

# DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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## KIRTON IN LINDSEY TOWN COUNCIL

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A 47 NO. SPACE PUBLIC CAR PARK  
INCLUDING EV CHARGING POINTS, GATED ACCESS AND HABITAT ENHANCEMENT  
MEASURES UPON LAND AT JUNCTION OF  
SOUTH CLIFF ROAD AND REDBOURNE MERE, KIRTON IN LINDSEY.

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

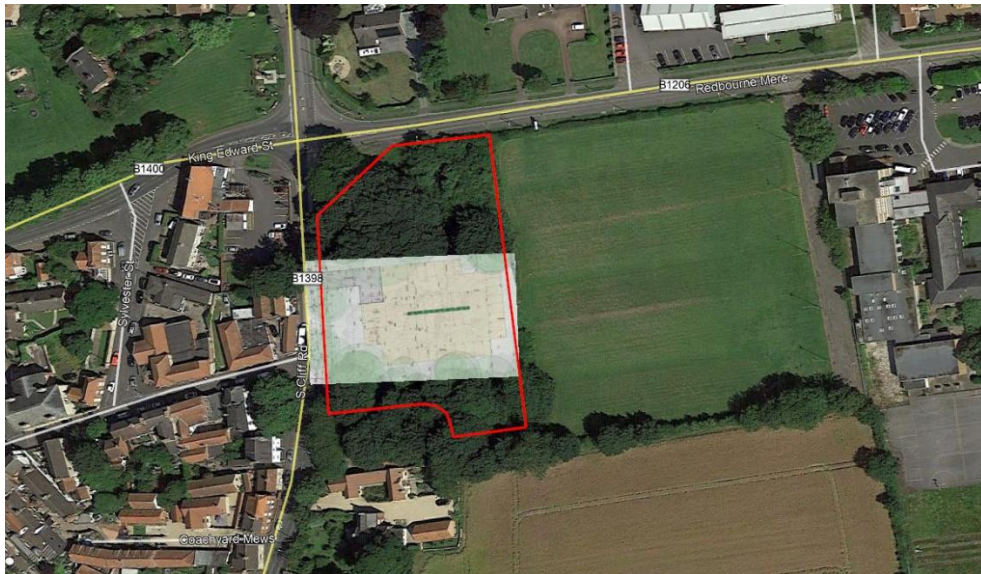
- 1.1 This document comprises a Design & Access Statement produced in support of an application seeking full planning permission for development of a 47 No. space community public car park including EV charging points, gated access and habitat enhancement measures upon land adjacent to the junction of South Cliff Road and Redbourne Mere, Kirton in Lindsey, Gainsborough. The following serves to outline and evaluate the development scheme in light of its spatial, functional, design, flood risk, ecological, heritage and strategic context.
- 1.2 The Design and Access Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying submitted plans and supporting documents:
- Proposed site location plan J1710-SCH-01, site layout plan J1710-SCH-02, gate/barrier elevation drawings J1710-SCH-03 and visibility plan J1710-SCH-04;
  - George Shuttleworth Ltd, 2021, Drainage Report;
  - ENGIE Arboricultural Consultancy, 2020, Arboricultural Report;
  - ENGIE Arboricultural Consultancy, 2021, Arboricultural Method Statement;
  - Inspired Ecology Ltd, 2020, Ecology & Protected Species Survey;
  - Inspired Ecology Ltd, 2020, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment;
  - HALL, Neville, 2020, A Heritage Assessment Of A Proposed Development Site On Land At The Junction Of South Cliff Road & Redbourne Mere, Kirton In Lindsey, North Lincolnshire.

## **2.0 DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT**

### **The Site**

- 2.1 The application site comprises part of an area of vacant land (Use Class *Sui Generis*) located adjoining the defined eastern periphery of Kirton in Lindsey. The site, which is under private ownership, is essentially an area of copse/scrubland host to remains of concrete hardstanding originally associated with a World War II era RAF base. The wider boundaries are primarily delineated by mature deciduous hedgerows. It can be observed that a timber double gated entrance flanked by sections of low stone walling is located near centrally along the site's western boundary. This provides direct access to South Cliff Road (B1398), which runs a course parallel with the western boundary. The eastern verge of South Cliff Road includes a public pavement, thereby facilitating pedestrian access to the site. The pavement extends around the site, past the northern boundary and along the southern verge of Redbourne Mere (B1206).
- 2.2 As evident within the aerial photograph based image included below, neighbouring land to the east of the application site comprises a playing field utilised by 'Kirton Lindsey Junior Football Club'. Huntcliff Comprehensive School is located to the east of the playing field. Arable farmland is located to the southeast of the proposed site. Land in

residential use is situated just beyond the site's southern boundary. Residential development is also located along South Cliff Road to the west of the site and Redbourne Mere to the north. The Queens Head public house occupies land in close proximity to the northern half of the site's western boundary, adjacent to the South Cliff Road and King Edward Street junction. The Queens Head is a Grade II Listed Building. A second designated heritage asset, comprising a war memorial (also Grade II listed) dating from 1920 is located opposite the cross roads to the northwest of the application site. It is therefore evident that the site's immediate surroundings are characterised by a mixture of community, residential, agricultural and commercial land uses.



Aerial photograph with layout plan overlay image depicting proposed site/development relative to neighbouring land uses.

- 2.3 The application site and wider surrounding landscape exhibits a relatively flat landform devoid of significant variations in gradient. Given the site's historic use, there is no reason to believe that the land is contaminated. The Environment Agency flood hazard map depicts the proposed site within 'Flood Zone 1', which indicates that there is a low risk of flooding. The site has not been subject to localised flooding or drainage problems attributed to surface water discharge. Nevertheless, this application includes a surface water drainage scheme (George Shuttleworth Ltd, 2021, Drainage Report).
- 2.4 The proposed site is not situated within any area of designated habitat importance (such as SSSI's, LWS, Ancient Woodland etc). However, the entirety of the site has been designated as an 'Area of Amenity Importance' within the 'saved' North Lincolnshire Local Plan 2003. The western confines of the application site are also encompassed by the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area. Historic England's database has not identified any listed buildings or designated heritage assets within the site. However, as noted above, a number of listed buildings and structures are located within its immediate zone of visual influence/setting. A Heritage Statement has therefore been submitted as part of the application portfolio (HALL, Neville, 2020, A Heritage Assessment Of A Proposed Development Site On Land At The Junction Of South Cliff Road & Redbourne Mere, Kirton In Lindsey, North Lincolnshire).

## **The Development**

- 2.5 The applicants' (Kirton in Lindsey Town Council) have been monitoring the availability of public car parking space within the settlement for a number of years. It has become increasingly apparent that the number of public car parking spaces/facilities available within Kirton in Lindsey is frequently insufficient during peak times. Such limits accessibility to businesses, shops, services and facilities, thus proving detrimental to the social and economic wellbeing of the local community. The lack of available public car parking space also exacerbates problems arising from on-street parking.
- 2.6 Provision of a new public car park is a logical way of addressing the current lack of car parking space within the town. Finding suitable land to support the project has however been a challenge. Nevertheless, an opportunity has now arisen to purchase the application site for the purpose of forming a new public car parking facility.
- 2.7 The proposed development seeks formation of a formal public car parking area including: 42 No. conventional spaces; 2 No. spaces for people with disabilities; 3 No. spaces with EV (electric vehicle) charging points; height restriction barrier; and timber gated access. The car park will utilise the existing site entrance, which will be upgraded and feature a short section of hard wearing tarmac surfaced carriageway. The main vehicle parking area will be formed from compacted aggregate interspersed with areas of landscaping (which assist with surface water drainage/infiltration). The development will include a modest external lighting scheme (for approval via condition). It is anticipated that this will comprise the installation low output LED bollards. Kirton in Lindsey Town Council intend that the car parking area will only be open to the general public 7 days per week between the hours of 08:00 and 20:00.
- 2.8 The new car park will be complemented by a landscaping scheme designed to promote biodiversity through the wider application site area. These measures are summarised within the latter 'Ecology & Nature Conservation' section of this statement. The car park should be regarded as a community asset that has the potential to support a number of local businesses and services through improving accessibility to the town centre. The social, economic and aesthetic benefits of the scheme will arguably promote a greater sense of civic pride.
- 2.9 North Lincolnshire Council were consulted via a formal pre-application enquiry (PRE/2019/62) at the outset of the project. Feedback was provided by Senior Planning Officer Mr. Scott Jackson on the 25<sup>th</sup> June 2019, whom concluded that, in principle, the development is considered to be strategically acceptable: *'In terms of the principle of development for a car park on this land I can confirm that the proposal is considered to be broadly acceptable under policy RD2 of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan as it is for a public car park which is essential for local community facilities.'* However, it was identified that any future planning application would also need to demonstrate an appropriate level of functional and environmental compatibility. Pre-application feedback identified the following attributes and potential constraints:
- Access: The Senior Highway Development Services Officer commented that the site's existing point of access to the public highway, which will be utilised by the proposed development, benefits from good visibility and appears suitable. Such would however need to be demonstrated through inclusion of visibility splays

within the proposed plans. It was also highlighted that the proposed car park should not result in the introduction of loose surfacing material within 10 metres of the public highway.

