the site and Melton to the north-west. It is currently allocated as a strategically important employment site in the adopted East Riding Site allocations DPD (2016) under Policy Melt-E.
- 1.1.4 The site is currently an undeveloped plot within the wider Melton West Business Park and comprises two agricultural fields divided by an access track, bordered on the northern side by hedgerow. The application boundary also includes a strip of land to the west to allow for future drainage connections and extends around the land where a new roundabout is proposed on Brickyard Lane that has recently been approved via planning application ref: 20/02150/STPLF.
- 1.1.5 The site itself forms part of a wider development known as the Melton Industrial Estate as defined on the Site Allocations Proposals Map. A commercial and industrial development site to the south of the A63, the east of Gibson Lane, north of the Hull and Selby Railway. The 39ha site encompasses the northern section of Brick Lane. It is separated on its eastern side from the residential areas of North Ferriby by a belt of woodland known as Long Plantation.
- 1.1.6 This wider area has been subject to many employment planning permissions in the past, with the most recent being a hybrid application approved in 2011 (ref: 11/00613/STPLF/STRAT). This covered a wider area than the current application site and delivered a hybrid consent for B1, B2, and B8 uses.
- 1.1.7 A common consideration of the current and previous applications is the landscape treatment afforded to the eastern boundary of the site, in order to safeguard the residents of North Ferriby and Long Plantation. The space assigned to this treatment varies between the applications and likewise the composition and function of the landscape buffer.

1.2 Landscape context

- 1.2.1 The following description of the site and its landscape context is paraphrased and extended from the Landscape and Visual Appraisal accompanying the current application.
- 1.2.2 The site comprises two largely flat agricultural fields located to the south of Monks Way East/ A63 interchange. It is bound to the west by Brickyard Lane, with part of the site extending into the adjacent field to allow for future drainage connections. To the east the site is bordered by mature woodland at Long Plantation, which separates the site from the village of North Ferriby.

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- 1.2.3 The site's fields include boundary hedgerows and a fragmented hedgerow that follows a line west to east within the centre of the site. Agricultural access into the site is from Brickyard Lane, with an access track running beside the central hedgerow.
- 1.2.4 Following the northern boundary of the site is a footway-cycleway. This follows a course parallel to the embanked Monks Way East-Melton Road, which rises above the site at the A63 interchange by up to c.10m. The footway-cycleway includes an underpass below Monks Way East that provides a connection between the settlements of Melton and North Ferriby.
- 1.2.5 North of Monks Way East is the Sandpiper Public House and a group of residential properties at Melton Fields.
- 1.2.6 The A63 provides the main transport to Hull from the M62 motorway. Close to the site, the route lies in cutting and effectively by-passes the settlements of Elloughton, Brough, Melton and North Ferriby.
- 1.2.7 To the north of the site and the A63 there is a noticeable change in the landform with the flat low-lying landscape of the Humber Estuary making way to the rising lands of the Yorkshire Wolds at Melton Hill.
- 1.2.8 Beyond the A63 corridor are the villages of Melton and Welton that lie to the north-west, c. 0.7km and 2km from the site respectively. To the north-east, beyond Melton Hill, is the village of Swanland, around 2km from the site.
- 1.2.9 Long Plantation, which forms a linear and contiguous belt of mature woodland, extends northwards from the edge of the River Humber up to the Melton Road and the A63. A section of the Yorkshire Wolds Way long distance path follows a line through the centre of woodland providing connections to a further long-distance path, the Trans Pennine Trail, which follows the Humber Estuary to the south.
- 1.2.10 Beyond Long Plantation is the residential edge of North Ferriby, which includes nearby housing at Plantation Drive, The Triangle and Parkfield Avenue. North Ferriby extends to the east with the older parts of the village focussed along the High Street. Further east is the settlement of Hessle (c.4.5km from the site) and in the wider landscape and further east still is the urban area of Hull.
- 1.2.11 The site's southern boundary - which is not defined on the ground - lies within an agricultural field near to the Hull and Selby Railway line. The rail line is set in a shallow cutting and is bordered by intermittent vegetation, which includes a tall group of trees near the Brickyard Lane rail bridge (Melton Bridge). Beyond the rail line is an arable field that extends to Red Cliff and the shoreline of the River Humber.
- 1.2.12 The Humber Estuary forms an open and expansive landscape to the south. The striking visual feature of the Humber Bridge that rises above the landscape lies to the east at Hessle, around 4.5km from the site.
- 1.2.13 The site's western boundary is primarily defined by Brickyard Lane which connects with Monk Way East. Brickyard Lane, which includes several industrial and commercial units, bridges the rail line before reaching Whinny Clump and then East Clough on the edge of the Humber.
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- 1.2.14 To the west of Brickyard Lane are agricultural fields that are allocated for employment use under Policy Melt-E. The area around Gibson Lane includes several residential properties, a number of industrial and commercial buildings, and two wind turbines. Further to the west is Melton West Business Park which comprises commercial and employment buildings.

