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**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT  
ASSESSMENT**

**RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION  
FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A BUILDING  
TO HOUSE WOOD SHREDDING  
OPERATIONS AND CONSTRUCTION OF SIX  
ADDITIONAL WOOD STORAGE BAYS**

**Pebble Hall, Threddingworth,  
Northamptonshire, LE17 6NJ**

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Client:

**Welland Waste Management Ltd.**

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## APPENDICES

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<b><u>Drawing Name:</u></b>	<b><u>Drawing Reference:</u></b>
Site Location Plan	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/01 Revision 1
Site Plan	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/02 Revision 1
Site Layout	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/03 Revision 1
Elevations for Shredding Shed	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/04 Revision 1
Site Layout Plan – Whole Site	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/05 Revision 1
Proposed Storage Bays Indicative Layout	GPP/WWM/PHSS/16/06 Revision 3
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for Pebble Hall Farm Waste Wood Storage Facility, written by Watkins Design Associate Ltd in April 2016	15WW01_S3G-1
Letter by Watkins Design Associate Ltd in 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2017	
Site Location Plan	ALD770 / LD1000 Revision P01
Site Analysis	ALD770 / LD1001 Revision P01
Site Photos	ALD770 / LD1002 Revision P01
Viewpoint Locations	ALD770 / LD1004 Revision P01
Photographic Viewpoints For Assessment	ALD770 / LD1005 to 1014 Revision P01

## REVISION & REVIEW RECORD

### Revision details

Rev	Date	Amendment	Creator	Checked
P01	8/03/17	Preparation for first circulation	AF	CB
P02	9/03/17	Amended following comments from MD at GPP	AF	CB

### Review record

Rev	Date	Reviewers comments or page references	Initials / organisation
P02	9/03/17	Various comments in the document to pick up typos and scheme changes	MD / GPP

# INTRODUCTION

# ONE

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## 1.1 Appointment and Brief

1.1.1 Applied Landscape Design was appointed by GP Planning in February 2017, to carry out a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for land on the Welland Waste Management Facility site at Pebble Hall Farm, east of Husbands Bosworth, Harborough, Leicestershire with a view to understanding how a proposed waste wood shredding building, storage facility extension and minor realignment of the internal access track are visually placed within the surrounding landscape.

1.1.2 Applied Landscape Design is also a registered practice of the Landscape Institute.

## 1.2 The Site / Ownership Extent

1.2.1 The site is located south of the A4304 (Bosworth Road), Theddingworth in the northern part of the District of Daventry. It is approximately 1.8 km east of the village of Husbands Bosworth and 750 metres southwest of Theddingworth.

1.2.2 Existing access to the Application Site, which crosses the Northamptonshire and Leicestershire county boundaries, is surfaced in concrete and is approximately 560 metres long from its junction with the A4304.

1.2.3 Pebble Hall is an agriculturally based operation that has been the subject of farm diversification, mainly as a result of the BSE crisis. By a series of grants of planning permission over a number of years, the site has established a variety of industrial / commercial / renewable energy concerns and a waste management operation as part of the diversification of the farm. The site already undertakes wood waste management operations and shredding, in compliance with planning permission for a Renewable Energy Generation Facility (REGF) (08/00053/WAS).

1.2.4 The Application area for the new building is approximately 700m<sup>2</sup> in size and is shown edged red on drawings the six storage bays are approximately 16 m<sup>2</sup> in size.

1.2.5 The building is located in a part of the site that has planning permission for storage and shredding of wood waste and sits adjacent to the existing composting yard. The storage bays will be built on part of the site that is currently being used as a construction compound/car park by the REGF contractors.

1.2.6 Both parts of the application are on brownfield land. See drawings ALD770/LD1002-3 for photos.

1.2.7 The site sits at around 120m AOD, the surrounding landscape within the study area ranges from a low of 90m AOD in the valley bottom to the northeast through to 130m AOD in the north and 150m AOD in the west gaining height to 170m AOD to the southeast near the village of Sibbertoft.

### **1.3 The Study Area**

- 1.3.1 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment zone is illustrated on drawing ALD770/LD1000 and can be found in the Appendices to the back of this document.
- 1.3.2 The study area comprises an area within a circa 4km radius from the site within which the visibility of the site is assessed. Due to topography, built settlement and significant woodland tracts the study area is focused to the northeast and west, with the farthest viewpoint being at about the 3.3km mark.
- 1.3.3 The study area comprises an area within a 4km radius from the proposal site and extends:
- To the north – Laughton Hills and the Grand Union Canal
  - To the east – Marston Trussell Village and the Jurassic Way
  - To the south – Sulby and Welford Villages
  - To the west – North Kilworth Village

### **1.4 Proposed Scheme**

- 1.4.1 This planning application seeks retrospective planning permission for the erection of a building to house a wood shredder. The machinery will be operating in a similar location that it has in the past, on land which has planning permission for these operations, simply with the addition of the building around it. In addition, the application seeks planning permission for six additional wood storage bays and minor realignment of an existing track on land adjacent to the TAD/REGF buildings. This details of which are:
- The building footprint is 35m by 20m.
  - The building has a pitched roof: it measures 10m in height to the eaves, and 12m to the ridge.
  - The building has Juniper Green cladding.
  - Elevations:
    - Northwest: On the side near the existing compost yards, there are proposed to be four bays open for access to wood ready for REGF and two personnel doors.
    - Southeast: The side near the water tank, there will be 2 roller shutter doors at 6m wide by 5 m high and a personnel door.
    - Northeast: The gable end near Hothorpe will not have any access points.
    - Southwest: The gable end near the REGF will have a roller shutter door in the centre at 7m wide and 5m high.
  - Six storage bays are approximately 16 x 16 metres squared in size, 5m high and formed out of concrete.
  - No additional landscaping will take place as part of the proposed development as extensive approved Landscaping Schemes have been carried out alongside past planning permissions. Further planting is being proposed in association with an application for a wood storage yard that is currently being considered by Northamptonshire County Council.

## **1.5 Scope of Assessment**

1.5.1 This LVIA report is split into nine sub-sections;

- This first section provides an introduction to the assessment.
- The second section sets out the landscape and visual policy context for the scheme.
- The third section describes the assessment methodology that has been adopted and the consultation that has been carried out in relation to landscape and visual issues.
- The fourth section consists of a landscape baseline study for the existing site and its surroundings. This breaks the landscape down into component parts, making it easier to understand and identify any elements or features that might be particularly sensitive to the proposed development.
- The fifth section consists of a visual baseline study for the existing site and its surroundings. This highlights locations sensitive to development and is presented as viewpoints located at different points throughout the study area along with a brief explanation of their existing status quality.
- The sixth section sets out the potential landscape and visual impacts that the scheme could have without any mitigation, including construction phase landscape and visual effects and potential effects on the completion of the scheme.
- The seventh section describes the landscape and visual mitigation measures that are either inherent to the scheme or additionally proposed.
- The eighth section provides an assessment of the cumulative landscape and visual effects of the application scheme and other associated development proposals in the vicinity.
- The ninth section is a summary of all conclusions and recommendations.

## LEGISLATION

## TWO

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### 2.1 Introduction to Planning Context Analysis

2.1.1 This section briefly outlines planning issues specifically relevant to landscape matters within the general study area and site. It should be read in conjunction with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for Pebble Hall Farm Waste Wood Storage Facility, written by Watkins Design Associate Ltd in April 2016 as this report is current and relevant for the site and study area.

2.1.2 The proposed site lies to the west of Market Harborough in the parish of Marston Trussell. The site sits within Daventry District Council policy area and the wider 4km study area falls within both Daventry District Council and Harborough District Council.

### 2.2 International and National Landscape Designations

2.2.1 The application site does not sit within any International and National landscape designations nor are there any within the study area.

### 2.3 Local Landscape Designations

2.3.1 The site lies within a Special Landscape Area (EN1) and within the 4km study area there are designations that include;

- Conservation Areas
- Public Right of Ways (PROWs)
- Listed Buildings
- Local Nature Reserves

2.3.2 Refer to section 3 (pages 12-16) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

### 2.4 Wider Context

2.4.1 The following features potentially fall within a 4km study area of the site:

- Ancient Woodlands and Tree Preservation Orders
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Special Landscape Area (SPA)

2.4.2 Refer to section 3 (pages 12-16) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.



## **2.5 Landscape Character**

- 2.5.1 The site is located south of the A4304 (Bosworth Road), Theddingworth in the northern half of the District of Daventry. It is approximately 1.8 km east of the village of Husbands Bosworth and 750 metres southwest of Theddingworth.
- 2.5.2 According to Natural England National Character Areas (2012), the site is just found within the northern portion of the National Character Area 89: Northamptonshire Vales, the study area also falls within the National Character Area 95: Northamptonshire Uplands and 94: Leicestershire Vales. The Northamptonshire Character and Green Infrastructure Suite further defines the site as being within the landscape character area of Welland Valley Environmental Character Area. The key characteristics for the character area are very typical of the landscape observed on the site visit.
- 5.2.3 Refer to section 4 (pages 17-22) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

## **2.6 Landscape Features**

- 2.6.1 This section briefly outlines issues specifically relevant to landscape matters both within the site and in the context of the general study area. Specific reference should be made to drawing ALD770/LD1001 contained within the Appendices.
- 2.6.2 The site is situated on top of a small hill within the wide undulating valley of the River Welland, which runs just off the northwest boundary. The river is lined by mature trees and hedges that thin out as it passes south to north round the site. Low bunding and whip planting form the northwest boundary of the site before the landscape sharply slopes down to the river. The south and eastern boundary of the site are formed by much taller bunding, covered with newly planted trees, thicket and shrubs currently all whip size. To the west the site is more open, not being enclosed by bunding and looks out over the fields up gently sloping hills. There is little to no vegetation on site, just self-seeded shrubs and grasses amongst rubble piles and plant storage areas.
- 2.6.3 The area immediately surrounding the proposal site is an open rural landscape typical of the character of the region, comprising a mosaic of active arable and pastoral fields, dense woodlands, tree copses and local lanes contained either side by hedgerows.
- 2.6.4 Views into site are available at several locations within approximately 4km of site.
- To the north of site, views are afforded along the A4304 road from Husbands Bosworth to Theddingworth, looking up the hill to the site approximately 0.5km away. As you move further north you need to be higher up on the Mowsley Hills, approximately 3km from site, to gain a view. Views are afforded at several locations in between woodland copses on the edge of the ridge but generally, once you have passed south of the Grand Union Canal the site is obscured.
  - To the east, views into site are afforded over open fields from Hothorpe Road and the bridleway which runs off it, both about 1km from site. Further east the patchwork of hedgerows, individual trees and small tree copses obscure many views to the site, however, intermittent views can be found along the lanes/roads approximately 2.5km away. These views will be clearer in the winter months when vegetation is bare of leaves.

