

Eden District Council Housing Development Plan



Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisals Appleby-in-Westmorland

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1.0 Introduction

PDP Associates has been instructed by Eden District Council to undertake landscape and visual impact appraisals on various sites in Appleby in Westmorland. This information will inform the Housing Development Plan by helping to assess individual site's suitability for incorporating housing (landscape impact), and the impact any such development might have on the wider area (visual impact).

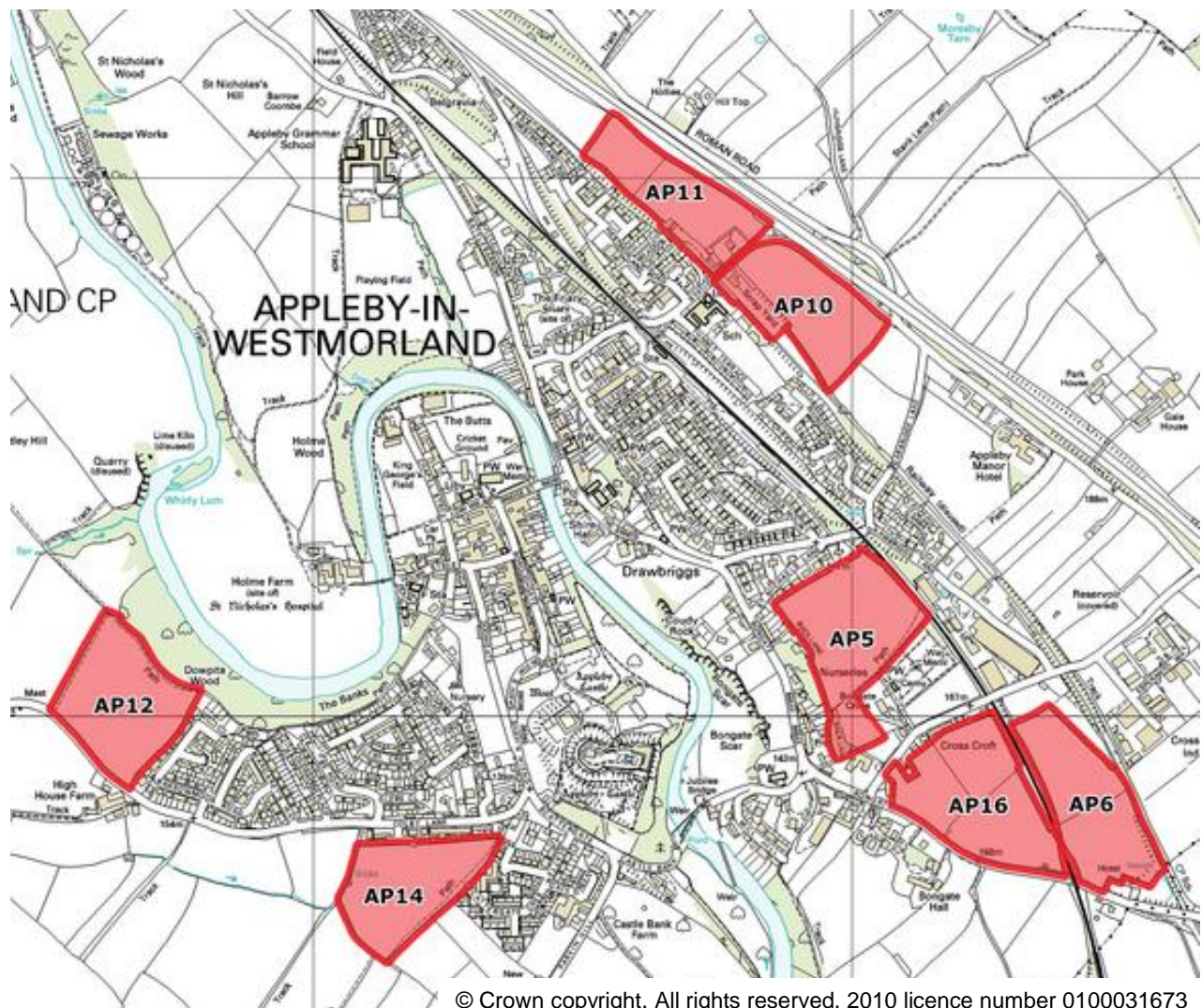
By following a structured assessment method, it has been possible to rank each site according to its overall suitability for use for housing. It has also been possible to highlight individual areas within each site which are particularly suitable or unsuitable for housing, and suggest mitigation methods which may improve a site's suitability.

Appleby in Westmorland is a small town in the Eden District of Cumbria, with a population of approximately 2500. It was the county town of the former county of Westmorland until the creation of Cumbria in 1974. The town's facilities far exceed that which would be expected of such a small town, and it is the hub for a wide, exceedingly rural area, with the nearest sizeable town, Penrith, being approximately 15 miles away.

The town is a popular tourist destination, and particularly noted for its annual Horse Fair. It is a major station on the Settle Carlisle line.

1.1 The proposed sites

Seven separate parcels of land have been assessed.



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- Parcel AP5 – Approximately 4.75 hectares between St Michael's Lane and the cemetery, and to the south of the railway line. Its south west boundary is adjacent to the boundary for Appleby Conservation Area.
- Parcel AP6 – Approximately 4.2 hectares to the south west of the Cross Croft Industrial Estate and the north east of the railway line, immediately adjacent to parcel AP16.
- Parcel AP10 – Approximately 3.9 hectares to the south east of Station road and the north east of the primary school. Adjacent to parcel AP11.
- Parcel AP11 – Approximately 3.5 hectares to the north west of Station Road and the north west of Meadow Close and Westmorland Rise.
- Parcel AP12 – Approximately 4.4 hectares to the north east of Colby Lane, north west of Barrowmoor Road and above the River Eden.
- Parcel AP14 – Approximately 3.7 hectares to the south of Colby Lane and the west of Scattergate Crescent.
- Parcel AP16 – Approximately 5 hectares between the Bongate approach to Appleby from the east and the railway line.

2.0 Methodology

Guidance for the undertaking of this report has been sourced primarily from:

The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (second edition), published April 2002 by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (hereafter referred to as GLVIA)

and

Landscape Character of Assessment, Guidance for England and Scotland, published April 2002 by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.