1.3 Objectives of this report and extent of review

- 1.3.1 The Landscape Partnership has been instructed to undertake an independent review of the landscape and visual-related components of the planning application by North Ferriby Parish Council. The purpose of the review is to provide advice and commentary on the accuracy and reliability of the documents, to help the parish council compile an informed consultation response to the application, with particular regard to the appropriateness and practicability of the landscape treatment proposed along the eastern edge of the site, and its amenity value as accessible open space for use by the local community.
- 1.3.2 In doing so, The Landscape Partnership reviewed documents and plans accompanying the application, and in particular the Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) prepared by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd (FPCR).
- 1.3.3 The objectives of the review are to:
- review the methodology used for the LVA;
 - review the judgements made about the effects of the proposed development on sensitive landscape and visual receptors; and
 - identify any further work that should be undertaken in order that ERYC can make an informed judgement on the likely effects of the proposed development on landscape character and visual amenity.
- 1.3.4 The review considers only landscape and visual aspects of the application.
- 1.3.5 It should be noted that The Landscape Partnership has not undertaken a site visit and has not prepared its own LVA or LVIA, and that any comments made regarding the judgements within the assessment are made on the basis of information provided within the FPCR LVA and reference to online mapping and aerial photographs.
- 1.3.6 The findings are to be used by the parish council in representations to ERYC, for it to consider when determining the planning application.
- 1.3.7 The review of the LVA was undertaken by Simon Neesam, a Technical Director of The Landscape Partnership and a Chartered Landscape Architect with over 25 years' experience. He holds a degree and a postgraduate diploma in Landscape Architecture and became a fully qualified Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute in 1994. Simon has a wide range of experience in landscape architecture and landscape planning, and has undertaken projects for private clients as well as national, regional, and local public sector bodies throughout the UK. He has carried out landscape assessments, visual impact assessments, and acted as expert witness for a variety of projects including major out-of-town retail facilities, highway schemes, renewable energy developments, landfill and mineral schemes, flood alleviations schemes, and new housing, often within sensitive landscapes or at potentially contentious locations.

1.4 Overview of EYRC's approach to open space

1.4.1 ERYC definition for open space for new development¹ [TLP emphasis]:

Open space includes all open space of public value and can belong to the council, a private organisation or an individual. The only condition is that the land must be safely accessible by the community.

Open space, which includes all open space of public value, can take many forms, from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors, and country parks. It can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby; have ecological value and contribute to green infrastructure, as well as being an important part of the landscape and setting of built development.

New developments for more than 10 houses, or 1,000m² of floor space, must make provision for new open space. New open space can be provided on-site, or in certain circumstances, a contribution ('commuted sum') will be sought from the applicant.

1.4.2 This requirement is set out in Policy C3 of the East Riding Local Plan Strategy Document.

Policy C3: Providing public open space for leisure and recreation

- A. Proposals should maintain and/or enhance the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and address any shortfalls in provision, when measured against the standards set out in Table 12.*
- B Development that increases demand for open space will be required to address this demand in line with Part A of this Policy. Where practicable, open space should be provided on-site and link in well with other green infrastructure features as described in Policy ENV5.*
- C Proposed open space, including open space required to make up existing shortfalls in provision, will be identified in the Allocations Document or a Neighbourhood Development Plan.*
- D Existing and proposed open spaces are shown on the Policies Map. Proposals resulting in the loss of an existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, will only be supported where:*
 - 1. Assessments of existing provision against local standards demonstrate the land is surplus to requirements for all of the functions that open space can perform; or*
 - 2. Replacement open space to an equivalent standard or better, in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility, is provided; or*
 - 3. The development is for alternative sports and recreation provision, for which there is a deficit; and*

¹ <https://www.eastriding.gov.uk/planning-permission-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-the-local-plan/open-space-on-new-developments/> accessed 03.12.2020

4. *The loss of open space would not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on the amenity or character of the area.*

1.4.3 The East Riding Local Plan (2012-2029) Policies Map includes Long Plantation as Open Space

1.4.4 East Riding Local Plan: Open Space Supplementary Planning Document, Adopted November 2016, defines open space as:

All open space of public value, not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

2 Summary of the site's planning background

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The following paragraphs provide a potted history of the site's planning background, as it relates to the development of proposals for landscape treatment on the eastern boundary of the site.

2.2 PA 01/03878/STOUT

2.2.1 On 08.11.2001, outline planning permission was granted at land to the east and west of Brickyard Lane, Melton, East Riding of Yorkshire for the "Erection of buildings for B1, B2 and B8 use, car parking, landscaping and associated works". The red line on the eastern boundary of the site was offset from Long Plantation by c.50m, with the intervening space annotated on drawings as Green Space or Open Space.

2.2.2 A Section 106 Agreement was made between the ERYC and Ashtenne Humberside No.1 Limited, dated 08.11.2001, to facilitate the transfer of the Open Space to ERYC.

2.2.3 Para 2.1 of the Section 106 notes that the landscape works for the open space shall not include the provision paving, play spaces, benches, and similar hard landscape proposals.

2.3 PA 03/05511/STVAR

2.3.1 On 06.10.2004, approval was given for a:

Variation of conditions 1 and 2 relating to outline planning application no. 01/03878/STOUT for the erection of buildings for use within Classes B1, B2 and B8, car parking, landscaping and associated works.

2.3.2 Condition 18 of the resultant decision notice noted [TLP emphasis]:

The masterplan referred to in Condition No.1 shall include details of:

- (i) a 15 metre wide area of landscaping along the boundary of Melton Grange, and*
- (ii) a landscaping strip to the far eastern boundary to reflect in area the adjoining open land between the far eastern site boundary and Long Plantation.*

Works required to meeting (i) and (ii) above shall be completed before the commencement of any works on the site, or within such longer periods as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

This condition is imposed in the interests of the visual and residential amenities of the area. It is likely that landscaping in this context will mean an element of mounding and planting.

Section 106 Agreement

2.3.3 A Section 106 Agreement, undated bar the year 2004, was made between the ERYC and Ashtenne Humberside No.1 Limited, to facilitate the transfer of the Open Space to ERYC.