- In the south, all views to site are blocked by the Hothorpe Hills and woodlands that sit approximately 0.6 km away.
- To the west, views out of Husbands Bosworth are blocked by thick woodland along the A4304, however, views are afforded when you walk along the bridleway to the south of the village. There are more open fields here affording views to the site from approximately 1.5km. Further west you can see site from the A5199, approximate 2.6km from site. However, views are rare because of hedgerow, woodland and hills in the way at this distance.

2.6.5 The character of the site is similar to the farm context of the area.

## **2.7 Summary**

2.7.1 In conclusion, the site is not situated within National and International designations but is situated within a Local designation. Within the 4km study area there are also several landscape related designations that must be recognised and relevant policy objectives should be met.

## METHODOLOGY

## THREE

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### 3.1 Summary of Approach

3.1.1 The format of this assessment and the methodology employed accords with the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments' by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition published April 2013 and Natural England (NE) with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Landscape and Sea Scope Character Assessments (October 2014)

3.1.2 The study comprises:

- A desktop review of current statutory and non-statutory documents;
- A landscape assessment of the wider context of the site including an analysis of character, quality and sensitivity, and the identification of key viewpoints;
- An assessment of the site and its immediate landscape setting;
- An understanding of views affected by the proposed development;
- A description of the proposed scheme.

3.1.3 Documents reviewed / consulted in undertaking the study include:

- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy – 15<sup>th</sup> December 2014;
- Daventry District Local Plan 1997 – Saved Policies;
- Harborough District Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2006-2028 adopted 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011;
- Harborough District Local Plan Saved Policies April 2001;
- National Character Areas Character Map – Natural England;
- Northamptonshire Character and Green Infrastructure Suite;
- Harborough Rural Areas Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study.
- [www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk) MAGIC (Multi Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside);
- Aerial maps;
- OS Explorer Map 223 – Northampton and Market Harborough;
- Client provided detailed topographic survey (digital).9;
- <http://www.old-maps.co.uk>; and
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for Pebble Hall Farm Waste Wood Storage Facility, written by Watkins Design Associate Ltd in April 2016.

- 3.1.4 Use was made of the mapping information and data to identify a selection of potential viewpoints (receptors). This selection of potential viewpoints, and any others identified during the fieldwork were then visited and assessed for their overall potential sensitivity to a Renewable Energy Generation Facility.
- 3.1.5 No specific formal consultations have been undertaken with respect to the landscape and visual aspects of the potential development, other than reference to planning guidance and published landscape character assessments.
- 3.1.6 The field work for the assessment was carried out on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 during the daytime. The weather conditions experienced were constant in nature with patchy sun, light grey cloud and light to moderate winds. The conditions for the visit were considered suitable for undertaking the landscape and visual appraisal assessment.
- 3.1.7 Photographs illustrating views from a select series of viewpoints (potential receptors) were taken during the site visit, using a Nikon D3200 digital camera set to the equivalent of a 33mm focal length, which is the equivalent of 50mm film camera lens (equivalent of human eye) on automatic setting. The nature of the views are relatively wide panoramas and it is therefore considered beneficial to present the photographs as so – where these panorama's consist of three or four images, the frames have been overlaid using Adobe Photoshop Software (CS6).

## **3.2 Methodology of Landscape and Visual Baseline Studies**

### **3.2.1 Landscape Baseline Methodology**

- 3.2.2 By analysing the character of an area, its principal features and elements can be identified. Once these elements are identified, potential impacts caused by proposed development can be measured and a judgment made as to the overall effect this may have on the local landscape character.
- 3.2.3 The Countryside Agency guidelines (*Swanwick et al, 2002*) make a clear distinction between the characterisation process (in which the attributes of the landscape are described) and the judgement-making process. The landscape baseline section of the assessment deals with the characterisation process, and later sections make judgements about the potential effects of the proposed development based upon the characterisation.
- 3.2.4 This is also to be read in conjunction with Natural England (NE) with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Landscape and Seascape Character Assessments (October 2014) that provides a brief introduction to Landscape Character Assessments.
- 3.2.5 Existing landscape character assessments are an important starting point for any new assessment, due to the hierarchical nature of character assessment.

3.2.6 *“Ideally assessments at different scales should fit together as a nested series or a hierarchy of landscape character types and/or areas so that assessment at each level adds more detail to the one above” (Swanwick et al 2002, par. 2.14).*

3.2.7 The study of landscape assessments at different strategic levels is important for a number of reasons:

- it aids the understanding of the landscape at a wider level;
- it allows the identification of landscape elements that may be present at a number of different scales and thus of higher importance;
- it highlights landscape character that is ‘out of context’ with other levels of the hierarchy;
- it may identify potential mitigation and restoration options that may not be present at the local scale, but can be beneficial at a higher level. The landscape character of the site and its surroundings should be assessed according to the above principles.

3.2.8 The assessment is also carried out in accordance with Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity (Ref 10.3).

### 3.2.9 Landscape Evaluation

3.2.10 The table below provides five evaluation components to assess the landscape character situation of the Assessment Site and its surroundings. Through assessing these components the existing landscape character’s capacity to accept change will be identified. These components are defined with reference to best practice guidance on character assessment.

<b>Table 1: Landscape Evaluation</b>	
<b>Landscape Component</b>	<b>Description</b>
Landscape Character	The distinct and recognisable pattern of elements made up from landscape components that create a sense of place. It is a reflection of the geology and soils, landform, land use, built form and human activity.
Landscape Value	The importance of an area on a national, regional or local scale. In terms of planning policy, value is recognised through designations. At a community level, recognition of value may occur without formal designation, and encompasses subjective and perceptual aspects such as scenic quality, tranquillity, wildness, cultural associations or conservation.
Landscape Condition	Equivalent to quality, this is the physical state of the landscape, or townscape, its intactness, and the state of repair of the features and elements that together make up its character.
Landscape Sensitivity	The sensitivity refers to the nature of the receptor the character and quality and the extent to which these factors will be tolerant of change in general and be able to recuperate from loss or damage.
Landscape Capacity	The ability of an area to accept change without significantly affecting its character.

3.2.11 Through providing a concise description of the existing landscape elements (such as topography, vegetation, urban grain, and built form mass and scale), an understanding of distinct character areas, which share common features and characteristics will be identified. These areas have recognisable patterns of elements, which together create the particular sense of place for the Assessment Site and its surrounding landscape.

3.2.12 Landscape Value

3.2.13 The value of the identified landscape character areas is assessed using the criteria set out in Table 2. The value is based on and takes into account what is important within this landscape and whether it is of value at a national, regional or local level. Part of the assessment decisions are made as to whether the Assessment Site is special, distinctive and representative, or include, characteristic features relating to the areas national, regional or local character assessments defined character.

<b>Table 2: Landscape Value</b>			
<b>Value</b>	<b>Typical criteria</b>	<b>Typical scale of importance/ rarity</b>	<b>Typical examples</b>
Exceptional	High importance and rarity. No or limited potential for substitution	International, National	World Heritage Site, National Park, AONB, Grade I and Grade II* listed buildings
Major	High importance and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	National, Regional, Local	AONB, Scheduled Monuments, Conversation Area, Grade II listed buildings Register Park and Gardens
Moderate	Moderate importance and rarity. Limited potential for substitution	Regional, Local	Undesignated but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or demonstrable use
Minor	Minor importance and rarity. Considerable potential for substitution	Local	Areas identified as having some redeeming feature or features and possibly identified for improvement
Poor	Minor importance and rarity	Local	Areas identified for recovery

3.2.14 Landscape Condition

3.2.15 The condition of the identified Landscape Character Area is assessed using the criteria set out in Table 3. The condition refers to the state of the individual area and is described as factually as possible.

<b>Table 3: Landscape Condition</b>	
<b>Condition</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
High	Where the area is in good repair/quality.
Moderate	Where the area is in average repair/quality.
Low	Where the area is in poor repair/quality.

3.2.16 Landscape Capacity

3.2.17 Finally, the baseline Landscape Character Assessment considers the identified character area's capacity to accept change. Here, the degree to which the identified character areas can accept change without a detrimental effect is established. These findings will contribute to the effects section of this assessment. The capacity of the area to accept change will be assessed as high, moderate or low as defined in Table 4.