Unlike a standard Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, where specific, detailed proposals are assessed, in this report, assumptions and generalisations have had to be made; that the areas are to be used for standard national house-builder type housing will be proposed on these sites. This report describes and considers all of the potential effects which are likely to arise from such development and generally assumes that an impact could lead to a positive or adverse effect. The definition of impact terminology has been developed to ensure that, wherever possible, an objective assessment has been made and that the terminology used is appropriate to the development and the landscape setting.

Current guidelines advise that the assessment of an impact on the visual amenity resulting from a particular development should take full account of the landscape (character) impacts as well as the potential visual impacts. Although they are separate, it is difficult to isolate each category and so both landscape and visual effects are considered as part of the assessment process.

2.1 Landscape Effects

Landscape impact assessment describes the likely nature and scale of changes to individual landscape elements and characteristics, and the consequential effect on the landscape character.

Changes can vary between small and large scale, or be so small that there is, in effect, no change.

To assess the effects of development on a given landscape, it is necessary to examine the different factors which make up a landscape:

- Quantifiable elements, such as hills, valleys, woods, hedges, roads etc.
- Characteristics, such as tranquillity and derived from the combined effect of individual elements.
- Character; the sense of place of a given landscape, created by the pattern of elements that occur consistently.

2.2 Magnitude of landscape impacts

The magnitude of landscape impacts, which are categorised as high, medium, low or negligible depends on the following factors:

- The scale or degree of change to the existing landscape character.
- The nature of the change caused by the proposed development (beneficial, adverse or neutral).

Without specific, detailed proposals, it is difficult to assess the landscape impact on any individual area. However, it can generally be considered that placing housing on Greenfield sites, such as these, will have a high impact. On areas with a low existing landscape quality, this could be a beneficial impact. Conversely, on areas with a high landscape quality, this could be a negative impact. Mitigation can be applied through careful design, variation in density (according to a landscape's ability to accommodate change) and through landscape enhancement of certain features, or even the re-introduction of landscape features currently missing from a given specific area, but evident in the wider surroundings.

2.3 Visual Effects

Visual impact assessment describes the changes of the available views resulting from the development, and the changes in the visual amenity of the visual receptors, including:

- The magnitude or scale of visual change is described by reference to elements such as:
 - The extent/proportion of change within the view.
 - The degree of contrast.
 - The duration of the effect (temporary or permanent).
 - The nature of the effect.
 - The angle of view.
 - The distance of receptor (viewpoint) from the development.
 - The area where changes would be visible.

Assessment needs to allow for an average as well as worst-case scenario. Although residents may be particularly sensitive to changes in visual amenity, most land use planning regimes consider that public views are of greater value than those from private property.

2.4 Sensitivity of viewpoints

The sensitivity of individual viewpoints can be categorised as high, medium, low or negligible. Sensitivity depends on the following factors:

- The location and context of the viewpoint; viewpoints which are closer to the site are generally more sensitive.
- The number of viewers who commonly use the viewpoint. Some viewpoints are commonly used by the public, such as formal viewing platforms, picnic areas or recreational rights of way. Other viewpoints may be difficult to gain access to.
- The nature of the viewpoint. Residential properties are sensitive to visual impacts as the residents experience the impacts on a regular and prolonged basis. Public footpaths can also be sensitive, since the users' attention is often focussed on the landscape. By contrast, views from outdoor sports facilities, transport routes or places of work are less sensitive.
- Movement of viewers at the viewpoint. More transitory views, for example from a motorway, are generally less sensitive than views experienced from residential properties and footpaths.
- The cultural significance of the viewpoint, including its appearance in guidebooks and tourist maps, or cultural and historical associations.

2.5 Magnitude of visual impacts

The magnitude of impact for individual viewpoints can be categorised as negligible, low, medium or high depending on;

- The proportion of the existing view would change as a result of the proposed development.
- The number of features or elements within the view that would change.
- The appropriateness of the proposed development in the context of the existing view.
- The angle of the view.
- Whether any impact has a beneficial nature.

2.6 Terminology

The potential significance of landscape and visual impacts is determined by combining the magnitude of the potential impact with the sensitivity of the landscape or visual receptor to change.

The following terminology is used for the definition of magnitude of change for both the landscape and visual effects at an individual viewpoint:

- Negligible – Where the change is so small that there is, in effect, no change at all within the viewed landscape.
- Small – Where proposals constitute only a minor component of the wider view, which could be missed by the casual observer or where awareness does not affect the overall quality of the scene.
- Medium – Where proposals would form a visible and recognisable new development but where it is not intrusive within the overall view.
- Large – Where the proposals would form a significant and immediately apparent element of the scene, and would affect the overall impression of the view.

The following terminology is used to describe sensitivity of individual viewpoints:

- Negligible – Where views either don't exist or contribute an insignificant amount.
- Low – Where views are incidental to other activities, such as viewers at work or travelling through or past the site on a train or by road.
- Medium – Where views are noticeable, but not prominent. Includes residents of outlying areas of residential/urban areas, but from where no particular direct or notable view can be ascertained.
- High – Where the view forms a strong component of the activity at the viewpoint location. Includes users of recreational footpaths with specific viewpoints to the subject site and direct, close range views.

The following terminology is used to describe sensitivity with regard to the effect on the landscape:

- Low – Where little, or no landscape structure dominates, and landform and land cover are masked by land use. Where lack of management and intervention has resulted in a degraded appearance or there are frequent detracting features.
- Medium – Where there is a recognisable landscape structure and where there are characteristic patterns and combinations of landform and land cover. Some may be masked by developed land cover. Where there are some features worthy of conservation but also some detracting features.
- High – Where there is a strong landscape structure, characteristic pattern and balanced combination of landform and land cover. It includes features worthy of conservation and a strong sense of place.

| Magnitude/Sensitivity | Negligible | Low | Moderate | High |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Negligible | Negligible impact | Negligible/ slight impact | Slight impact | Slight/ moderate impact |
| Small | Negligible/ slight impact | Slight impact | Slight/moderate impact | Moderate impact |
| Medium | Slight impact | Slight/ moderate impact | Moderate impact | Moderate/ substantial impact |
| Large | Slight/ moderate impact | Moderate impact | Moderate/ substantial impact | Substantial impact |

Table 1. Criteria for assessing significance

| Level of significance | Definition |
|-----------------------|---|
| No impact | The proposed scheme would affect no landscape or visual receptors |
| Negligible | The proposed scheme is largely appropriate in its context and would have very little effect on its surround and affect very few receptors |
| Negligible/slight | The proposed scheme would have a minimal change on the landscape and would affect very few receptors |
| Slight | The proposed scheme would have a slight change on the landscape and would affect few receptors |
| Slight/moderate | The proposed scheme would have a noticeable effect on the landscape and would affect several receptors, therefore changing the character of the landscape or the character of a view |
| Moderate/substantial | The proposed scheme would have a very noticeable effect on the landscape and would affect several or many receptors, therefore changing the character of the landscape or the character of a view |
| Substantial | The proposed scheme would change the character and appearance of the landscape, either for a long period or permanently. It would affect many receptors and would therefore alter the character of the landscape or of a view |

Table 2. Significance criteria for landscape and visual impact

2.7 Key Issues

Without specific proposals, at this stage, the key issues are limited to:

- Landscape Character
- Visual Qualities
- Mitigation Measures

Computer-generated mapping showing each parcel's theoretical visibility were not produced for this study. Instead, careful analysis of the likely visual receptors was made at each parcel, and the impact from each receptor was then made.