- Ecology & Visual Impact: Project Officer (Ecologist) Mr Andrew Taylor emphasised that: *‘This proposal should only go ahead if the need for and benefits of the development outweigh the harm to the landscape, woodland habitat and any protected or priority species that may be present.’* On this basis, it was recommended that the planning application be supported by an ecological survey, an appraisal of landscape and visual impact, and details of mitigating landscaping designed to enhance the site’s habitat/biodiversity value.
- Heritage Impact: Historic Environment Officer Ms Alison Williams identified that the western part of the application site is situated within the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area. The Historic Environment Record also indicates that there is evidence of a World War II era military development/remains within the site’s confines. The application portfolio will therefore need to be supported by a comprehensive Heritage Statement, as required under the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Residential Amenity: Environmental Health Officer Aleks Szymonowicz highlighted that the proposed development has the potential to impact levels of amenity afforded by neighbouring occupants to the south by virtue of noise and light pollution. Such therefore needs to be addressed by the application portfolio. Conditions were also suggested in order to regulate the installation of any external lighting and minimise disruption caused during the project’s construction phase.
- Flood Risk & Drainage: Mr B. Green of the North Lincolnshire Council Flood Risk Team observed that the application site is currently greenfield land with no public surface water sewers available nearby to facilitate drainage. It was accordingly requested that the application be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment and drainage strategy.

2.10 It is emphasised that the form and extent of the proposed development has been guided by the comments outlined above and advice provided by various commissioned specialists. The scope of supporting information also addresses requirements highlighted through pre-application consultation.

### **3.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

3.1 The statutory ‘Development Plan’ comprises the adopted North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework (LDF) ‘Core Strategy’ (2011) and the accompanying Housing & Employment Land Allocations Development Plan Document (2016). However, the LDF is still augmented by the ‘saved’ policies of the North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2003). This portfolio of documents will eventually be replaced by a single comprehensive ‘Local Plan’. However, such is at a very early stage of preparation and, as such, does not comprise a significant material consideration under Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Significant weight is given to the relevant provisions of the recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019.

## **North Lincolnshire Local Plan (2003) ‘Saved Policies’**

3.2 The North Lincolnshire Local Plan was adopted in May 2003. Following the requirement to prepare a Local Development Framework under the provisions of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the adopted Local Plan 'expired' in September 2007. However, under direction from the Secretary of State, a number of Local Plan policies were 'saved' from expiry pending replacement by the emerging LDF. In 2011, the LDF Core Strategy was adopted, thus superseding a number of saved Local Plan Policies. The LDF Housing & Employment Land Allocations Development Plan Document was subsequently adopted in 2016, thus replacing a number of additional Local Plan Policies. However, numerous 'saved' policies, which are directly applicable to the application in question, have not been superseded. These are referred to below:

3.3 **Policy RD2** concerns 'development in the open countryside'. Its provisions are applicable for reason that the application site is technically located outside of (though adjoining) Kirton in Lindsey's defined settlement curtilage. Policy RD2 stipulates that: *'Development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will only be granted for development which is: iv) essential for the provision of outdoor sport, countryside recreation, or local community facilities;'* In this context, it is emphasised that the proposed scheme seeks change of use of land to allow formation of a public car parking area. The need for a community facility of this nature has been identified by the Town Council. Formal pre-application with North Lincolnshire Council identified that, in principal, the proposed change of use would be considered strategically acceptable in light of 'Criterion iv)'. Nevertheless, Policy RD2 also outlines a series of criteria against which the suitability of new development proposals can be appraised. These are addressed as follows:

- a) *'The open countryside is the only appropriate location and development cannot reasonably be accommodated within defined development boundaries.'* With regard to sequential site selection, it should be noted that the application site comprises the only viable available land situated adjacent to the town centre. The application site is technically in open countryside by virtue of being located beyond the defined settlement curtilage. Nevertheless, the site does afford an excellent spatial relationship with the existing built environment. It is bounded by residential and commercial development on three sides and positioned adjacent to High Street, just 110 metres from Kirton in Lindsey's market place. The application site is therefore considered to be a most appropriate location for the proposed car park.
- b) *'The proposed development accords with the specific requirements set out in the relevant policies of this chapter and elsewhere in this Local Plan.'* As discussed below, it is considered that the proposed development accords with all relevant 'saved' Local Plan policies.
- c) *'The development would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the open countryside or a nearby settlement in terms of siting, scale, massing, design and use of materials.'* The application site is presently somewhat neglected and the area upon which the new car park will be formed primarily comprises scrubland partially underlain with concrete hardstanding. The proposal will introduce a

sensitively designed rolled gravel surfaced car parking area complemented by comprehensive habitat enhancing landscaping measures. The development will essentially ‘tidy up’ unkempt elements of the site whilst safeguarding the vast majority of mature trees and boundary hedgerows. It is anticipated that the proposed scheme will have a positive impact upon the character and appearance of the area. Due to the site’s close spatial relationship with the existing built environment, the development will not have any tangible impact upon the setting of outlying countryside to the southeast.

- d) *‘The development would not be detrimental to residential amenity or highway safety.’* Pre-application consultation with North Lincolnshire Council did not highlight any concerns over levels of traffic generation or highway safety. The existing point of juncture with Cliff Road (B1398) afforded excellent X and Y dimension visibility and the car parking facility has been designed in a manner that prompts site access and egress in forward gear. The positioning of the vehicle parking hardstanding ensures that there are good levels of separation from neighbouring land in residential use to the south of the site. External lighting will be minimal, of low output and designed to avoid unnecessary light spillage/radiance. Levels of amenity afforded by neighbouring occupants will remain essentially unaffected by the proposed development.
- e) *‘Account is taken of whether the site is capable of being served by public transport.’* It can be noted that the site is located in close proximity to Kirton in Lindsey town centre and bus stops are situated along Cliff Road close to the proposed car parking area entrance.
- f) *‘The development is sited to make the best use of existing and new landscaping.’* In light of this provision, it is emphasised that the design and siting of the proposed car parking area has been informed by the submitted arboricultural survey report (ENGIE Arboricultural Consultancy, 2020, Arboricultural Report) and the scheme accordingly safeguards all healthy mature trees of visual amenity/habitat value. Existing boundary hedgerows will also be incorporated into the scheme. The neglected hedgerow adjacent to the access will be trimmed to a height of approximately 1.0 metres and reinforced by additional planting as necessary. The scheme will include planting measures designed to ensure biodiversity net gain. The landscaping scheme will complement the appearance of the site and improve its habitat value.

3.4 On the basis of the above, it is considered that the proposed development accords with all relevant provisions of Policy RD2.

3.5 The Kirton in Lindsey Inset Map identifies that the application site is allocated as an ‘Area of Amenity Importance’. The proposed development is therefore subject to the provisions of **Policy LC11**, which states: *‘Within important amenity areas, development will only be permitted where it would not adversely affect their open character, visual amenity or wildlife value or compromise the gap between conflicting land uses. Where development is permitted, measures shall be taken to minimise their impact or, where necessary, make a positive contribution to such areas.’*

3.6 In light of the above, it can be observed that the proposed development principally comprises the introduction of new surfacing (the car park) to part of the application site that is already host to areas of concrete hardstanding (WWII era military structure remains). Though the application site is now widely proliferated with trees and foliage, the locality selected for use as a car park has previously been subject to scrub/tree clearing work in 2008. It is therefore already characterised by a lower density of trees than the remaining areas of the site to the north and south of the proposed car park. Resultantly, the proposed scheme will primarily comprise groundworks within an established clearing and such will not entail the introduction of substantial vertical elements (the only notable structures comprising a timber gated entrance with height restriction barrier) or significant tree removal. Though changes to visual baseline conditions will be perceptible from beyond the site's confines, its 'open character' will not be fundamentally altered by the proposed development. Indeed, the formal surfacing, landscaping and 'tidying' of scrubland/hardstanding areas will arguably enhance the site's visual amenity value. The application site has been subject to comprehensive ecological and arboricultural surveys. It is evident that the proposal will not lead to the substantive loss of habitat land and the site's biodiversity can be enhanced through a comprehensive landscaping scheme. The development presents an opportunity to bring the site into beneficial active use as a community asset and such can be achieved without compromising its amenity value. The proposal is considered to achieve strong alignment with the strategic direction of Policy LC11.

