



**LYTHAM GREEN DRIVE GOLF COURSE,
BALLAM ROAD, LYTHAM ST ANNES FY8 4LE.**

For

BOOTH VENTURES LTD.

LANDSCAPE APPRAISAL

FEBRUARY 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.1 Appletons were commissioned by Booth Ventures Ltd/ Lytham Green Drive Golf Club to carry out a Landscape Appraisal of a 5.6ha site to the north-east of Lytham Green Drive Golf course, off Saltcotes Road, Lytham St Annes FY8 4LE (hereafter called 'the site'). This assessment has been carried out to accompany a full planning application for the re-profiling/ landscape, drainage engineering and construction of a new golf course hole area. A Masterplan has been prepared by Gaunt Golf Design to demonstrate the scope of the scheme which could be accommodated on the site and thereby best understand the potential impact of the proposals. The application is also informed by a number of other surveys and studies by consultants within the design team.
- 1.2 The assessment site located on the edge of the Saltcotes area of Lytham. It comprises of land in the north east corner of the golf course that is currently an unused. The site abuts the golf course to the west and Saltcotes Road to the east. Nearby settlements include Saltcotes (located 420m to centre to the south) and Lytham (located 1.75km to centre to the south-west).
- 1.3 This assessment considers the baseline for both landscape and visual amenity and seeks to identify the sensitivity of each, before considering the change that the introduction of the proposed golf course hole area will produce. Potential landscape/ landscape character and visual impacts of the proposals are assessed together with any cumulative impacts and recommended mitigation proposals to ameliorate such impacts should they occur.
- 1.4 Landscape assessment is the systematic description and analysis of the landscape resource, including physical features and elements of the landscape, of how their composition forms distinct areas of character, appraisal of quality and sensitivity, and the potential effect of the proposed development on the landscape. The elements may include landform, field and settlement patterns, building styles, road and transport patterns, vegetation cover and land use.
- 1.5 Visual assessment is the description and analysis of the views experienced by receptors from residential properties, public buildings, public open spaces, public rights of way, open access areas, transport corridors and places of work, and the potential effect of the site on these receptors.
- 1.6 The nature of landscape and visual impacts is closely related to other topics such as ecology and the historic environment. Each of these topics can influence the landscape character of an area or contribute to the quality and sensitivity of landscape or visual receptors. The scope of this report has been developed in accordance with these topics in so far as information is available.
- 1.7 Principles and good practice for undertaking an appraisal are set out in the Landscape Institute (LI) and the Institute of Environmental Management (IEMA) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA, April 2013). The methodology used for this assessment

is based upon this guidance. A summary of the methodology employed for this assessment is set out in Section 2 and in detail at **Appendix 1**. Where any deviation from the Guidelines occurs in order to appropriately undertake the assessment in a manner which provides clear evaluation, this will be justified, and an explanation provided (see Section 2.0).

- 1.8 The assessment should be read in conjunction with the following drawings: GGD350-3090 Masterplan, GGD350-3091 Earthworks Plan, GGD350-3093 Cross Sections, GGD350-3095 Cross Sections Plan, prepared by Gaunt Golf Design on behalf of Booth Ventures/ Lytham Green Drive Golf Club (**Appendix 2**).

Site Visits

- 1.9 Site visit for the purposes of completing this report was made on 2nd February 2024 in order to survey the existing landscape and to assess both local landscape character and visual amenity. The site visit was undertaken by Dave Starkie, Chartered Landscape Architects with over 15 years' experience within the industry and included visits to the site itself, and to significant and representative viewpoints.

Definition of Assessment Area

- 1.10 The focused study area shown on **Figure 1 (Appendix 4) Location and Context**, was selected on a realistic and pragmatic basis as an approximate 3km radius from the centre of the site. Viewpoints where predicted impacts may be significant to a greater or lesser degree were assessed. Potential views from further distance were also assessed and discounted as being negligible or not feasible.

Individuals involved in preparing this Assessment

- 1.11 This assessment was undertaken by Appletons, landscape architects and environmental consultants, a Registered Practice of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. A Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI) was directly involved in writing this assessment: Dave Starkie, CMLI (Associate Director). Viewpoint photography, mapping and figures were taken and prepared by Dave Starkie CMLI.

Pre-Application Advice

- 1.12 A Pre application and screening opinion was submitted to Lancashire County Council on 27th April 2023. A formal response (**Appendix 5**) was supplied on 28th June 2023.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The site has been assessed in terms of the character, landscape and impacts of the proposed golf course development on the existing site and the surrounding area. It has been carried out in accordance with the recommendations contained within the *'The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact'* 3rd Edition published jointly in 2013 by The Landscape Institute and The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. The baseline condition of the site has therefore been established and an assessment of the positive and negative impacts in terms of landscape character, landscape effects and visual effects has been made.

Definition of Assessment Area

- 2.2 The study area for the assessment has been identified through an interactive process in the early stages of this assessment. Baseline information and site survey work has addressed the site itself and the wider landscape around it which the proposed development may influence. This has enabled the refinement of an appropriate assessment area for specific landscape and visual effects. The study area for the assessment has also been defined by the physical characteristics of the landscape (including landform, vegetation and existing character studies) as well as a preliminary review of the proposed development in its schematic form. The study area is based on an approximate radius of 3km from the site's approximate centre, beyond which the proposed development is unlikely to result in significant impacts or effects. The spatial scope of this study area has been refined through the initial stages of the assessment to focus on the key sensitive receptors and likely significant effects. Viewpoints where predicted impacts may be significant to a greater or lesser degree have been assessed. Potential views from further distance were also assessed and discounted as being negligible or not feasible.

Site survey/ visits and selection of viewpoints

- 2.3 The site and surrounding area viewpoint photographs were taken on 2nd February 2024. Trees and vegetation had lost their foliage, however they still provided some visual screening within the landscape. The surrounding road network was driven, and local Public Rights of Way were walked. Positive and detracting elements in the landscape were recorded, as was the general land use, susceptibility and value/ quality of the site and surrounding area. Viewpoints were identified based on public viewpoints (Public Rights of Way) and a best effort was made to establish where potential sensitive, partial and open views of the site could be observed. The selection of public vantage points from Public Rights of Way and highways for the viewpoints used in the landscape and visual impact assessment, has been arrived at using professional judgement and in accordance with *'The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact'*. Private viewpoints (residential properties) were also considered where applicable and key distant viewpoints identified to determine the wider impact on the landscape and where development would have the potential to affect the value and character of existing views.

- 2.4 The surveys helped gain an understanding of existing landscape character and visual amenity receptors, and supplemented the available information collected during the desk study. The surveys also helped establish the likely effects of the developments and possible mitigation.

Visibility Mapping

- 2.5 The visible envelope of the site has been considered through desk top analysis of topographical data combined with field surveys to investigate visual enclosure arising from landform, vegetation and built form. A series of representative viewpoints were subsequently taken to represent typical views from publicly accessible areas within the study area which may give rise to views of the proposed development. Mapping of a Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) has been prepared and included at **Figure 5 (Appendix 4)**.

Photographs

- 2.6 A daytime photographic survey of the site has been made using a prime (fixed) lens (AF-S NIKKRO 35mm 1:1.8G) on a digital SLR camera (Nikon D3100). This produces individual photographs with an approximate horizontal field of view of 40°, which are similar to those taken with a standard 35mm film camera and a 50mm fixed focal length lens and allows for images to be reproduced as close to that which is generally equivalent to the focal length of the human eye. Technical Guidance as set out within the TGN 06/19 Landscape Institute Visual Representation of Development Proposals and supporting documents, has been followed, although tripod mounting and levelling to horizontal and vertical axes has not been employed, and any grid references (where given), are approximate. The majority of the photographs utilise a series of three frames stitched together using image software (Adobe Photoshop) to provide a representation of the views that receptors are likely to experience when observing a landscape and moving their head and eyesight across the view. These have then had minimal cropping to present a photomontage which can be viewed on an A3 paper size.

Methodology for assessment

- 2.7 The methodology seeks to use recognised, published industry standards and techniques to identify and describe a landscape and visual baseline. These are then used to ascribe a sensitivity to landscape receptors and determine the effect on visual receptors which may be altered through the introduction of the proposed development. Landscape and visual impacts and their effects are considered separately, although the conclusion on sensitivity and impact will have regard to both these related areas of study and proposals made for the mitigation of that impact. The magnitude of change brought about through the proposed development is considered alongside the level of sensitivity for each landscape receptor or visual receptor and the level of landscape or visual effects is expressed as a combination of these two elements. The proposal site has been assessed for both Landscape and Visual effects based on the proposed development and associated infrastructure only.

- 2.8 The detailed methodology adopted for this assessment is contained in **Appendix 1**, but as qualified by the above paragraphs.

Desk Study

- 2.9 Within the study area, the relevant Local Plans and Local Authority guidance documents were reviewed to gain an understanding of the quality and sensitivity of the features and elements that contribute to landscape character and visual amenity.
- 2.10 Following the Natural England approach of a tiered method of landscape character assessment and analysis, reference has been made to published landscape assessments. These provide an objective assessment of landscape character and provide a useful description of the baseline position. Natural England's Countryside Map of England has been referred to for a broad understanding of landscape character at a regional scale. Where available, local authority landscape character assessments have also been referred to.
- 2.11 Ordnance Survey mapping (Scales 1:50,000 and 1:25,000) and aerial photography has been studied to gain a general understanding of landform, the location of any Public Rights of Way and national cycle network routes, the extent and type of vegetation and land use.
- 2.12 The following principal sources of information were used to inform the Assessment of Effects on the Landscape Resource and Visual Amenity:

Sources of Information

2.12.1 Planning Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised December 2023;
- Fylde Local Plan to 2032, adopted October 2018;

2.12.2 Guidance

- 'Guidance for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment third edition 2013;
- 'Landscape Character Assessment for England and Scotland', (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage 2002);
- 'Photography and Photomontage in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' Advice note. The Landscape Institute, March 2011.
- 'Visual Representation of Development Proposals' Technical Guidance Note 06/19. The Landscape Institute, September 2019.