Site visits took place during January and February 2010. For each viewpoint, either a panoramic or a single-frame photograph, (shot at the equivalent to a 35mm SLR with a 50mm focal-length lens as this best replicates the view a human eye sees) was taken. For distance views, a subsequent 85mm (equivalent) panorama was also taken.

3.0 Policy context/framework

3.1 Policy guidance

3.1.1 Regional Policy Guidance

Regional policy guidance is offered through the Northwest of England Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (NWRSS) and The Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan 2001-2016 (Structure Plan), in which Cumbria's **"fine landscapes, wildlife, buildings and features of archaeological and historic importance"** are identified as being a major factor in attracting tourists, businesses and residents to the area. The Structure Plan sets out to protect, conserve and enhance the local environment by promoting sustainable development which **"relate[s] well to the existing built and natural environment and to the capacity of the landscape to accommodate new development"** and recommends that there are **"high standards of design including siting, scale, use of materials and landscaping which respect and, where possible, enhance the distinctive character of townscape and landscape' and wherever possible should look to minimise levels of light pollution and noise"**.

The most relevant policy within the Structure Plan is Policy E37 (Landscape Character) which states;

"Development and land use change should be compatible with the distinctive characteristics and features of Cumbria's landscape types and sub types. Proposals would be assessed in relation to:

- 1. Locally distinctive natural or built features.**
- 2. Visual intrusion or impact.**
- 3. Scale in relation to the landscape and features.**
- 4. The character of the built environment.**
- 5. Public access and community value of the landscape.**
- 6. Historic patterns and attributes.**
- 7. Biodiversity features, ecological networks and semi-natural habitats.**
- 8. Openness, remoteness and tranquillity."**

RSS Policies EM1(A): Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Region's Environmental Assets and DP7 (Promote Environmental Quality) are also relevant.

DP7 (Promote Environmental Quality) and EM1 (Integrated Enhancement and Protection of the Region's Environmental Assets) may also be relevant, although indirectly so.

3.12 Local Policy Guidance

The Eden Core Strategy was formally adopted in March 2010 and recognises the District's "exceptionally high quality of environment" and the fact that much of the District is covered by either national or local landscape or conservation designations.

CS1 – Sustainable Development Principles (point 12) states **“Development should reflect and enhance landscape character having regard to the sensitivity of the Eden Valley, the North Pennines AONB, the Lake District National Park, and their settings.”**

CS16 – Principles for the Natural Environment states that **“Development should accord with the principles of protection and enhancement of the natural environment of the District, including landscape, biodiversity and geodiversity and especially those areas designated as being of international, national and local importance.”**

It then goes on to list the aims as:-

To further protect the natural environment within the District as a whole:

- 1. The relationship between development and the natural environment would be managed to minimise the risk of environmental damage.**
- 2. Loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land would be avoided.**
- 3. Encouragement would be given to the creation of opportunities for species to spread out and create niches elsewhere in order to reduce any negative impacts of development and to allow species to migrate as a result of climate change.**
- 4. The re-creation and restoration of traditional habitats would be encouraged and existing wildlife and habitats such as hedges, ponds, woodlands, ancient woodlands, wetlands and species rich grasslands would be protected and enhanced.**
- 5. Where possible, developments would be expected to include suitable measures to contribute positively to overall biodiversity in the District or to mitigate harm caused by the development.**
- 6. Areas of open space and unbuilt frontages within towns and villages would be protected and enhanced where they are important to the character and amenity of the area.**
- 7. Promote improvements in accessibility to the natural environment for all people regardless of disability, age, gender or ethnicity.**
- 8. Development should reflect and where possible enhance local landscape character.**

CS18 – Design of New Development and CS24 – Open Space and Recreation Land are also relevant.

In terms of specific saved policies within the Local Plan:-

- Policy NE1** **The countryside of the District is valued for its undeveloped character. To protect its character, new development in the undeveloped countryside outside settlements and groups of dwellings will only be permitted to meet local infrastructure needs or if a need is established for the development in a specific location which is sufficient to outweigh environmental cost and if all of the following criteria are satisfied:**
- i) the siting of the development and any landscaping proposed will minimise impact**
 - ii) the design and materials proposed are appropriate to the location; and**
 - iii) an unacceptable level of harm will not be caused to any interests of acknowledged importance.**
- Policy NE13** **In considering development proposals particular regard would be given to the retention of trees of amenity value, including those the subject of Tree Preservation Orders, and to their protection during development. Where appropriate, Tree Preservation Orders would be used to afford the necessary level of control.**
- Policy BE18** **Proposals involving environmental improvement including landscaping schemes, the enhancements of open spaces ...would be permitted if the design and materials to be used are appropriate to the location concerned.**
- Policy BE20** **In all new housing developments containing ten or more dwellings the Council will seek the provision of publicly accessible open space to a minimum standard of 15 square metres per dwelling as an integral part of the proposal.**
- Policy BE21** **Applications for development requiring or likely to require external lighting shall include details of lighting schemes. Such schemes would be assessed against the following criteria:**
- i) that the lighting scheme proposed is the minimum to undertake the task;**
 - ii) that light spillage is minimised;**
 - iii) in edge-of-town or village locations, or in rural areas, that landscaping measures would be provided to screen the lighting installation from neighbouring countryside areas; and**
 - iv) that road safety will not be compromised as a result of dazzling or distraction**

Policy RE5 **Proposals that would affect any rights of way will only be permitted where an acceptable diversion is provided by the developer and a legal diversion order obtained, or if a clear benefit arises from the change sufficient to outweigh the loss to the rights of way network.**

3.2 The landscape setting

Landscape types can be categorised at national, regional and local levels, with each level adding detail.