<b>Table 4: Landscape Capacity</b>	
<b>Capacity</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
High	Where the character area can accommodate significant levels of change without significant effect on its landscape character.
Moderate	Where the character area can accommodate a degree of change without significant effect on its landscape character.
Low	Where the character area can only accommodate a small amount of change without significant effect on its landscape character.

3.2.18 Sensitivity of Landscape Resource

3.2.19 The determination of landscape sensitivity is an important part of the LVIA process. Sensitivity combined with the magnitude of impact, which will be assessed later, allows assessing the overall significance of the landscape effects.

3.2.20 The overall sensitivity of the existing landscape resource is based on the following factors:

- The value placed on a landscape;
- The quality placed on the landscape;
- Compatibility of the proposed development with the existing land-uses and landscape character;
- Condition of the landscape;
- Contribution of the landscape within the site to the overall landscape character;
- The scope for mitigation of the proposed scheme, and
- Degree to which landscape elements and characteristics can be replaced or substituted.

<b>Table 5: Landscape Sensitivity</b>	
<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
High	The landscape character area has an exceptional or major value and a high to moderate condition and therefore would not be tolerant of change.
Moderate	The landscape character area has a moderate to minor value and a moderate condition and therefore would be tolerant of some change.
Low	The landscape character area has a moderate to poor value and a moderate to low condition and therefore would be tolerant to change.

### 3.2.21 Visual Baseline Methodology

3.2.22 An initial study of Ordnance Survey Map 223 – Northampton and Market Harborough (1:25,000) was carried out to identify potential viewpoints and areas for investigation based on the following criteria:

- Distance from the scheme to the receptor;
- The proportion of the development visible as well as the absolute visibility of the scheme;
- The height of the development relative to the receptor with reference also to the scale of other features in the view;
- The number and character of elements which would be lost from or added to the view;
- High concentrations of viewers, such as settlements, local recreational facilities, PROWs etc;
- Views illustrating the visual character of the surrounding area.

3.2.23 Viewpoints are selected on the basis of which points provide the clearest views of the site and are also the most accessible to the public.

3.2.24 A total of **10** viewpoints have been recorded to illustrate the general range of visibility across the study area, as well as viewpoints with the potential to suffer most impact from the development. A desktop study of the area and a review of the existing, previous Watkins Design Associates LVIA report were used to identify potential viewpoints. The identified viewpoints were then visited and assessed for their sensitivity to the proposed development. Out in the field it was deemed that the 8 viewpoints used in the WDA report would be suitable for the current scheme plus additional 2 viewpoints from the areas identified from the desk top study.

3.2.25 The site visit was carried out on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017. The weather conditions experienced were constant in nature with patchy sun, light grey cloud and light to moderate winds. Visibility was acceptable for assessing all types of views.



3.2.26 Sensitivity of Visual Resource

3.2.27 Sensitivity of the visual resource depends on the following factors:

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

<b>Table 6: Sensitivity of Viewpoint</b>	
<b>Significance</b>	<b>Criteria</b>
High	Residential properties, public footpaths, bridleways, public buildings, culturally sensitive areas.  This significance is reduced to moderate if viewed behind a retail or employment site.
Moderate	Retail and employment sites, sports and recreational facilities. Roads, railways and motorways.
Low	Industrial sites, outdoor sports facilities and agricultural land.

**3.3 Assessment Methodology and Criteria**

3.3.1 Having assessed the landscape and visual baseline and identified the potential elements of the development likely to cause change to that baseline, a detailed assessment of the possible changes to all identified landscape and visual receptors can be made.

3.3.2 In order to assess the significance of effects, an assessment of the magnitude of the impact is necessary. The magnitude of landscape impacts depends upon the following factors (LI and IEMA, 2013):

- The scale or degree of change to the existing landscape resource;
- The nature of the change caused by the proposed scheme (for example beneficial or adverse);
- The timescale or phasing of the proposed scheme.

3.3.3 For each of the viewpoints the potential magnitude of the residual visual impacts, of both construction and completion of the development, have been assessed. The magnitude of visual impacts is mainly dependent upon the following factors (LI and IEMA, 2013):

- What proportion of the existing view would change as a result of the development proposals?
- How many features or elements within the view would be changed?
- How appropriate is the proposed scheme in the context of the existing views?
- How many viewers would be affected by the changes in the view?
- What is the timescale of the proposed scheme? Also, is it continuous or intermittent?
- What is the angle of the view in relation to the main activity of the receptor?

3.3.4 The magnitude of change for each viewpoint should be assessed for both construction of the scheme and its completion.

3.3.5 The magnitude of change for both landscape and visual impacts can be categorised as:

- **High** – The proposed scheme would completely change the character and/or appearance of the landscape for a long period of time or permanently. It would affect many receptors;
- **Moderate** – The proposed scheme would cause a noticeable difference to the landscape, and would affect several receptors;
- **Low** – The proposed scheme would cause a barely perceptible impact, and would affect few receptors;
- **Negligible** – The proposed scheme is appropriate in its context. It may be difficult to differentiate from its surroundings and would affect very few or no receptors.

3.3.6 The potential significance of landscape and visual impacts is determined by a combination of the magnitude of the potential impact and the sensitivity of the landscape and visual setting to change. These two variables can be correlated as illustrated in Table 7, below.

<b>Table 7: Impact Magnitude Matrix Sensitivity of Receptor</b>			
<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<b>Sensitivity of Receptor</b>		
	<b>High</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>High</b>	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate
<b>Moderate</b>	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor
<b>Low</b>	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor
<b>Negligible</b>	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant

3.3.7 The above consideration of the sensitivity of the receptors with the magnitude of the potential impacts provides an overall assessment of the potential significance of impacts. This process is not however a quantitative process; there is not an absolute scoring system. Instead, the correlation of the two factors,

although reflecting recognised features and methods of working outlined in this report, is in the end a matter of professional judgement.

3.3.8 Table 8 provides a brief definition of the significance criteria. It must be emphasised that both landscape and visual impacts can be either adverse or beneficial in nature except the situation where no change is predicted and in this case the impact is assessed as not significant – neither beneficial nor adverse.

<b>Table 8: Significance Criteria</b>	
<b>Level of Significance</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Major</b>	Very large or large change in environmental or socio-economic conditions. Effects, both adverse and beneficial, which are likely to be important considerations at a regional or district level because they contribute to achieving national, regional or local objectives, or, could result in exceeding of statutory objectives and/or breaches of legislation.
<b>Moderate</b>	Intermediate change in environmental or socio-economic conditions. Effects that are likely to be important considerations at a local level.
<b>Minor</b>	Small change in environmental or socio-economic conditions. These effects may be local issues but are unlikely to be of importance in the decision making process.
<b>Not Significant</b>	No discernable change in environmental or socio-economic conditions. An effect that is likely to have a negligible or neutral influence, irrespective of other effects.

3.3.9 Following their identification, significant effects have been classified on the basis of their nature and duration as follows:

- **Site Specific** Effects that result from a geographically localised impact;
- **Wider** Effects that are individually significant at a regional level, but which are unlikely to be significant locally;
- **Beneficial** Effects that have a positive influence on receptors and resources;
- **Adverse** Effects that have a negative influence on receptors and resources;
- **Temporary** Effects that persist for a limited period only (due for example, to particular activities taking place for a short period of time);
- **Permanent** Effects that result from an irreversible change to the baseline environment (e.g. land-take) or which persist for the foreseeable future (e.g. noise from regular or continuous operations or activities);
- **Direct** Effects that arise from the impact of activities that form an integral part of the scheme (e.g. direct employment and income generation);
- **Indirect** Effects that arise from the impact of activities that do not explicitly form part of the scheme (e.g. offsite infrastructure upgrades to accommodate the development);

- **Secondary** Effects that arise as a consequence of an initial effect of the scheme (e.g. induced employment elsewhere); and
- **Cumulative** Effects that can arise from a combination of different effects at a specific location or the interaction of different effects over different periods of time.

3.3.10 Short to medium-term impacts are normally considered to be associated with physical construction, and long-term impacts are normally associated with a fully occupied and operational scheme.

### **3.4 Limitations and Assumptions**

3.4.1 The principal assumptions and limitations for this assessment are as follows:

- Baseline conditions have been established using existing assessments, available documentation and field assessment; it is important to note that this information may change before or during the construction and operation of the proposed development.

### **3.5 Consultation**

3.5.1 No specific formal consultations have been undertaken with respect to the landscape and visual aspects of the potential development, other than reference to planning guidance and published landscape character assessments.

## BASELINE STUDY: LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

## FOUR

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### 4.1 Landscape Baseline

- 4.1.1 All landscapes have character. It is what makes them unique and defines their sense of place. Natural England defines landscape character as;
- 4.1.2 *'A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/ or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse'*
- 4.1.3 The Countryside Agency guidelines identify three main levels of Landscape Character Assessment:
- National and regional scale;
  - County, district and unitary authority scale; and
  - Local, parish and site scale.
- 4.1.4 This section highlights the baseline landscape conditions that could be effected during and after the proposed development takes place.

### 4.2 Landscape Character Appraisal

#### 4.2.1 National Landscape Character

4.2.2 In 2005, The Countryside Agency and English Nature (now 'Natural England'), with support from English Heritage, produced a map highlighting 159 national character areas (NCAs). This map combines English Nature's Natural Areas and the Countryside Agency's Countryside Character Areas into a composite map of Joint Character Areas, this was revised in 2012. The map and supporting descriptions provide the top tier of the hierarchy of Landscape Character Assessment in England and a national context for regional and local landscape and ecological assessments.

4.2.3 The site has been identified as being within Character Area 89 - Northamptonshire Vales, it is found within the northern portion of this character area to the west of Market Harborough.