3.7 **Policy HE2** concerns 'development in conservation areas'. As previously noted, the western third of the application site is encompassed by the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area and elements of the proposed car park will be constructed therein. Policy HE2 states that: '*All development proposals in, or which affect the setting of, Conservation Areas should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area and its setting.*' In order to ensure that this primary objective is achieved, new development proposals are appraised against eight criteria. These are discussed below:

- i. '*Development should be of a standard of design which respects the appearance and character of the Conservation Area in terms of its bulk, height, mass, vertical and horizontal emphasis, proportions, layout, siting, landscaping and other matters of design such as roofscape and architectural style and detailing;*' Evidently only elements of this criterion are applicable to the development in question. With the exception of the proposed gated access/height restriction barrier, the proposed development essentially entails the introduction of new hardstanding and is thus two-dimensional in nature. Changes to visual baseline conditions will primarily arise through use of the car park, i.e. the introduction of vehicles. Nevertheless, it is emphasised that the design of the proposed car park was sensitively conceived from the outset in order to complement the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Such has been achieved by siting the new car park in an area subject to sparser tree coverage, thereby minimising the loss of protected trees (by virtue of specimens being within the Conservation Area) and ensuring that the application site's wooded appearance is broadly maintained. The existing access will be utilised with adjoining boundary walling safeguarded and timber gates relocated further into the confines of the site. Though tarmac surfacing is required at the point of juncture with the public highway, the main car parking area will feature compacted aggregate topped with rolled gravel (or similar). The car park will be augmented by a comprehensive landscaping scheme designed to retain

screening vegetation and promote greater biodiversity. The proposal will therefore appear as a discreet and congruous addition to the Conservation Area.

- ii. *‘Development should harmonise with adjoining buildings, preserve or enhance the street scene and should not detract from important existing spaces and views;’* In context of the above, it is envisaged that the proposed development will complement the setting of the street through the sensitive use of surface treatments, materials, layout and landscaping. The scheme will significantly improve the site’s accessibility and amenity value, resultant in some vistas of the surrounding Conservation Area becoming available from within the site. The development will effectively ‘tidy up’ unkempt elements of the site including scrubland and abandoned hardstanding.
- iii. *‘Building materials should be appropriate to the locality and context and sympathetic to those of existing and nearby buildings in terms of type, texture, colour and size. Walls, gates and fences should be of a type traditionally used in the locality;’* As previously stated, the proposed scheme will safeguard existing stone boundary walls located at the site access, which are considered to make a positive contribution to the setting of the Cliff Road street scene. The existing timber double gates, which are of traditional appearance and aesthetic merit, will also be retained and repositioned deeper into the site access. The use of rolled stone surfacing within the car park will avoid the hardstanding appearing unduly contemporary or discordant within the setting of the historic built environment.
- iv. *‘The development must have a satisfactory means of access which does not detract from the character of the area, not generate excessive traffic and where appropriate should provide for adequate car parking in a way which is sympathetic to the Conservation Area. In instances where there is conflict between the highway requirements and the retention of the character of the area, the latter shall prevail;’* The existing site access is considered to be readily adaptable for use in association with the proposed car parking area. Such affords excellent X and Y dimension visibility along Cliff Road. It is anticipated that the proposed car park will serve to address problems associated with on-street parking within the town centre. The facility therefore has the potential to reduce traffic congestion. It is unlikely that the proposal will tangibly increase levels of vehicular activity within Kirton in Lindsey. The availability of additional parking will merely divert a proportion of existing visitor derived traffic to a more appropriate location, thereby helping to remedy street scenes presently dominated by parked vehicles.
- v. *‘The development should retain important landscape and ecological features and where possible, include measures to enhance these features;’* As discussed in detail within the latter ‘Environmental Effects’ section of this statement, the proposed scheme has been carefully designed in a manner that preserves key ecological features and promotes greater biodiversity.
- vi. *‘The development should retain important architectural and historical features such as traditional street furniture and paving and should include measures to enhance them where possible;’* With the exception of the existing stone boundary walling and timber double gates located at the entrance (which will be retained), the application site is essentially devoid of important architectural or historic features.

As noted within the latter ‘Archaeology & Heritage’ section of this statement, the site is host to areas of concrete hardstanding that were originally used in association with a WWII era military installation. Certain parts of the hardstanding will need to be removed in order to facilitate development of the proposed car park. Nevertheless, the hardstanding areas have been surveyed and documented through a combination of field work (topographic and walkover surveys) and desk based investigations (refer to submitted report HALL, Neville, 2020, A Heritage Assessment Of A Proposed Development Site On Land At The Junction Of South Cliff Road & Redbourne Mere, Kirton In Lindsey, North Lincolnshire).

- vii. *‘The development should avoid the loss of open areas, gaps in frontages, and natural and built features (such as trees, hedges, fences, walls and paving materials) if they are important to the character of the Conservation Area.’* The application site is predominantly bounded by hedgerows and host to a plethora of trees. The proposed development has been sensitively conceived in mind of preserving established tree and hedge specimens wherever possible. The new car parking area has accordingly been positioned within a historically open area of the site (presently occupied by concrete hardstanding, scrub and poor quality tree specimens). When viewed from surrounding land, the general composition of the application site subsequent to the proposed development will not appear as a significant departure from baseline conditions.
  - viii. *‘The development should not spoil or destroy attractive views and vistas into, within and out of the Conservation Area if they are important to the character of the area.’* By virtue of proliferate trees and foliage, views through the application site are not currently readily attainable. The site is also under private ownership and not technically accessible to the public. For this reason, views from within the site are not ordinarily available. The appearance of the site is much akin to that of a small copse and such effectively comprises part of the Conservation Area’s background setting as opposed to a focal point. The proposed development will not significantly alter the site’s wooded appearance or its contribution to the setting of the street scene. The scheme will however create new publicly accessible space and, resultantly, new views of the Conservation Area will become available from within the site. The development will not prove detrimental to the enjoyment of the Conservation Area’s visual amenity value.
- 3.8 For the reasons outlined above, it is anticipated that the proposed development will make a minor positive contribution to the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area, thereby achieving consistency with the objectives of ‘saved’ Policy HE2.
- 3.9 **Policies T20 and T21** concern the provision of short and long stay public car parking. The rhetoric of the policies places priority upon minimising the need for car parking facilities by promoting alternative means of transport to the private car. New public car parking facilities are therefore restricted to the main town centres. However, the relevance of these policies to the development now in question must be questioned. Since adoption in 2003, there have been a number of technological, policy and societal changes. Not least since the advent of the Coronavirus pandemic, it is now evident that primary reliance upon public transport services is not realistically viable in rural areas such as Kirton in Lindsey and its hinterland. Car (and other forms of private transport) use will inevitably remain crucially important in rural areas and this must be catered for

with sufficient car parking facilities. Furthermore, a transition to the use of electric vehicles is now enshrined in Government policy and their usage will become dominant and relatively sustainable. Provision will need to be made for the use of these vehicles (including EV charging points) in locations beyond the major urban areas of Scunthorpe, Bottesford, Barton and Brigg. The proposed development addresses this reality. The need for additional car parking within Kirton in Lindsey has been identified by the local community and the development thus accords with aforementioned Policy RD2, thereby circumnavigating the somewhat restrictive criteria of policies T20 and T21.

### **North Lincolnshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011)**

- 3.10 Policy CS6 concerns the ‘Historic Environment’. As previously noted, the application site is partially situated within the Kirton In Lindsey Conservation Area and a number of designated heritage assets comprising listed buildings and structures are present within the surrounding area. Policy CS6 emphasises that: *‘The council will seek to protect, conserve and enhance North Lincolnshire’s historic environment, as well as the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance including historic buildings, conservation areas, listed buildings (both statutory and locally listed), registered parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and archaeological remains. All new development must respect and enhance the local character and distinctiveness of the area in which it would be situated, particularly in areas with high heritage value. Development proposals should provide archaeological assessments where appropriate.’* For reasons outlined within the context of ‘saved’ policy HE2 above, it is considered that the proposed development will respect and enhance the distinctiveness of the area. The design, layout and siting of the proposed car park has been sensitively conceived in order to achieve a high level of visual congruity. The site’s archaeological potential has also been examined. Reference should accordingly be made to the ‘Archaeology & Heritage’ section of this statement.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (2019)**

- 3.11 The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was formally adopted in February 2019. This updated document now replaces the previous National Planning Policy Framework adopted in July 2018 and the preceding NPPF of March 2012.
- 3.12 **Paragraph 8** expands upon the term 'sustainable development' in light of its economic, social and environmental components: *‘Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*
- a) *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
  - b) *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built*

*environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

- c) *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.'*

3.13 In context of the above, it is emphasised that the proposed community car parking use is considered beneficial compared to the alternative of leaving the application site in a state of disuse/dereliction. The provision of car parking in this locality is of collateral benefit to numerous outlying shops, businesses and services within Kirton in Lindsey's town centre for reason that such improves accessibility. It is therefore reasonable to state that the proposed car park will have an indirect positive impact upon the local economy and the vitality of the local community. The car parking use is not anticipated to result in notable changes to local baseline traffic conditions, though it is expected to reduce the prevalence of on-street car parking. The scheme has been sensitively conceived following a comprehensive arboricultural and ecological survey. On balance, the new car park with associated landscaping will have a negligible impact upon the site's habitat value. There is every reason to believe that the development scheme will complement the setting of the surrounding historic built environment. The proposal will not prove visually obtrusive and the site's wooded appearance, which partly defines the character of the locality, will be essentially preserved. Ample separation can be achieved from neighbouring sensitive receptors, such as land in residential use to the south, thereby avoiding adverse impacts such as disturbance derived from vehicle noise or light pollution. It is evident that the new car parking area can incorporate sustainable infiltration drainage in order to manage surface water discharge. The scheme will avoid the potential risk of flooding. The proposal is considered to achieve a high level of environmental compatibility. On this basis it can be argued that the proposed development is sustainable and that it should be promoted accordingly.