At a national level, Appleby lies within Joint Character Area 9 – Eden Valley, as defined by Natural England.

The characteristics of the Eden Valley Character Area are:

- Broad, river valley landscapes of productive mixed farmland with local variations in topography, scale and landcover.
- Productive improved pasture and arable land with large farms in the lower lying areas.
- Less intensively managed rolling or hilly pasture and lowland heath, intersected by numerous gills, in the foothills of the North Pennines.
- Sandstone hills with woodland and lowland heath vegetation.
- Numerous small basin mires among drumlins.
- Large broadleaved and coniferous estate/farm woodlands and areas of ancient semi-natural woodland. Mature hedgerows, hedgerow trees, small copses and shelterbelts contribute to the well-wooded character.
- Settlements have strong distinctive character. Red sandstone is the dominant building material and a unifying feature. Limestone is found on the margins of the area.
- Intricate network of narrow minor roads with tall hedgerows and walls.
- Red sandstone features such as walls and gateposts.
- Important transport corridor for the Settle-Carlisle railway line, M6 motorway, A66 trunk road and west coast mainline railway.

At a regional level, Appleby falls within the Landscape Type 6a (a sub-section of Landscape Type 6); Intermediate Land, as defined within the Cumbria and Lake District Joint Structure Plan 2001 – 2016.

Landscape Type 6 is described as “A large-scale open landscape, the intermediate land between lowland and rolling upland areas. The land use is predominantly grazing land bound by hedgerows and stonewalls. A well-managed landscape interrupted by M6 motorway/mainline railway” while Landscape Type 6a is further described as “predominantly grazing land between 100-200m AOD. It is intermediate between the lowland and more rolling upland types. It varies from rolling high land with wide views and few hedges to undulating more enclosed land with a regular pattern of hedges or hedgerow trees. Stonewalls are also common. In Eden there are very broad valleys and narrow ghylls. Most of this landscape type is fairly simple in character with few strong features. A number of historical elements have been identified”.

The key characteristics are described as:

- Grazing land between 100-200m AOD. Intermediate between the lowland and upland landscapes.
- Planned villages with greens displaying topographical and archaeological evidence of their medieval origins.
- Carlisle area is dissected by the deeply incised valleys of the black and white Lyne, which are well wooded.

3.3 General Descriptions of the Sites

3.31 Parcel AP5

Parcel AP5 lies to the town centre's south west, behind the area around the Royal Oak pub. To the area's north and north west are areas of long-established housing. Over the railway line is an area of more recent housing along Drawbriggs Lane which leads to Rivington Park, and industrial units of the town's former dairy. To the south and south east lie areas of lower density housing and the deconsecrated church of St. Michael.

The parcel's south western boundary against Back Lane, a narrow by lane running parallel to and behind the properties along Bongate, is formed by sporadic hedgerows and mature native trees, with post and wire fencing. The main south eastern boundary is formed by a high mortared-stone wall on the boundary with the cemetery. A public footpath follows this boundary. The main north eastern boundary is with the Settle-Carlisle railway line and is formed by a post and wire fence. The north western boundary is with the rear gardens of properties along St. Michaels Lane, and is formed through a variety of boundary treatments. There is a smaller section in the area's south-eastern corner, over a continuation of the cemetery's boundary wall, which borders a nursing home and Bongate Cross.

The parcel is currently semi-improved pasture which slopes from approximately 154m in the south west corner to 165m in the north east corner. The parcel is clear of vegetation within it other than a fine Ash tree, towards the south east boundary, which is worthy of protection and retention. The mature trees along the south west boundary are also worthy of protection and retention. Other than the existing vegetation, the parcel is of only moderate landscape quality, with a contained, settled feel reinforced by its proximity to the cemetery. Noise of traffic from Bongate and the railway line prevents any sense of tranquillity. The parcel is screened sufficiently to prevent any distance views, although is highly visible from the rear of the properties along St. Michael's Lane and Bongate.

3.32 Parcels AP6 and AP16

Parcels AP6 and AP16 can be treated as one entity as they are adjacent to each other, although separated by the railway line, and share many characteristics.

In general terms, the parcels lie to the south east of town. The southern boundary of AP16 is with the B6542 which leads from the town to the eastbound A66, from the westbound A66 and to and from Coupland and the town's golf course. The railway bridge over the road marks the boundary between AP16 and AP6. The southern and south east boundaries of AP6 are formed by a small section of dry stone wall adjacent to the road, and then runs behind the former Gate Hotel. Part of the north east boundary runs along the former Kirkby Stephen to Penrith railway line, and is formed by post and wire fencing. The remainder of the north east boundary and the north west boundary is adjacent to an industrial vehicle park; and extension of the Cross Croft Industrial Estate which lies beyond the former railway line. The north west boundary of parcel AP16 is adjacent to houses and light industrial units along Cross Croft and is formed by dry stone walling.

Both parcels are currently improved pasture fields, with sporadic hedge planting along the boundaries and some mature trees within AP6, worthy of protection and retention.

Parcel AP6 rises from approximately 156m in the eastern corner to 164m in the north west corner. The land immediately behind the Gate Hotel rises particularly steeply and is highly visible from the road when approached from the east.

Parcel AP16 rises from approximately 162m in the south west corner to 168m alongside the railway line. No public footpaths cross either parcel.

Both parcels have an open feel, with extensive views towards open countryside to Appleby's east, and the Pennines beyond. The proximity of the industrial estate and the nature of the land use to the north west detract from a feeling of remoteness, although residential areas of Appleby itself are largely not visible from the parcels.

3.33 Parcel AP10

Parcel AP10 lies to the north east of the town and is sandwiched between the primary school and A66. Much of it lies on the site of the former Appleby East railway station and is now used as a scrap yard. The remainder is arable land.

The parcel's north west and north east boundaries are with Station Road; initially running north and then turning east, beyond which lies the A66 bypass. The boundary comprises post and wire fencing with hedgerow on the road side. The south east boundary is formed by further post and wire fencing with hedgerow and mature trees beyond which lies an additional arable field and Garbridge Lane.

The land rises from approximately 167m in the south west corner off Station Road to approximately 177m in the north east corner. No public footpath crosses the parcel.

The parcel has a low landscape quality, devoid of features and adjacent to a scrap yard, albeit screened through scrub planting. From within the parcel, views are extensive over the town and towards Mallerstang and the Howgills in the far distance to the south and towards the Pennines to the north. Whilst only fleetingly visible, the A66 is very evident due to noise from the passing traffic, meaning the parcel lacks any sense of tranquillity.

