



**COTTAGE FARM, OADBY**

**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT- Masterplan Site**

**for**

**Wheatcroft & Son/ Bloor Homes**

**by**

**Hankinson Duckett Associates**

**HDA ref: 438.1  
May 2006**

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Cottage Farm Landscape/LVA/438.1/2/NT/ May 06

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**Plans**

- HDA 1: Site Location Plan**
- HDA 2: Topographical Plan**
- HDA 3: Site Survey Plan**
- HDA 4: Visibility of the site and existing urban fringe**
- HDA 5: Visual Assessment of the proposals**

**Photographs**

## **1 INSTRUCTIONS**

1.1 Hankinson Duckett Associates (HDA) was commissioned by Wheatcroft & Son/ Bloor Homes in April 2006 to undertake a landscape and visual assessment for a proposed development site on land at Cottage Farm, Oadby. This assessment identifies the potential impacts of the proposals on the visual amenity and landscape character of the local area.

1.2 The visual assessment of the site was carried out in April 2006

## **2 SITE DESCRIPTION**

### **2.1 Introduction and Planning Context**

*(Plan HDA 1 and HDA 3)*

2.1.1 The Cottage Farm site is an arable field of 12.6ha. Agricultural access to the site is through a gate off the A6 which is directly to the north east of the site. A track runs from the gate through the centre of the field to the South western boundary. To the north of the track, just outside of the south western boundary, is a copse and a simple agricultural shelter. To the south of the track within the site are two small ponds. The site is enclosed to the north by the urban edge of Oadby and recreation ground and Glen Course Golf Club to the south. Beyond the golf course to the south and south west are open fields.

2.1.2 The site is not included within the Districts Green Wedge designation and it is shown in the adopted Local Plan as countryside but is not subject to any special landscape designations.

2.1.3 A TPO order, made in 1987, covers the majority of the trees on the site. Some of these trees no longer remain or are in poor condition.

### **2.2 Topography**

*(Plan HDA 2)*

2.2.1 The site of Cottage Farm and the northern edge of Oadby sit on the spur of high ground, at approximately 120AOD, running west from a more extensive ridge running through Stretton Hall Farm south towards Mount Farm and the A6. North-east of the site the ridge gradually rises to 130AOD just beyond Stretton Hall. The ground gradually falls west of the site to the eastern edge of Wigson. There are a number of minor ridges south of the site forming small tributaries to the River Sence which is south and east of the site. The town of Great Glen, east of the site sits at 90AOD at the base of the River Scene Valley.

2.2.2 The ridges south of the site, create a gentle undulating landform which interrupts views across the countryside and to the urban edge of Oadby and Wigson. New development at

Mount Farm, just outside of the borough of Oadby and Wigston is in a prominent position surrounded by open countryside.

- 2.2.3 The Cottage Farm site itself is level with a slight north to south fall. There are two drainage ponds in the southern corner of the site.

## **2.3 Land Use**

- 2.3.1 To the south of the Cottage Farm site and the urban edge of Oadby is open countryside. On the lower valley floor the agricultural land use is generally pasture with native tree and hedge lined fields. There are some larger fields on the higher ground near to and adjoining the site and urban edge where the land use is generally arable. The vegetation to the boundaries of these fields is generally sparse.
- 2.3.2 Approximately 2km south and east of the site is the River Sence. Approximately 2km south of the site is the Grand Union Canal and a railway. The A6 runs north-west to south east directly north east of the site. Approximately 0.75km south east of the site is a new development east of the A6 near Mount Farm (*Photograph H*). Great Glen sits on the valley floor south east of the site and Newton Harcourt sits just above the valley floor south of the site.
- 2.3.3 The Cottage Farm site sits on the edge of Oadby which bounds the site to the north, north east and north west. The Urban edge is residential in character with predominately semi detached housing. North west of the site is a recreation ground, school and college and between Oadby and Wigston is a 'green wedge', part of which is a country park. Wigston is approximately 1.5km west of the site.
- 2.3.4 Directly south of the site is Glen Gorse Golf Club (*Photograph G*), beyond which is a north east to south east bridleway (Mere Lane/ Old Mere) which runs between the A6 and Newton Lane and a riding school, farm buildings and associated residential properties (*Photograph I*).
- 2.3.5 A footpath runs between the recreation ground and bridleway south west of the site. A footpath runs along the northern boundary of the recreation ground. Beyond the south west boundary of the site a footpath runs between the urban edge of Wigston and the bridleway. There are also two footpaths which run south east from the bridleway.
- ## **2.4 Site Vegetation**
- 2.4.1 The north eastern boundary of the Cottage Farm site is lined by a gappy native mixed hedge of approximately 3-4m in height. There are five Sycamores within the hedge line

which are approximately 12m in height. The Sycamores were found to be in good condition *Photograph J*).