4.2.4 Refer to section 4 (pages 17-18) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

#### 4.2.5 Regional Landscape Character

4.2.6 A regional character assessment - Northamptonshire Character and Green Infrastructure Suite covers the area, and our site sits within the Welland Valley Environmental Character Area, the study area is also covered by the West Northamptonshire Uplands.

4.2.7 Refer to section 4 (pages 18-21) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

4.2.8 Local Landscape Character

4.2.9 The local Character Assessment Harborough Rural Areas Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study (HRLCA) divides the local area into 2 character areas – Laughton Hills and Welland Valley.

4.2.10 Refer to section 4 (pages 21-22) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

**4.3 Natural Characteristics**

4.3.1 In order to understand the landscape and visual impacts a development might have, the existing character of an area and its natural features must be taken into account. Appreciating that landscapes have a different character ensures that future developments are well situated and adhere to relevant environmental, social and economic objectives.

**4.4 Topography**

4.4.1 Refer to appendix B table B1.1 heading foundations (page A10), table B1.2 heading foundations (page A11) and table B1.3 heading foundations (page A13) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

**4.5 Geology and Soil**

4.5.1 Refer to appendix B table B1.1 heading foundations (page A10), table B1.2 heading foundations (page A11) table B1.3 heading foundations (page A13) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

**4.6 Vegetation**

4.6.1 Site Vegetation

4.6.2 Low bunding and whip planting form the northwest boundary of the site before the landscape sharply slopes down to the river. The south and eastern boundary of the site are formed by much taller bunding, covered with newly planted trees, thicket and shrubs currently all whip size. To the west the site is more open not being enclosed by bunding and looks out over the fields up gently sloping hills. There is little to no vegetation on site, just self-seeded shrubs and grasses amongst rubble piles and plant storage areas. Refer to drawing ALD770/LD1001.

4.6.3 Study Area Vegetation

4.6.4 The area immediately surrounding the proposal site is an open rural landscape typical of the character of the region, comprising a mosaic of active arable and pastoral fields, dense woodlands, tree copses and local lanes contained either side by hedgerows. Refer to appendix B table B1.1 heading land cover (page A10), table B1.2 heading land cover (page A11) and table B1.3 heading land cover (page A13) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

#### 4.7 Water Bodies / Drainage

4.7.1 Refer to appendix B table B1.1 heading land cover (page A10), table B1.2 heading land cover (page A12) and table B1.3 heading land cover (page A13) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

#### 4.8 Cultural and Social Factors

##### 4.8.1 Settlement and Dominant Built Form

4.8.2 Refer to appendix B table B1.1 heading human influence (page A10-A11), table B1.2 heading human influence (page A12) and table B1.3 heading human influence (page A13-A14) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

##### 4.8.3 Historic Development

4.8.4 At the time of carrying out the desktop study, and assessment process, limited historical references are evident for the site. However it was noted on reviewing several historical OS maps that the site existed, and has existed, over a number of centuries in the form of Broxhill Barn and its associated farmland. From looking at the old historical maps, the site has remained relatively unchanged over the years until more recently when the BSE crisis forced the farm to diversify and become the site it is today.

##### 4.8.5 Industry

4.8.6 Refer to appendix B table B1.1 heading human influence (page A10-A11), table B1.2 heading human influence (page A12) and B1.3 heading human influence (page A13-14) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

#### 4.9 Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects

4.9.1 The aesthetic qualities of the local area are summarised in the table below and have been divided into the main categories identified by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage guidance (CA and SNH, 2002).

<b>Table 9: Aesthetic Factors</b>	
<b>Enclosure</b>	<p>Low bunding and whip planting form the northwest boundary of the site before the landscape sharply slopes down to the river. The south and eastern boundary of the site are formed by much taller bunding, covered with newly planted trees, thicket and shrubs currently all whip size. To the west the site is more open not being enclosed by bunding and looks out over the fields up gently sloping hills.</p> <p>There is no public access to the site in the form of PROWs.</p> <p>These boundaries combined with the undulating nature of the surrounding landscape of neighbouring fields, creates a sense of localised enclosure to 3 of the sides (northwest, south and east) the west and southwest are much more open with long ranging views.</p>

<b>Table 9: Aesthetic Factors</b>	
<b>Balance</b>	<p>The balance of the surrounding landscape character is weighted towards agricultural practices which dominate the area. Urban settlement is found to the edge of the study area.</p> <p>Numerous individual properties are scattered throughout the farmed landscape of the wider area with transport routes further dissecting the patchwork field arrangement. Significant long distance views are very limited to the higher ridges with many views being restricted due to the undulating topography and the presence of the significant amount of woodlands and tall field boundaries.</p> <p>Breaks in these boundaries allow for mid-distance views, whilst simultaneously screening the area in the immediate foreground.</p>
<b>Pattern</b>	<p>The landscape holds a generally informal pattern, agricultural practice creates a mosaic of fields all separated by vegetated boundaries.</p> <p>The locality experiences a strong transport infrastructure with A and B roads acting as the main link between built settlements.</p> <p>Public footpaths and trails scatter the local area, meandering through farms, grassland and local woodland connecting the settlements.</p>
<b>Diversity</b>	<p>The local topography, assortment of different sized arable / improved grassland fields and the mixture of small single farmsteads, larger villages and towns combine to create a relatively diverse landscape that, aesthetically, meets with the general character of the area.</p> <p>Vegetation diversity is enhanced by the native mature field boundaries, woodland blocks and roads with associated woodland edge ground flora that weave through the landscape.</p>
<b>Scale</b>	<p>Field boundaries break up the expanse of agricultural land to create smaller scale farms which form the local landscape. The sense of scale within the site is restricted by the topography mixed with mature field boundaries, woodland copses and the villages. Expansive rural views are experienced from the north of the site on a local ridgeline towards the south of the study area and site.</p>
<b>Form and Line</b>	<p>The horizontal elements include open agricultural landscape, grassland, roads and footpaths, which contrast with the vertical mass of buildings, farm sheds and pylons that are located in the area and water towers on the horizon.</p> <p>Mature field boundaries and woodland copses composed of various native/naturalized tree and shrub species, provide much of the vertical element to the area and create an intermediate transition between the built form and the surrounding landscape.</p>
<b>Colour</b>	<p>Natural greens, browns and yellows of the rural countryside, dominate the background landscape, with glimpses of browns, reds, blacks and greys coming from the villages and towns.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the surrounding landscape these colours continue to change throughout the seasons.</p>



**Table 9: Aesthetic Factors**

<b>Movement</b>	Animation is brought to the calm landscape through the localised areas of urban development that have infrastructural links such as roads, amenities, schools, churches and recreational areas.  Seasonal and weekend peaks in activity would see greater movement, with visitors using local trails and footpaths. Dominant agricultural practices add to the informal and relaxed feel of the landscape in the background.
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4.9.2 Also refer to appendix B table B1.1 heading aesthetic characteristics (page A11), table B1.2 heading aesthetic characteristics (page A13) and table B1.3 heading aesthetic characteristics (page A14) of the Watkins Design Associates report for more detail.

#### **4.10 Transport Links**

##### **4.11.1 The Site Transport Links**

4.11.2 Existing access to the site is surfaced in concrete and is approximately 560 metres long from its junction with the A4304 to the north of the site. There is not any formal pedestrian access onto site, or any footpaths within the local vicinity.

##### **4.11.3 Study Area Transport Links**

A strong network of minor roads exists within the study area, with the A4304 running closest to site in the northwest at the entrance to the access track, this road runs in a northeast to southwest direction. Minor rural roads are then the next closest to the east and south.

#### **4.12 Landscape Dynamics**

4.12.1 The landscape is continually changing and evolving, mainly in response to the demands placed upon it, but sometimes due to the lack of management. An examination of the likely changes to the landscape as a whole is important in setting the context of potential changes caused by the proposed development. It may also identify opportunities the proposed development may create for positively improving the landscape, whilst also preventing change considered to create a negative impact.

#### **4.13 Classification and Evaluation**

4.13.1 The above appraisal concludes that the classification of the existing landscape as part of the Landscape Character Area is an accurate reflection of the character of the site.

4.13.2 The table below illustrates how these criteria have been appraised to achieve an assessment of the areas sensitivity.

<b>Table 10:</b>	
<b>Landscape Elements</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Quality</b>	<p>The proposed development is in keeping with its immediate surroundings of the Renewable Energy Generation Facility (REGF) farmland / settlements and shows signs of effective management of the more recent planting.</p> <p>Compared to the surrounding landscape which, due to agricultural farming, is a highly managed mix of arable and pastureland, the site has a moderately lower level of quality due to its past history and lack of management. The landscape quality for the proposed site is rated as <b>moderate-minor</b>.</p>
<b>Value</b>	<p>The landscape has been assigned <b>moderate</b> landscape value rating, as its importance is only relevant on a regional and local level, with some redeeming features and possibly room for improvement.</p>
<b>Condition</b>	<p>The landscape has been assigned a <b>moderate</b> condition rating with a coherent pattern of elements and strong ecological and functional integrity.</p>
<b>Capacity</b>	<p>The rating of <b>moderate</b> for landscape capacity has been applied, as the character area can accommodate a degree of change without significant effect on its character.</p>
<b>Compatibility</b>	<p>Views in and out of the site are restricted to the south, to the east, west and north they are much more open and long ranging to approximately 2-3km. Presence of existing built form (farmsteads and villages) some at higher elevations (breaking the skyline) adjacent to the site <b>is not</b> of significant enough mass to make these proposals <b>compatible</b> with the existing environment, localised visual changes may be significantly different to those currently experienced.</p>
<b>Scope for Mitigation</b>	<p>The proposed development does not provide opportunity for a landscape and ecological enhancement strategy to be implemented. But as part of previous and current planning permissions for the site, mitigation in the form of planting has already been undertaken and further is proposed.</p>
Overall landscape sensitivity of the site = <b>Moderate</b>	

## BASELINE STUDY: VISUAL ASSESSMENT

## FIVE

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### 5.1 Visual Baseline

#### 5.1.1 Introduction

5.1.2 In order to assist with viewpoint selection, as well as to appreciate the potential influence of the development in the wider landscape and to indicate areas where views into the site might be possible, a desk study of the area's topography, mature vegetation, settlements, recreational facilities and footpaths was undertaken.