3.34 Parcel AP11

Parcel AP11 lies to the north east of the town, separated from parcel AP10 by Station Road. It is sandwiched between the former railway line and the A66 and the majority of the parcel occupies improved pasture, with a small section currently a light-industrial/farm yard.

The majority of the parcel's south east boundary is formed by a steep embankment, heavily vegetated, sloping down from the former railway line, beyond which lies recent housing development along Westmorland Road. Towards Station Road, the boundary is formed by agricultural fencing and a light industrial yard. The south east boundary with Station Road is very mixed, with a gate leading onto the former railway line, walling surrounding a residential property and small lengths of hedging, within which are several tracks into the parcel. The north west boundary with the A66 and the north west boundary are formed by a mixture of post and wire fencing and substantial hedgerow, worthy of protection and retention.

The parcel rises from approximately 162m in the south west corner to approximately 173m in the north east corner. No public footpath crosses the parcel.

The parcel has low landscape quality, with a slightly neglected quality and lacking in features within it. The mixed boundary with light industrial use in evidence reduces any rural feel. Views are very contained within the majority of the parcel by the former-railway embankment and A66 although towards the high sections in the north east corner, there are extensive views over Appleby towards the Shap Fells.

3.35 Parcel AP12

Parcel AP12 lies to the south west of the town, at the western end of the Barrowmoor Road and high above the River Eden. The parcel is currently semi-improved pasture.

The parcel's north west boundary is formed by a low, but well-maintained native hedge, beyond which lies further pasture fields. A public footpath runs along this boundary. The north east boundary is formed by post and wire fencing beyond which lies established woodland called Dowpits Wood, on a steep bank sloping down to the River Eden. A public footpath runs along this boundary. The south east boundary is formed by the rear boundaries of existing houses along Barrowmoor Road; mostly post and wire with some sporadic hedge planting. The south west boundary is with Colby Lane, separated by some substantial hedge and tree planting, with further post and wire fencing.

The parcel slopes gently from south west to north east, with the lowest point, approximately 150m, being in the northern-most corner and the highest point, approximately 162m in the south west corner. Beyond the north east boundary, the land falls dramatically by approximately 20m to the river below.

The parcel has a high landscape quality within it, and is set within a high quality wider landscape, displaying many characteristics typical of the area, mature boundary planting and extensive views. The current boundary with the properties appears somewhat arbitrary, but the relative lack of traffic from Colby Lane lends to a tranquil quality.

3.36 Parcel AP14

Parcel AP14 lies to the south of the town, behind some existing housing along Colby Lane and to the south west of Scattergate Crescent. The parcel is currently semi-improved pasture.

The parcel's northern boundary is with the rear gardens of existing properties along Colby Lane, and an access road to some further houses, and is formed by a mixture of boundary treatments and sporadic hedge planting. The south east boundary is partly formed by further hedge planting and post and rail fencing alongside the rear boundaries of houses along Scattergate Crescent and then post and wire agricultural fencing with scattered mature trees. A public footpath runs along this boundary. The south west boundary is formed by established and well-maintained hedge planting with further pasture fields beyond. The western boundary is further sporadic hedgerow with post and wire fencing, beyond which runs another public footpath.

The parcel has a moderate landscape quality but is set within a high quality landscape to its south and south west. There is currently a stark edge to the housing along Colby Lane and Scattergate Crescent, but there are fine views towards the Castle and the Pennines in the far distance.

4.0 Landscape and visual impacts and their significance.

4.1 Visual baseline

Visual impact assessment relates to “**changes that arise in the composition of the available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people’s responses to the changes and to the overall effects with respect to the visual amenity**” (GLVIA).

Potential visual receptors can include the public or community at large, residents, visitors and other groups of viewers as well as the visual amenity of people affected.

During the site surveys, careful notes were taken as to likely viewpoints of the parcels, and those viewpoints were subsequently visited, and the views recorded and analysed.

4.2 Landscape sensitivity

Sensitivity is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible, according to the degree to which a particular landscape or area can accommodate change arising from a particular development, without detrimental effects on its character, as based on the following factors:

- Compatibility of the proposed development with the existing land-uses and landscape character.
- The pattern and scale of the landscape in relation to the development.
- Visual enclosure/openness and potential extent of visibility.
- The scope for mitigation of the proposed development, which would be in character with the existing landscape.
- The value placed on the landscape.

In order to provide comparisons between Option Areas (and/or individual parcels), scores have been assigned to each impact level.

| Significance of landscape or visual effect | Score |
|--|-------|
| No impact | 0 |
| Negligible impact | 1 |
| Negligible/slight impact | 2 |
| Slight impact | 3 |
| Slight/moderate impact | 4 |
| Moderate impact | 5 |
| Moderate/substantial | 6 |
| Substantial impact | 7 |

Table 3. Scores allocated to each given impact level

4.21 Parcel AP5

| Landscape element | Sensitivity | Nature of impact | Predicted magnitude | Significance of impact | Score |
|---------------------|-------------|--|---------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Landform | Low | Earthworks typical of housing and infrastructure development. | Small | Slight | 3 |
| Land cover | Low | Change of use from agricultural to developed. | Large | Moderate | 5 |
| Trees and woodland | Moderate | Substantial tree planting along boundaries with several mature trees within the parcel itself. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Hedgerows | Low | Some boundary hedgerows. | Small | Slight | 3 |
| Water bodies | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Rights of way | Low | Footpath along south west boundary which bisects the assumed access into the parcel. | Small | Slight | 3 |
| Landscape character | Moderate | Some character to the parcel although dominated by proximity to town's cemetery. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| | | | | | 22 |

Table 4. Landscape sensitivity of Parcel AP5

4.22 Parcel AP6

| Landscape element | Sensitivity | Nature of impact | Predicted magnitude | Significance of impact | Score |
|---------------------|-------------|---|---------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Landform | Moderate | Steeply sloping area to the parcel's south east boundary behind the gate hotel which may require groundworks if decided to develop. | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Land cover | Low | Change of use from agricultural to developed. | Large | Moderate | 5 |
| Trees and woodland | Moderate | Some mature trees along boundaries, including internal existing field boundaries. | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Hedgerows | Low | Small lengths of fragmented hedgerows which could likely be retained if deemed desirable. | Small | Slight | 3 |
| Water bodies | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Rights of way | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Landscape character | Moderate | Typical characteristics of the wider landscape and open vistas towards the Pennines and Eden Valley from parts of the parcel. | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| | | | | | 23 |