3.14 **Paragraph 106** concerns the provision of car parking and, of particular relevance to the proposed development, it states: *'In town centres, local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.'* Though technically defined as being located within 'open countryside', it can be noted that the application site is situated within the periphery of Kirton in Lindsey's town centre, just 110 metres from the market place. Paragraph 106 is therefore considered to be applicable in this case. As previously stated, the application site's utilisation for the purposes of car parking will improve accessibility to surrounding shops, services, businesses and community facilities. Car parking provision is presently very limited within the settlement. The scheme has been designed in a manner that promotes natural surveillance and it will be complemented by an external lighting scheme, thereby helping to 'design out crime'. The car park is considered to be sufficiently convenient, safe and secure. The formation of a new car parking area is therefore considered to be both desirable and consistent with the strategic direction of the NPPF.

## 4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

- 4.1 The following sections detail analysis of the various environmental effects anticipated to arise from the proposed development/use and any mitigation measures considered necessary to avoid identified adverse impacts.

### Landscape & Visual Impact

- 4.2 This section considers the physical and visual impact of the proposed development upon the local landscape. The assessment process adheres to general principles outlined by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environment Management publication '*Guidelines for Visual and Landscape Impact Assessment*' (2013) (GLVIA3) and The Countryside Agency's '*Landscape Character Assessment - Guidance for England & Scotland*' (2002) publication. However, it is not considered necessary for the following appraisal to provide the level of detail one would typically associate with a full Environmental Impact Assessment.
- 4.3 The GLVIA notes that landscape and visual assessment are technically separate procedures. However, the assessment of how a development might impact upon the landscape inevitably forms a baseline for visual assessment. The 'landscape' is regarded as an environmental resource and the 'effect' of a development upon it is primarily assessed in light of physical changes and the manner in which these alter established attributes/characteristics. 'Visual impact' is essentially a term used to describe the aesthetic consequences of changes to the landscape, i.e. how people might perceive changes to a view or the visual amenity/value of a site and its surroundings.

### Landscape Baseline & Characteristics

- 4.4 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) defines the term 'landscape' as: '*...an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors*' (Council of Europe, 2000). To understand the application site within its wider landscape context, regard was given to the Natural England publication '*National Landscape Character Area 45 – North Lincolnshire Edge with Coversands*.' Page 6 summarises the key characteristics of this National Character Area (NCA) as follows:
- *'Elevated arable landscape with a distinct limestone cliff running north–south, the scarp slope providing extensive long views out to the west.*
  - *Double scarp around Scunthorpe of ironstone, and extensive areas of wind-blown sand, the Coversands, giving rise to infertile soils supporting heathland, acid grassland and oak/birch woodlands, with rare species such as woodlark and grayling butterfly.*
  - *Underlying limestone supporting small areas of calcareous grassland.*
  - *Few watercourses on the plateau, which lies between the rivers Trent and Ancholme which flow into the Humber, and is cut through in the south by the River Witham.*

- *Productive soils on limestone plateau giving rise to a large-scale landscape of arable cultivation with extensive rectilinear fields and few boundaries of clipped hedges or rubble limestone, supporting birds such as grey partridge and corn bunting.*
- *Semi-natural habitats of acid and calcareous grassland and broadleaved woodland are small and fragmented, and often associated with disused quarries.*
- *Limited woodland cover, with patches of both broadleaves and conifers associated with infertile sandy soils, elsewhere occasional shelterbelts.*
- *Long, straight roads and tracks, often with wide verges; Ermine Street follows the route of a key Roman north–south route.*
- *Nucleated medieval settlement patterns following major routes, especially Ermine Street; sparse on higher land, with springline villages along the foot of the Cliff and some estates and parklands.*
- *Other development comprises the major settlements of Lincoln and Scunthorpe, with their prominent landmarks of the cathedral and steelworks, and several active and re-used airfields prominent on the ridgetop.*
- *Vernacular architecture and walling, especially in villages, of local warm-coloured limestone with dark brown pantiles.*
- *Several ground features, especially on the plateau, include prehistoric burial mounds, Roman artefacts and abandoned medieval villages.’*

4.5 In context of the above, page 8 of the Landscape Character Area profile notes further: *‘To the west, below the scarp of the Edge, soils are deeper on the lower-lying land towards Gainsborough, a market town located on the Trent. Here there is more of a sense of enclosure, with pastures bounded by full hedges, several parklands and estates associated with country houses, and woodlands on the steeper slopes of the scarp and on sandy soils around Scotton. A number of attractive small villages, including Kirton in Lindsey, Willoughton, Glentworth and Fillingham, nestle along the springline at the foot of the Cliff. Older houses, walls and farm buildings are often built with the local warm-coloured limestone, with dark brown or red tiled roofs, creating an attractive visual coherence.’*

4.6 Evidently, only elements of the broad landscape character area description are applicable to the application site and its immediate surroundings. The proposed site is technically situated in a transitional location between the existing countryside and built environments. However, it should be noted that the site is located in very close proximity to Kirton in Lindsey town centre. The contribution made by the site to the setting of outlying countryside to the southeast is limited. The application site’s contribution to the setting of the South Cliff Road and Redbourne Mere street scenes is however more significant by virtue of its spatial attributes/intervisibility. The proposed development’s potential to impact upon wider landscape character features summarised above is therefore limited. There is however much greater potential for the development to impart changes upon the established urban form/townscape character.



Extract from Townscape Analysis Plan – proposed car park location outlined in red.

- 4.7 The Kirton in Lindsey ‘Townscape Analysis’ plan (2003) identifies the application site as being host to ‘important trees/tree groups’, located partially within the Conservation Area and neighbouring buildings of ‘townscape merit’ (green in above plan extract) and heritage assets (listed buildings coloured orange). The application site is also allocated as an ‘area of amenity importance’ within the adopted Local Development Framework.
- 4.8 The site’s character and appearance is primarily defined by the plethora of trees established thereon and its contribution to the setting of the street scene is regarded as positive. It should however be noted that the individual tree specimens are generally of average to poor quality and the site is not rich in biodiversity (refer to ‘Ecology & Nature Conservation section below).



Aerial photograph of site dated 2008 depicting tree clearance and evidence of WWII era hardstanding

- 4.9 The appearance of the site has changed in recent years. As evident within the aerial photograph included above, the central area (which will be host to the proposed car park) was cleared of trees and foliage in 2008. This revealed World War II era remains (hardstanding) and created a sense of openness within the setting of the South Cliff Road street scene. Though former RAF hardstanding is still present within the site, it is now obscured from view of outlying receptors as scrub/juvenile trees have become re-established.

#### Landscape Impact

- 4.10 The impact of a development upon the fabric of the landscape is effectively appraised in light of the degree to which the resultant changes will alter the perceived landscape character and landform.
- 4.11 The proposed car parking area will occupy a relatively small area (1455.5 square metres including access). The fabric of the local landscape/townscape will nevertheless be subtly changed as a result of the proposal. GLVIA3 assessment criteria indicate that the application site and surrounding landscape should be regarded as exhibiting a moderate to high sensitivity to change. Nevertheless, one would typically expect to see car park development in a peripheral town centre location such as that in question. The proposed development will not appear as an alien or discordant feature within the setting of the existing built environment.
- 4.12 The local landscape/townscape character is considered to be robust and the appearance of the application site, though not unattractive, is relatively ubiquitous. The site is not host to tree specimens or features of key visual amenity value (such as ancient Oak trees, prominent historic earthworks/ruins listed buildings, sculptures etc). Its contribution to the setting of the street scene is essentially defined by the quality of

providing a 'green' treed/foliage backdrop to the historic built environment. Nevertheless, as previously noted, the area of the site proposed for change of use to a car park has been cleared of foliage in relatively recent years, thereby exposing presently concealed concrete hardstanding. The proposed scheme will essentially entail reversion of the site to a similar partially cleared condition.

- 4.13 It is emphasised that the proposed development's landscape impact will be somewhat variable dependent upon the intensity of the proposed car park's usage. When not in use (all vehicles vacated), the proposed combination of permeable surfacing and landscaping will integrate discreetly and successfully with the setting of the existing built and outlying countryside environments. However, when in full usage, the presence of vehicles within the site introduces a three dimensional element, increasing the site's prominence within the setting of South Cliff Road, the Conservation Area and land to the east. The nucleated layout of the car park in combination with retention of copse areas to the north and south and boundary trees/hedgerows to the east and west serves to limit the geographic extent of the landscape impact.
- 4.14 On balance, the development scheme will not therefore significantly erode the established local landscape character. The site will undergo appreciable change, though the wider parcel of associated land will still provide a treed backdrop within the setting of the town centre periphery and the proposed car park will merely occupy an area of land historically more open in nature that is already host to hardstanding. On the basis of GLVIA3 assessment criteria, it is therefore reasonable to conclude that the overall landscape impact of the proposed development will be of **small to medium magnitude**.