5.1.3 The information obtained from this provided a selection of viewpoints that offered long distance, middle distance and glimpsed views of the site. This selection of potential viewpoints, were then visited and assessed for their overall potential sensitivity to the potential wood shredding and storage development, during and after construction. Other viewpoints identified as important were added during the field work.

5.1.4 This section briefly describes issues specifically relevant to visual matters both within the site and in the context of the general study area. Specific reference should also be made to the Photographic Viewpoints for Assessment (drawings ALD770/LD1005 – LD1014), contained within the Appendices.

5.1.5 This section represents the findings of the Applied Landscape Design visit in March 2017 and the desk study. It was highly apparent when out in the fields undertaking the site survey that in particular the landform and landcover significantly altered and in occasional cases blocked views to the site that were thought to be evident within the desk study assessment in particular the eastern portion of the study area.

5.1.6 However a fairly even spread of views was established locally within 1-1.5km at varying distances to the proposed site on the day with a more scattered spread for the wider views. They were restricted though by the topography, woodland and urban edges to within 4km of the site. It was felt that when undertaking the site visit the natural ridgeline that formed in the land immediately to the south meant that the land actually fell away from the proposed site to the south at approximately 1km from the site.

5.1.7 Landscape topography, urban form and wooded nature of the area played a big part in the restriction of views, especially from the south and west with woodland tracts and tall hedgerows providing interrupted, intermittent views that were short and enclosed in nature.

5.1.8 During the site visit the settlements of Welford, Sibbertoft, Lubenham and North Kilworth were all visited where accessible on foot from the local Public Rights of Ways or on roads via the car. We were unable to see the site from these points, nevertheless that does not rule out the possibility that they might be seen from upper storeys within buildings. However this does not form part of this assessment.

## 5.2 Viewpoints

- 5.2.1 These viewpoints offer views that may be particularly sensitive to change. These could be associated with areas used regularly by the public, such as footpaths, roads and recreational areas or might be a single house, edge of village that has clear views of the proposed area. The viewpoints also represent areas which may be perceived to be sensitive to the visual impact of the proposed development but which in reality have restricted views of the site.
- 5.2.2 Viewpoint 1: (Same location as viewpoint 1 from WDA LVIA report April 2016)
- 5.2.3 This viewpoint is taken from the pedestrian footway outside the entrance of Woodside Farm on Theddingworth Road (A4304), approximately 0.5km from the site. It looks southeast across an open field towards the site, affording a clear view, blocked only by two small tree copses framing the view on either side. This view has been selected to be representative of residents at Woodside Farm as well as pedestrians, cyclists and motorists who use the A4304. This is a wide simple view across a medium sized field that looks up towards the site which is slightly elevated from this position up the hill. Fields lay adjacent to the east and west but views beyond the site are obscured by the hill it sits on. The shredding facility is visible to the back left of the view and the proposed wood storage bays are located centrally in the view, although they may just be obscured out of view by the brow of the hill / boundary bunding.
- 5.2.4 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **high**.
- 5.2.5 Viewpoint 2: (Same location as viewpoint 2 from WDA LVIA report April 2016)
- 5.2.6 This viewpoint is taken from the pedestrian footway along the A4304 at the western edge of Theddingworth, approximately 0.65km from the site. It is approximately 1km east up the road from viewpoint 1 and looks over a small fenced off pasture in the foreground with larger fields behind leading up to the site. To the left and behind, surrounding the site in the background are the Hothorpe Hills. This view has been selected to be representative of Theddingworth residents where they have views across the fields to the site, as well as pedestrians, cyclists and motorists who use the A4304. The shredding facility is hidden behind the undulating topography of the landscape and cannot be seen from this view. It is likely that the proposed wood storage bays will also be obscured by the brow of the hill / bunding to the front of the site.
- 5.2.7 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **high**.
- 5.2.8 Viewpoint 3: (Same location as viewpoint 3 from WDA LVIA report April 2016)
- 5.2.9 This viewpoint is taken from Hothorpe Road opposite the entrance to Home Farm, approximately 0.96km from site. It looks west to a field track and hedged field boundary (cut back short in winter) in the foreground. Beyond this are further fields and hedge lines sloping gently up to the hill which the site sits on. To the left of view one can see the start of the Hothorpe Hills and Spring Hollow. To the right: Hothorpe Hall is surrounded by fragmented woodland. This view has been selected to be representative of pedestrians / cyclists and motorists on Hothorpe Road as well as the residents of Home Farm set back approximately 400m east from the road. The majority of the shredding facility is hidden behind the bunding to the east of the site with only the very top of the roof visible. The proposed wood storage bays will be completely obscured by the undulating landscape topography / bunding around the site.
- 5.2.10 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **high**.

5.2.11 Viewpoint 4 (Same location as viewpoint 4 from WDA LVIA report April 2016)

5.2.12 This viewpoint is taken from the public bridleway south of Hothorpe Road, approximately 1.3km from site. It looks west over large open fields with hedge lined boundaries. Spring Hollow is visible to the left at the foot of the Hothorpe Hills and Hothorpe Hall is visible to the right set amongst fragmented woodland. Individual trees are scattered around the mid-ground of this view. This view has been selected to be representative of walkers and other users of the bridleway. The majority of the shredding facility is hidden behind the bunding to the east of the site with only the very top of the roof visible. The proposed wood storage bays will be completely obscured by the undulating landscape topography / bunding around the site.

5.2.13 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **high**.

5.2.14 Viewpoint 5 (New viewpoint)

5.2.15 This viewpoint is taken from the triangle junction of Sibbertoft Road and Dick's Hill Road, approximately 2.7km from site. It looks west along Sibbertoft Road, over the hedgerow that lines the road in the foreground, then over open fields and through a broken tree line in the mid-ground. Hothorpe Hall is visible to the right through a break in the treeline and the tops of Hothorpe Hills are visible to the left of the view. In the background of the view the site is visible by the chimney and tallest roof tops only. If the shredding facility roof is visible it is not distinguishable from the small mass of roof tops merged together at this distance. The proposed wood storage bays will be completely obscured from this viewpoint. This view has been selected to be representative of motorists using this road.

5.2.16 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **moderate**.

5.2.17 Viewpoint 6 (Same location as viewpoint 5 from WDA LVIA report April 2016)

5.2.18 This viewpoint is taken from the public bridleway approximately 250m south of Husbands Bosworth and is approximately 1.6km from the site. It looks east over open pastoral fields in the foreground to a thick woodland treeline that breaks in the middle, then thinning out to the right of view to show the landscape beyond, including the site. The western end of the Hothorpe Hills are visible to the mid-right of the view. The shredding facility is indistinguishable from the mass of dark buildings to the centre of this view but still visible to the back. The proposed wood storage bays will potentially be visible at the base of the taller buildings on site but will not be more visible in the landscape than the existing structures. This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of walkers and other users of the bridleway

5.2.19 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **high**.

5.2.20 Viewpoint 7 (Same location as viewpoint 6 from WDA LVIA report April 2016)

5.2.21 This viewpoint is taken from the public bridleway approximately 500m south of Husbands Bosworth and is approximately 1.5km from the site. It looks east over broken, untidy fields and bunds of a gravel extraction site in the foreground. In the mid-ground the landscape changes to pastoral fields, hedges and the wooded block at Gravel Pit Spinney. Beyond that the landscape undulates to the horizon with the plateaux of Hothorpe Hills visible to the right of view. The site is visible to the right of Gravel Pit Spinney, however, the shredding facility is indistinguishable from the mass of dark buildings to the centre of the view. The proposed wood storage bays will potentially be visible at the base of the taller buildings on site but will not be more visible in the landscape than the existing structures. This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of walkers and other users of the bridleway

5.2.22 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **high**.

5.2.23 Viewpoint 8 (Same location as viewpoint 8 from WDA LVIA report April 2016)

5.2.24 This viewpoint is taken from the public footpath west of Kicklewell Spinney, approximately 2.85km from site. It looks south down a pastoral hill slope over the whole valley where a patchwork of pastoral fields, hedges and tree copses can be seen with Hothorpe Hills in the distance. The Grand Union canal runs from east to west at the bottom of the hill and can be seen clearly to the right of this view. Both Theddingworth and Husbands Bosworth villages can be seen from this vantage point framing the site on either side. From here the site is visible to the centre of the view with the shredding facility clearly separate from the main body of buildings. The proposed wood storage bays will potentially be visible from here but will not be more prominent in the landscape than the existing structures on site. This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of walkers and other users of the footpath.

5.2.25 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **high**.