Table 5. Landscape sensitivity of Parcel AP6

4.23 Parcel AP10

| Landscape element | Sensitivity | Nature of impact | Predicted magnitude | Significance of impact | Score |
|---------------------|-------------|---|---------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Landform | Moderate | Considerable slope over majority of the site, particularly southern area. | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Land cover | Low | Change of use from arable/scrap yard to developed. | Medium | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Trees and woodland | Moderate | Some mature trees along boundaries which could easily be protected and retained. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Hedgerows | Moderate | Significant, well maintained, mature hedge along northern and western boundary with road, which could easily be protected and maintained. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Water bodies | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Rights of way | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Landscape character | Low | Arable field and scrap yard within an overwhelmingly grazing landscape with few features and an intensively managed character. | Negligible | Negligible/slight | 2 |
| | | | | | 19 |

Table 6. Landscape sensitivity of Parcel AP10

4.24 Parcel AP11

| Landscape element | Sensitivity | Nature of impact | Predicted magnitude | Significance of impact | Score |
|---------------------|-------------|---|---------------------|------------------------|-------|
| Landform | Low | Gently sloping parcel, not posing any problems to development. | Negligible | Negligible/slight | 2 |
| Land cover | Low | Change from grazing land and farm yard to developed. | Medium | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Trees and woodland | Moderate | Some mature trees along boundaries, which could easily be protected and retained. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Hedgerows | Moderate | Mature hedgerow on parcel's boundary with some along existing internal field boundary which would be at risk. | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Water bodies | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Rights of way | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Landscape character | Low | No notable features and few characteristics of the wider landscape. | Negligible | Negligible/slight | 2 |
| | | | | | 17 |

Table 7. Landscape sensitivity of Parcel AP11

4.25 Parcel AP12

| Landscape element | Sensitivity | Nature of impact | Predicted magnitude | Significance of impact | Score |
|---------------------|-------------|--|---------------------|------------------------|-------|
| Landform | Moderate | Gently undulating, adding to character of the parcel. Unlikely to pose any problems to development. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Land cover | Low | Change of use from agricultural to developed. | Large | Moderate | 5 |
| Trees and woodland | Moderate | Some mature trees along boundaries, and extensive mature woodland on bank sloping down to River Eden beyond north east boundary. | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Hedgerows | Moderate | Significant hedgerow planting along south and west boundaries, and fragmented hedgerow along eastern boundary with existing adjacent properties. | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Water bodies | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Rights of way | High | Footpaths along northern and western boundaries, and footpath diagonally crossing site towards Colby Lane. Character would be lost if developed. | Large | Substantial | 7 |
| Landscape character | Moderate | Strong character with many aspects of wider landscape. Provides last open space before Appleby as approached from Colby, | Large | Moderate/substantial | 6 |
| | | | | | 27 |

Table 8. Landscape sensitivity of Parcel AP12

4.26 Parcel AP14

| Landscape element | Sensitivity | Nature of impact | Predicted magnitude | Significance of impact | Score |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Landform | Low | Gently sloping but not posing a problem to any development. | Negligible | Negligible/slight | 2 |
| Land cover | Low | Change of use from agricultural to developed. | Large | Moderate | 5 |
| Trees and woodland | Moderate | Some mature trees along boundaries which could easily be protected and retained. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Hedgerows | Moderate | Small lengths of fragmented hedgerows which could likely be retained if deemed desirable. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Water bodies | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Rights of way | Moderate | Footpaths along eastern boundary and immediately adjacent to western boundary, whose character would be lost through development. | Large | Moderate/substantial | 6 |
| Landscape character | Moderate | Generally enclosed, contained views but good views towards Appleby Castle and glimpses of the Pennines to the north. | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| | | | | | 25 |

Table 9. Landscape sensitivity of Parcel AP14

4.27 Parcel AP16

| Landscape element | Sensitivity | Nature of impact | Predicted magnitude | Significance of impact | Score |
|---------------------|-------------|--|---------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Landform | Low | Relatively level with some more significant level changes towards boundaries, but would not pose problem to development. | Negligible | Negligible/slight | 2 |
| Land cover | Low | Change of use from agricultural to developed. | Large | Moderate | 5 |
| Trees and woodland | Low | Some mature tree planting along southern boundary with railway. One significant tree within the parcel, but in poor condition. | Small | Slight | 3 |
| Hedgerows | Low | Small lengths of fragmented hedgerows which could likely be retained if deemed desirable. | Small | Slight | 3 |
| Water bodies | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Rights of way | N/A | None. | None | No impact | 0 |
| Landscape character | High | Typical characteristics of the wider landscape and open vistas towards the Pennines and Eden Valley from parts of the parcel. | Large | Substantial | 7 |
| | | | | | 20 |

Table 10. Landscape sensitivity of Parcel AP16

4.3 Summary of landscape impacts

By scoring the anticipated impact of each factor assessed, a cumulative significance score has been given to each Option Area. The higher the score, the greater the significance of the impact on the landscape through developing an area would be.

| | |
|-------------|----|
| Parcel AP5 | 22 |
| Parcel AP6 | 23 |
| Parcel AP10 | 19 |
| Parcel AP11 | 17 |
| Parcel AP12 | 27 |
| Parcel AP14 | 25 |
| Parcel AP16 | 20 |

Table 11.

4.4 Visual impact

Visual impact assessment relates to **“changes that arise in the composition of the available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people’s responses to the changes and to the overall effects with respect to the visual amenity”** (GLVIA)

Potential visual receptors can include the public or community at large, residents, visitors and other groups of viewers as well as the visual amenity of people affected.

Rather than identify individual locations considered to be a visual receptor to each parcel, an overview has been taken to assess visual impact in the immediate vicinity, mid distance (up to 2km) and beyond 2km. This is sufficient to give a gauge to the likely visual impact development may create.

As with landscape impact, in order to provide comparisons between parcels, scores have been assigned to each impact level.

| Significance of landscape or visual effect | Score |
|--|-------|
| No impact | 0 |
| Negligible impact | 1 |
| Negligible/slight impact | 2 |
| Slight impact | 3 |
| Slight/moderate impact | 4 |
| Moderate impact | 5 |
| Moderate/substantial | 6 |
| Substantial impact | 7 |

Table 12. Scores allocated to each given impact level

4.41 Visual impact from Parcel AP5

The visual receptors to this parcel are limited to the residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the site, users of the cemetery, users of the footpath crossing the site and passengers on the Settle Carlisle railway line. Of these visual receptors, the residents in the nearby properties which overlook the parcel are the most sensitive to any change, and because they would experience the view on a permanent basis, their sensitivity can be considered to be high. For them, development would cause a medium magnitude of change. Whilst the parcel is currently an open field, it is surrounded by existing development and does not afford views over open countryside. Development, therefore, would result in a moderate impact.