#### Visual Context & Receptors

- 4.15 The gently undulating nature of the landscape surrounding the application site means that some long distance vistas can be experienced. However, such also means that views can easily be restricted by buildings, topographical features and vegetation.
- 4.16 The visual influence of a development is assessed by identifying its connection with the surrounding environment and its range of intervisibility. Such is referred to as the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI). The ZVI is determined by the presence of screening features (be they terrain, buildings or vegetation) and the manner by which these serve to restrict the line of sight potentially gained from the surrounding area. Theoretically the ZVI perimeter will demarcate the furthest possible views of a site/development.
- 4.17 However, in reality the ZVI frequently varies according to climatic conditions and both minor and major changes to the built environment and wider landscape. For example, the felling of certain trees could potentially increase the ZVI of a structure from several metres to several kilometres in a given direction. Equally, a prominent feature with a large ZVI could be almost entirely obscured by the erection of a large building or tree planting on adjacent land.
- 4.18 A distinction has been made between 'obscured' and 'unobscured' views of the new car parking area. Viewpoints from where 50% or more of the parking area is clearly visible (unobscured) are encompassed by the first zone of visual influence (ZVI1). Viewpoints from where less than 50% of the parking area is visible (obscured) fall within the second zone of visual influence (ZVI2). This distinction avoids particularly obscured views of

new development being misrepresented as 'readily visible' from the surrounding landscape. It should be noted that the visual assessment assumes the presence of vehicles within all available parking spaces. Views that fall within ZVI2 are typically long range or very 'fleeting' in nature, i.e. limited views of the site gained from a distant elevated vantage point or through small gaps in otherwise dense foliage cover. Intervisibility achieved within ZVI2 is usually considered to be of low significance.

- 4.19 The following diagram illustrates the indicative boundary for ZVI1. Predominantly unobscured views of the proposed car park will be gained from (with a few localised exceptions) any point within the blue delineated perimeter during the months of winter. However, during spring, summer and early autumn, foliage cover provided by trees and hedgerows acts to significantly reduce the ZVI1 area.

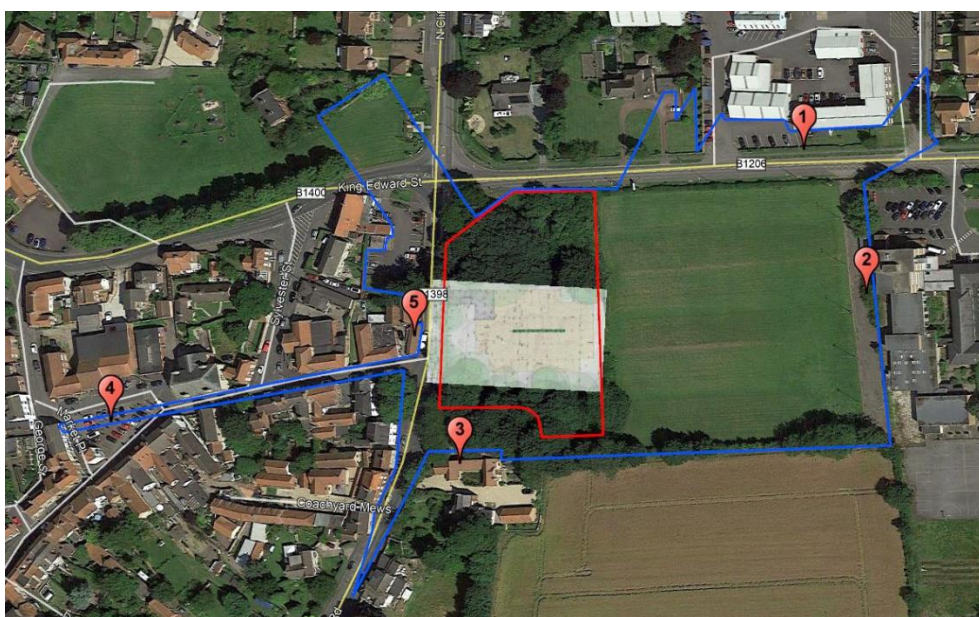


Diagram depicting ZVI1 (outlined blue) surrounding proposed car park (plan overlay with application site outlined red) and location of identified visual receptors (1 – 6)

- 4.20 Views within ZVI1 were considered in light of sensitive visual receptors and the identified landscape character. Regard was given to the potential dominance and screening effect the proposal might impart upon views of and from residential and recreational areas, the public highway, public footpaths and sites of visual amenity and/or historic value such as conservation areas and listed buildings etc. Individual receptors have been classified into groups defined by their type and position within a given arc of view, thereby avoiding unnecessary repetition of appraisal that might otherwise result if, for example, multiple adjoining properties within the same geographic/ZVI area were appraised separately. On this basis, six key visual receptors have been identified:

1. *Dwelling and commercial premises along Redbourne Mere* – located between 50 metres and 130 metres to the northeast of the proposed development. Redbourne Mere comprises an east to west orientated public carriageway. A section approximately 126 metres in length is situated within ZVI1. The carriageway is used with reasonable frequency but does not comprise a well-known visitor attraction/area of visual amenity value. However, views of the site gained therefrom may form a part of the receptor experience. Views will be transient for reason that

people will be travelling along the highway and occasionally obscured by sections of existing mature hedgerow located along the southern verge. Vistas including the application site attained from this receptor are considered to exhibit moderate susceptibility and sensitivity to change. Office premises and adjacent garden land associated with a dwelling located along the northern verge of Redbourne Mere are also located within ZVII. Static short range (0 to 0.4 kilometres) primary angle views of the proposed development will theoretically be gained from domestic garden land and front elevation windows of the adjacent commercial premises. Under GLVIA3 criteria, views of the site from the commercial receptor are considered to exhibit a low susceptibility to change. Views of the site obtained from the adjacent dwelling garden are of higher susceptibility to change. The sensitivity of the available vista to change is considered to be moderate for reason that, though generally attractive, such does include some discordant elements.

2. *Huntcliff School and playing field* – situated between up to 115 metres to the east of the application site's boundary. Short range views of the proposed car park's eastern confines will be readily available from the playing field and adjacent school premises. Under GLVIA3 criteria, playing fields and premises used as a place of work (or in this case, education) are considered to have a lower susceptibility to changes in visual baseline conditions. However, the vista's including the application site available from these receptors are considered to have a moderate sensitivity to change for reason that the static views are generally attractive, though unlikely to be the principal reason for a person being present at these locations.
3. *Dwelling, No.16 South Cliff Road* – comprising a domestic property situated to the immediate south of the application site. Views from residential receptors are considered to have a high susceptibility to change. It should be noted that both No.16 and the western confines of the application site are located within the Conservation Area. Static views of the site from this receptor are considered to have a high sensitivity to change. However, it is also noted that short range views of the proposed car park gained from the dwelling/associated garden land are somewhat obscured by existing structures present within the property curtilage and established trees/foliage (which will be retained) to the immediate south of the application site. Despite its close proximity, the proposed car park is therefore unlikely to be prominent within vistas including the application site.
4. *High Street and Market Place* – comprising sections of public highway located within the Conservation Area. High Street junctures with South Cliff Road opposite the application site's western boundary. It extends approximately 110 metres westwards therefrom in order to connect with market place. Transient views of the application site/market place will ordinarily only be gained from people travelling/facing eastwards along both carriageways. The proposed car park will be partially screened by existing boundary features and such is unlikely to appear prominent within the majority of vistas including the application site obtained from these receptors. The receptors are considered to have a moderate to high susceptibility to change for reason that individuals could be present specifically to visit the locality (comprising a designated heritage asset/town centre location). Similarly, views from these receptors including the application site are considered to be attractive/well composed and of moderate to high sensitivity to change. It should be noted that the various properties located along the carriageway are

oriented at angles oblique to the main angle of view, thus the proposed development will not be readily perceived within vistas available from dwellings/commercial premises in this locality.