- 2.4.2 The north western edge bounding the residential properties has a mixture of residential boundary fences, hedgerows and occasional trees. The hedge/ fence line generally has a maximum height of 2m. Where the field meets the recreation ground, there is a boundary of hedgerow and trees (*Photograph F*).
- 2.4.3 There is a line of 19 poplars on the south western boundary of the site in front of the copse. A number of the poplars are diseased or dying (*Photograph K*).
- 2.4.4 Between Glen Gorse Golf Club and the south eastern edge is a native hedge, primarily hawthorn of between 4 and 5m in height. There are also a number trees along this hedge line (*Photograph L*).
- 2.4.5 There are 14 trees along the track which runs through the site, including 9 mature oaks of approximately 15m in height. A number of the oaks are in poor condition. Towards the southern end of the track is a low mixed native hedge. There is a single tree to the north west of the site within the field (*Photograph M*).

### **3 VISIBILITY OF THE SITE AND EXISTING URBAN EDGE**

*(Plan HDA 4)*

- 3.1 This assessment considers as a baseline the visibility of the site and the boundary of the existing residential development directly to the north of the site. Plan HDA 4 identifies visibility of the existing site and urban edge to the north.
- 3.2 **The A6:** Views of the site and the residential properties to the sites north western boundary are limited to glimpse views from directly opposite the site (*Photograph A*).
- 3.3 **Footpath to the south western boundary of the site:** From the sites south western boundary, between existing trees and vegetation, there are some glimpse views and partial views of the site and those properties on the southern boundary of Oadby. From other parts of the footpath views of the site and those properties north of the site are blocked by field boundary hedgerow and trees (*Photograph B*).
- 3.4 **Footpath to the north eastern boundary of the recreation ground:** There are glimpse views of the site looking south across the recreation ground. There are views of the properties facing west on to the recreation ground; however there are no views of the properties directly north of the site (*Photograph C*).

- 3.5 **Footpath to the south western boundary of the field to the south west of the site:** To the north-west, there are no views of the masterplan site. To the southern corner of this field looking north east there are glimpse views between trees and vegetation. There are no obvious views of residential properties north of the site (*Photograph D*).
- 3.6 **Mere Lane/ Old Mere bridleway:** There are no views of the site or the existing edge of Oadby directly north-west of the site from the bridleway. Views are blocked by hedgerow and trees, particularly those associated with the golf course. There are also no views of the site or residential properties to the north from the public rights of way which run south west from Mere Lane (*Photograph E*).
- 3.7 **Newton Lane:** Tree and hedge lined field boundaries and undulating land form block views of the site and the southern edge of Oadby.
- 3.8 **Properties to the north-east of the site and A6:** From the properties directly opposite the cottage farm site there are glimpse views of the site and those existing residential properties to the northern boundary of the site (*Photographs A and J*).
- 3.9 **Properties to the north west of the site:** These properties generally have glimpse views of the site from lower floor windows and open views from upper floor windows. A number of the properties may also have glimpsed views of the southern edge of Oadby, the site and the A6 (*Photograph F*).

## **4 THE PROPOSALS**

### **4.1 The concept plan proposals**

- 4.1.1 The concept proposals are to develop the majority of the site for housing with some business uses and public open space.
- 4.1.2 The vehicular access shall be from the A6, at the location of the existing agricultural access.

### **4.2 Landscape design proposals**

- 4.2.1 The existing boundary vegetation would be retained and managed.
- 4.2.2 Additional trees will be planted to the north western boundary of the site where existing residential properties over look the site boundary.
- 4.2.3 The line of trees to the north western corner of the site would be extended.
- 4.2.4 Vegetation bounding the A6 shall be maintained and enhanced integrating the urban edge into the landscape and maintaining a green gateway into Oadby.