Users of the cemetery can be considered as having low sensitivity to the parcel's development, as whilst the parcel helps provide a setting for part of the cemetery, its users do not visit to appreciate the landscape and visits are normally brief. Development would still have a medium magnitude of change, but the resultant impact would be slight.

Users of the footpath crossing the site can be considered as having a low sensitivity to change. Whilst most users will use the footpath because of its location within a currently open field, the number of users appears relatively low, and the site is surrounded by other development. Development would not preclude the footpath's retention. Development would have a medium magnitude of change and therefore create a slight/moderate impact.

Passengers on the Settle Carlisle line are also low sensitivity, as any views will be fleeting, and the land adjacent to the parcel, in whichever direction of travel is already developed. The parcel is also read as being part of the town already as views carry over towards the town centre. Development would therefore have a low magnitude of change resulting in a negligible/slight impact.

Beyond the immediate area, views are very limited, meaning any visual receptors would have a low sensitivity to development, and any development would have, at worst, a low magnitude of change, meaning that any impact would be, at worst, negligible/slight.

| Parcel AP5 | Sensitivity | Magnitude of change | Impact | Score |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Immediate vicinity | High | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Mid-distance | Low | Small | Slight | 3 |
| Far-distance | Low | Negligible | Negligible/slight | 2 |
| | | | | 10 |

Table 13.

4.42 Visual impact from Parcels AP6 and AP16

The visual receptors to these parcels are limited to a small number of residential properties opposite the former Gate Hotel (Parcel AP6) and along Cross Croft (Parcel AP16), road users approaching Appleby from the east, and railway passengers on the Settle Carlisle line. Of these visual receptors, the residents in the nearby properties which overlook the parcel are the most sensitive to any change, and because they would experience the view on a permanent basis, their sensitivity can be considered to be high. For them, development would cause a high magnitude of change, as the parcel is currently open countryside with fine views of the Pennines beyond. Development, therefore, would result in a substantial impact.

Users of the road can be considered as having a low sensitivity to the parcel's development, as views of the parcel are fleeting, and the existing development of the town would soon be encountered anyway. Development would, however, have a high magnitude of change, as the south east portion of parcel AP6 slopes down towards the road and it consequently highly visible. Development would therefore have a low magnitude of change resulting in a slight/moderate impact.

Passengers on the Settle Carlisle line are also low sensitivity, as any views will be fleeting, development would have a low magnitude of change. Whilst it could cut off views over to the Pennines, or towards the Eden Valley, the views are either regained, or to be lost anyway (depending on the direction of travel) and the line does afford a great deal of views along the rest of its route. Development would therefore have a slight impact.

| Parcels AP6 & 16 | Sensitivity | Magnitude of change | Impact | Score |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------|
| Immediate vicinity | Moderate | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Mid-distance | Moderate | Small | Slight/ moderate | 4 |
| Far-distance | Low | Small | Slight | 3 |
| | | | | 12 |

Table 14.

4.43 Visual impact from Parcel AP10

This parcel has very few visual receptors, limited to the current occupiers of a residence opposite the entrance to the scrap yard, a few residences along Rivington Park with rear views towards the parcel, and road users travelling along the A66. Development would also make the parcel visible from the footpath network to the north east of Appleby.

The residence opposite the scrap yard entrance will have a moderate sensitivity to development as the parcel does form a large part of the view from the front of the house. However, development would only create a low magnitude of change, as the current view is very unsightly, resulting in a slight impact. Also, this residence forms part of adjacent Parcel AP11, so may not be a receptor at all. Any residences along Rivington Park with views overlooking the site will have moderate sensitivity, as only part of the parcel is directly behind the houses.

Road users can be considered to have a low sensitivity as views of the parcel are fleeting, and views over the town towards the Shap Fells and Eden Valley will not be affected.

Footpath users to the north east of the town can be considered to have moderate sensitivity to development as the main views gained from the footpaths in the area is towards the Pennines and away from the A66 and the town. Development may make the presence of the town visible above the A66, whilst it currently isn't, but most users will already associate the A66 with the town, and this should not alter the character of the area.

| Parcel AP10 | Sensitivity | Magnitude of change | Impact | Score |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Immediate vicinity | Low | Medium | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Mid-distance | Low | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Far-distance | Low | Negligible | Negligible/slight | 2 |
| | | | | 10 |

Table 15.

4.44 Visual impact from Parcel AP11

This parcel has very few visual receptors, limited to road users travelling along the A66 and Station Road. Development may make the parcel visible from the footpath network to the north east of Appleby and the occupiers of The Hollies, directly opposite the site, on the opposite side of the A66.

The site is contained within an embankment from the former railway line to the south west and the A66 to the north east, meaning that very few locations have views of it, let alone any meaningful visual receptor.

Road users can be considered to have a low sensitivity as views of the parcel are fleeting, and views over the town towards the Shap Fells and Eden Valley, from the A66, will not be affected. Similarly, users of Station Road would only see the site to the side of the direction of travel.

Footpath users to the north east of the town can be considered to have moderate sensitivity to development as the main views gained from the footpaths in the area is towards the Pennines and away from the A66 and the town.

| Parcels AP11 | Sensitivity | Magnitude of change | Impact | Score |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|--------|-------|
| Immediate vicinity | Low | Small | Slight | 3 |
| Mid-distance | Moderate | Negligible | Slight | 3 |
| Far-distance | Moderate | Negligible | Slight | 3 |
| | | | | 9 |

Table 16.

4.45 Visual impact from Parcel AP12

This parcel has numerous visual receptors amongst the properties of Barrowmoor Road whose rear face onto the parcel. It also has two well used footpaths which will cater for numerous walkers, and can be seen from further open countryside to the west and south of Appleby. It can also be seen, depending on the season and whether the trees on the embankment of Dowpits Wood are in leaf or not, from the area around the cricket pitch and the King George's playing fields.

The residences which overlook the parcel can be considered to have a high sensitivity to development, as the parcel is currently open countryside with further open countryside beyond, and they will experience the view on a permanent basis. Development would have a large magnitude of change and would therefore result in a substantial impact.