5.2.26 Viewpoint 9 (Same location as viewpoint 7 from WDA LVIA report April 2016)

5.2.27 This viewpoint is taken from the entrance gate to the public footpath / bridleway at Mosley Hills Farm, on top of the Mosley Hills, approximately 3.3km from site. It looks south down the hill slope over the whole valley where a patchwork of pastoral fields, hedges and tree copses can be seen with Hothorpe Hills in the distance. The Grand Union canal runs from east to west at the bottom of the hill and the left of the view is blocked by woodland on the hillside to the east of the Mosley/Theddingworth Road. Only Husbands Bosworth village can be seen from this vantage point with the church spire visible to right of view. The site is visible to the centre of the view with the shredding shred clearly separate from the main body of buildings. The proposed wood storage bays will potentially be visible from here but will not be more prominent in the landscape than the existing structures on site. This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of users of the footpath, bridleway and the residents of Mosley Hills Farm. This view is also representative of users of the Mosley/Theddingworth Road as they travel south down the hill.

5.2.28 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **high**.

5.2.29 Viewpoint 10 (New viewpoint)

5.2.30 This viewpoint is taken from a field entrance next to a radio mast on the Leicester Road (A5199), approximately 2.55km from site. It looks east over undulating pastoral hills, broken by hedgerows and occasional woodland copses with the Hothorpe Hills framing the background and the right of the view. In the far distance wind turbines are just visible over the horizon. The site is visible to the centre of the view but is partially obscured by trees in the mid-ground, which will become more of a visual barrier when in leaf. The shredding shred is still clearly separate from the main body of buildings but the proposed wood storage bays will not be visible, hidden by the landscape topography and site bunding. This viewpoint has been selected to be representative of users of the A5199 Road.

5.2.31 This viewpoint's sensitivity has been rated as **moderate**.

5.2.32 The table below summarises the sensitivity of the viewpoints.

<b>Table 11 – Viewpoints Summary</b>				
<b>Viewpoint</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Distance from Site</b>	<b>Potential Designations / Receptors</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>
<b>Viewpoint 1</b>	Looking south on A4304 on pedestrian footway outside Woodside Farm.	Approx. 0.5km	Woodside Farm residents, A4304 road users.	High
<b>Viewpoint 2</b>	Looking south from highway footpath along A4304, at the western edge of Theddingworth.	Approx. 0.65km	Theddingworth residents, A4304 road users, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments.	High
<b>Viewpoint 3</b>	Looking west from Hothorpe Road opposite the entrance to Home Farm.	Approx. 0.96km	Home Farm residents, Hothorpe Road users, Special Landscape Area.	High
<b>Viewpoint 4</b>	Looking west from the Public Bridleway south of Hothorpe Road.	Approx. 1.3km	Users of the PROW network, Special Landscape Area.	High
<b>Viewpoint 5</b>	Looking west from the triangle junction between Sibbertoft Road and Dick's Hill Road.	Approx. 2.7km	Road users, Special Landscape Area.	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 6</b>	Looking east from public bridleway approximately 250m south of Husbands Bosworth.	Approx. 1.6km	Users of the PROW network.	High
<b>Viewpoint 7</b>	Looking east from public bridleway approximately 500m south of Husbands Bosworth.	Approx. 1.5km	Users of the PROW network.	High
<b>Viewpoint 8</b>	Looking south from public footpath west of Kicklewell Spinney.	Approx. 2.85km	Users of the PROW network, listed buildings.	High

<b>Table 11 – Viewpoints Summary</b>				
<b>Viewpoint</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Distance from Site</b>	<b>Potential Designations / Receptors</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>
<b>Viewpoint 9</b>	Looking south from public bridleway / public footpath at Mowsley Hills Farm.	Approx. 3.3km	Mosley Hill Farm residents, users of the PROW network.	High
<b>Viewpoint 10</b>	Looking southeast from A5199 Leicester Road. Field entrance next to radio mast.	Approx. 2.55km	Road users, listed buildings.	Moderate



## ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

## SIX

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### 6.1 Key Development Characteristics

6.1.1 This planning application seeks retrospective planning permission for the erection of a building to house a wood shredder. The machinery will be operating in a similar location that it has in the past, on land which has planning permission for these operations, simply with the addition of the building around it. In addition, the application seeks planning permission for six additional wood storage bays and minor realignment of the access track on land adjacent to the TAD/REGF buildings. The details of which are:

- The building footprint is 35m by 20m
- The building will have pitched roof and is 10m in height to the eaves and 12m to the ridge.
- The building has Juniper Green cladding.
- Elevations:
  - Northwest: On the side near the existing compost yards, there are proposed to be four bays open for access to wood ready for REGF and two personnel doors.
  - Southeast: The side near the water tank, there are 2 roller shutter doors at 6m wide by 5 m high and a personnel door.
  - Northeast: The gable end near Hothorpe does not have any access points.
  - Southwest: The gable end near the REGF has a roller shutter door in the centre at 7m wide and 5m high.
- Six storage bays are approximately 16 x 16 metres squared in size, 5m high and formed out of concrete.
- Approximately 40m of the existing access track be realigned.
- No additional landscaping will take place as part of the proposed development as extensive approved Landscaping Schemes have been carried out alongside past planning permissions and proposed as part of existing planning applications.

### 6.2 Introduction to Construction Phase Effects

6.2.1 The main landscape impact associated with the construction would include:

- Nominal and temporary adverse landscape impacts on aesthetic and perceptual attributes of the surrounding landscape character areas, through increased vehicular traffic;
- Nominal and temporary adverse landscape impacts on tranquillity through increased vehicular traffic and construction on site;
- Adverse impact on the landscape due to the potential presence of additional lighting associated with construction;
- Nominal adverse impacts on the accessibility of the surrounding landscape;
- There will not be any loss of other landscape features (trees / hedgerows) as prior to the development of the site, the area where the building is situated was hard standing, and the area where the storage bays are to be situated is currently a carpark / hard standing; and

- The adjacent bund and recently planted native woodland planting should not be affected.

### **6.3 Introduction to Construction Phase Visual Effects**

6.3.1 The main visual impact associated with the construction would include:

- Adverse visual impacts on a few viewpoints due to the visibility of elements associated with construction, including construction machinery and construction materials;
- Adverse visual impacts from increased construction traffic to and from the development including construction vehicles and commuters;
- Adverse impact from viewpoints in close proximity to the application site due to the presence of lighting associated with construction; and
- Adverse visual impact due to the introduction of built form.

### **6.4 Introduction to Operational Phase Effects (Year 0 Post Construction)**

6.4.1 The main landscape impact associated with the development would be visual (see section 6.5) relating to the introduction of the building which is the taller element (+12m), the physical elements of landscape are limited to:

- Landscape impacts on aesthetic and perceptual attributes of the surrounding landscape character areas;
- Expansion of the active site area from hardstanding to a wood shredding facility;
- Increased human activity across a larger area of site;
- Introduction of materials not typically found in the area;
- An ongoing commitment to manage the existing trees and landscape forms around the development - an important part of the development concept; and
- There will not be any loss of other landscape features (trees / hedgerows) as prior to the development of the site, the area where the building is situated was hard standing, and the area where the storage bays are to be situated is currently a carpark / hard standing.

### **6.5 Introduction to Operational Phase Visual Effects (Year 0 Post Construction)**

6.5.1 The main landscape impact associated with the development would be an increase in built form including:

- Adverse impact from viewpoints in close proximity to the application site due to the introduction of an increase in built form into a farm setting;
- Adverse impact from viewpoints in close proximity to the application sites due to the increase in solidity of built form;
- Adverse impact from viewpoints due to increase of overall height of the built form;
- Adverse visual impacts from increased traffic to and from the development (nominal once operational); and
- Beneficial visual impacts from the ongoing commitment to managing and enhancement of the newly planted adjacent hedgerows and woodland blocks.



## MITIGATION OF EFFECTS

## SEVEN

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### 7.1 Introduction to Mitigation

7.1.1 Landscape and visual issues within the study area have been considered during the development's evolution to give priority towards the landscape and visual mitigation. This was covered in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for Pebble Hall Farm Waste Wood Storage Facility, written by Watkins Design Associate Ltd in April 2016 and have already started to be implemented (new woodland planting and bunds etc). See drawing ALD770/LD1001

7.1.2 The mitigation proposed within the Watkins Design Associates report will ensure that a comprehensive and integrated approach is taken to the landscape proposals albeit they are beyond the site boundary of this application and not part of this phase of the works but a previous earlier phase (refer to section 8 of the Watkins Design Associates report).

7.1.3 The mitigation measures below have been grouped as inherent and additional landscape and visual mitigation measures. Inherent landscape and visual mitigation measures are included in the strategy/design for the site and have been developed during the LVIA process.

### 7.2 Introduction to the Mitigation of Construction Phase Effects

7.2.1 Construction phase effect mitigation: Landscape

- Retention of more valuable landscape features within or on the ownership boundary line. *Note: It is not envisaged that any loss is intended as part of the current design;*
- Fencing off existing landscape features to be retained. Where applicable, Trees in Relation to Construction BS 5837:2012 should be applied to protect root areas;
- Where possible, use of fall cut-off lighting to reduce stray upward light and minimise light pollution; and
- Provision of 5m stand-offs in order to safeguard mature perimeter vegetation.

7.2.2 Construction phase effect mitigation: Visual

- Where possible, use of fall cut-off lighting to reduce stray upward light and minimise light pollution; and
- Provision of 5m stand-offs in order to safeguard perimeter vegetation.

### 7.3 Introduction to the Mitigation of Operational Phase Effects

7.3.1 Operational phase effect mitigation: Landscape inherent mitigation measures:

- Replacement of any perimeter vegetation lost through construction or operational activity to ensure the integrity of the vegetated site boundary. The planting palette should utilise 'like for like' species. *Note with the current design no perimeter vegetation is intended to be lost;* and

- Additional mitigation measures: Use, where possible, permeable surface materials for wood storage yard and storage bays in the interests of sustainable urban drainage.