2.3.4 The agreement noted:

- Commencement of development excludes soil investigation, archaeological investigation, demolition and clearance, drainage preparation works.
- 'The Land' was defined as *"all that land comprising the application site, the open space and the plantation"*.
- 'The Open Space' *"means an area of land to be laid out as open space between the Application Site and the Plantation approximately in the position shown edged and hatched in green on the Plan but whose boundary may be varied from time to time provided that the area within such boundary is not less than the area shown hatched green on the plan."* NB: reference to specific areas, e.g. *"no less than 4ha"* have been struck out.
- 'The Plantation' *"means an area of land comprising not less than 10.677ha situate in the approximate position shown edged and hatched brown...."*

2.3.5 The attached First Schedule notes:

Prior to Commencement of Development to submit to the Council for the Council's written approval (such approval not to be unreasonably withheld) a scheme of works for the laying out and landscaping of the Open Space ("the Open Space Works") which scheme of works for the avoidance of doubt shall not include the provision of paving play spaces benches and similar hard landscaping.

2.4 PA 08/30799/CONDET

2.4.1 An application to release Condition 18ii of PA 03/05511/STVAR was made under PA 08/30799/CONDET and approved on 21.05.2008.

2.4.2 The following information was prepared:

- Stephen George & Partners drawing No. 8213 SK008 Rev B: Typical site section through eastern boundary, dated 01.09.2006
- Stephen George & Partners drawing No. 8213 SK016 Rev A: Typical site section through eastern boundary 1 of 2, dated 03.04.2008
- Stephen George & Partners drawing No. 8213 SK017: Typical site section through eastern boundary 2 of 2, dated 03.04.2008.
- LCD drawing No. 3653-01: Proposed detailed planting plan, dated 22.04.2008, together with accompanying plant schedule dated 29.04.2008

2.4.3 Early consultation was sought from EYRC by submission of drawing No. 8213 SK08 Rev B. The accompanying covering letter (Indigo Planning to ERYC) dated 02.10.2006 notes that drawing 8213-

SK08 Rev B “shows the indicative profile of the landscaping strip between the development plots and the protected open space along the eastern edge of the site”.

2.4.4 And continues:

As illustrated on the enclosed drawing, the landscaping strip will run from the boundary with the GSJ in the north to the railway line in the south and will be profiled, up to a maximum of 8.9m high. As required by condition 18, it will extend in total to the same area as the open space, and as previously agreed with the Council, the plan form of the landscape strip may vary along its length, depending upon the layout of adjacent development plots, but will not exceed the maximum height and maximum width parameters illustrated on the enclosed drawing.

The enclosed drawing has been prepared to supplement the information recently submitted in respect of the Masterplan (pursuant to conditions 1 and 18 of the above consent). It is proposed that the landscape strip will be landscaped/planted in order to enhance its overall appearance and a detailed landscape scheme will be submitted at a later date for the Council’s approval. At this stage, however, we would be grateful if the Council could confirm their agreement to the principle of the proposed approach.

2.4.5 Drawing No. 8213 SK016 Rev A illustrates typical cross sections through the eastern boundary of Melton Park, Plot E, showing the relationship between the industrial units, the open space and Long Plantation. A bund, described as a ‘Landscape Strip’, that varies between 28.030m and 54.052m wide and 2.57m and 8.9 high, with 1:3 side slopes (with a flat top of varying width) and planted with shrubs is shown along the eastern edge of the industrial units, which typically have a ridge height of 8.730m. Between the bund and Long Plantation is an area of open space that varies between 46.944m and 49.071. The trees within Long Plantation are illustrated with a height of 15m and the residential dwellings beyond with a height of 7.38m

2.4.6 The drawing suggests that the landscape strip (e.g. the bund) would have a footprint of 5.2 acres (2.1ha). No area is given for the public open space but assuming an average width of 48m and a length of c.680m, would give an area of c.3.264ha.

2.4.7 The bund would be planted with a native woodland mix on the lower slopes, supplemented with feathered trees, together with a native shrub mix around the base of the bund and on the upper levels.

2.4.8 The A63 passes along the northern boundary some 10.825m above the level of the site, and therefore above the maximum height of the bund assuming the site is level.

2.4.9 It would appear that the approved landscape works would achieve the desired effect on safeguarding any views from residential areas in North Ferriby and that they would mitigate views experienced by walkers on the Yorkshire Wolds Way through Long Plantation and users of the new Open Space.

2.4.10 As suggested in Condition 18, the landscape proposals included planting and an element of mounding, as well as more accessible areas.

2.5 PA 11/00613/STPLF

2.5.1 On 05.07.2011, a hybrid application was approved on land to the east and west of Brickyard Lane, Melton. This consisted of:

- (a) Outline application for Erection of buildings for Employment Use (B1, B2 and B8) with associated access, car parking, landscaping and works (Access to be considered); and*
- (b) Full application for Erection of a Distribution Warehouse and Offices at Plot 21 of the Masterplan.*

2.5.2 The Indicative Masterplan shows the site divided into plots. The developed area between Brick Lane and Long Plantation is annotated as Zone E, which equates to the Zone E illustrated on PA 03/05511/STVAR

2.5.3 A 'Landscape Strip – B' is shown along the eastern edge of Plot E that appears to have a similar footprint to that illustrated on the drawings accompanying PA 08/30799/CONDET. The area between the landscape strip and Long Plantation is labelled as 'Open Space'.