## 5 VISUAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

*(Plan HDA 5)*

- 5.1 This assessment compares the likely views of the proposals, 10 years after the establishment of the landscape proposals. Plan HDA 4 identifies visibility of the existing site and urban edge to the north. Plan HDA 5 identifies likely visibility of the proposals. The colouring indicates the degree of visibility, from open views (red), through partial views (yellow) and glimpses (green), to no view (blue). Hence, a decreasing amount of red or yellow and an increasing amount of blue identifies a reduction in views of development.
- 5.2 **The A6:** There are no views approaching the site from the north east or south east along the A6. Directly opposite the site, there are glimpse views through the boundary hedgerow and trees. It is probable that there will be glimpse views from the proposed site access, however the green gateway into Oadby shall be maintained (*Photograph A*).
- 5.3 **Footpath to the south western boundary of the site:** South of the site within the golf course, trees, shrubs and hedgerow block views of the site. Where the footpath exits the golf course at the southern corner of the masterplan site, there are glimpse views between trees and vegetation. There are no views of the site through the copse. At the north western corner of the site there is a break in the copse, here there are partial views across the site. Extending the line of existing trees to the western corner of the site is likely to reduce these views to glimpses. North west of the site, looking south, hedgerow and tree planting to the boundary of the recreation ground blocks views of the site (*Photograph B*).
- 5.4 **Footpath to the north eastern boundary of the recreation ground:** There are glimpse views of the site looking south across the recreation ground through a tree lined hedgerow (*Photograph C*).
- 5.5 **Footpath to the south western boundary of the field to the south west of the site:** To the north western corner of this field and to the north west there are no views of the masterplan site. To the southern corner of this field there are glimpse views between trees and vegetation (*Photograph D*).
- 5.6 **Mere Lane/ Old Mere bridleway:** To the southern end of the track (Old Mere) hedgerow lined fields block views of the masterplan site. North where Old Mere becomes Mere Lane there are no views of the masterplan site. The shrubs, trees and hedgerow within the golf course provide an effective landscape buffer between Mere Lane and the Masterplan Site. There are also no views of the site from the public rights of way which run south west from Mere Lane (*Photograph E*).
- 5.7 **Newton Lane:** The tree and hedge lined field boundaries together with the undulating land form block views of the site.

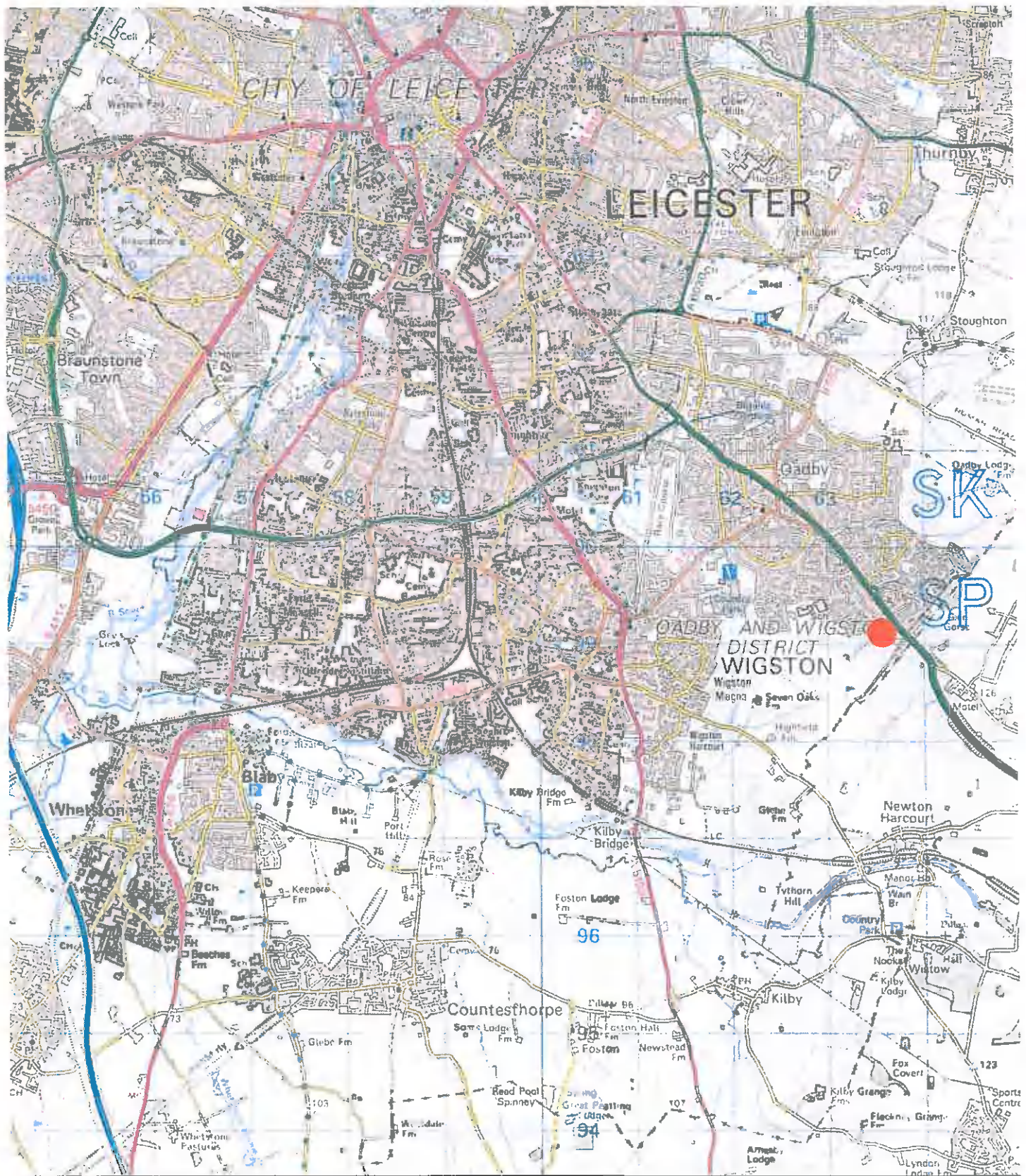
5.8 **Properties to the north-east of the site and A6:** There are glimpse views into the site from these properties through the existing boundary trees and hedgerow. It is also probable that there will be glimpse views from the site access (*Photograph A and J*).