Users of the footpaths across the site can be considered to have a moderate sensitivity, as use of the footpaths is discretionary, and if approached from the town, walkers will already have passed through much developed land. Development would simply delay the onset of open countryside to beyond the parcel.

Receptors from elsewhere within the open countryside to the town's south and east can be considered to have moderate sensitivity as they are highly likely to be using the area for recreation and therefore appreciating the landscape qualities. Development would cause a medium magnitude of change as it would clearly push development further into open countryside, increasing the ribbon of development Colby Lane beyond the area of the town below and over the river.

When viewed from the cricket pitch and the playing fields, the parcel would not be visible when the trees of Dowpits Woods are in leaf. However, in the winter, it is currently obvious where the existing development ends, and this corresponds well to the development within the main body of the town itself. Development of the parcel would push development beyond this, and cause a medium magnitude of change. However, users of these areas can be considered to have low sensitivity, as they are within the town, and not viewing open countryside.

| Parcels AP12 | Sensitivity | Magnitude of change | Impact | Score |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-------|
| Immediate vicinity | High | Large | Substantial | 7 |
| Mid-distance | Moderate | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| Far-distance | Moderate | Medium | Moderate | 5 |
| | | | | 17 |

Table 17.

4.46 Visual impact from Parcel AP14

This parcel has numerous visual receptors within Scattergate Crescent and along Colby Lane, from users of the footpath across and immediately adjacent to the parcel, from road users along Parkin Hill as it runs between Burrells and Appleby, and from users of the footpaths to the south of Appleby.

Of these visual receptors, the residents in the nearby properties which overlook the parcel are the most sensitive to any change, and because they would experience the view on a permanent basis, their sensitivity can be considered to be high. For them, development would cause a large magnitude of change which would result in a substantial impact.

Users of the footpath across the site can be considered to have a moderate sensitivity, as use of the footpaths is discretionary, and for half of its distance across the parcel, runs next to existing development in Scattergate Crescent. Development would therefore cause a medium magnitude of change, which would result in a slight/moderate impact.

Receptors from elsewhere within the open countryside to the town's south and east can be considered to have moderate sensitivity as they are highly likely to be using the area for recreation and therefore appreciating the landscape qualities. Development would cause a low magnitude of change as when viewed from further afield, the site sits well within an envelope of existing development, and would not appear to encroach severely into open countryside. Development would therefore create a slight impact.

| Parcels AP14 | Sensitivity | Magnitude of change | Impact | Score |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------|
| Immediate vicinity | High | Large | Substantial | 7 |
| Mid-distance | Moderate | Small | Slight/moderate | 4 |
| Far-distance | Low | Small | Slight | 3 |
| | | | | 14 |

Table 17.

5.0 Summary

If the scoring of both landscape and visual impact were combined to rank each parcel in terms of its suitability for development, the parcels would rank, with least impact (and therefore highest suitability) first;

1. Parcel AP11 (total score 26)
2. Parcel AP10 (total score 29)
3. Parcels AP5 & AP16 (total score 32)
4. Parcel AP6 (total score 35)
5. Parcel AP14 (total score 39)
6. Parcel AP12 (total score 44)

However, each parcel has constraints and opportunities that a simple scoring system cannot identify.

5.1 Parcel AP5

This parcel is very well screened from visual receptors in the immediate vicinity and beyond, but is in close proximity to the town's conservation area. It is located off a lane which currently has a rural feel and is adjacent to the town's cemetery.

Most impact could be reduced if any development were concentrated away from the cemetery and Back Lane, and closer to the existing development off St Michaels Lane. Structural tree planting should be retained and enhanced, and could be introduced between the parcel and the cemetery, enhancing the existing footpath route.

5.2 Parcels AP6 and AP16

Neither sites associate particularly well with the residential areas of Appleby and instead relate more with the adjacent industrial estate. They do offer excellent views over the Eden Valley, but their development would extend the built edge of Appleby into open countryside. Most impact would arise from development of the parcel's south east section, behind the former Gate Hotel, and any impact from development could therefore be greatly reduced by avoiding this area, by developing either to the north west beyond the ridge line, or tucked in behind the Gate Hotel itself. Any mature boundary planting should be protected and retained.

If Parcel AP6 were developed in isolation from parcel AP16, it would appear as a greater intrusion into open countryside, and appear further detached from the town itself. However, if developed with AP16, both sites could create a sufficient mass to appear a more logical extension of the town.

5.3 Parcel AP10

Development of this parcel may actually prove beneficial in parts as it would remove the unsightly scrap yard and allow for visual improvements to take place around the primary school. The sloping nature of the majority of the site gives excellent views towards the Eden Valley and Shap Fells, but is relatively screened from the town itself and beyond the A66. Development may make the presence of the town visible above the A66, whilst it currently isn't, but most users will already associate the A66 with the town, and this should not alter the character of the area. Development would therefore have a low magnitude of change and result in slight impact. It is possible that The Hollies may be able to view any development, although the property currently has significant screen planting around it, and is already impacted by the main road.

5.4 Parcel AP11

This parcel is extremely well screened, has few visual receptors, but relates well to recent residential development and appears to be an ideal site for affordable housing, given that its relative lack of views and proximity to the A66 would make more expensive housing less viable. It would fill in a gap between the A66 and existing development, and help locate Appleby to road users who currently get very few visual clues that the town exists. Boundary planting is worthy of retention and a buffer planting scheme to reduce noise and visual impact from the A66 would be desirable.

5.5 Parcel AP12

Although this parcel may appear a logical extension of existing development along Colby Lane, it is highly visible from a wide area and marks the last open countryside before Appleby is reached, if travelling from Colby. The current boundary between the existing rear gardens of Barrowmoor Road is stark and there may be an opportunity to help soften this boundary through high quality development. It would be important to retain any boundary structural planting, and to ensure that the boundary between development and open countryside were subtle and made to fit in with the landscape. This could be achieved through structural planting, and ensuring any boundary treatments blended in.

5.6 Parcel AP14

Whilst this parcel extends into open countryside in a similar vein to parcels AP12, AP6 and AP16, it still retains strong visual links with the existing development of Scattergate and Colby Road. It possesses a critical mass which keeps it in scale with those developments, and is relatively well screened from the surrounding area. Much of any impact could be reduced if development was focussed towards the existing properties in Scattergate Crescent and along Colby Lane, although when viewed from most possible viewpoints, development of the whole parcel would still be against the backdrop of existing development.

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