2.5.4 The ERYC Senior Planning Officer Trees and Landscape notes in their consultation response dated 30.04.2011:

I have visited the area and considered the detailed information received relating to the above application and would support the principles to be adopted in relation to the landscape elements of the development.

The report prepared by FPCR Environment & Design Ltd is a comprehensive Arboricultural appraisal of the existing landscape features and I would fully support their recommendations.

Whilst it would be highly desirable to retain the recorded veteran Oak trees (T3 and T11), I note that this may not be possible due to the layout of the development and would therefore, wish to see appropriate mitigation provided in the immediate locality.

I would welcome future involvement with the Replacement Planting Strategy to be submitted as a Reserved Matter, which should include the above mitigation and provide a long term commitment to improving the landscape character of the area.

2.5.5 Condition 15 of the Decision Notice noted:

Before any plot is commenced full details of both hard and soft landscape works for that plot together with a programme of implementation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and these works shall be carried out as approved prior to the occupation of any part of this phase or as may be otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

These details shall include:

- proposed finished levels or contours*
- means of enclosure ...*
- a programme for the implementation of the landscaping works*
- a scheme for future maintenance of the open areas.*

- 2.5.6 Condition 16 relates to the approval and programme of the landscape works, and includes a note [TLP emphasis]:

"This condition is imposed because a well designed landscaping scheme can enhance the living environment of future residents, reduce the impact of the development on the amenities of the existing residents and help to integrate the development into the surrounding area."

- 2.5.7 Condition 29 notes that: *"The Landscape Strips A and B shall be created and planted in accordance with an approved scheme prior to the first occupation of any of the units on Plot E".*

- 2.5.8 Under the title Reason for Decision, it is noted:

This eastern part of the site is sufficient distance (130m+) from residential properties in North Ferriby not to adversely affect their residential amenities, subject to further details which will be forthcoming with future reserved matters applications. A large landscaping strip is proposed to provide a further buffer to the development.

- 2.5.9 And

The development would be acceptable in terms of trees and landscape subject to further details to be included in future reserved matters applications. ...

- 2.5.10 Broadly, the 2011 scheme would deliver similar a landscape strip and open space as the 2008 scheme.

- 2.5.11 Reference to photographs provided by North Ferriby Parish Council suggests that works to construct the bund associated with the landscape strip have commenced in the south-eastern corner of the site, close to the railway line. The earthworks appear to have a well-established grass cover and evidence of occasional young trees and encroaching shrubs such as bramble. This suggests that the works are some years old.

- 2.5.12 Similarly, aerial photographs (e.g. Google Earth March 2020) show an area of disturbed ground with a vegetated cover in the south-eastern corner of the site, measuring c.140m in width (east to west), and extending in a northerly direction by up to c.125m. Google Earth's elevation tool (albeit necessarily a relatively crude measure) suggests that area has a broadly bund shaped profile, with a central highpoint of c.17m AOD. The ground levels on the southern edge of the site vary between 12m and 13m AOD, suggesting the early bund has a maximum height of some 4m to 5m.

- 2.5.13 Reference to SK016 Rev A suggests the completed bund in this vicinity should have a top height of 8.9m.

- 2.5.14 Reviewing historical aerals via Google Earth shows that the earthworks were present (in a similar form) on 27.04.2015. Albeit with less vegetation cover. The earthworks are absent from the next oldest aerial – 31.12.2007.

3 Review of PA 20/03555/STPLF

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 Planning application 20/03555/STPLF for the *“Erection of a storage and distribution building (Use Class B8) with ancillary office space and associated parking, landscaping, access and ancillary works”* at *“Land South East Of Brickyard Lane Roundabout Melton East Riding Of Yorkshire HU14 3HB”* was received and validated by ERYC on 27.10.2020. It is currently pending consideration.
- 3.1.2 The site broadly encompasses a parcel of land bound, approximately, by Monks Way East to the north, Long Plantation to the east, the railway (including a buffer) to the south and Brickyard Lane to the west. Whilst the red line is exclusive of Long Plantation, it is inclusive of the footprint of Landscape Strips A and B and the open space as promoted in the schemes approved under permissions PA 03/05511/STVAR, PA 08/30799/CONDET and 11/00613/STPLF.
- 3.1.3 The Landscape Proposals Plan shows a wider developed area east of Brickyard Lane than was the case for the approved schemes, extending into the area of those schemes that was proposed for landscape bunding.

3.2 Proposed scheme

- 3.2.1 Drawings submitted with the application include:
- FPCR drawing No. 9619-L-01 Rev B: Landscape Proposals Plan
 - FPCR drawing No. 9619-L-02 Rev C: Illustrative Sections
 - FPCR drawing No. 9619-L-05 Rev A: Landscape Masterplan
 - Arcadis drawing No. HUL-ARC-SW-XX-DR-CE-00 Rev 05: Site Finish Levels Layout
- 3.2.2 The following observations are made regarding the landscape proposals:
- a. Between the edge of the developed area and Long Plantation, a string of four bunds with a north-south orientation is proposed in the area allocated for Open Space in the approved schemes.
 - b. No levels or contours are provided as to the height of the bunds. A path (unlabelled on the drawing but annotated on the following cross sections as a ‘New Recreational Route’) winds through the depressions between the bunds alternating between their eastern and western sides and providing access between an unresolved point within the northern end of Long Plantation and the southern end of the plantation, close to the railway line.
 - c. The bunds would be clothed with *“Woodland Glade Tall Herb Grassland”* within which would be planted lozenges of woodland.
 - d. The current scheme provides no freely accessible open space.
- 3.2.3 Reference to the Site Finish Levels Layout suggests that the bunds would have varying top heights, generally between 18.2m and 19.5m, with the northern most bund up to 23.3m. It is not clear where the datum is and it is assumed, but not explicit, that these levels are metres AOD. Some levels are shown on the site-ward side of the bund, but it is not clear whether these are existing

levels or reduced ground levels (see notes below relating to illustrative sections). No levels are shown to the outside of the bunds, so it is not possible to judge the ultimate height(s) of the bunds.