2.12.3 Advice

- 'A Handbook on Environmental Impact Assessment – Third Edition', SNH, 2009.

2.12.4 *Background*

- OS Mapping;
- Aerial photographs of the site and surroundings;
- Topographical Survey data;
and;
- Information regarding the proposed development provided by the client and commissioned consultants.

3.0 STUDY AREA AND BASELINE CONDITIONS/ SITE CONTEXT

Location

- 3.1 The area as a whole is known as Lytham St Anne's (population 42,689 - 2021 estimate) with Lytham located 1.7km to the south east and St Anne's 5.4km to the west. The location of the proposal site is shown on **Figure 1 Location and Context (Appendix 4)**. The site is located to the north of the Lytham suburb called Saltcotes. The site is centred at grid reference SD 37530 28581. The local authority is Fylde Borough Council and the County Council is Lancashire. The site is currently part of the golf course boundary, however it is largely unmaintained.
- 3.2 The site abuts Saltcotes Road on the north-eastern boundary of Lytham Green Drive Golf Course. The below descriptions go into greater detail of the surroundings of the site and the site itself.

The Site

- 3.3 The site is formed by a large open grassland area, which has been predominately left uncut. Mature vegetation is located on the boundaries of the site, with narrow tree belts to the north and east. A small area of woodland and scrub separates the site from the wider golf course. In the north-western corner of the site is an existing pond, rushes and scrub. The site also encroaches onto the existing golf course, with a small portion of the fairway and green included in the site boundary of the adjacent golf hole, in the north-western corner of the site.
- 3.4 **Appendix 6** viewpoint site photographs indicate the features and characteristics of the site itself.

Land beyond the site: West & South

- 3.5 Beyond the site to the west and south is Lytham Green Drive Golf Course. Further to the south-east is the start of the residential area of Saltcotes, Lytham, with largely detached and semi-detached houses. In terms of topography, the golf course follows the same gradients as the site, even gradual fall and gentle low lying undulations from south to north. Generally the lye of the land is largely flat low lying land (typical of the area).

Land beyond the site: North

- 3.6 Immediately north of the site is a narrow tree belt which joins Birks Wood, this separates the site from the wider countryside with large field parcels and hedgerow boundaries. A series of drainage infrastructure drains cross the landscape as part of the agricultural land, such as the Main Drain and Branch Drain, which can be found north of the site. The topography continues to be typical of the wider landscape; flat and low lying.

Land beyond the site: East

- 3.7 The eastern boundary of the site abuts another narrow tree belt which borders Saltcotes Road. Beyond Saltcotes Road is a single large field parcel, which has a SSSI designation and separated

to the wider countryside by drainage infrastructure and railway line. Further to the north-east is a holiday caravan park, called Eastham Hall Holiday Park. Beyond the holiday park and drains is further agricultural fields with farmsteads. The land is more undulating in this area with evidence of man made mounding (possibly landfill) located 0.6km to the west of the site forming a local highpoint.

Golf Course Features

- 3.9 The site is owned by Lytham Green Drive Golf Club and as part of this proposal, will become part of the golf course. Lytham Green Drive golf course is an 18 hole golf course located on the north-eastern edge of Lytham, part of England's 'golf coast' area. It was founded in 1913 and with lack of hills make the course easy walking, situated in a parkland setting. Throughout the years, the course has undergone many alterations to its layout and infrastructure. Due to periods of prolonged inclement weather, the course often has to close for long periods of time during the year, due to waterlogging. The golf club are currently undergoing ambitious drainage plans, to be implemented in the coming years, with the aim to create a golf course which can be used all year round.
- 3.10 Lytham Green Drive golf course is a highly maintained, challenging course which people travel to play on. However, the course does not have suitable facilities for all year round play. Due to the waterlogging and temporary closures of the course, this reduces its appeal to wider audiences.

Site Features

- 3.11 The site is located in the north eastern corner of the existing golf course; there is one vehicle access point to the site from Saltcotes Road, on its eastern boundary. A small area of existing hardstanding is located at this vehicle entrance, typically used for maintenance only. Pedestrian/ golf course users can access the site at a variety of points to the south and western corners. The site itself is largely devoid of features, it is relatively flat, open grassland area for the most part. In the north-western corner is an existing pond area with wetland plant species surrounding. Further information on habitats and woodland are detailed in the ecology reports and tree survey report which form part of the planning submission. The boundaries of the site comprise of maintained narrow tree belts with semi-mature to mature trees and thick hedgerows.

Topography

- 3.12 The site highpoint (south-western corner) is at 4m AOD with the low point (north-eastern corner of site) at 2m AOD. The majority of the site falls evenly from the south to the north, however is largely flat with only minor/ localised undulations in some areas. Beyond the site, the golf course to the west follows similar gradients as on site. The surrounding area is predominantly flat and low lying apart from a man made mound (likely historical landfill) where the ground rises above the flat surroundings by 10 metres (from 2m AOD to 12m AOD).

Ecology

- 3.13 Ecological assessment of the site is confirmed within the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) dated October 2022 (reference 2419-E1) prepared by Appletons. Biodiversity Net Gain requirements have been met as detailed in the BNG report.

Planning Policy

- 3.14 Planning policy is also covered in the Design and Access Statement that accompanies this application. The key policies have been reviewed and it is this report's opinion that the proposals are policy compliant. Relevant policies have been extracted and shown below:
- 3.15 The application site, in the adopted Local Plan 2018 (produced by Fylde Borough Council) is designated as Development in the Countryside (GD4), which the policy states:

"Policy GD4: Development in the Countryside

Development in the Countryside, shown on the Policies Map, will be limited to:

- a. that needed for purposes of agriculture, horticulture or forestry; or other uses appropriate to a rural area, including uses which would help to diversify the rural economy, including small-scale tourist accommodation, holiday caravan sites and very exceptionally, larger scale tourism development;...*
- d. development essentially needed for the continuation of an existing enterprise, facility or operation, of a type and scale which would not harm the character of the surrounding countryside;..."*

- 3.16 Adjacent to the application site and over the road (Saltcotes Road) is a SSSI designated area (Lytham Coastal Changes SSSI). The relevant policy ENV2: Biodiversity has been extracted and shown below:

"Policy ENV2: Biodiversity

Section 1. Nature Conservation Sites and Ecological networks

A The hierarchy of nature conservation sites

The Council is committed to ensuring the protection and enhancement of Fylde's biodiversity and geological assets and interests. In order to do this, the Council will have regard to the following hierarchy of nature conservation sites when making planning decisions, according to their designation:

The strongest possible protection will be given to sites of international importance, predominantly the Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA/Ramsar site.

- National Nature Reserves (NNR)*
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)...*

In addition to the provisions of National and European law, and in accordance with national planning policy, proposals for development within or affecting the above nature conservation sites must adhere to all of the following principles:

- iv. Where development is considered necessary, adequate mitigation measures and compensatory habitat creation will be required through planning conditions and/or obligations, with the aim of providing an overall improvement in the site's biodiversity value. Where compensatory habitat is provided it should be of at least equal area and diversity, if not larger and more diverse, than that which is being replaced. Measures should be put in place for the ongoing management of such features."*

Agricultural Land Quality

- 3.17 Agricultural Land Quality is graded using the ALC system into five categories from excellent to poor. Grades 1, 2 and 3A are considered to be 'Best and Most Versatile' (BMV) in planning terms. Natural England are responsible for maintaining records of Agricultural Land Quality and have to be consulted if development is likely to cause the loss or cumulative loss of more than 20ha or more of BMV land. Reference to Magic Mapping Agricultural Landscape Classification Map shows that the site falls into Grade 3a (i.e. part of the Best and Most Versatile category). It is noted that this grading will not be impacted on as the existing soils will be scraped and stored on site and then placed back on top to complete the finished levels.

4.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.1 In the context of this definition, the LVIA process seeks to consider the effects in an objective and systematic approach whilst recognising the emotive and sometimes subjective response to the landscape (e.g. a landscape may figure in a famous artwork and therefore can produce feelings of sentiment or recognition of heritage). The definition also acknowledges the effect of man on the landscape character.

4.2 The impact of the proposed development on the landscape will be discussed in the following sections and the process will deal with separate but interlinked issues of:

Landscape Character: The potential effects of the development upon discrete character area and/or character types comprising features possessing a particular quality or merit.

Landscape Features: The potential effects of the development on existing physical features which may in turn alter the character of a landscape.

Visual Amenity: The potential effects of the development on views from visual receptors and upon the amenity value of the views.

4.3 It is important to consider the character of the landscape so that any changes to the fabric of the landscape can be fully understood and discussed. The Landscape Character Assessment Guidance defines landscape character as:

“A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape and which makes landscapes different from one another, rather than better or worse.”¹

Characterisation is the process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character. This process does not mean that the character is uniform across an area as there may be variation in character and changes both subtle and abrupt in dominance of the elements in the landscape which affect visual amenity directly.