7.3.2 Operational Phase Effect Mitigation: Visual inherent mitigation measures:

- Beneficial visual impacts from the managing and enhancement of the adjacent woodland blocks outside of the site boundary.

## CUMULATIVE AND ADDITIVE EFFECTS

## EIGHT

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### 8.1 Cumulative Landscape Effects

- 8.1.1 The assessment of potential landscape impacts is primarily focused upon the proposed wood shredding building (+12m), placed within its landscape context and the existing development of the site surrounding it. The general conclusion is that, in a localised context, landscape impacts would arise, however when considered in an increasingly broad context, especially more than 1km distance from the site, these impacts are of moderate or minor significance. The extent within which this transition to minor / not significant would occur is considered to be beyond the 2km distance from the application site due to topography and landcover.
- 8.1.2 The character of the wider landscape would largely be unaffected by the addition of the wood shredding building and wood storage bays at the Renewable Energy Generation Facility (REGF) and Anaerobic Digestion Facility (TAD), due to the fact that beyond 2km from the site its visibility decreases significantly thanks to the undulating topography. In a localised context, landscape character changes will be significant as the buildings are very industrial and angular in nature positioned in a very soft rolling farmland character.

### 8.2 Cumulative Visual Effects

- 8.2.1 The assessment of potential visual impacts is, primarily, focused upon the proposed development, placed within its landscape context. The general conclusion is that, in a highly localised context, potential visual impacts would arise, however when seen in an increasingly broad context, these impacts are moderate / minor or not significant. The extent within which this transition to not significant would occur is also considered to be within 2km of the application site.
- 8.2.2 The local landscape already accommodates some built form in the shape of the REGF (including TAD), gravel extraction and smaller settlements, some of which sit on top of rises in the topography (and therefore break the skyline). Consequently it is anticipated that the localised visual changes will not be significantly different to those currently experienced. It is simply viewed as an extension to the REGF, if the site were more fractured, a different visual effect would be concluded.

### 8.3 The Broader Context

- 8.3.1 Any impacts relating to the proposal site are deemed not to be significantly adverse in the broader context of the landscape. Though agricultural land remains the dominant landscape type in the area, the existing built form in the shape of the REGF (including TAD), Hothorpe Hall, villages and farmstead and their associated buildings and infrastructure comprises a substantial component in the broader context visually, meaning the area has already been subject to development / urbanisation.

## **8.4 Residual Effects: Introduction to Residual Effects**

8.4.1 The potential landscape and visual effects of the proposed development on the surroundings, and in particular the views from viewpoints have been assessed through desktop studies and the site visit.

### **8.4.2 Residual Landscape Effects: Description of Residual Landscape Effects During Construction and Operational Phase**

- Having assessed the landscape baseline of the proposal site and identified the potential elements of the development likely to cause change to that baseline, a detailed assessment of the possible changes can be made;
- The construction of the development proposals would result in the removal of existing hard surfacing (contractor's compound and storage areas). In the short term this would be replaced by construction activities for the erection of the storage bays and wood shredding shed. In the long term a building and concrete bays would be in situ; and
- Construction would not require any re-profiling of the internal and surrounding landscape, so effects on topography would not be significant and levels would be maintained in their current condition. The overall impact of construction on the landscape would be low.

### **8.4.3 Changes in Social and Cultural Factors**

- The principal alteration to cultural and social factors would concern the commencement of construction activities within a predominately arable landscape; and
- Upon completion the development will introduce a comparable style of built form into the area. It is anticipated that there will be no increase in vehicular traffic to and from the site, it is unlikely to increase recreational visitor numbers as there will be nothing on offer to local residents. Cultural or social impacts are likely to be similar to those currently experienced by the existing surrounding settlements.

### **8.4.4 Changes in Aesthetics and Perceptual Aspects**

- The recurrent visual strength of the existing built environment from the villages, gravel extraction and large farm barns would render any effects from the proposed development as moderate to low, assuming the development is implemented, using appropriate building materials where feasible; and
- The wood shredding facility will add to the overall physical mass of the built environment and extend the existing mass of the REGF.

## **8.5 Residual Magnitude of Landscape Impacts Summary**

- The predicted residual magnitude of landscape impacts of the development is localised in scale and restricted to the site and immediate environs up to 2km. This assessment is mainly due to the undulating nature of the topography and land cover of the surrounding area, plus the presence of existing built settlements and the REGF within the local environment;
- The localised nature of the landscape impacts mean that the proposed development would result in low adverse impacts on the wider landscape at a regional level;
- There will be not topographic/drainage alterations. Therefore, the site would not impact on the landscape quality of the area and would largely blend within the existing landform; and

- It is therefore concluded that the overall magnitude of the landscape impacts would be low and with the potential for providing enhancements once the proposed development is complete.

## 8.6 Residual Visual Effects

8.6.1 Using the viewpoints identified in the visual baseline an assessment can be made of the potential magnitude of the visual change likely to be incurred through the proposed development.

### 8.6.2 Magnitude of Visual Impact

- For each of the viewpoints the potential magnitude of the residual visual impacts, taking into account each phase of the development and proposed mitigation, has been assessed. The magnitude of visual impacts is mainly dependent upon the following factors:
  - What proportion of the existing view would change as a result of the development proposals?
  - How many features or elements within the view would be changed?
  - How appropriate is the proposed development in the context of the existing views?
  - How many viewers would be affected by the changes in the view?
  - What is the timescale of the proposed development? Also, is it continuous or intermittent?
  - What is the angle of the view in relation to the main activity of the receptor?
  - The magnitude of change is categorised as high, medium, low or negligible.

### 8.6.3 Magnitude of Residual Visual Change for Viewpoints

- The magnitude of change for each viewpoint was assessed for both construction and on completion.

## 8.7 Viewpoints

8.7.1 The location of the Viewpoints, and a photograph of each from the site visit in March 2017, together with a description, is included within the Appendices towards the end of the document.

8.7.2 Viewpoint 1 – Looking south on A4304 on pedestrian footway outside Woodside Farm.

### 8.7.3 Construction

Due to the topography and proximity of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see a significantly increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility and storage bays.

- Due to the local topography, combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation, the overall impact would be **moderate** and temporary in nature.

### 8.7.4 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be moderate from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the angle of the view – straight on to the northwestern boundary and the



longest elevation of the building. The viewer also looks up to the site in its elevated position. The shredding facility is clearly visible, it is assumed the wood storage bays will not be visible.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **moderate** during construction, **moderate** upon completion.

8.7.5 Viewpoint 2 – Looking south from highway footpath along A4304, at the western edge of Theddingworth.

8.7.6 Construction

Due to the topography and proximity of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see an increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility only.

- Due to the local topography combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation the overall impact would be **moderate** and temporary in nature.

8.7.7 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be low from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the undulating topography on the site boundary. The viewer looks across to the site over fields and a bund, the shredding facility is mostly hidden from this view and it is likely that the wood storage bays would be obscured too.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **moderate** during construction, **low** upon completion.

8.7.8 Viewpoint 3 – Looking west from Hothorpe Road opposite the entrance to Home Farm.

8.7.9 Construction

Due to the topography and proximity of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see an increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility only as it is likely to break the skyline.

- Due to the local topography combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation the overall impact would be **moderate** and temporary in nature.

8.7.10 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be low from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the undulating topography on the site boundary. The viewer looks across to the site over fields and a bund, the shredding facility is mostly hidden from this view and it is likely that the wood storage bays would be obscured too as they are behind the building.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **moderate** during construction, **low** upon completion.

8.7.11 Viewpoint 4 - Looking west from the Public Bridleway south of Hothorpe Road.

8.7.12 Construction

Due to the topography and proximity of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see an increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility only as it breaks the skyline.

- Due to the local topography, combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation, the overall impact would be **moderate** and temporary in nature.

8.7.13 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be low from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the undulating topography on the site boundary. The viewer looks across to the site over fields and a bund, the shredding facility is mostly hidden from this view with only the roof visible and it is likely that the wood storage bays would be obscured as they are behind the building and smaller.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **moderate** during construction, **low** upon completion.

8.7.14 Viewpoint 5 – Looking west from the triangle junction between Sibbertoft Road and Dick’s Hill Road.

8.7.15 Construction

Due to the topography and proximity of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see an increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility but only as it breaks the skyline.

- Due to the local topography combined with the existing screening vegetation the overall impact would be **low** and temporary in nature.

8.7.16 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be low from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the undulating topography and the busy active arable scene in the foreground. The shredding facility is mostly hidden from this view with only the roof visible and that will be hard to distinguish in amongst the rest of the REGF and it is likely that the wood storage bays would be obscured as they are behind the building and smaller.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **moderate** during construction, **low** upon completion.

8.7.17 Viewpoint 6 - Looking east from public bridleway approximately 250m south of Husbands Bosworth.

8.7.18 Construction

Due to the topography and elevated position of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see a significantly increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility and storage bays.

- Due to the local topography combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation the overall impact would be **moderate** and temporary in nature.

#### 8.7.19 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be moderate from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the angle of the view onto the western boundary where limited screening is afforded. The viewer looks down to the site and is afforded a full view of the REGF building in the foreground, the shredding facility is clearly visible to the rear of the site and it is assumed the wood storage bays will also be visible.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **moderate** during construction, **moderate** upon completion.

#### 8.7.20 Viewpoint 7 - Looking east from public bridleway approximately 500m south of Husbands Bosworth.

##### 8.7.21 Construction

Due to the topography and elevated position of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see an increase in the level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility and storage bays but this would be restricted by the REGF building..