5. *Dwellings and Queens Head Public House, South Cliff Road* – A series of dwellings, some of which comprise listed buildings and the Queens Head Public House are situated along South Cliff Road within ZVI1 to the immediate west of the application site. Static views of the site/development gained from the majority of these properties will be at short range. GLVIA3 criteria indicate that views available to residents at home and people engaged in outdoor recreation where the setting is likely to make an important contribution to the experience are of higher susceptibility to change. Vistas including the application site available from these receptors, which are all located within the Conservation Area, are also considered to have a high sensitivity to change. The South Cliff Road public carriageway adjoins the application site's western boundary and access will be gained therefrom. The north to south orientation of the carriageway in combination with its close proximity to the site will result in the proposed car park being evident within transient views available to people travelling along the road in either direction. The South Cliff Road visual receptor is considered to have a moderate to high susceptibility to change for reason that individuals could be present specifically to visit the locality (comprising a designated heritage asset/town centre location). Views of the site gained by users of the public carriageway are considered to be attractive/generally well composed and of moderate to high sensitivity to change.
  6. *War memorial and King Edward Street* – situated approximately 60 metres to the northwest of the proposed car park entrance. The war memorial comprises a listed structure situated amidst the Conservation Area. GLVIA3 criteria indicate that views available to people visiting sites such as designated heritage assets, where the setting is likely to make an important contribution to the experience, are considered to be of higher susceptibility to change. The short range static and transient views including the application site available from this receptor are generally attractive with few discordant features, thus indicating a moderate to high sensitivity to change. It can nevertheless be noted boundary hedgerows and established retained tree planting will result in large elements of the proposed car park being obscured/screened, reducing its prominence within vistas obtained from this war memorial and adjoining 30 metre section of King Edward Street.
- 4.21 Intervisibility within the second zone of visual influence (ZVI2) is variable, of lesser significance and difficult to accurately calculate on a theoretical basis. It is reasonable to predict that transient elements of the proposed development such as parked vehicles will be visible to a minor degree from remote vantage points/gaps in otherwise dense foliage etc. located within the surrounding countryside/urban area beyond the confines of ZVI1. ZVI2 views to the south and north of the site are very limited due to the presence of screening vegetation and existing buildings. Long range views (1.0+ kilometres) of the proposed development will not be readily attainable.

#### Visual Impact

- 4.22 Visual impact is assessed in light of the degree to which a view from identified receptors will change. The contrast of this change is in turn appraised against the significance of

these receptors and backdrop of the existing environment. The geographic extent of the development's zone of visual influence and the duration of the identified impacts are also taken into consideration.

- 4.23 The application site is presently host to a mixture of established trees and emerging scrub growing atop the remains of concrete hardstanding. The proposed car park, including associated structures, will primarily be situated in place of the existing hardstanding within a part of the site that was cleared of foliage in 2008. The removal of scrub and introduction of new hardstanding will not therefore be entirely unprecedented in this context. The balance of features within vistas including the site will inevitably change as a result of the development. However, views of the new car park (including vehicles parked therein) will not be widely available from the surrounding landscape. The site's primary zone of visual influence indicates that only the most proximate visual receptors will be impacted by the scheme. The spatial relationship between the proposed development and these receptors indicates that changes to views would typically be subject to partial obscuration by outlying trees, hedgerows, buildings and structures. The changes to visual baseline conditions arising from the development will also typically affect a small area of the vistas available from the identified sensitive receptors. In light of GLVIA3 criteria, the scale and geographic extent of the proposed development's visual impact is therefore considered to be small.
- 4.24 The majority of the development is essentially two dimensional in nature (hardstanding). It is also emphasised that external lighting will comprise low output LED bollards, which will only be active when the car park is operational (closed during the majority of night time hours). Adverse visual effects resultant from radiance/light pollution will therefore be avoided. Vehicles utilising the car parking area will therefore comprise the most visually prominent element. This assessment considers the visual impact of the scheme on the basis of all parking spaces being occupied by vehicles.
- 4.25 In reality this means that the visual impact of the development will be somewhat variable. Such will change dependent upon both usage and time (the car park will be closed outside the hours of 08:00 to 20:00). The changing of the seasons will prompt variations in the screening effect imparted by surrounding established tree and hedge planting. The car park operating at full capacity in the middle of winter will be more conspicuous within vistas attained from outlying sensitive receptors. In contrast, periods of low usage in summer months are likely to result in the presence of the car park being difficult to discern from beyond the site boundaries. It should be noted that the site is situated within a sensitive landscape area, within/adjointing the Conservation Area and proximate to various designated heritage assets. The site is also considered to be of some visual amenity value in its present form. Nevertheless, one would typically expect to see a car park adjacent to a town centre location and the development will not appear unduly prominent within key vistas. The scheme has arguably been sensitively designed in a manner that complements the character and appearance of the area.
- 4.26 It is accordingly concluded that, based on GLVIA3 assessment criteria, the proposed development's visual impact will be of **small to medium magnitude**. Though this level of magnitude is a consideration material to the determination of the planning application, it would not ordinarily be regarded as sufficient to justify the refusal of planning permission.

## **Traffic Impact**

- 4.27 The proposed car park will gain access to the public highway via South Cliff Road, which has a 30 mph speed limit. The point of juncture will achieve an X- dimension visibility of 2.4 metres and Y- dimension visibility exceeding 43 metres in both directions. The junction will be tarmac surfaced and of geometry suitable for use by light vehicles (which the use of the car park will be restricted to), with ample space for vehicles to access and egress simultaneously. The proposed access is therefore considered to be both safe and functionally viable.
- 4.28 A total of 47 car parking spaces (including 2 disabled spaces and 3 spaces with EV charging points) will be provided by the proposed scheme. Levels of vehicular activity directly associated with use of the proposed car park is potentially difficult to calculate with accuracy for reason that such will function in a capacity ancillary to shops, services, businesses and places of employment within the town centre. Usage/trip generation is likely to be directly proportionate to overall traffic volumes within the settlement on any given day.
- 4.29 Extreme ranges of trip generation could vary between 0 and 564 vehicles accessing the site over a given 12 hour period (assuming 100% parking space occupancy for an average duration of 1 hour between 08:00 and 22:00). Accounting for access and egress, maximum theoretical trip generation would therefore result in 1128 vehicle movements. However, this scenario is somewhat unlikely. In reality, the capacity of the car park is considered ample for the settlement's requirements and it is not anticipated that all spaces will be occupied at all times. Indeed, the British Parking Association indicated that local authority car parking spaces typically achieve between 50% and 80% occupancy. It is also probable that many spaces will be occupied for periods in excess of 1 hour. It is thus plausible that the car park will accommodate approximately 150 vehicles over a 12 hour period on a day of frequent usage, resultant in 300 trips accounting for access and egress.
- 4.30 In this context, it is emphasised that the proposed car park is unlikely to directly generate traffic/notably increase car usage, it will merely provide a parking facility ancillary to trips already generated by people working within/visiting the town centre. It should not therefore be assumed that the proposal will result in a tangible increase in traffic levels relative to baseline conditions. The development will essentially alleviate existing problems with on-street parking and inadequate capacity within existing car parking areas. The new car park therefore has the potential to actually reduce congestion and improve the safety of the town's highway network.

## **Noise**

- 4.31 The proposed car park theoretically has the potential to generate noise disturbance by virtue of vehicle movements therein. During the application's pre-application consultation phase, North Lincolnshire Council's Environmental Health Officer highlighted concerns over the impact of the scheme upon land in residential use to the south of the application site. It was suggested that a buffer zone should be introduced between the car parking area and this neighbouring noise receptor, possibly with inclusion of an acoustic barrier.

- 4.32 An acoustic consultant was accordingly consulted at the outset of the scheme. It was indeed considered appropriate to create a degree of separation between the car park hardstanding perimeter and the boundary of the adjacent dwelling. The proposed design achieves a generous 30+ metre separation distance. It should be noted that vehicles will be manoeuvring at very low speeds within the car park and activity will essentially be restricted to daytime hours, the potential for noise disturbance is therefore very limited and inclusion of an acoustic barrier was not recommended on this basis.
- 4.33 It is not anticipated that use of the proposed development will result in any significant change to established noise baseline conditions in the short, medium or long term. The development's construction phase does however present much greater potential for levels of noise disturbance detrimental to levels of amenity afforded by neighbouring occupants to the south and west of the site. To minimise this, North Lincolnshire Council's Environmental Health Officer suggested that the following condition be attached to any grant of planning consent:

*'Construction, and site clearance operations shall be limited to the following days and hours:*

- *08:00 to 18:00hrs Monday to Friday.*
- *09:00 to 13:00hrs Saturday.*
- *No construction, or site clearance operations on Sundays or public holidays.*
- *HGV movements shall not be permitted outside these hours during the construction phase without prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.*
- *Installation of equipment on site shall not be permitted outside these hours without prior written approval from the Local Planning authority.'*

- 4.34 Inclusion of the above condition is indeed considered to be an appropriate mitigating measure.