3.2.4 The Illustrative Sections show a 'new landscape corridor' c.50 m wide along the eastern edge of the developed area that would comprise a bund, c.50m wide, planted to create 'New woodland, grassland and hedgerow habitats'. No levels or top heights are provided for the earthworks.

3.2.5 The following observations are made:

- a. The current scheme provides a 'landscape corridor' some 50m wide, as compared to the approved schemes, which included a landscape strip that varied between c.27m and c.54m, together with an additional swathe of accessible open space that remained around 47m wide, to give a total width between c.74m and c.100m
- b. From visual observation, it would appear that the developed area would be sunk below existing ground levels. Although no levels are shown on the sections, and mindful of the accuracy of scaling from a pdf, the top of the bund in Section AA' would be c.14m above formed ground on the site-ward side and c.9m high as experienced from the outward side. This is at variance to the Finished Site Levels drawing which notes a top height for this bund as c.21m and a site-ward level of 14.6m, to give a bund height of only 6.4m (compared to c.14m) as experienced from within the site.
- c. Woodland is proposed on the bunds, but bunds are not ideal growing conditions (drainage, exposure, etc.) and it is likely to be some years before planting becomes sufficiently established to begin to filter or screen views.
- d. Further, the bunds' heights and their close proximity to the viewer (particularly in relation to Long Plantation) are such that they would themselves be incongruous features, preventing views out from Long Plantation to a sense of openness beyond. Once clothed with vegetation, they are likely to result in shading within the plantation.
- e. The landscape corridor proposed comprises a string of planted mounds, and a snaking path. This could not be considered to be 'open space'. The gradients of the bunds are such that they would be inaccessible to most of the general public and, in any event, they would be planted or seeded to form rough grassland.

3.3 Arboricultural Assessment

3.3.1 The Arboriculture Assessment was undertaken by FPCR and dated October 2020.

3.3.2 The following observations are made (no commentary is provided in this review as to the findings the assessment):

- a. The assessment includes FPCR drawing No. 9619-T-01 Rev B: Tree Survey Plan, dated October 2020, which shows Long Plantation as Category A – Trees/Groups of High Quality (BS 5837:2012). The drawing is not clear but Long Plantation appears to be G8 (i.e. Group 8).
- b. Appendix A: Tree Schedule, notes that G8 comprises ash, English oak, sycamore, silver birch, elm, hawthorn, cherry, beech, and horse chestnut, with heights varying between 3m and 20m. The age class is described as young/mature and the overall condition as good. The required root protection area radius beyond the group was noted to be 8.4m.

- c. A root protection area is shown on FPCR drawing No. 9619-T-02 Rev B: Tree Retention Plan, dated October 2020.
- d. On the Tree Retention Plan, the proposed engineered bunds are clearly shown to extend into Long Plantation's root protection area in the south-eastern portion of the site. Such overlap is likely to result in compaction to the root zone of trees in Long Plantation and to compromise their long-term viability and thus contribution to the landscape.

3.4 Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal

3.4.1 The planning application is supported by a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA), prepared by FPCR and dated October 2020.

3.4.2 Para 1.1 notes:

This is a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) prepared by FPCR Environment & Design Ltd, as part of a Full Planning Application for a storage and distribution building (Use Class B8) with ancillary office space and associated parking, landscaping, access and ancillary works.

3.4.3 Paras 1.4 and 1.5 note:

The purpose of the LVA is to review landscape character and visual amenity, and to assess the resulting landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development (i.e. that is presented by this Full Planning Application) on the receiving landscape receptors³ and visual receptors⁴.

The landscape and visual effects are assessed in relation to the development as described within the Planning Statement and the Design & Access Statement, and as identified on the application plans which includes the Site Layout.

3.4.4 Footnotes define:

- Landscape Character as “A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse [GLVIA3 definition]”; and
- Visual Amenity as “The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area [GLVIA3 definition]”

3.4.5 The LVA considers the likely landscape and visual effects of the entire development; this review considers only aspects that relate to the effectiveness of the landscape proposals for the eastern edge of the development.

Methodology

3.4.6 The LVA has been prepared using a methodology based on the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition, Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Impact Management and Assessment, April 2013 (GLVIA3). This is the industry standard for preparing Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments and the like.

3.4.7 Correctly, the methodology noted that the “components of this LVA include: baseline studies; a description and details of the Proposed Development; and an identification and description of likely effects arising from the Proposed Development” [para 2.6], and the “judgements that are made in

respect of landscape and visual effects are a combination of the sensitivity of the receptors and the magnitude of the effect, alongside professional qualitative judgment, which is a very important part of the LVIA process as expressed by GLVIA3” [para 2.7].