National Character Area

4.4 Landscape character areas are defined on a broad scale by the National Character Area Profiles prepared by Natural England published 9th January 2014. The application site is in the National Landscape Character Area No. 32: Lancashire and Amounderness Plain, see **Landscape Character Assessment Extracts at Appendix 3**.

¹ Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland, published by Natural England, 2002

4.5 This character area is assessed in summary as follows:

“The Lancashire and Amounderness Plain is an area of high-grade agricultural land, bounded by Morecambe Bay in the north and Liverpool in the south. The eastern boundary is contained by the Bowland Fringe. The plain is made up of a series of low-lying landscape types: in the east, undulating lowland farmland on the highly productive coastal plain, and in the west, the former mosslands and their remnant sites, and the coastal marshes and dunes...The northern Fylde (or Amounderness) coastal plain contains the estuary and lower reaches of the River Wyre, as well as its tributaries, the rivers Calder and Brock. It is predominantly improved pasture, with isolated arable fields. It is an ordered landscape of medium-sized fields with field ponds, clipped hedgerows and drainage ditches. This is a medium- to large-scale landscape, where blocks of windsculpted mixed woodland punctuate the relatively flat to gently rolling plain.”

4.6 Key characteristics within the broad character area which are particularly observed within the landscape around the study area are as follows:

- *“A rich patchwork of pasture, arable fields and drainage ditches, on a relatively flat to gently undulating coastal landscape.*
- *Extensive views across the plain, within which small to medium-sized blocks of mixed woodland (wind-sculpted near the coast) provide punctuation and vertical accents.*
- *Thickly blanketed by glacial till, with poorly-drained peat-filled hollows that give rise to mosses and meres (now mainly remnants).*
- *Medium-sized to large fields form an open, large-scale agricultural landscape. Pasture is more dominant north of the Ribble Estuary, with arable to the south. There is a high density of relict pastoral field ponds on the eastern side of the NCA.*
- *Mixed arable and pastoral farmland habitats support a nationally important assemblage of breeding farmland bird species.*
- *A complex network of channelised rivers, canals, drainage ditches and dykes supports a nationally important population of water vole.*
- *Designed landscapes associated with large houses are locally common in the south, where they provide enclosure in an otherwise open landscape.*
- *A rectilinear network of lanes and tracks – usually without fences or hedges– subdivides the landscape, and isolated brick farmsteads occur in rural areas.”*

Regional Assessment

4.7 The site falls within the South Fylde Mosses, as characterised in ‘A Landscape Strategy for Lancashire: Landscape Character Assessment’ by Lancashire County Council in December 2000. The description of the character area is also included in the ‘Fylde Council Strategic Site Options: Appraisal of Strategic Site Options: Landscape Assessment for the Capacity to

accommodate *Landscape and Visual Change*’ produced by Fylde Council March 2016. Extracts of the landscape character description is shown below:

- *“The Mosslands are an extremely flat, low lying landscape comprised of peat deposits which were formerly an extensive series of lowland raised mires.*
- *Fields are typically large in size and geometric in shape, defined by straight drainage ditches and post and wire fences.*
- *Lytham Moss, on the eastern edges of Lytham St Anne’s and Blackpool, is influenced by the proximity of these urban areas. It is typical of a Mossland landscape in its underlying geology, landform, drainage and land use.*
- *The rows pylons which run from east to west across the landscape to Blackpool dominate the horizon however trees in small copses and shelter-belts are more pleasing vertical elements and help provide a backdrop and sense of scale in the landscape.*
- *Just north of Lytham, Lytham Hall is an important and established landscape feature as the 18th century landscaped grounds contain many trees. The proximity of Blackpool and Lytham is influential and the presence of golf courses, camp sites, new built development and industry erode the rural and tranquil character usually associated with this landscape type.”*

Local Landscape Character

4.9 The surroundings of the application site is a mixture of existing Lytham Green Drive golf course, residential areas (Saltcotes and Lytham), agricultural fields and narrow tree belts and woodland as part of the golf course and Lytham Hall Country Park. Other landscape character elements include a holiday caravan park, recycling centre, former landfill and drainage infrastructure (such as ditches or drains). As mentioned within the local landscape character assessment (16b and 15d), the landscape is influenced by the presence of golf courses and Lytham Hall is an important, established landscape feature close proximity to the golf course. As the landscape is relatively flat in this area (apart from the man made mound to the east), the horizon is dominated by trees in small copses and shelter belts, which the existing golf course and application site form part of. Residential areas of Saltcotes and Lytham are influences on the local landscape character of the area, providing an urbanising element in close proximity to the site. Further to the north of the site, the landscape character changes from parkland (combination of Lytham Hall Country Park and the existing golf course) to agricultural fields with maintained hedgerows. Interspersed between the fields are small pockets of woodlands and farmsteads. The topography in the surrounding area is relatively flat, with little in the way of high ground, with longer distance views blocked by tree shelter belts.

4.10 The boundaries of the site between the application site and existing Lytham Green Drive Golf Course is largely open to the south and north-western corner. Short sections of mature vegetation separate the site from the existing golf course. The northern and eastern boundaries of the site

are tree belts to the wider landscape and form the corner of the existing golf course. On site, there are no internal boundaries.

Character of the Application Site

- 4.11 The application site is an underused part of the golf course in the north-eastern corner. The site has undergone periods of regular maintenance (i.e. regular grass cuts) to having little to no maintenance and vegetation is left to mature. Areas of scrub, longer grassland occur near the borders of the existing golf course fairways and the pond. The pond (in the north-western corner of the site) is fed from a network of drainage ditches running through the existing golf course and a series of bridges cross over the ditches to allow access for golfers. The site boundary extends towards the 'rough' grassland area adjacent to the green to the existing golf hole, to the south. This area consists of long grass interspersed with scrubby vegetation and young trees. Included in the application boundary is an area of hardstanding adjacent to the existing access point off Saltcotes Road. The access point is marked by green palisade fencing, access gate and height restriction barrier.
- 4.12 There are a limited number of features on site which define its character, it is predominately a large open grassland area with boundary vegetation.

Characteristics of the site can be found on **Figure 7 Site Characteristics Plan at Appendix 4**.

Cultural and Social Factors (including existing built form)

- 4.13 The site itself is private land, forming part of the golf course, which majority of the time is underutilised, with no built form on site.

Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects

- 4.14 The aesthetic qualities of the site and local area involve judgments involving the following:

Enclosure: The boundaries of the site are identified and closed by existing vegetation on the majority of sides, partially closed to the south. The site is contained between the existing golf course and public highway (Saltcotes Road/ B5259).

Balance: The landscape within the immediate and vicinity of the application site consists of the varied character, as expected as the landscape changes from urban to a more rural character of small settlements and large field patterns. The site is situated between the edge of a golf course and agricultural fields to the north and SSSI area to the east. The golf course landscape character is a marked change, when compared to the surroundings. Nearby noise from industry and a recycling centre to the east disturb the tranquillity.

Pattern: The site itself is considered to be consistent in its features with that of the general surrounding landscape pattern, when compared to field parcels in the local vicinity and the adjacent golf course.

Diversity: The immediate landscape of the site has a range of diverse features, such as the manicured nature of the adjacent golf course, small pockets of woodland, large field parcels and drainage infrastructure. In terms of distinct, diverse features on site, there are few; a small existing pond and maintained green in the north-west corner are distinct on site.

Form and line: The site gradually falls from the south towards the north-eastern corner/ Saltcotes Road, this is in keeping with the adjacent golf course and surrounding landscape, which is largely flat with little undulation apart from the large man made mound to the east. The field boundaries are largely straight, as are the open field drains in the area.

Colour: The existing vegetation cover and grassland of the site and surrounding landscape are predominantly muted greens with dark browns and greys. Bright greens can be found on intensely maintained fairways and putting greens in the adjacent golf course. The residential areas of Saltcotes are lighter browns/ dark reds with highlights of colour within certain buildings. As the site sits within a transitional area, the landscape is **moderately colourful** in good light.

Movement: The landscape surrounding the site is largely agricultural or golf course, which can be described as **stationary**. The site is both influenced by some tranquillity being adjacent/ part of an outdoor recreation activity and being close to wider countryside with large swaths of countryside.

Texture: The surrounding landscape has relatively **low texture**, with a limited variety of natural and built features such as block walls and man-made features and maintained grass areas.

Susceptibility to change

- 4.15 The susceptibility to change has also been considered within the appraisal. This is the ability of the landscape (whether it be the overall character or condition of a particular landscape type, or individual features/ elements or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed scheme without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and the achievement of landscape policies or strategies. The development proposed at the application site would bring about a temporary loss of existing grassland features. However, the addition of new elements and the size and scale of the scheme in relation to the wider golf course and surrounding landscape within the immediate locality, are not likely to alter the long term aesthetics and will reflect the adjacent golf course to the west and south. The local highway network to the east forms a man-made boundary between the golf course and the SSSI area. The man made mound to east would continue to be the local highpoint and allow for the newly sculpted

levels to blends with its surroundings. The narrow tree belt to the north of the site, separates the site from the wider countryside, where the landscape pattern alters. The highway access point is an existing feature and is largely utilised for maintenance access.

- 4.16 It is judged that the site does not have any constraining features/ characteristics which would restrict the change from underused golf course land to import material and raising the levels of the land and inclusion into the existing adjacent golf course. Any new landscape features should seek to integrate with the pattern and overall appearance of the wider golf course, with vegetation screening in the form of large blocks of trees. There will be a change in character for the site from partially managed golf course land to manicured fairway, green, bunkers, however strong existing physical features such as boundary vegetation will be retained. Change is therefore likely to occur due to the proposed scheme, however the extent of the change is expected to reduce when the areas are managed under its proposed use. Alterations to levels means a generally flat landscape will become more undulating and higher, however this will be in the context of the larger existing mound to the east. It would also not be out of place on a golf course. There will be minor alterations to the existing access point into the site, it will be widened and radius formalised to account for visibility splays. The site is judged as being medium susceptibility. Overall, susceptibility to change is therefore considered to be **medium**.