### **Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage**

- 4.35 With regard to 'Planning and Flood Risk', paragraph 163 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 stipulates that: *'When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment[50]. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that:*

- a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;*
- b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient;*
- c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;*
- d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and*
- e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.'*

- 4.36 Expanding on the above, NPPF footnote 50 states: *'A site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1, an*

*assessment should accompany all proposals involving: sites of 1 hectare or more; land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems; land identified in a strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased flood risk in future; or land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where its development would introduce a more vulnerable use.'*

- 4.37 In this context, it can be noted that the red outlined application site boundary (as defined upon submitted Location Plan J1710-SCH-01) encompasses an area under 1.0 hectares (total site area including existing access is approximately 0.54 hectares). Indeed, it should be observed that the proposed scheme will only result in approximately 0.145 hectares of presently greenfield land being subject to new development (proposed access and hardstanding). The application site has not been subject to historic localised flooding or surface water drainage problems and the land is identified upon the Environment Agency's Flood Hazard Map as being within 'Flood Zone 1'.
- 4.38 Under these circumstances, NPPF paragraph 163 and footnote 50 do not require that a site specific flood risk assessment (FRA) is submitted in support of the planning application. However, pre-application consultation feedback provided by North Lincolnshire Council Flood Risk Team indicated that consideration should nevertheless be given to the implications of the proposed scheme upon localised flood risk and drainage.
- 4.39 Land in Flood Zone 1, is defined as '*...having a less than 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding.*' FZ1 is therefore at the lowest risk of flooding. Table 2 'Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification' of the National Planning Practice Guidance (2014 revision) does not specifically identify public car parks. However, these types of facility are ordinarily regarded as being 'less vulnerable' to flooding. With reference to NPPG Table 3, which identifies the flood risk vulnerability and potential compatibility of new development within the various flood zones, it can be noted that 'less vulnerable' development is considered to be entirely strategically acceptable within Flood Zone 1. The application site is therefore a sequentially preferential location for the proposed development and there is no requirement for applying the 'exception test' noted within paragraph 163 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Flood Zones	Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification				
	Essential infrastructure	Highly vulnerable	More vulnerable	Less vulnerable	Water compatible
Zone 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 2	✓	Exception Test required	✓	✓	✓
Zone 3a †	Exception Test required †	✗	Exception Test required	✓	✓
Zone 3b *	Exception Test required *	✗	✗	✗	✓*

NPPG Table 3 extract outlining development vulnerability to flood risk classifications

- 4.40 It is evident that the only notable potential source of flood risk to the actual application site comprises surface water discharge from the hardstanding areas. The proposal will therefore incorporate a surface water drainage system designed to prevent the development giving rise to drainage/flood risk problems within and beyond the application site. Attention is accordingly drawn to the submitted document *George Shuttleworth Ltd, 2020, Drainage Report*.
- 4.41 Following the preferred hierarchy of drainage stated in Part H of the Building Regulations and The SuDS Manual the following disposal routes were considered:
- a) Disposal via Infiltration
  - b) Disposal to a Watercourse
  - c) Disposal to Surface Water Sewer
- 4.42 On this basis, two percolation test pits were dug within an area of the application site that will be host to the proposed car park hardstanding. In accordance with BRE 365, three consecutive tests were conducted in each of the holes. Percolation rates of 50 and 52mm/hr were recorded in each hole. It is therefore evident that an infiltration system can be utilised, with surface water draining via permeable surfacing. Details of hydraulic calculations and the proposed drainage system are included within the submitted Drainage Report. This demonstrates that it is practical to provide a sustainable surface water drainage system that will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere in the catchment.

#### **Ecology & Nature Conservation**

- 4.43 The application site essentially comprises an area of copse host to a range of mature and juvenile trees. A number of these trees are protected by virtue of being situated within the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area. In light of pre-application consultation feedback and the relevant provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), it was considered appropriate for assessments to be undertaken in order to ascertain the proposed development's potential arboricultural and ecological impact.
- 4.44 In this context, it was considered necessary to establish baseline data regarding the type, condition and number of trees present within the site at the outset of the project. Initial feedback from commissioned arboricultural consultant Mr A. Hudson (ENGIE) confirmed that positioning the proposed car park upon derelict hardstanding presently host to scrub near the centre of the site would be preferential in terms of minimising damage to mature/protected trees. On this basis, a full arboricultural survey was undertaken. Reference should be made to the submitted document: *ENGIE Arboricultural Consultancy, 2020, Arboricultural Report*. The data gathered through the tree survey process enabled fine tuning of the proposed car park layout and established which tree specimens were suitable for retention and protection. Attention is drawn to the submitted document *ENGIE Arboricultural Consultancy, 2021, Arboricultural Method Statement*. This evaluates the direct and indirect effects of the proposed design/layout and details measures to ensure good practise in the protection of trees (including a full tree protection plan) during the proposed development/construction phase. It is emphasised that the proposed development can be implemented within minimal loss of trees. The majority of specimens requiring removal are juvenile trees/scrub.

4.45 Nevertheless, the clearance of any existing trees, vegetation and ground has the potential to adversely impact site ecology. Specialists Inspired Ecology Ltd were therefore commissioned to survey the entirety of the application site in order to establish its habitat/biodiversity value at the outset of the project's design phase. Regard should be given to the submitted report: *Inspired Ecology Ltd, 2020, Ecology & Protected Species Survey*. It should be noted that the ecological survey and subsequent report were drafted on the basis of an earlier iteration of the development scheme that included both the car parking area (now in question) and clearing of additional copse area to form public open space (a picnic area). This latter element of the scheme was subsequently abandoned. Regardless, the ecology and protected species survey report concludes that *'No ecological constraints were found to be associated with plans to develop this land.'* However, a number of precautionary measures and ecological enhancements were recommended. These are both outlined below and summarised within section 6 of the submitted report:

- *'Precautionary measures for great crested newts;*
- *Bat activity surveys in summer months to determine appropriate recommendations with respect to bats on site;*
- *Vigilance and best practice regarding badgers and other ground mammals;*
- *Appropriate timing with regards to nesting birds;*
- *Provision of bird boxes;*
- *Improvement of boundary hedgerow; and*
- *Use of native species in any landscaping scheme.'*

4.46 Subsequent to completion of the ecological survey, the development scheme was updated resultant in removal of the proposed public picnic areas and minor revisions to the extent and layout of the proposed car park hardstanding. At this juncture it was considered appropriate to undertake a 'Biodiversity Net Gain' (BNG) Assessment. As expanded upon within the submitted report *Inspired Ecology Ltd, 2020, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment*, the purpose of the biodiversity assessment is to determine a pre-works and post-works comparison of biodiversity units through applying the Biodiversity Metric 2.0 Calculation Tool. The aim of BNG is to improve the post-development biodiversity value of the site. The assessment calculation was achieved using information pertaining to the onsite habitat condition, area and species composition, which were assessed against the predicted impacts arising from the works.

4.47 In this context, paragraph 4.5 of the BNG Assessment observes: *'The Biodiversity calculator identified an overall post-development LOSS in biodiversity units of -25.64% in absence of mitigation. This is as a result of the loss of onsite habitat units for dense scrub and woodland habitat to accommodate the car park. However, it is possible to improve this loss to -8.90% by enhancing all remaining areas of woodland and scrub.'* On this basis, the proposed development will incorporate/follow recommendations outlined within both the BNG Assessment report and the Ecology & Protected Species Survey discussed above.

4.48 The proposal will have a minor detrimental impact upon biodiversity. However, this is not realistically avoidable and such is not considered to be significant in light of the site's identified baseline habitat value. Planning permission would not ordinarily therefore be refused on this basis.

## Archaeology & Heritage

- 4.49 The application site is partially situated within the Kirton in Lindsey Conservation Area and located within the setting of a number of listed buildings/structures. Furthermore, formal pre-application consultation of North Lincolnshire Council highlighted that the site might be host to archaeological features. An appraisal of the proposed development's impact upon identified heritage assets has therefore been undertaken in accordance with paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), which stipulates that: *'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.'*
- 4.50 In this context, reference should be made to the submitted report: HALL, Neville, 2020, A Heritage Assessment Of A Proposed Development Site On Land At The Junction Of South Cliff Road & Redbourne Mere, Kirton In Lindsey, North Lincolnshire. The following provides a brief summary of key findings detailed therein.
- 4.51 With regard to the impact of the proposed development upon the setting of the Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings, paragraph 6.11 of the submitted Heritage Assessment emphasises that *'...that the nature of the proposed development will result in the creation of a new community asset and facility and in the clearance of a current area of waste ground, which is unused and has been neglected for some years and which will in turn contribute to the enhancement and improvement of the general character, appearance and setting of the assessment site. This will in turn enhance and improve the character and appearance of this particular portion of the local Conservation Area and will further contribute to the enhancement and improvement of the settings of the nearby identified designated and non-designated heritage assets, for which this study has concluded that there will be overall general negligible impacts from this proposed development with no change to their respective settings or to the significance of any of these identified heritage assets.'* It should be noted that these findings are consistent with the conclusions drawn within the above 'Landscape & Visual Impact' section of this statement.
- 4.52 As previously noted, the application site is host to areas of hardstanding and building remains. With reference to the site's archaeological potential, paragraph 6.8 of the accompanying Heritage Assessment notes: *'The cumulative research which has been carried out for this study has established the existence and location of a former WWII military site within the bounds of this assessment site. This comprised a series of temporary buildings that appear to have rested on concrete slab or pad foundations along with further areas of associated concrete hardstanding that included access off the eastern frontage of the South Cliff Road. The presence of this site here, which had been established by the map regression and aerial photographic analysis utilised for this study, was confirmed on the ground by a topographical survey of the assessment*

site in 2019 along with the site walkover survey that was carried out for this study.’ The potential for WWII era archaeological features/remains being present within the site is thus considered to be high.