5.9 **Properties to the north west of the site:** These properties generally have glimpse views of the site from lower floor windows and open views from upper floor windows. Tree planting to this boundary is likely to reduce the open views to partial views of the site (*Photograph F*).

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

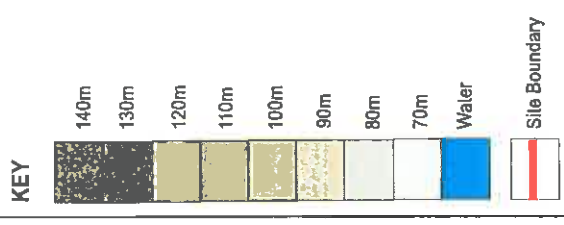
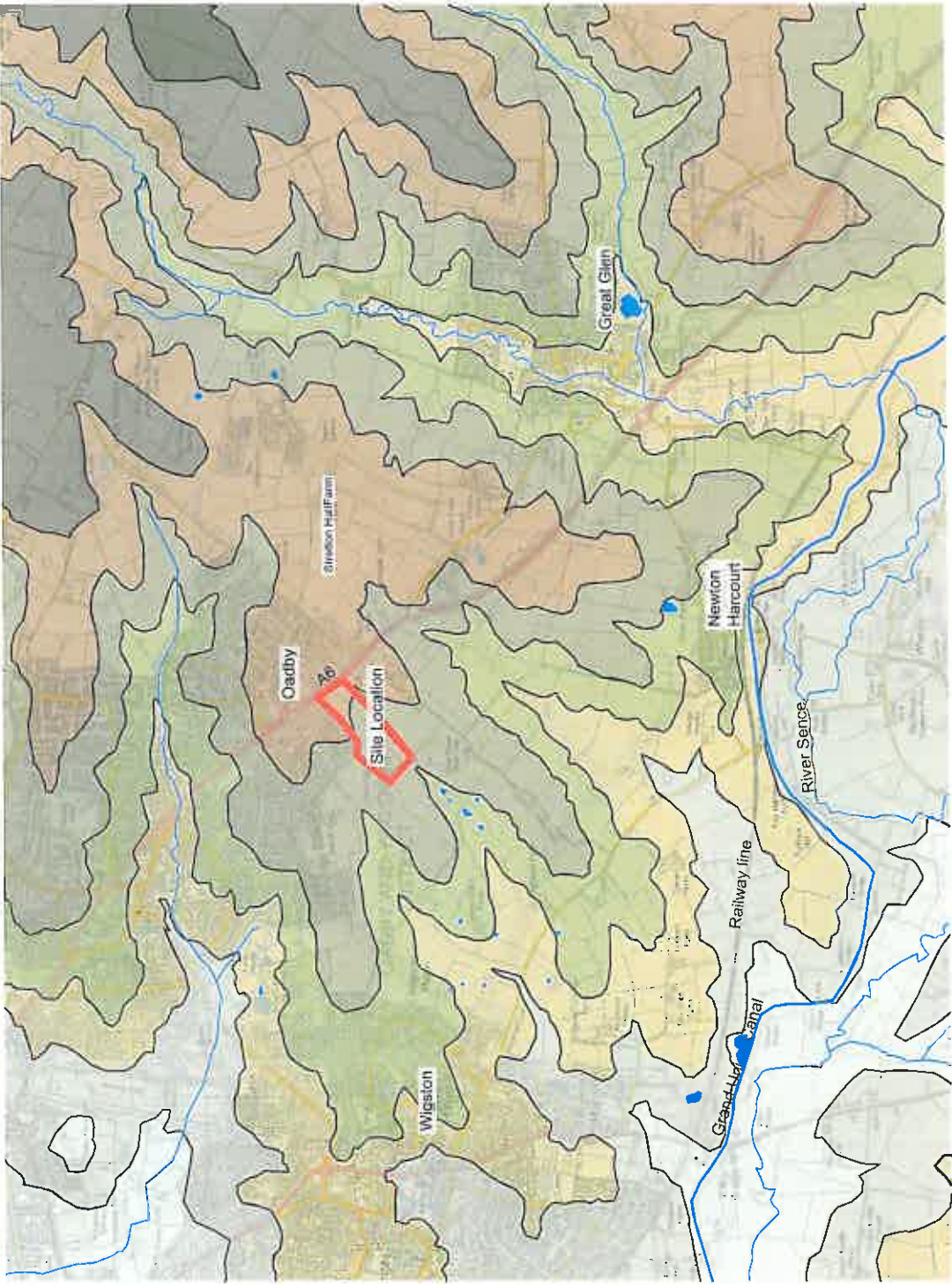
6.1 Currently the southern edge of Oadby is well contained and not open to view from the surrounding countryside. The site wraps around the southern edge of Oadby and is also well enclosed and visually detached from the open countryside to the south and south-west by virtue of mature trees, hedgerows and gently undulating landform. The proposed development will not significantly increase the visual influence of Oadby on the surrounding countryside. Landscape proposals will minimise any minor visual impacts on local visual receptors e.g. public footpaths and residential properties.