Landscape Character Value

- 4.17 In terms of judging at the value attached to the character of the application site the following criteria were considered in terms of their relevance to arrive at an informed judgement:
- Inclusion within a local or national designation i.e. National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
 - Inclusion in formal Landscape Character Assessments and whether they are reviewed, plotted, referenced and the scale of the site in relation to landscape character types;
 - Inclusion in Conservation Area assessment, building listings, village design statements and neighbourhood plans;
 - Inclusion within related Supplementary Planning Documents/ Guidance;
 - Inclusion within a cultural evaluated or rare landscape;
 - Inclusion within an identified geological landscape;
 - Inclusion within an important landscape habitat;
 - Inclusion within a visually strong and sensory landscape;
 - Consideration of any other 'special qualities'.
- 4.18 A finer grain assessment of the site and immediate locality can be undertaken with consideration given to the following:
- The components of the landscape – elements and landscape features such as evidence of recreational use e.g. Public Rights of Way;

- The aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape – scale, complexity, openness, tranquillity or wilderness;
- The overall character of the landscape created by particular combinations of these.

4.19 The existing landscape of the site has been considered within the appraisal and assessed in terms of the features and components both natural and man-made that combine to give structure, form and detail to the character of the landscape. The landscape is currently an underused area of the golf course and used infrequently by the golf course for a practice area.

4.20 The landscape condition of the site is typical of a low maintenance area adjacent to a golf course, predominately small number of species of grasses left long, with wetter areas containing reeds/ rushes and pond area. This provides little in terms of landscape value to the local area. The site itself is not particularly rare in its locality. The site itself is influenced by the proximity to the golf course features such as the tree shelter belts and small areas of woodland. The landscape is therefore judged as (**moderate in value**) and **ordinary in quality and condition**.

5.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The full planning application provides for the works to import inert fill, reprofile and create a new golf course hole course with enlarging of existing pond, roughly 435m (476yds). The scheme will include associated landscaping to integrate it into adjacent golf course such as tree planting. Part of the scheme also includes an extensive surface water management system which will help waterlogging issues found on the course and surrounding area. There will be an opportunity for habitat creation as part of the scheme, in particular the creation of new tree planting and increase boundary vegetation, to compensate for the loss of trees and scrub in the south-eastern corner of the site. The Masterplans submitted in support of the proposals (drawing no. GGD350-3090) is presented at **Appendix 2**. This plan provides the broad parameters for the proposed scheme. The Design and Access Statement submitted as part of the application provides an analysis of the site's constraints and opportunities insofar as they relate to the evolution of the design parameters.
- 5.2 The importation phase is expected to last approximately 20 - 24 months. The total fill material necessary to complete the works is approximately 188,258m³. Following the importation phase, the new golf course fairway, pond and bunkers formation phase will commence, creating the finished levels for the playing surface, seeding grass areas and planting new trees. Through elevating the levels, it will allow the creation of a high quality facility and playing environment and radically improve drainage in the area. The land will gradually increase in height reaching a maximum increase of 8-9m in the localised mounds.
- 5.3 Existing healthy trees, hedges and vegetation will be retained where possible. There will be some scattered trees lost as well as mature scrub, and widening of the existing access will involve removal of a section of hedgerow/ scrub to Saltcotes Road. Trees and vegetation lost within the fill area will be replaced with new tree/ hedgerow planting to help separate the proposed golf hole and adjacent fairways. The new planting along external boundaries will help to give screening where required, but also to provide filtered views and help the scheme to blend with the existing golf course.
- 5.4 It is proposed that construction traffic will use the existing vehicle access gate off Saltcotes Road. This access route will be surfaced in crushed aggregate as part of these proposals. Proposed access point will be widened to accommodate the traffic of large vehicles and increase visibility splays for safe access in/ out of the construction site. The site compound will be located within the site boundary, adjacent to the site access point. There are no Public Rights of Way within or adjacent to the application site. Pedestrian access around the golf course is by golfers only; during the course of the construction works the site will be fenced off and all golfers kept out. More details on highways matters can be found in the SCP Highways Assessment which has been submitted as part of this application.

6.0 CONSIDERATION OF EFFECTS

6.1 The impact is considered in terms of (A), landscape impacts – the irreversible loss of natural features such as habitats and vegetation, (B) visual impact as the result of the development on a range of receptors and (C) any adverse change in the character of the landscape. In summary the findings of the appraisal for the construction and completion/ operational phases are set out in the following sections.

6.2 Full details of the methodology used for the preparation of this assessment are provided in **Appendix 1**.

Predicting, describing and assessing Landscape Effects

6.3 In considering the effects on the landscape, the degree of change in respect of the loss or impact on natural landscape assets such as trees or hedges, man-made features such as walls or the modification of the topography and quality of existing features, which also contribute to landscape character of the site and surrounding environment is assessed. This is known as '*landscape impact*'.

Identifying landscape receptors and interactions with the proposals

6.4 Landscape receptors are those components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposed development and can include key characteristics, individual elements and features and specific aesthetic and perceptual aspects. The interaction or impact of the different components of the proposed development at all its different stages between the landscape receptors is identified.

Susceptibility to change

6.5 The susceptibility to change has also been considered as part of the quality of the landscape. This is the ability of the landscape to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and the achievement of landscape policies or strategies.

Establishing value

6.6 Individual elements, and/ or aesthetic/ perceptual aspects and/ or statements relating to landscape conservation which may be noted in Landscape Character Assessments are often taken as indicators of the value of the landscape. The condition is also a determinant of value. The condition of the different landscape types or areas, including evidence for change in that condition, is also assessed. The fact that an area is not designated either nationally or locally does not mean it does not have value. Conversely, just because an area is popular within a local situation does not mean that it has intrinsic value. Value also needs to be weighed against other criteria to assess the landscape's merit in terms of designation.

Landscape sensitivity

6.7 Sensitivity of the landscape is the judgement on the combined susceptibility of the landscape to the particular type of change or development proposed, and the value attached to the landscape. This is expressed in this assessment as high, medium, low or negligible.

SENSITIVITY OF LANDSCAPES		
Sensitivity of landscape receptor =	Value attached to landscape receptor +	Designations attached to landscape character types or areas which may be affected and their national, regional, local importance.
		Landscape quality (condition)
		Scenic quality
		Rarity or representativeness
		Conservation heritage assets
		Recreational value
		Notable perceptual qualities
	Associations with art or literature	
	Susceptibility of landscape receptor to change	The ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline and/ or landscape planning policy or strategy.
Overall judgement in respect of sensitivity: This is expressed in this assessment as high, medium, low or negligible depending on the combination of circumstances.		

Landscape Effects

- 6.8 Landscape effects may include:
- The degree of change in and/ or partial or complete loss of elements, features, or aesthetic or perceptual characteristics that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the existing landscape resource;
 - The addition of new elements or features that will influence the character and distinctiveness of the landscape;
 - The combined effect of these to changes in overall character.
 - Effects may be beneficial, neutral or adverse and a judgment is made taking into account:
 - the degree to which the proposals fit with existing character;
 - the contribution to the landscape the development may make in its own right, even if in contrast to that character.

- 6.9 The magnitude of change is assessed in accordance with the criteria contained in **Table E within Appendix 1** and summarised below.

MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE WITHIN LANDSCAPES		
Magnitude of landscape effects =	Size and scale of changes +	Extent of existing landscape elements that contribute to character that will be lost.
		Degree to which the proposal fits in with or changes existing character.
		The contribution made to the landscape by the scheme by virtue of good design, and its relationship to existing character.
	Geographical Extent +	Extent of geographical area over which effects are felt e.g. at site level; with the immediate setting of the site; at the scale of a landscape type or character area; effects spread over a wider area.
Duration of effects	Short term: 0-5 years, medium term: 5-10 years, long term: 10-25 years; Consideration of reversibility and changes which will occur over time.	
Overall judgement in respect of magnitude of landscape effect: This is expressed in this assessment as high, medium, low or negligible depending on the combination of circumstances.		

Significance of landscape effect

- 6.10 The correlation between sensitivity and magnitude of effect is determined in a considered way and the significance will be described as Major, Moderate, Minor or Negligible, and as either Beneficial, Adverse or Neutral depending on the circumstances.

Predicting, describing, assessing Visual Effects

- 6.11 The '*visual impact*' of the proposed development on the general public is assessed. Such impacts could be the result of visual intrusion into an important viewpoint or the direct obstruction of views into the wider landscape. Visual receptors that have a greater awareness of the view, such as walkers and residential occupiers will notice the introduction of new features more than those who are not absorbing it. However, it must be remembered that in respect of residential occupiers that within planning law there is no right to a view. The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed site, the duration of the impact, the scale and massing of the proposed development and the elevation of the proposed feature from the viewpoint are all assessed to determine the degree of impact.