- Due to the local topography combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation the overall impact would be **low** and temporary in nature.

##### 8.7.22 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be low from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the undulating topography and the busy active arable scene in the foreground. The shredding facility is mostly hidden from this view and is hard to distinguish in amongst the rest of the REGF and it is likely that the wood storage bays would be visible at the base of the taller buildings onsite.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **low** during construction, **low** upon completion.

#### 8.7.23 Viewpoint 8 - Looking south from public footpath west of Kicklewell Spinney.

##### 8.7.24 Construction

Due to the topography and elevated position of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see an increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility and storage bays as the view is of the longest elevation of the site.

- Due to the local topography combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation the overall impact would be **low** and temporary in nature.

##### 8.7.25 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be low from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the undulating topography and the busy active arable scene in the foreground. The shredding facility is clearly visible from this view with the upper half of the building and the roof being visible, but it will be hard to distinguish in amongst the rest of the REGF and it is likely that the wood storage bays would be visible as they are forward of the main REGF building.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **low** during construction, **low** upon completion.

8.7.26 Viewpoint 9 - Looking south from public bridleway / public footpath at Mowsley Hills Farm.

8.7.27 Construction

Due to the topography and elevated position of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see an increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility and storage bays as the view is of the longest elevation of the site.

- Due to the local topography combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation the overall impact would be **low** and temporary in nature.

8.7.28 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be low from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the undulating topography and the busy active arable scene in the foreground. The shredding facility is clearly visible from this view with the upper half of the building and the roof being most prominent, but it will be hard to distinguish in amongst the rest of the REGF and it is likely that the wood storage bays would be visible as they are forward of the main REGF building.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **low** during construction, **low** upon completion.

8.7.29 Viewpoint 10 - Looking southeast from A5199 Leicester Road. Field entrance next to radio mast.

8.7.30 Construction

Due to the topography and elevated position of the viewpoint in relation to the proposal site, it would be possible to see an increased level of activity onsite for the duration of the construction of the wood shredding facility and storage bays as the view is of the longest elevation of the site.

- Due to the local topography combined with the lack of existing screening vegetation the overall impact would be **low** and temporary in nature.

8.7.31 On Completion

Any view of the development on completion would be low from this view in part due to the distance from the site and the undulating topography and the busy active arable scene in the foreground and well treed boundaries. The shredding facility is clearly visible from this view with the upper half of the building and the roof being most prominent, but it will be hard to distinguish in amongst the rest of the REGF and it is likely that the wood storage bays would not be visible.

- The magnitude of visual impact of the proposed development is assessed to be **low** during construction, **low** upon completion.

8.7.32 Table 12 summarises the cumulative and additive effects written within this chapter and formalise the potential significance of the landscape and visual impacts.

<b>Table 12 – Summary of Effects</b>					
<b>Receptor</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<b>Type of Impact</b>	<b>Significance</b>
<b>Viewpoint 1</b>	High	Construction	Moderate	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Moderate	Permanent	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 2</b>	High	Construction	Moderate	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Low	Permanent	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 3</b>	High	Construction	Moderate	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Low	Permanent	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 4</b>	High	Construction	Moderate	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Low	Permanent	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 5</b>	Moderate	Construction	Moderate	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Low	Permanent	Moderate / Minor
<b>Viewpoint 6</b>	High	Construction	Moderate	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Moderate	Permanent	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 7</b>	High	Construction	Low	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Low	Permanent	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 8</b>	High	Construction	Low	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Low	Permanent	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 9</b>	High	Construction	Low	Temporary	Moderate
		Completion	Low	Permanent	Moderate
<b>Viewpoint 10</b>	Moderate	Construction	Low	Temporary	Moderate / Minor
		Completion	Low	Permanent	Moderate / Minor

8.7.33 Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 are assessed as having the highest impact of Moderate for the landscape and visual impacts as per the Impact of Magnitude Matrix Sensitivity of Receptor (Table 7).

8.7.34 The reason why these 8 viewpoints stand out as a higher impact above the other 2 viewpoints, is because of the high sensitivity to change that we have applied. Viewpoints 1, 2, 3 and 4 also take in the widest and most continuous direct length of view along the boundaries of the site, where the proposed shredding facility and wood storage bays are sited, they are also closer to the development.

8.7.35 Table 8 categorises the significance of impacts as the following:

- **Major** - Very large or large change in environmental or socio-economic conditions. Effects, both adverse and beneficial, which are likely to be important considerations at a regional or district level because they contribute to achieving national, regional or local objectives, or, could result in exceeding of statutory objectives and/or breaches of legislation.
- **Moderate** - Intermediate change in environmental or socio-economic conditions. Effects that are likely to be important considerations at a local level.

8.7.36 It should be noted that when reviewing table 8 and the descriptions of the Level of Significance, Major does not fit the profile of the effects and scheme.

8.7.37 This type of development is likely to swing to the Moderate Level of Significance. It would be considered Major if the development significantly broke the skyline and was highly visible, but due to careful site selection and existing remodelling of the immediate surrounding landscape the proposed shredding facility sits in a locally lower area, and is only seen consistently within a 1.5km radius of the site. The facility will introduce additional straight lines into an organic farmland landscape, however the shredding facility is low level enough and consistent with the existing REGF, that it is in keeping with the surrounding context.

8.7.38 Therefore it is not believed that it is a site that is worthy of consideration at a regional or district level, hence not in keeping with the Major category.

## CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS

## NINE

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- 9.1.1 The proposed wood shredding facility and storage bays (see Appendix 1 for drawings) should not cause unacceptable landscape and visual impacts especially in the wider landscape. Appropriate measures will be taken to assist in the integration of the infrastructure into the surrounding landscape and to mitigate short distance views where possible thanks to earlier phases of the site.
- 9.1.2 The most notable impact will be the physical extension of the existing REGF site with a +12m building in Juniper Green cladding.
- 9.1.3 It was apparent when out in the fields undertaking the site survey that the landform, landcover and landscape elements significantly altered and in some cases blocked views to the site that were thought to be evident within the desk study assessment, especially beyond the 2km distance with woodland tracts, shelterbelts, and tall hedgerows providing interrupted intermittent views back to the site. This means that the proposed development, although tall and large in comparison to the surrounding landscape, was not always easy to visualise when travelling along the local road network. The tallest element of the neighbouring building, the REGF, was the stack and this was used as a guide to easily pinpoint site. However, if using Public Rights of Way or standing stationary in the neighbouring villages the development is more prominent when vegetation allows.
- 9.1.4 The impact upon the heritage assets within the area (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings) will be minimal as it is only isolated listed buildings that will realistically see towards the site and the proposed changes.
- 9.1.5 To reconfirm, the proposed layout of the development will comprise of one building 35m x 20m at a height of +12m to ridgeline, the building is in Juniper Green cladding with 3 of the 4 sides having access points. Six storage bays approximately 16m x 16m and 5m high formed out of concrete. There is a minor realignment of the existing access track adjacent to the storage bays. The entrance into the proposed site is reusing the existing access.
- 9.1.6 Several opportunities exist to reduce the visual impact of the proposed development and improve and conserve the character of the area in line with the recommendations made within the landscape character assessment. They are as laid out below and some already form part of the previous applications and permissions.
- 9.1.7 The location of the proposed building is currently set so that the building is as centrally positioned to the space as allowed. This enables the development from a visual perspective to be as far away as possible from any one of its boundaries. Thus ensuring that the building does not give the impression that is towering above people on any one side.

- 9.1.8 The colour of the proposed building is an important factor, as a white / light coloured cladding will stand out more against the surrounding landscape when viewed from a distance. The appearance of the building should assist in blending the development into its surroundings.
- 9.1.9 The proposed development does not provide opportunity for a landscape and ecological enhancement strategy to be implemented. However, as part of previous planning permissions for the site, mitigation in the form of planting has already been undertaken and was evident on the site visit. It will provide an important buffer, assisting with screening the site but not completely 'hiding' it from views. This planting will be maintained and further enhanced by additional landscaping should the current wood storage application be approved.
- 9.1.10 It is therefore considered that any moderate landscape or visual impacts will be localised to the development site or to the adjacent fields around site to a distance of approximately 2km as the study suggests. Any affects beyond the 2km extent will be moderate / minor during construction decreasing to low and negligible on completion. The degree of low and negligible will depend locally on what is in the foreground of the view, between the viewer and the site
- 9.1.11 When considered in an increasingly broad context of the farmed / quarried landscape, these impacts become acceptable in both landscape and visual perspectives. Refer to section 8 for further detail.



## APPENDICES

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<b><u>Drawing Name:</u></b>	<b><u>Drawing Reference:</u></b>
Site Location Plan	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/01 Revision 1
Site Plan	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/02 Revision 1
Site Layout	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/03 Revision 1
Elevations for Shredding Shed	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/04 Revision 1
Site Layout Plan – Whole Site	GPP/WWM/PHSS/17/05 Revision 1
Proposed Storage Bays Indicative Layout	GPP/WWM/PHSS/16/06 Revision 3
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for Pebble Hall Farm Waste Wood Storage Facility, written by Watkins Design Associate Ltd in April 2016	15WW01_S3G-1
Letter by Watkins Design Associate Ltd in 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2017	
Site Location Plan	ALD770 / LD1000 Revision P01
Site Analysis	ALD770 / LD1001 Revision P01
Site Photos	ALD770 / LD1002 Revision P01
Viewpoint Locations	ALD770 / LD1004 Revision P01
Photographic Viewpoints For Assessment	ALD770 / LD1005 to 1014 Revision P01