6.2 There will be no significant loss of existing vegetation or TPO'd trees. Landscape proposals will reinforce the site boundary vegetation and should provide a robust new edge to Oadby. Development on the masterplan site would not significantly affect the rural quality of the landscapes to the south and south-west and will have no urbanising influence on the Districts Green Wedge designation to the west of the site.



	Site Location	Project: Cottage Farm Landscape	<small>Based on the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 scale map with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Hankinson Duckett Associates, Landscape Studio Lower Basingdon Reading Berkshire, RG8 9NE License No AR 187372</small>
		Title: Site Location	<b>Hankinson Duckett Associates</b>
		Scale: 1:50,000 Date: April 2006	
		438.1/1	HDA 1
















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**Hanson Duckett Associates**



client	Wheatcroft and Son/ JS Bloor
project	Collage Farm
TYP	Topography
SCALE	1:25000 at A3
DATE	May 2006
438.1/2A	HDA 2

**KEY**

-  Site Boundary
-  A Road
-  Public Footpath
-  Bridfeway
-  Track/ Other
-  Hedgerow and Trees
-  Urban Areas
-  Schools and Colleges
-  Agricultural Land
-  Golf Course
-  Ponds, Drains and Ditches

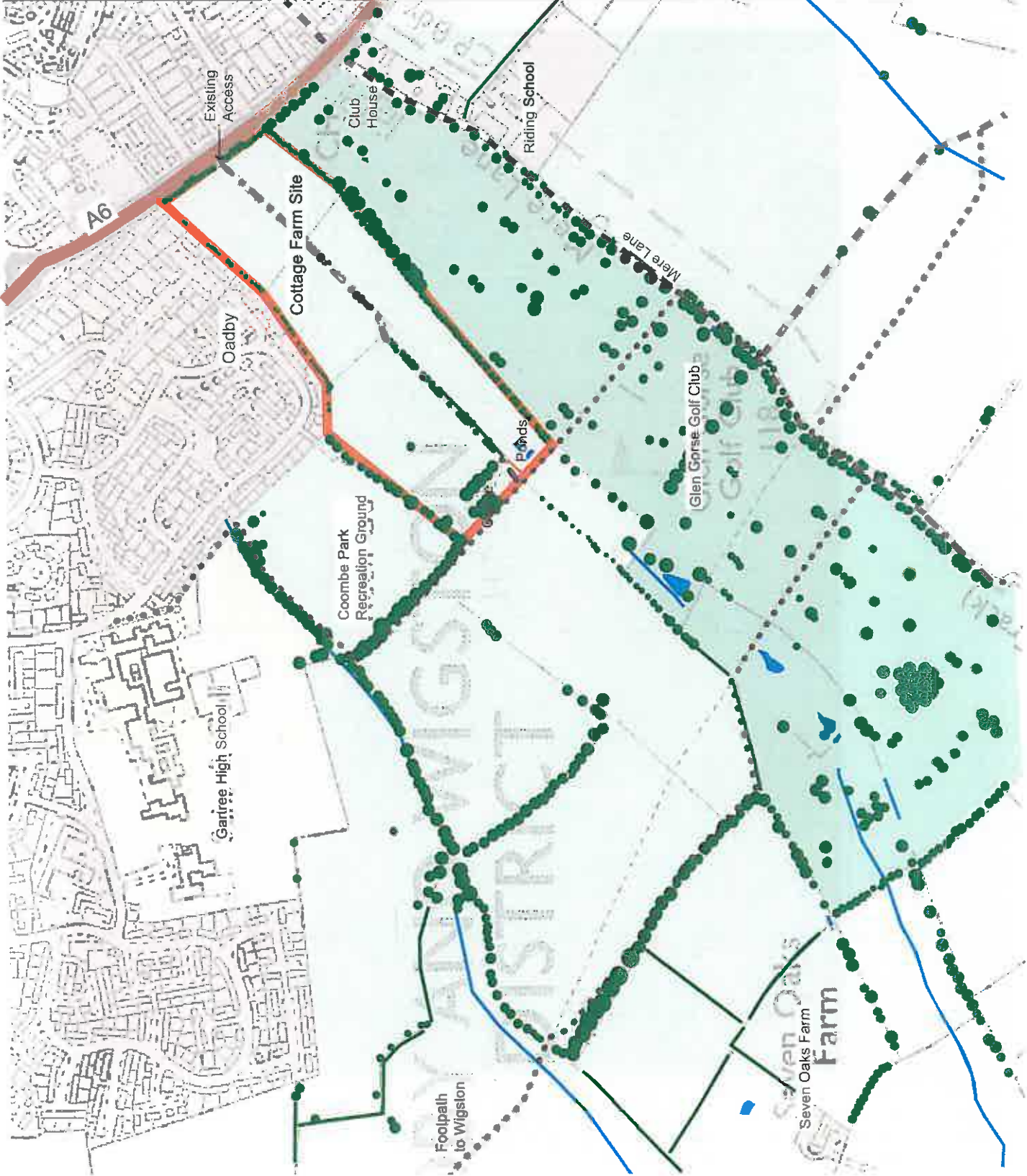
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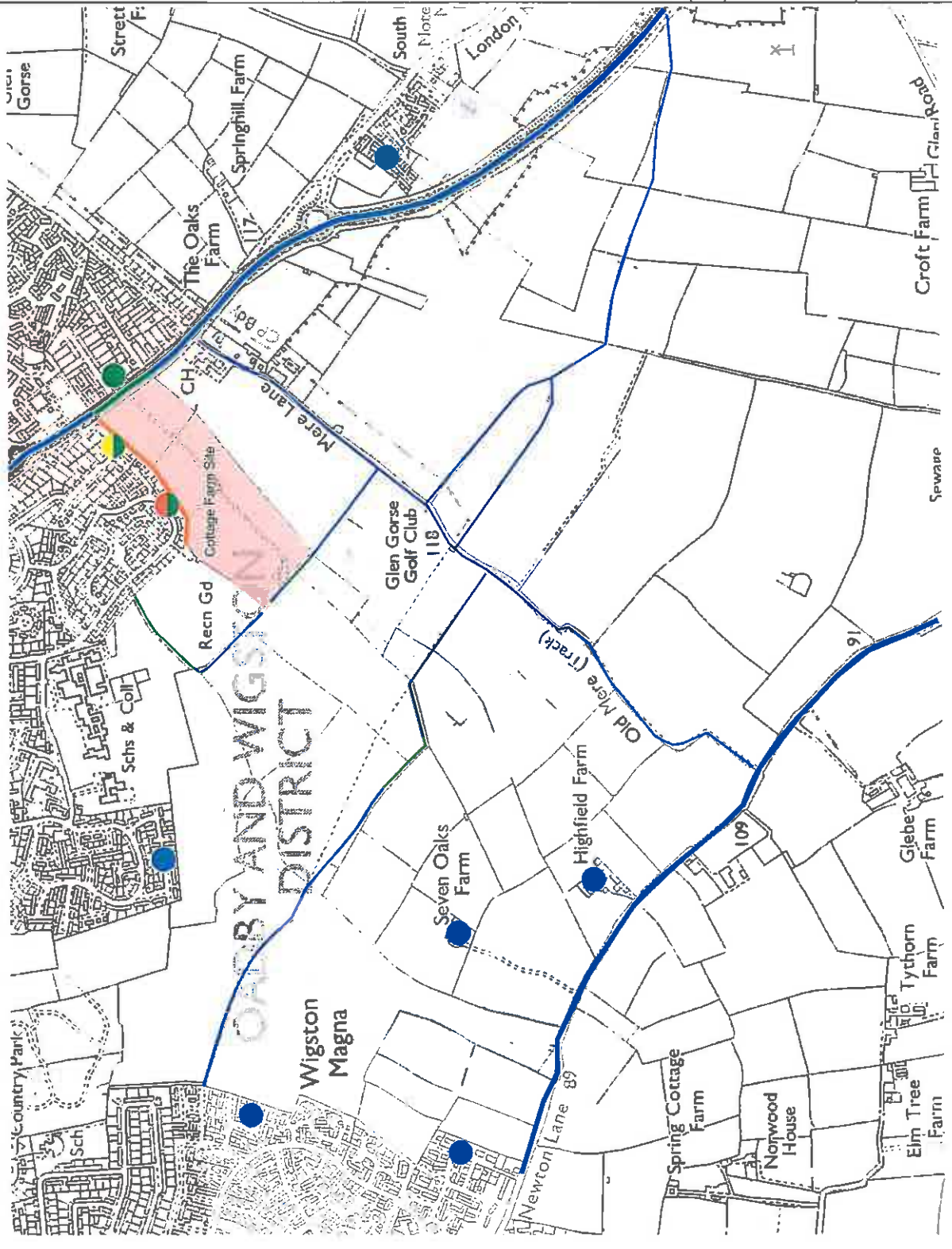
**Hankinson Duckett Associates**