Susceptibility of visual receptors

- 6.12 The following are relevant when assessing the significance of the impact on visual amenity:
- The receptor's sensitivity and activity type. Receptors that have greater awareness of the view such as walkers will notice the introduction of new features more than those who are not actively absorbing the view;
 - The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed site. The greater the distance of the viewpoint from the feature the less detail is observable, and it becomes more difficult to distinguish the feature from the background;

- The duration of the perceived impact, the number of potential receptors will increase as the duration of the impact increases;
- The scale and degree of the proposed scheme, the greater the proportion of the view that is taken up by the proposed feature the greater the impact. Proposed features that would include considerable movement will result in an increased negative impact;
- Seasonal effects;
- The elevation of the proposed feature from the viewpoint and if the proposed features are viewed against the sky then the impact will be greater than if the feature is viewed against a background;
- The proportion of the development that is visible.

Value attached to a view

6.13 Judgements are made about the quality and value attached to the views experienced taking into various factors. These include views that are recognised through a relationship with heritage or inclusion within planning documentation/ development framework and the value attached to the view as signified by appearance in literature, guidebooks, interpretative material or in literature or art.

Visual sensitivity

6.14 Sensitivity of the landscape is the judgement on the combined susceptibility of the receptor to the particular type of change or development proposed, and the value attached to the views. This is expressed in this assessment as high, medium and low.

6.15 The sensitivity of the receptor often takes into account the following:

- Number of users;
- Frequency of use;
- Period of use;
- Focus of attention on the landscape.

SENSITIVITY OF VIEWS AND VIEWPOINTS		
Sensitivity of views and viewers =	Value attached to a view +	Relationship to heritage assets or planning designations.
		Indicators of value in publications, maps or art etc.
	Susceptibility of viewer to change	Occupation or activity of viewer.
		Extent to which their attention is focussed on the view.
Overall judgement in respect of sensitivity: This is expressed in this assessment as high, medium, low or negligible depending on the combination of circumstances.		

Magnitude of visual effect

6.16 Effects are assessed and described for each receptor with reference to representative and/ or specific viewpoint. The size of scale, extent and duration and reversibility of the change in the view are assessed.

- 6.17 The magnitude of change is assessed in accordance with the criteria in **TABLE J in Appendix I** and as summarised below.

MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE TO VIEWS			
Magnitude of visual effects =	Size and scale of changes +	Loss or addition of feature and changes in composition, including consideration of proportion of view affected, and whether it will be full, partial or glimpsed.	
		Degree of contrast or integration with the landscape setting, including the design of the scheme and its visual qualities.	
		Permanence of the view and its changes over time.	
	Geographical extent +	Angle of view compared to activity of main receptor.	
		Distance of viewer from the development.	
		Extent of area over which changes are visible (including lengths of footpaths etc.).	
	Duration of effects	Short, medium, long term and reversibility.	
	Overall judgement in respect of magnitude of landscape effect: This is expressed in this assessment as high, medium, low or negligible depending on the combination of circumstances.		

- 6.18 The correlation between sensitivity and magnitude of effect is determined to give the significance of landscape effect.

Character Effects

- 6.19 An assessment to establish the '*character impact*' is made to assess the degree of change affecting both the site and the wider environs. Adverse changes in landscape character can occur as the result of the loss of landscape features which are acknowledged components of local distinctiveness, or the construction of new features that do not match those that already exist.
- 6.20 To assess the significance of the potential effects/ impacts the degree or magnitude of change (sometimes referred to as the nature of change), both adversely and beneficially, acting on the baseline conditions and the sensitivity of receptors is objectively considered. This is considered with and without mitigation based on prescribed criteria.

7.0 SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE AND CHARACTER EFFECTS

- 7.1 This section will deal with the assessment relating to landscape and landscape character effects of the scheme. In accordance with GLVIA, prior to making judgements as to the potential impacts of the scheme, the value of the landscape of the site and its immediate surroundings needs to be established together with the susceptibility of key landscape characteristics to the type of change potentially brought about by the development. These aspects are correlated to judge the landscape sensitivity of the site and locality to the type of change proposed.
- 7.2 The landscape character of the site and its context in the surrounding area cannot be considered in precisely defined areas and the effect of one area on the neighbouring area needs to be assessed. Effects that result indirectly from the proposed change as a consequence of the direct effects, often occurring away from the site, or as a result of a sequence of interrelationships are known as indirect effects. They may be separated by distance or in time from the source of the effects. Landscape effects are assessed with reference to the site itself and to the wider setting landscape character area.
- 7.3 The proposed application site comprises of: a new fairway, teeing off point, bunkers, putting green and enlargement of an existing pond. The site is part of the existing golf course, however is underused and not a formal fairway/ hole. Areas of long grass and scrub with waterlogging can be found across the site. Adjacent to the site, to the west and south is intensely maintained golf course holes forming fairways and greens. Areas to the north are agricultural field parcels, separated by narrow tree belt which forms Birks Wood to the application site. This is the most significant vegetation within or adjacent to the site, Birks Wood forms the northern boundary to the existing golf course to the west, with mature trees and understorey. More details on tree species and qualities found on and adjacent to the site, can be found in the Tree Constraints Plan, drawing no. 2419_01, January 2024 prepared by Appletons. The closest built form to the site is a residential properties on Saltcotes Road (150m to the south-east of the site) which marks the start of the suburb of Saltcotes.

Susceptibility

- 7.4 The scheme would potentially bring about a temporary change and the displacement of existing landscape elements e.g. trees and hedgerows, however the changes will integrate into the adjacent golf course. The displacements will be mitigated against with a suitable landscape scheme. In terms of the tree cover on site compared to the immediate surroundings, the site has a low amount of tree cover in comparison. Landscapes beyond the site are either in recreational use (existing golf course), residential areas, agricultural field parcels or broadleaved woodland. In the long term (post construction phase) the site would formally become part of the golf course and be in keeping with the existing adjacent golf course.

- 7.5 While the site currently sits outside of the current golf course and is not used by members, however due to the land use and management, means the site is more in character with the adjacent golf course than the wider landscape of agriculture field parcels, residential and woodland areas. Saltcotes Road and the narrow tree belt to the north of the site, both act as a clear barrier between the site and wider landscape markers of where the landscape character changes from the existing golf course to the wider countryside. As such, although change will occur, it is considered the site would be susceptible to change to a **moderate degree**.

Value

- 7.6 The condition of the site is moderate and assessed as a land without particular note in its context. The site and existing golf course are within Policy GD4: Development in the Countryside designation, with the significant landscape features of hedgerows, linear woodlands and trees to the boundaries within the existing golf course. The facilities on site could be improved through the proposed new golf course hole, which has the potential to form part of a locally reputable sports facility located on the settlement fringe, which would be used by golf course members and non-members who can pay as they play. The existing course is maintained to a high standard and in regular use by members. There is moderate perceptible tranquillity within the site, with some influences by the surroundings such as the wider countryside and woodland pockets, but also the adjacent settlement areas. It is judged to be **moderate in value**.

Sensitivity

- 7.7 An appraisal of sensitivity of the site is usually made regarding a landscape in which judgments on the susceptibility of the landscape (to the particular type of change or development proposed) and the value attached to the landscape are combined. This is usually expressed in a narrative form on a scale ranging from very low, through low, medium, high to very high. The sensitivity of the landscape to accept imported fill to raise the levels to then be integrated as part of the golf course is assessed overall as **moderate**, the site itself is of moderate quality, adjacent to a well maintained landscape which will be sensitive to change, with the disturbance of importation of fill. It is however, considered to be tolerant of change. **A summary of the sensitivity to change of the main landscape features of the site are set out in Table 7.2.**

Construction Phase

- 7.8 Following the granting of any full planning consent and the approval of relevant conditions, it is envisaged that the construction of the proposals would be broadly in the following sequence:
- Placement of protection measures for any vegetation and ecological features to be retained.
 - Construct work compounds.
 - Improvements to the access and infrastructure.
 - Construction of drainage as per approved drawings.
 - Importation of fill phase, cap as seal on completion.
 - Form new golf course, connect new drains, topsoil, grass seed, tree planting.

- Remove temporary compound and construction phase protection measures.

- 7.9 An assessment of the potential impacts of the construction phase has been undertaken on the basis of the Masterplans GGD350-3090 attached at **Appendix 2**. Construction effects would be temporary in nature and confined broadly to the same zone of influence as the operational phase. The construction of the scheme would be finite, enduring for a relatively short period of time.
- 7.10 During the enabling works arisings will include topsoil storage, and will be stored and recycled within the site. During the construction stage, the only permanent plant on site will be a bulldozer, with an excavator occasionally. Off site movements will only involve 8-wheeler tipper trucks and site staff vehicles (likely 2no cars). There will be Herras protection fencing, temporary signage and a site compound and welfare cabin. Construction hazard lighting will also be visible and vehicle reversing alarms will be white noise to minimise disruption. There would be movement across the site by vehicles and plant which would potentially render the site works more visible to the observer.

Effects on Character during Construction

- 7.11 The main effect on landscape character during the construction phase is likely to be the gradual transformation of the site from an underused area of the golf course to well maintained golf course holes with all associated features (bunkers, waterbody, fairway and green), which undulates and gradually increase in level. The proposals includes a minor change to the access, this will not be a deviation from the existing components of the established landscape character. The effects on landscape character will be relatively gradual and the changes only fully realised on the completion of the scheme. The impact of the scheme is therefore considered in the following paragraphs of this section, that deals with the summary of effects during the Construction and Operational Phases.

Effects on Landscape Resources during Construction

- 7.12 The following reviews the potential effects of the application site during the construction phase on landscape features/ resources.