- 3.4.8 The full methodology to be used for the LVA is contained at Appendix A. The overall process followed accords with GLVIA3; however, there are omissions of detail as to how judgements are made that mean it fails to accord with GLVIA3 para 3.28:

... The rationale for the overall judgement must be clear, demonstrating:

- *how susceptibility to change and value together contribute to the sensitivity of the receptor;*
- *how the judgements about scale, extent and duration contribute to the magnitude of the effects; and*
- *how the resulting judgements about sensitivity and magnitude are combined to inform judgements about overall significance of the effects.*

- 3.4.9 And para 3.34:

When drawing a distinction between levels of significance is required (beyond significant/not significant) a word scale for degrees of significance can be used (for example a four-point scale of major/moderate/minor/negligible). Descriptions should be provided for each of the categories to make clear what they mean...

- 3.4.10 For example, there is no:

- combined sensitivity judgement for landscape and visual receptors;
- combined magnitude of change for landscape receptors;
- (for visual receptors) break down of the anticipated magnitude of effect into its component parts of scale/size, geographical extent and reversibility;
- explanation as to how the sensitivity and magnitude judgements have been combined to give a level of effect; and
- definition as to what the level of effect criteria of Major, Moderate, Minor and Negligible mean.

- 3.4.11 It is therefore difficult to follow the assessment process or to appraise how the judgements in the LVA have been derived, or whether alternative judgements might be more appropriate.

Baseline landscape character and visual analysis

- 3.4.12 The following comments are made in regard to Section 5.0

- a. With regard to Recreational Value, para 5.35 notes: *“There are no Public Rights of Way across the site and it is not publicly accessible. However, during the field work there was evidence of the eastern parts of the site near Long Plantation being used informally by walkers.”*
- b. Landscape value is judged as Medium; it is not considered to be a ‘valued landscape’ within the terms of NPPF. These would appear to be reasonable conclusions.

- c. The description of the baseline views is limited.
- d. With regard to views from North Ferriby, it is noted that most views are blocked by Long Plantation. Para 5.51 notes: *“There are some occasional, albeit heavily filtered views of the site through the woodland of Long Plantation for users of the Yorkshire Wolds Way Consequently, it is judged that there may be a few properties that have first floor views of the site, although it is considered these would be no more than glimpsed views being heavily obscured and filtered by intervening tree cover.”*
- e. With regard to views from the Yorkshire Wolds Way, para 5.66 notes: *“... there are some occasional glimpsed views of the site through the tree line. By and large, however, the intervening structure of trees and vegetation, prevents and obscures views of the site (See Viewpoint 3a-3b, Figure 9-10).”*
- f. Reference to the accompanying photographs suggests the visibility of the site is understated.

Photo Viewpoint 3a illustrates the view from the Yorkshire Wolds Way where it passes over the railway. The foreground is framed by Long Plantation, but open views are available to the site. Vegetation and the roll of the topography block views to the footprint of the site, but open views are available to the air space immediately above.

Photo Viewpoint 3b illustrates the view from the Yorkshire Wolds Way, from a point within Long Plantation. The photo was taken in July 2020 when the leaves are in full leaf. Nonetheless, glimpses of the landscape beyond the plantation are possible through the trees, and this is likely to be expounded in winter months when the trees are devoid of leaves.
- g. Para 5.67 notes that within the Plantation, there are other informal and undesignated routes that have been created off the Yorkshire Wolds Way.
- h. Photo Viewpoint 4 is also taken from the Yorkshire Wolds Way, at an elevated point in the north-eastern corner of the site. From this point, expansive and panoramic views are available out over the site in the foreground and the River Humber beyond, to South Ferriby on the opposite bank.
- i. The value of the visual receptors along the Yorkshire Wolds Way is judged as High.
- j. No reference is made to benefits arising from extant planning permissions or agreements that might not be delivered, were the proposed development to be approved; for example, the provision of accessible open space (in addition to any required landscape mitigation works) between the eastern edge of the developed site and Long Plantation, as delivered by planning permissions PA 03/05511/STVAR, PA 08/30799/CONDET and 11/00613/STPLF or the Section 106 Agreement dated 2004.

Proposed development - design

3.4.13 Section 6.0 describes the proposed development that has been assessed in subsequent chapters.

3.4.14 The following comments are made [TLP emphasis]:

- a. Para 6.2 notes that the design and mitigation measures *“adopted and embedded”* within the scheme include the provision of green infrastructure (GI), *“which is shown on the Landscape*

Plan ...". GI is defined in a footnote as: "A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities [NPPF]"

- b. Para 6.4 notes that the proposals *"include carefully considered design measures and landscape strategies to minimise the level of adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity", and to "deliver opportunities for long term enhancements through, for example, new green space"*
- c. Para 6.5, bullet b, notes that the proposals will: *"introduce a variety of connected new habitats and landscape features that can provide long term enhancements for biodiversity, landscape character, recreation and health and well-being."*
- d. Para 6.6, bullet c, notes that the key elements guiding the development proposals include: *"Ensuring that the development's GI is multifunctional in its design and management, so that it performs a range of functions, to include benefits for biodiversity, landscape character, recreation, drainage and climate change."*
- e. Mindful of the above comments, reference to drawing 9619-L-01 Rev B: Landscape Proposals Plan shows that the only landscape proposals that might be described as GI or which could deliver recreation, and health and well-being benefits are along the eastern boundary of the site. The primary purpose of this network of inaccessible bunds is as screening. Whilst they might also provide habitat benefits, any multi-functional benefits in terms of recreation or access for the local population, as defined by GI, would be limited to a winding path between the bunds that for part of its length affords open, close-proximity views across the industrial development to a 22m high building. There is no element of the proposed measures that could be considered to provide open green space for recreation.
- f. Para 6.6, bullet d, notes a further key element was: *"To develop and deliver sensitive well-designed strategies that address the development's relationship and setting with particular components within, or close to the site, such as Long Plantation and the Trans Pennine Trail"*
- g. It is not clear which elements of the landscape proposals address the relationship and setting of the plantation or the Yorkshire Wolds Way (connecting to the Trans Pennine Trail). The footprint of the bunds is such that it would extend into the root protection area of the plantation (see notes elsewhere) and thus compromise its long-term health and viability and contribution to the landscape. Views from the long-distance route, particularly in winter, that currently included glimpses between trees across arable land would be foreshortened by a high earth bund. From certain sections, e.g. where the route crosses the railway and from more open sections of the plantation, the 22m high building would be seen to rise above the bund.
- h. Para 6.6, bullet e, sub-note 1 notes that planting would be established along the southern boundary to *"assist in filtering views of the built development from the site, to include users of the Trans Pennine Trail"*. Given the height of the proposed building, it is likely to be many years before any planting provides screening properties. See also notes the difficulties associated with planting on earth bunds.