CLIENT: Wheatcroft and Son, JS Bloor  
 PROJECT: Cottage Farm Landscape  
 TITLE: Land Use and Vegetation  
 SCALE: 1:5,000 at A3  
 DATE: April 2006

438 1/0A  
 HDA 3





**KEY**

View from footpath		View from road		View from property		View from settlement	
View from footpath		View from road		View from property		View from settlement	
View from footpath		View from road		View from property		View from settlement	
View from footpath		View from road		View from property		View from settlement	

	Views from Lower Floors
	Views from Upper Floors
	Urban edge directly north of the site referred to in visual assessment.

**Methodology**

The visual assessment is based on a grading of degrees of visibility, from a visual inspection of the site and surrounding areas. There is, in any visual assessment, a continuity of degrees of visibility from not visible, to fully open in views, to indicate the degree of visibility of the site from various locations. This continuum has been divided into four categories:

1. Open view - a clear view of a significant proportion of the site within the wider landscape.
2. Partial view - a clear view of part of the site - a partial view of it, or a distant view in which the site forms a relatively small proportion of the wider view.
3. Glimpse - a transient view, or a distant view of part of the site in the context of the wider landscape.
4. No view - no view, or difficult to perceive.

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**Hankinson Duckett Associates**



CLIENT	Wheatcroft and Son/ JS Bloor
PROJECT	Collage Farm Landscape
TITLE	Visual Assessment of the Existing Site and Urban Edge north west of the site
SCALE	1:10,000 at A3
DATE	April 2006
	438 114A
	HDA 4



**KEY**

View from footpath		View from road		View from property		View from settlement	
				Open view		Partial view	
				Glimpse		No view	
				Views from Lower Floors		Views from Upper Floors	

**Methodology**

The visual assessment is based on a grading of degrees of visibility from a view point. There is, in any visual assessment, a continuity of degrees of visibility from not visible, to fully open views. To indicate the degree of visibility of the site from any location, that continuum has been divided into four categories:

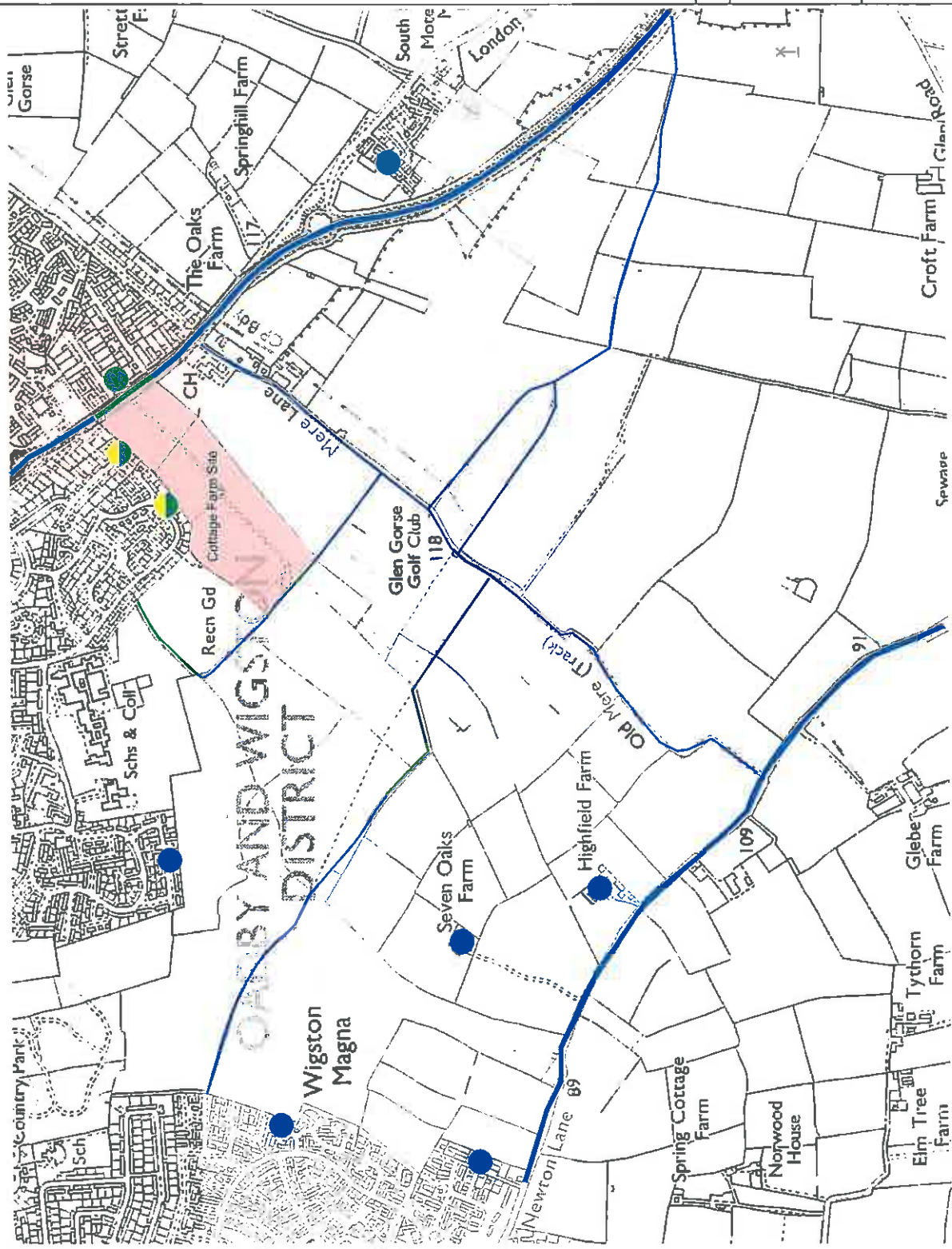
1. Open view - a clear view of a significant proportion of the site within the wider landscape.
2. Partial view - a clear view of part of the site, a partial view of it, or a distant view in which the site forms a relatively small proportion of the wider view.
3. Glimpse - a transient view, or a distant view of part of the site in the context of the wider landscape.
4. No view - no view, or difficult to perceive.

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CLIENT: Wheatcroft and Son, JS Bloor  
 PROJECT: Cottage Farm Landscape  
 TITLE: Visual Assessment of the Proposals  
 SCALE: 1:10,000 at A3  
 DATE: April 2006





Photograph A: South west from the A6 looking into the site.



Photograph B: North east from the south western boundary of the site

Cottage Farm Site boundary



Photograph C: East from the recreation ground.

Boundary to Glen Gorse Golf Club

Field boundary

Site



Photograph D: East from footpath to the south western of the field to the south west of the site.





Photograph E: North east from Mere Lane



Photograph F: North from the site to the north western boundary



Photograph G: North west from the A6

New development near Mount Farm



Photograph H: South east from north east running footpath off Mere Lane

New property at riding school



Photograph I: South east from north east running footpath off Mere Lane



3 Sycamores

Site Access

2 Sycamores



Photograph J: North east from the site to the north eastern boundary

Poplars

Copse



Photograph K: South west from the site to Poplars and a copse on the south western boundary

**Boundary hedge**



**Golf course trees**

**Photograph L:** South east from the site to south eastern boundary



**Photograph M:** Trees on track which runs through the site