Topography and Landform

- 7.13 The site is relatively flat, with a slight fall from south to north, with little undulation or change from east to west. Should the site be utilised as a golf course in its current state, it would lack undulation and no challenging features for golfers. The imported fill will increase the levels of this land to provide a greater challenge and facility, and therefore enjoyment for players. Positive aspects of the site are to be retained, including the vegetation and trees where possible on the boundaries, including the existing internal tree belt within the golf course to the west of the site. Preparation of the site levels will require removal and appropriate storage of topsoil (where it is present to an approximate depth of 300mm) in agreed locations to avoid visual disturbance. Part of the

proposed new landform will include a series of swales, soakaways and enlargement of existing pond within the imported fill. This forms part of the proposed extensive drainage scheme to alleviate flooding issues on the golf course and surface water on site. The effects of the increase of levels in predominantly flat landscape are reduced by both existing and enhanced vegetation screening and the nearby man made mound which is larger than what is being proposed by the golf club. Once operational which the height increase may be visible in certain locations, the character of being part of the golf course will allow it to blend with the adjacent existing course.

- 7.14 The topography of the site is considered to be of **medium sensitivity to change**, due to the relatively flat surrounding area with nearby highpoints, should the new land form rise above tree line and nearby mound it would create a prominent landmark in the landscape.
- 7.15 ***There will be alterations to site levels which will be permanent and of local scale. The magnitude of change is medium.***
The likely significance of the effect is therefore moderate adverse.

Land Use

- 7.16 During construction, the site will change from disused golf course area and scrub to a construction site. This landscape type accounts for a large part of the landscape proposed for development. The site compound would be located within agreed location shown in the Construction Environmental Management Plan prepared by Booth Ventures, no retained/ existing trees will be impacted upon in its positioning.
- 7.17 ***The magnitude of impact is large.***
The likely significance of effect is therefore moderate adverse.

Vegetation

- 7.18 The key vegetation resources for the site are to the edges of the site, in particular the northern and eastern boundaries, which include self-set and mature trees, both of which are outside the red line boundary. A small area of woodland is located on the site's western boundary, between the site and the wider golf course. Along the site's southern portion, the vegetation is sparse and in small clumps, predominately scrub or young tree species, some of which will be removed as part of this proposal. It is understood that there will be minor tree loss (see the Arboricultural Impact Assessment produce by Appletons) and sections of hedgerow/ scrub clearance at the site entrance to facilitate the scheme. It is proposed to enhance the species mix along the boundaries with replacement tree planting post construction phase, particularly to the north and eastern boundaries.
- 7.19 The vegetation on the site boundaries offers both aesthetic screening and wildlife value. It is considered to be of **medium sensitivity**.

7.20 ***The magnitude of change to trees during construction will be medium with any loss of screening being restored in the longer term. Any trees/ hedgerows that will be removed, will be replaced with new planting.***

The likely significance of effect is therefore considered to be moderate adverse, but with longer term mitigation would become negligible.

Public Access

7.21 There is no Public Rights of Way adjacent or no the application site, therefore there will be no temporary change to visual impact on receptors, during the course of construction.

7.22 ***The likely significance during construction is none, due to no Public Rights of Way across or near the application site.***

Operational Phase

7.23 For the purposes of the assessment the operational phase is classified as the period when all the works to construct the golf course hole, infrastructure and associated landscape works have been completed. Any impacts are likely to be very long term and irreversible in this phase. The following assessments are based on the consideration of the proposals shown on the Masterplan and the night-time impacts on the wider landscape.

7.24 In the context of the surrounding landscape character, the change is considered to be perceptible to some components of the wider landscape albeit with some filtered views. Although it is accepted that change will occur, it would be unremarkable in the localised area, particularly as the changes would be reflective of the adjacent golf course. The alteration of the landscape would not necessarily decrease landscape value and quality, given the current baseline land use resource and the site is considered to have the ability to absorb change to varying degrees. The site forms part of the golf course character, despite its lack of use. The golf course forms part of the parkland associated with Lytham Hall Country Park to the west of the golf course, as mentioned in the generalised key characteristics of the Local Landscape Character Type. The adjacent landscape character in this location would not therefore be impacted on significantly by the development proposals, due to the existing golf course and scheme's intended use.

Topography and Landform

7.25 Following completion of the scheme there will be direct effects on the topography of the site. New design levels will be integrated with the adjacent golf course topography. The implementation of a considered scheme of landscape works will soften visually the new levels and increase the screening to the wider landscape. Careful design consideration has been taken to not increase the topography to such a degree where the new landform will be visible above the boundary tree line or the nearby man made mound, which in turn would create a greater visual effect. The new

landform will also help provide an extensive drainage system to alleviate flooding issues in the adjacent golf course. The new levels will provide a high quality playing/ practice facility which will be challenging for users.

7.26 The topography of the site is considered to be of **medium sensitivity to change, due to the flat nature of the surrounding area but with local highpoints.**

7.27 **There will be alterations to site levels which will be direct, permanent and of local scale. The magnitude of change is large.**

The likely significance of the effect is therefore moderate adverse when judged against the adjacent landscape.

Land Use

7.28 Following construction, the underused area of the golf course grassland and scattered trees/ scrub will have been replaced by better drained, highly maintained areas of grass, new tree planting and associated infrastructure. The proposal will be for a new golf course hole with bunkers, green, fairway, teeing off point and new enlarged pond.

7.29 The land use resource in a landscape context is considered to be of **low sensitivity**, the site is an underused area of the golf course and following the development will come into full use and match the adjacent land use to the west. The site will change from underused and low maintenance area of the golf course to a highly maintained area with greens, fairway and drainage infrastructure.

7.30 **The magnitude of impact will be small.**
The likely significance of effect is therefore minor adverse.

Vegetation

7.31 Following completion of the development, the agreed landscape strategy will include tree and shrub planting internally and strengthening of any boundaries using locally prevalent native species and planting arrangements that reflect the character of the site's context and help to integrate and assimilate the proposed scheme into the wider landscape.

7.32 The existing vegetation is considered to be of **medium sensitivity** to change. There will be some loss of trees/ scrub and hedgerow vegetation (at the site entrance) as part of the proposals. There will also be a loss of grassland and reed/ scrub vegetation. Once established, new tree planting will enhance the setting of the new golf course area and help to blend in with the adjacent golf course.

7.33 **The magnitude of impact would be moderate adverse.**

Following the establishment of mitigating vegetation to boundaries, the likely significance of effect over a period of time of minor beneficial.

Public Access

- 7.34 During the construction and operational phase, there will be no change to the public right of way adjacent to the site (closest is along the southern boundary of the existing golf course, approximately 325m). The new facilities may have the potential to attract additional pedestrian/public visitors to the golf course.
- 7.35 ***The likely significance during the operational phase is therefore negligible, although encouraging more people to use the facilities, gives the potential for a beneficial effect over the longer term.***

Effects on Landscape Character following Completion of Development over the longer term

- 7.36 The proposed masterplan demonstrates that the site has the capacity to accommodate the proposed new golf hole course, including the rise in levels, drainage infrastructure and enlargement of existing pond and access alterations. It is expected in the longer term, the proposed changes will receive the same maintenance regime as the adjacent golf course, along with maturing vegetation, the proposals will blend into the wider golf course.
- 7.37 The Local Character Type: South Fylde Mosses contains key characteristics, such as its flat landform with pylons and trees punctuating the horizon, Lytham Hall with its landscaped grounds and the surrounding wider mossland landscape. These key environment characteristics abut directly with the local urban communities such as Lytham and Blackpool, which influence the requirement for golf course, camp sites and other outdoor activities, which are important for these communities. The proposed development will not change the local character of these elements and will strengthen the golf course's wider appeal and maintain the division between the urban edge environment and wider countryside. There will be an increase in levels in a relatively flat landscape, but this would not be out of character when considering the nearby man made mound which is larger and higher than what is proposed on the golf course. It will increase the overall standard of the golf course and continue to perform as outlined in the landscape character description, part of the golf course network in the local area, as stated in the Landscape Character Assessment. The proposals will not significantly alter the landscape character as described in the assessment. It will not contribute to the urbanisation of the area, with some minor vegetation removal, boundary vegetation largely unaffected and underused golf course area to regular use land changed. Proposals are in keeping and would introduce elements which are not uncharacteristic in the area, including acceptable increase in levels within reason, particularly with the adjacent golf course. The overall significance of the landscape effect is a correlation between the sensitivity of the landscape resource and the magnitude of the effect. In this assessment it is judged ***overall to be of a minor-moderate adverse significance*** when the scheme is newly completed and prior to the establishment and maturity of associated landscape works. It is judged that the proposals would not be a significant disruption to the adjacent golf course or wider landscapes. There would be some disturbance of views within a very localised area and wider views will be seen in the context of the local golf course. ***Within 15-20+ years the significance***

of effect is judged to reduce to minor adverse significance. The proposals will be in keeping with the current adjacent golf course, therefore blending into the surrounding landscape.

7.38 The significance of Landscape Effects and the Residual Effect following mitigation is summarised in **Table 7.1** below.