- i. Sub-note 2 notes: *“Along the eastern part of the site the proposals include a broad (c50m) swathe of new planting and green space that would, in the much longer term, effectively strengthen the woodland of Long Plantation. The corridor provide an extensive area of publicly accessible natural green space with a mix of habitats such as blocks woodland, tree groups and hedgerows, that would be located in varied mixed grassland areas that will be managed for both biodiversity amenity benefits. The design includes earthworks and ground modelling (which are key points of the noise mitigation strategy). A new circular recreational path is provided that would enable connections to be made with connection into Long Plantation and the Yorkshire Wolds Way.”* The planting within the corridor would be in small pockets on raised earth mounds. It would be of a very different character to Long Plantation and it is hard to imagine how it could “strengthen” the latter; rather, it would have an adverse effect on its landscape setting and appreciation. Importantly, as noted previously, the corridor as proposed could in no way be considered to provide “*extensive area of publicly accessible natural green space*”, since the earth mounds would be inaccessible due to their profile and vegetation cover and access is restricted to a single path.
- j. The proposed bunds would be substantial elements that would, in themselves, be incongruous features within the landscape. As noted above, there is some ambiguity as to how high the bunds would be. Without confirmation of such information, it is not possible to judge how effective they would be in mitigating any adverse effects on views and, importantly, what effect they themselves would have on landscape character and visual amenity.

Landscape effects

3.4.15 The following observations and comments are made regarding Section 7.0: Landscape effects.

- a. The LVA considers the landscape’s susceptibility to change to be Low. Given its planning context, this would appear to be reasonable.
- b. At a district level, the LVA judges the magnitude of change to landscape to be Medium-Low. This would appear to be reasonable.
- c. At a site and immediate environs level, the LVA judges the magnitude of change to landscape to be High-Medium. This would appear to be reasonable.
- d. Para 7.21 notes that there would be *“no marked effects on the woodland at Long Plantation”*.
- e. Para 7.25 notes: *“The design is considered to be sensitive to Long Plantation (and North Ferriby) with built development set back some distance from the woodland behind a substantial area of new green space and habitat creation.”*
- f. Ref points d and e, such verdict is not to take into consideration the introduction of substantial artificial engineered bunds, and the effects they would have on what is currently a largely level site; the adverse effects that the construction of the bunds within the plantation’s root protection area would have on the trees’ long-term health and viability; nor the adverse effects on the plantation’s landscape setting or the appreciation of the woodland within.

- g. The LVA considers there would be a Moderate Adverse landscape effect, that would reduce to Moderate-Minor Adverse by year 15. Given the extent of the proposed development and the magnitude of change predicted, this effect seems to be underestimated.

3.4.16 In any event, given the various short comings in the scheme design noted above, it is clear that improved landscape mitigation measures could do much to reduce the level of adverse effect associated with the proposed development. Such improvements could include:

- creating a meaningful swathe of truly multi-functional GI along the eastern edge of the site, commensurate with that proposed in previous approved developments, and which therein was found to be appropriate and effective in helping to mitigate adverse effects arising from the (lower and less extensive) proposed development;
- inclusion of an area of accessible open space that would provide the local community with the recreation, health and well-being benefits advocated in Section 7 of the LVA but not delivered in the emerging scheme; and
- provide suitable offsets to any engineering works that would safeguard the health and long-term viability of the trees within Long Plantation.

Visual effects

3.4.17 The following observations and comments are made regarding Section 8.0: Visual effects, and in particular the effects on those representative viewpoints within the LVA that encompass the eastern edge of the site, i.e. Viewpoints 3a, 3b and 4.

- a. With regard to views from the Yorkshire Wolds Way, para 8.26 notes: *“Within Long Plantation this right of way is confined by mature woodland so that visibility across the local landscape towards the site is restricted. The intervening structure of existing trees and vegetation, and the new landscape corridor of planting and earthworks within the eastern part of the site would prevent and heavily obscure views of the proposed building both from the right of way and from other informal undesignated routes within the woodland.”* Reference to the accompanying photographs suggests that clear open views of the proposed building (22m high) would be available from Viewpoint 3a. There is currently limited reference to built form in the photograph and that it would be many years before the planting proposed along the southern edge of the site was sufficiently mature to screen or filter it.

As noted above, within Long Plantation, there is visibility out from the Yorkshire Wolds Way in summer months (and so even more so in winter ones); here, the close-proximity of the proposed engineered bunds are likely to result in an appreciable change to the aspect of the route and the sense of openness beyond the plantation, and thus the experience of those using the walk. From localised points, the new building would be seen to rise above the bund.