Table 7.1 – Sensitivity of Landscape Features

Sensitivity of Site Landscape Features				
Site feature	Description	Landscape value	Susceptibility to change	Overall landscape sensitivity
Landform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slight gradient from the south to the north of the site. Landform is representative of the adjacent golf course and the local wider character; relatively flat. Not rare within the local adjacent landscape (golf course). 	Moderate	Medium/ High	Medium/ High
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site is currently an underused area of the course and not distinctive in the local area. Reduced maintenance grassland of dominate species with wetter areas and reeds. Areas of reeds and some vegetation/ scrub within site boundary to be removed and mitigated for. 	Low	Small	Minor adverse
Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good existing vegetation to the boundaries of the site, with overgrown hedgerows and mature trees. Minor internal vegetation/ scrub to be removed as part of the scheme and widening of existing access will require a small section of hedgerow to be removed. Mature tree belt along the western boundary between the site and existing golf course. 	Moderate	High	Medium
Built structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No structures on site. 	-	-	-
Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Public rights of way adjacent to the site. The site is private land. No alteration to access. 	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Table 7.2 – Landscape Effects

Landscape Effects for Operational Phase					
Landscape change	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Effects	Significance	Mitigation	Residual Effect
Character from underused part of the golf course to raised level new golf hole of similar appearance to adjacent golf course.	Medium	Medium	Minor-Moderate Averse	Assimilation over time with landscape mitigation.	Minor Adverse within 15-20 years.
Landform with higher levels, but integrated with surrounding topography.	Medium	Large	Moderate Adverse	Softened by implementation of landscape works.	Minor-Moderate Adverse within 10-15 years.
Land use altered from underused area of the course to highly maintained golf course.	Low	Small	Minor Adverse	Maturing of landscaping over time.	Negligible over time.
Loss of some scattered trees, section of hedgerow and vegetation mitigated by new trees and scrub planting.	Medium	Moderate	Moderate adverse	Scheme will integrate with the majority of boundary vegetation retained, with the addition of new tree and shrub planting.	Minor Beneficial over time.
Private land part of the existing golf course.	Negligible – No PROW	None	None	Increased use by current and new members.	Potential for Minor Beneficial.
Public access/ amenity.	Negligible – No PROW through the site.	None	None	Mitigating vegetation maturing over time to improve the habitat.	Potential for Minor Beneficial.

8.0 SIGNIFICANT VISUAL EFFECTS

8.1 The '*visual (amenity) impact*' of the proposed scheme on the general public and people who may observe the development changes is assessed. Visual amenity is defined as the overall pleasantness of the views that people enjoy of their surroundings.² Views to the proposed development of the application site would be available from roads and lanes, residences, golf course users and public rights of way (PRoW), along with any areas of public access. Agricultural workers may also be exposed to views. Visual impacts could be the result of visual intrusion into an important or valued viewpoint and/ or the partial or full obstruction of views into the wider landscape, and/ or change in composition of rural views to that of construction. The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed site, the duration of the impact, the scale and massing of the proposed scheme and the elevation of the proposed feature from the viewpoint are all assessed to determine the magnitude of the impact and the significance of the effect.

Potential receptors appraisal

8.2 Viewpoints have been selected from various locations and possible vantage points through site visits and analysis of desk top studies and topography from mapping. Views of the proposed scheme have been chosen to be both representative of the range of differing receptors (public, community, residents, visitors and workers) within the area and of the visual amenity available at points north, south, east and west of the proposed site. The sensitivity (low, medium or high) of the receptors has been judged. Viewpoints can also be assessed in terms of the type of receptor and views have been selected which are representative of a typical view of that type of receptor or selective of an important view.

Susceptibility of Visual Receptors

8.3 The susceptibility of visual receptors has been considered. The interest and focus of walkers, cyclists and horse riders of the local lanes, tracks, towpaths, footpaths and bridleway network including the highway footpaths around the site have been considered. The closest public access to the site is along the public right of way to the north-east of the site, from Saltcotes Road, through the Eastham Hall Holiday Park leading to Carr Farm/ Lodge Lane. There is also a bridleway along the southern boundary of the existing golf course, linking Ballam Road and Saltcotes Road (named Green Drive). These footpaths are generally considered to be of **high susceptibility** since it is for recreational users of the footpath where interest is likely to be focused on the landscape albeit the right of way past Eastham Hall Holiday Park is blocked therefore usage of this path will be minimal.

² Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition. Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

- 8.4 The residents of the local community of Saltcotes, particularly properties to the north of the suburb and along Saltcotes Road, are considered **high susceptibility** in accordance with the GVLIA, third edition. However, it is generally accepted in English law that there is no right to a private view. In this instance, the views from these properties are unlikely to be effected by the proposals, due to intervening vegetation and the topography does not allow for extensive view.
- 8.5 The same **high susceptibility** is given to users of the adjacent golf course during the course of construction, who may have direct views of the works. Although views will be filtered through existing vegetation within the existing golf course.
- 8.6 Workers and visitors to the agricultural land and farms to the north and east of the site, are considered to have **low susceptibility**, given that their attention is not generally focused on the views and access is not open to the public (unless on a public right of way through the agricultural land). Whilst visits are assumed to be very infrequent, they may, however, have an appreciation of their surroundings in context to their activities.
- 8.7 Workers and visitors within the existing adjacent golf course, have **low susceptibility** given that their attention is not generally focused on the views with the majority of views screened by intervening boundary vegetation and tree belts within the golf course.
- 8.8 Vehicle users on the local road network in the vicinity of the site, namely Saltcotes Road has a national speed limit in place. Although there is a 30mph speed limit in place as vehicles approach Saltcotes properties. As the focus of attention is on driving, the scenic quality is not as prominent, and the viewable aspects of the proposed scheme are limited. However, filtered views from Saltcotes, from vehicles travelling in either direction will obtain views of the site access and the site itself, through the boundary vegetation. Views from passing motorists are limited due to boundary vegetation, fleeting (speed) and seen in the context of surroundings. Overall views are considered to be of **low susceptibility from vehicles using the local road network**.
- 8.9 Views of the proposals are limited to the middle to near distances of approximately 0.5km – 2.0km in all directions. Due to the flat surrounding landscape, mature trees prevent long distance views of the site. Middle distance views are largely obstructed by intervening vegetation, particularly to the west and south of the site, with internal tree belts of the existing golf course. To the north and east, filtered views are possible through boundary vegetation. At greater distances, vegetation along the Main Drain drainage infrastructure and the man made mound restricts views of the site to the east. Views from the north of the site are reduced by Birks Wood, which forms the northern boundary of the existing golf course.
- 8.10 Internal adjacent golf course tree belts and small areas of woodland vegetation to the south and west, limit views beyond distances of 0.5km. Views from the north are limited by boundary

vegetation to the golf course, however possible, particular from adjacent fields. The site is difficult to distinguish from Peg's Lane, which is just 870m to the north of the site boundary. The views from the east are limited by intervening vegetation along the Main Drain, mounding and the railway line into Lytham, the site is indistinguishable from Huck Lane 960m away. With this in mind, views at middle and long distance are judged to have **low susceptibility**.

Value attached to views

- 8.11 'Value' attached to views takes account of planning designations, heritage assets and publications, interpretation and guidebooks that confer value to a particular view. The narrative and key characteristics within landscape character assessments, and the views described may confer value to certain views.
- 8.12 In assessing the site in terms of planning designations, character assessment and other literature, there is no evidence to convey significance to the surrounding landscape. Other than its recreational use and acting as a transition from urban to countryside landscape that is to be expected as a characteristic in this area. The site is designated under the policy Development in the Countryside in the local polices map. Other designations in proximity include Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to the east (other side of Saltcotes Road), semi-natural greenspaces (along the southern boundary of the golf course), various Public Rights of Way/ bridleways and historic park and gardens at Lytham Hall. These designations are considered to be of local importance and of **high value**.
- 8.13 The potential impact of the scheme on views from the adjacent existing golf course and nearby settlements have been considered. Local rights of way and highways footpaths have been walked and assessed. The landscape is not of local importance, as it cannot be directly viewed by the local community. These views are considered to be of **low value depending on the particular location along the publicly accessible routes**.
- 8.14 All other views are considered to have **low value**.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 8.15 The *visual sensitivity* of receptors has been judged through a combination of the susceptibility of visual receptors to change and the value attached to views. These judgments are detailed in the **Table 8.2**, but are summarised as follows:
- Walkers, cyclists and horse riders using the local footpath network are generally considered **high sensitivity** since they are potentially **highly susceptible** with a range of **moderate to high value views**.
 - Residents within dwellings are considered of **medium to high sensitivity** since their susceptibility is **medium to high** with **low to moderate value views**.

- Golf Course users are considered **medium sensitivity with low to moderate value views**.
- Motorised road users are of general **low to medium sensitivity with low to moderate value views**.
- Workers and visitors, the surrounding landscape are **low sensitivity with low to moderate value views**.

8.16 Sensitive receptors are assessed to be golf course users due to their close proximity to the site, to the west and south and properties along Saltcotes Road, particularly on the western side of the road.

Visual Amenity

8.17 Within the following reference should be made to:

Figure 4 (Appendix 4) – Photograph Viewpoint Location Plan.

Figure 5 (Appendix 4) – Zone of Visual Influence.

Visibility Mapping

8.18 No visibility mapping techniques have been utilised as part of this assessment; however, the Visible Envelope of the Site has been considered. This is based on field analysis and with reference to existing screening, including built structures and vegetation identified from mapping and aerial photography. The Zone of Visual Influence is indicative of the part of the landscape from which views of the proposed development might be gained. It does not imply that views would be possible from all points within the area delineated, nor does it indicate that all the development might be seen or that the development would be highly perceivable. Photographic viewpoints have generally been taken from within this Visual Envelope as shown on **Figure 5 (Appendix 4)**.

Views from the north

8.19 Views from the north of the application site are predominately from agricultural fields, with a small number of properties/ holiday caravans (Eastham Hall Holiday Park) off Saltcotes Road able to view into the site. Any clear views will be in close proximity to the site and predominately motorists on the road itself at the sites access point. Agricultural worker's view will be interrupted by intervening boundary vegetation.

Views from the south

8.20 Views from the south of the site are largely restricted to the existing golf course, with views beyond the golf course blocked by linear woodland along the southern boundary of the golf course. Any direct views into the site will be gained in close proximity to the site, on adjacent/ nearby fairways. Filtered views through existing vegetation, maybe gained from residential properties to the south of the site off Saltcotes Road, particularly in rear gardens. Due to the existing maintained

boundary vegetation to the site and golf course, there is a significant amount of screening of the application site from Saltcotes Road and beyond. Some limited broken views can be identified from the linear bridleway (Gren Drive) where the high points on the site may be visible.

Views from the east

- 8.21 Views of the proposed golf course hole area, from the east will be predominantly from motorists on Saltcotes Road and will be fleeting. Longer distance views are limited to none due to raised topography and heavily filtered through intervening vegetation. Views from Public Rights of Way further to the east, connecting Saltcotes Road and Huck Lane is very limited to none.

Views from the west

- 8.22 Views from the west is similar to the views from the south of the application site; they will largely be from the existing adjacent golf course. Views will be filtered by intervening internal tree belts within the golf course and a small woodland area immediately adjacent to the site. Longer distance views are blocked by the internal tree belts within the course. For the majority of the golf course to the east, users will unlikely gain a view of the proposals, unless in close proximity to the site.

Assessment of Visual Effects and Magnitude of Change

Construction Phase

- 8.23 The visual impacts of both the construction and operational phases have been assessed. Given the relatively short period of time for the construction and the permanence of the new golf facilities upon completion, significant effects for the operational phase only are described as follows. However, during construction work, there would inevitably be indirect effects on visual amenity of the site. These would overall be controlled where possible through the implementation of a construction management plan. Construction activities would be visible to a greater or lesser degree from within the identified visual envelope and are likely to comprise:

- Groundworks and stripping of topsoil;
- Tree and habitat protection fencing installed;
- Signage;
- Construction traffic and flashing hazard lights both on site and using the access track;
- Temporary site infrastructure including a welfare unit and haulage routes;
- The gradual importation of inert material;
- Formation of final levels and construction of the new golf course hole;
- Site plant mobilising (one bulldozer).

- 8.24 There would be a gradual change in the scale of development throughout the construction phase. The sensitivity of the receptors is varied with low to high sensitivity both in proximity to the site and in the more distant landscape. The magnitude of change will also vary in accordance with the progress, location and type of construction taking place.

Operational Phase

8.25 For the purposes of the assessment the operational phase is classified as the period when all the new infrastructure, built form and associated landscape works have been completed. Predicted impacts are likely to be **very long term and irreversible** in this phase. The following assessments are based on the consideration of the proposals, including the following:

- Rise in levels;
- Highway and access infrastructure to be used by golf course maintenance staff to access the facilities;
- Structural landscaping;
- Stationary and moving vehicles;
- Golf course users and golf club staff;
- Night time lighting.

Night time Impacts

8.26 There is no proposed lighting as part of the scheme. All construction work and vehicle movements would take place during daylight hours. No lighting is proposed for the finished golf course hole. The effect is considered **Neutral/ None**.

Significance of Visual Receptor Effects

Summary

8.27 The significance of Visual Effects and the Residual Effect following mitigation is detailed in **Table 8.2**.

Table 8.1 – Visual Effects

Visual Effects for Operational Phase					
Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Effects	Significance	Mitigation and landscape enhancement	Residual Effect
<u>Residential</u>					
Housing to the south of the site on Ballam Road. Front of house views. VP 1, 2, 3, 4 representative views.	Medium due to proximity to the site boundary.	Small / Negligible – site unlikely to be visible.	Negligible	Post construction the site will become part of the golf course with new tree planting and part of regular maintenance.	Negligible
Properties on The Belfry and Saltcotes Road to the east of the site. VP 12 provides representative view.	Medium due to oblique views of the site boundary.	Medium adverse-view seen in the context of the golf course. Heavily screened.	Moderate adverse		Small adverse over time
<u>Golf Club users and workers</u>					
View from fairways, greens and tracks within the	High – Golfers engaged with the view	Medium adverse-view seen in the	Small adverse – reduction in view	Post construction the	Negligible

existing golf course. Views by members of the club playing golf and staff working at the club.	and workers not dependant on view.	context of the golf course.	towards the wider landscape	site will return to current use with new tree planting and part of regular maintenance.	
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Public Rights of Way and other areas of public access

Bridleway Ref. BW0502004 Green Drive to the south of the site. VP 5, 6.	High- walkers engaged with the view.	Medium adverse-view seen in the context of the golf course. Middle distance	Small adverse – minor reduction in view towards the wider landscape	Post construction the site will return to current use with new tree planting and part of regular maintenance.	Negligible
Public Right of Way FP0503013 to the east of the site. VP 8,15	Medium – Long distance to site. Footpath block in places. Detracting factors.	None – No views due to topography and screening.	None – No views due to topography and screening.	Post construction the site will return to current use with new tree planting and part of regular maintenance.	None

Public highways

Pedestrians on Ballam Road. West of the site VP 1, 2, 3, 4	Medium due to proximity to the site boundary. Walkers partially focused on views	Small / Negligible – site unlikely to be visible.	Negligible	Post construction the site will return to current use with new tree planting and part of regular maintenance.	Negligible
Pedestrians on Salcotes Road. East of the site. VP 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	Medium- Low- partially focused on route, detracting factors.	Small / Medium – site unlikely to be visible at long distance. Close views around entrance	Moderate-Minor		Minor
Pedestrians on Lodge Lane. East of the site. VP 7	Medium – Long distance to site. No footpath	None – No views due to topography and screening.	None – No views due to topography and screening.		None
Pedestrians on Pegs Lane north east of the site. VP 9	Medium – Long distance to site. No footpath	Small adverse- Limited long distance views. Good screening	Minor		Negligible

Rural workers, commercial premises

Agricultural workers. VP 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 provide representative views.	Low- not inherently engaged with the view.	Small – Negligible	Minor Adverse	Post construction the site will return to current use with new tree planting and part of regular maintenance.	Negligible over time
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9.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND LANDSCAPE MITIGATION

Potential Development and Mitigation

- 9.1 The visual impacts identified are associated with the proposed scheme from predominantly near views, very intermittent mid-distance and virtually no long-distance views are possible. Comprehensive landscape proposals will be an integral part of the scheme. The majority of the existing vegetation along the boundaries will be retained, with only a small section of hedgerow/scrub to be removed to allow widening of the existing access point. New landscaping and tree planting is proposed to the boundaries of the proposals, forming a denser screen between the new golf course hole and the wider landscape to the north and east. This landscaping will further strengthen the existing landscape features and help the proposals to blend in with its surroundings. The finished golf course hole will be visually in keeping with the adjacent golf course. The scheme offers an underused area of the golf course, to be turned into a usable recreational green space. The scheme incorporates a comprehensive sustainable urban drainage scheme, which will significantly improve current drainage issues off site in the wider course. The proposals for the widening of the existing access point will allow for safer traffic movements during both construction phase and operations, with little impact on the existing landscape.
- 9.2 Although not identified as mitigation to reduce or remove adverse effects, the landscape proposals will greatly enhance the scheme and is part of the overall design process and planning of the improvements. Adverse visual impacts can be offset and in the long term, may give rise to further positive effects and contribute to the overall quality of the landscape in this locality.
- 9.3 New planting would generally use a mix of whips and transplants and standard tree stock for structure planting of native species. Assumed planting heights of newly planted advanced tree stock will be between 3.5 – 6.25m (12-14cm/ 16-18cm girth). Heights at year 15, assume a conservative growth rate of 1m every 3 years, equating to approximately 30cm+ per annum. Smaller stock (whips and transplants at between 60-100cm) can generally attain faster growth levels, so can achieve a height of approximately 3-5m from a planted height of 80cm after 15 years. Therefore, it is anticipated that any tree planting landscape strategy would be effective in reducing views and assimilating the development within 15 years. Further growth beyond this time would serve to add depth, massing of foliage and therefore increase screening capacity.

10.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 The Landscape Appraisal undertaken for the proposed reprofiling of levels, new golf course hole at Lytham Green Drive Golf Course has been assessed in accordance with the stated methodology. The assessment has focused on the proposal site and the likely impacts or effects the scheme and associated infrastructure would have on the landscape, landscape character and visual receptors.
- 10.2 The proposals seek to create a high quality golfing facility with a new golf course hole area with a challenging fairway to provide more enjoyment for members and visitors. The proposals will incorporate and replicate landscape features that are evident in the local character area and wider course.
- 10.3 The proposals are fully compliant with both National and Local Plan policies.
- 10.4 In landscape terms, overall the scheme has a **moderate impact** on the landscape of this area during the construction phase, predominantly due to the interference associated with construction and increase in land levels. Once in operation, the scheme has the potential to be in keeping with the adjacent landscape character, therefore offer **beneficial impacts**. In the longer term it also has the potential to enhance landscape quality through new tree planting and improved maintenance.
- 10.5 In visual terms, the proposed scheme would alter the views from a baseline of existing underused area of the golf course which is relatively flat, grassland area with areas of scrub and reeds, to a highly maintained, modern golf course hole and challenging course with enlarged waterbody. Views would affect receptors mainly at close quarters from a number of viewpoints, with much of the middle-long distance views of the proposed scheme unobservable due to intervening features. Direct views of the site are largely only visible on the boundaries of the site, wider golf course and adjacent field parcel. Given that landscape works form part of the new proposals, the impact of scheme would be mitigated with a residual significance of impact ranging from **moderate to negligible adverse**.

end.