- b. Para 8.27 notes: *“As the Yorkshire Wolds Way heads out of Long Plantation and across the interchange, receptors would have elevated views of the Proposed Development, with views of the new building, roads and car parking. Existing buildings are visible within Meltonwest Business Park and Brickyard Lane and the Proposed Development would be seen within that context and that of the highway infrastructure. The presence of the A63-Melton Road-Monks Way interchange, in terms of the level of noise and moving traffic, detracts somewhat from the*

overall experience." Such description makes insufficient reference to the extensive views available across the River Humber to the opposite bank [See LVA Viewpoint Photo 4]. Since the viewpoint is located close to a busy road junction, the focus of the view for uses of the long-distance route is even more likely to be away from the traffic and to the south, thus accentuating the importance of the composition of the view in this direction.

- c. Para 8.28 notes: *"New woodland planting and tree cover around the northern part of the site will help to filter views of the Proposed Development in the longer term."* However, this fails to note that the introduction of planting here would, in itself, block the opportunity to appreciate the views across the Humber.
- d. Effects are judged to be Major-Moderate Adverse on completion, reducing to Moderate Adverse in the longer term (year 15). The LVA has made such judgements having regard to *"the maturing nature of the GI framework that would help to 'soften' the view of the building and built uses"*.
- e. Para 8.29 notes that *"The majority of the Yorkshire Wolds Way within this landscape is contained within woodland at Long Plantation and Terrace Plantation such that views of the Proposed Development would be prevented"*. This is to not take account of the open views from above the railway line (View 3a) and the filtered views (more open in winter) available from View 3b.
- f. It is not clear whether the judgements made acknowledge the loss of views brought about by the introduction of what appear to be substantial engineered earth bunds in close proximity to the viewer, which themselves would be an incongruous addition to the view in what is an otherwise almost level landscape.
- g. Likewise, there is no mention of the loss of long-distance views brought about by the introduction of the bunds and/or planting.

3.4.18 Concern is made as to how the level of visual change could have been calculated given that there is ambiguity in the height of the proposed bund or their profile. Confirmation is required of what levels were assumed in order to know how effective they would be in providing a screen to the proposed development, and to what degree the proposed building (22m high) would be visible above it.

3.4.19 Notwithstanding how the judgements have been made, given the level of visual change predicted (e.g. Major-Moderate Adverse), it is important to be able to demonstrate that all has been done to mitigate these adverse effects.

3.4.20 One of the purposes of landscape and visual assessment is to identify the effects of development that are likely to be experienced by sensitive landscape and visual receptors, and to use this information to help steer the emerging design proposals, such that the resultant scheme includes appropriate mitigation measures to safeguard landscape character and views. The resultant measures should then be re-tested to demonstrate how adverse effects have been addressed and either negated or brought within acceptable thresholds. It should be possible to reduce the degree of visual effect reported by implementing the following measures to the scheme.

- Increasing the width of the landscape corridor, e.g. to that which was found acceptable to safeguard the visual amenity of residents of North Ferriby and users of the Yorkshire Wolds Way in the earlier approved schemes e.g. planning permissions 03/05511/STVAR, PA 08/30799/CONDET and PA 11/00613/STPLF. In these consented schemes, the total width of the buffer between the developed portion of the site and Long Plantation generally varied between c.100m and c.74m, including a corridor of open space that remained around 47m wide.
- Recognising the adverse effects that an engineered bund (perhaps up 9m high could have) and creating an appropriate offset between the bund and the viewpoints.

4 Recommendations for further study

4.1.1 Landscape and visual aspects of the planning application that The Landscape Partnership considers require additional or further study and/or re-assessment before the effects of the proposed development on landscape and visual receptors can be fully understood – and thus the application determined - are considered below.

- Confirmation of how the engineered bunds would be constructed given their relationship to the root protection area of Long Plantation, and how the long-term health and viability of the woodland could be secured.
- Expansion of the methodology of the LVA to clarify how judgements have been made and better to understand the criteria thresholds.
- Review of the scheme's stated design principles, to ensure they have been delivered.
- Review of whether the landscape measures as proposed would truly provide multifunctional green infrastructure, and whether they would deliver the envisaged design principles of introducing *"a variety of connected new habitats and landscape features that can provide long term enhancements for biodiversity, landscape character, recreation and health and well-being."* In particular, whether the proposed scheme would provide accessible green space. Consequential review of the LVA and the weighting afforded to multi-functional green infrastructure in judgements when offsetting adverse effects.
- Review of opportunities to increase the width of the landscape corridor to that which was found acceptable to safeguard the visual amenity of residents of North Ferriby and users of the Yorkshire Wolds Way in the earlier approved schemes e.g. planning permissions 03/05511/STVAR, PA 08/30799/CONDET and PA 11/00613/STPLF.
- Clarification as to the assumed finished heights of the engineered bunds (e.g. illustrative sections prepared by the Landscape Architects vs the Site Finish Levels drawing), followed by consequential review and reappraisal of the likely landscape and visual effects to reflect the actual dimensions of the bunds and their ability to provide mitigation. Without such actions, it is not possible to rely on the findings of the LVA as part of the decision-making process.

- Expansion of the LVA to take account of the introduction of what are likely to be substantial engineered bunds into what is currently a largely level landscape, and the consequential adverse effects they themselves would have on landscape character and visual quality.
- Given the residual adverse effects on landscape and in particular visual receptors that remain, review of the mitigation measures proposed and exploration of how they might be expanded so as to more effectively mitigate the adverse effects arising from the proposed development.