- 4.53 Paragraph 6.5 of the Heritage Assessment also observes that the application site ‘...appears to lie just beyond the eastern fringes of the post-medieval settlement, where there may be a greater propensity for archaeological activity and finds from this period to be made on this assessment site, the potential for which is assessed as high, though this is not considered to be significant.
- 4.54 On this basis, mitigation measures are considered necessary to ensure that archaeological features are identified and documented for the benefit of future generations. Paragraph 7.1 of the Heritage Assessment stipulates: ‘As the proposed development will entail the removal of the remains of this former WWII military site, it is recommended that an enhanced archaeological watching brief be carried out on the groundworks for this proposed development following the site clearance of the current dense undergrowth and other associated landscaping works, but prior to the actual construction of the car park and access. This will ensure that the remains of this site are preserved by record. This can be secured by the attachment of relevant planning conditions to the granting of planning consent for this development.’ The proposed watching brief is considered to be a proportionate measure in light of the site’s archaeological potential and significance.

## **5.0 DESIGN & ACCESS**

### **Use**

- 5.1 The application site presently comprises an area of copse and derelict scrubland. The proposed development will entail a change of use in order to form a community car park (Use Class *Sui Generis*). The site is located close to Kirton in Lindsey town centre and the development is considered to achieve a high level of compatibility with all neighbouring land uses. As demonstrated within the Planning Policy Context section of this statement, the proposed change of use is considered strategically acceptable in light of the Development Plan, national planning policy and other material considerations.

### **Amount**

- 5.2 The application site occupies an area of approximately 0.54 hectares. The majority of the site will however remain undeveloped for reason that the proposed car parking area, including access, hardstanding and integrated landscaping, encompass 1455.5 m<sup>2</sup> (0.145 hectares). Details of the various surface treatments and structures are outlined below:
- *Tarmac surfaced access*: this will juncture with South Cliff Road and provide approximately 163.5 m<sup>2</sup> of hard wearing low noise surfacing designed to allow vehicles to simultaneously pass one another when travelling between the main car parking area and public highway.

- *Car parking area*: occupying approximately 1272 m<sup>2</sup> and constructed from semi-free draining compacted granular aggregate. This will provide a total of 42 No. conventional spaces; 2 No. spaces for people with disabilities; and 3 No. spaces with EV (electric vehicle) charging points. The car parking area will also include a centrally located landscaped island measuring approximately 20 m<sup>2</sup> and low output energy efficient external lighting designed to minimise light pollution.
- *Gated access with height restriction barrier*: to be located at the car park entrance. These timber structures will prevent unauthorised access when the car park is closed and restrict the size/height of vehicles utilising the facility.

5.3 The proposed size/amount of car parking is required to meet local requirements identified by Kirton in Lindsey Town Council.

### **Layout**

5.4 The proposed site layout seeks to: avoid profligate use of land; safeguard mature trees and minimise loss of wildlife habitat; avoid visual intrusion within the setting of the surrounding historic built and countryside environments; provide safe and effective access to the public highway; and prevent neighbouring land users from suffering a loss of amenity.

5.5 On this basis, the proposed layout seeks formation of the new car park centrally within the site upon an area that is presently host to scrubland and existing concrete hardstanding. The selection of this locality, which followed consultation with arboricultural and ecological specialists, will minimise harm to established trees and limit the development's ecological impact. Such will also maximise the screening benefit of retained mature tree and hedge planting to the north, south and west, thereby reducing the prominence of the car park within the setting of the adjoining Conservation Area. The site layout will make use of the established access, though this will be reconfigured and upgraded. This established point of juncture with the public highway achieves excellent visibility. Its positioning will allow vehicles to progress efficiently to and from the car parking area, thereby minimising the extent of required private carriageway. It can be observed that the layout retains a 'buffer zone' to the south of the proposed hardstanding, thus creating a good degree of separation from neighbouring land in residential use. This measure avoids potential noise disturbance and loss of amenity.

### **Scale**

5.6 Considerations of scale are multifaceted for reason that they relate both to the proportions of the various buildings/structures proposed and the overall size of the development scheme. In addition, scale is a relative term. The perceived scale of a development is usually appraised against the baseline of existing built surroundings.

5.7 Though the application site occupies in excess of 0.5 hectares, it is emphasised that the actual area subject to new development merely comprises 0.145 hectares. The new car park will therefore occupy an area akin to a large dwelling curtilage and the extent of hardstanding proposed is similar to a number of private car parks and yards located throughout the settlement. The development is essentially a two dimensional structure

within minimal vertical elements (primarily comprising the gated access with height restriction barrier). The scale of the proposed scheme will not therefore appear discordant within the setting of the surrounding built environment.

### **Landscaping**

- 5.8 As identified within the ‘Ecology & Nature Conservation’ section of this statement, the application site is host to a range of mature and juvenile trees. The majority of the site boundaries are also delineated by mature hedgerows. The proposed development has been conceived following consultation with arboricultural and ecological specialists. This process has ensured that the new car park is designed and positioned in a manner that minimises tree loss and adverse impacts upon site ecology. A tree protection plan has been produced in order to safeguard key specimens during the development’s construction phase. A number of additional landscaping measures are proposed in light of recommendations highlighted within the submitted Ecology & Protect Species Survey and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.
- 5.9 The application site is currently dominated by deciduous, broadleaved trees with a closed canopy structure. Prevalent species include sycamore (which has regenerated profusely) together with occasional hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, English oak *Quercus robur*, holly *Ilex aquifolium* and ivy *Hedera helix* present. A number of tree specimens are in poor health (note submitted arboricultural report) and benefits could be presented through their felling and replacement. Indeed, the submitted BNG Assessment report observes: ‘*In view of the lack of species diversity and standing/fallen dead wood, in its current form, this habitat was assessed as being of ‘moderate’ condition under the assessment criteria contained within the Natural England Technical Supplement (Crosher et al. 2019) based on the number of failed criterion.*’ It is accordingly recommended that any felled trees are left on-site to simulate fallen deadwood, thereby creating superior habitat for invertebrates. It is also advised that a number of Sycamore trees be removed in order to allow introduction of a greater species mix. The Ecology & Protect Species Survey report suggests: ‘*...species that provide pollen, nectar and fruit should form part of the landscaping in order to provide a food source for common birds. Species which could be considered include hazel *Corylus avellana*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, dog-rose *Rosa canina*, wayfaring tree *Viburnum lantana*, sweet-briar *Rosa rubiginosa*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, common buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica* and guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*.*’
- 5.10 The eastern boundary hedgerow will also be reinforced with new specimens. Again, the submitted Ecology & Protected Species Survey report recommends that: ‘*The eastern boundary hedgerow should be improved using native species such as blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, common hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, field maple *Acer campestre*, midland hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata*, wild cherry *Prunus avium* and bird cherry *Prunus padus*. It is recommended that the eastern boundary hedgerow is double-planted to provide extra width, and therefore increasing the amount of available opportunities for hedgerow habitat and food sources. It may be suitable for the hedgerow to be laid, however further advice on this should be sought from a specialist hedgelayer.*’

- 5.11 It should also be noted that the proposed car parking area will include integrated hard and soft landscaping measures. In order to promote superior visual integration within the setting of the surrounding historic built environment, the primary car park hardstanding will be constructed from a suitable granular aggregate material selected on the basis of its hard wearing, free draining and aesthetic properties (this can be approved via the LPA through use of a planning condition). A landscaped island occupying approximately 20 m<sup>2</sup> will be positioned centrally within the car parking area. This has the potential to be planted with a selection of habitat enhancing shrubs, herbs and flowers.
- 5.12 The above planting/habitat enhancement measures and applicable recommendations detailed within the aforementioned submitted reports will be implemented then managed throughout the lifespan of the proposed development.

### **Appearance**

- 5.13 At present, the application site effectively comprises an area of unmanaged copse host to a combination of mature trees, scrub and derelict hardstanding predominantly bounded by mixed hedgerow. Though the actual site is perhaps of modest aesthetic merit, it does nevertheless provide an attractive treed backdrop to the setting of South Cliff Road, Redbourne Mere and King Edward Street, thus making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposed development primarily entails formation of a new car park upon existing derelict hardstanding/scrubland. Care has been taken to safeguard existing mature trees and boundary hedgerows. From the majority of outlying visual receptors, the copse like appearance of the site will be preserved with the car park only being most readily apparent in vistas gained from points close to the entrance and the playing field to the east. The appearance of the site and setting of its surroundings will be subtly altered rather than fundamentally changed as a result of the proposed scheme.

### **Access**

- 5.14 The application site presently gains access to South Cliff Road via a double gated entrance located mid-way along the western boundary. The proposed development will utilise this same point of juncture, though the access will be upgraded with tarmac surfacing, superior geometry and gates with a height restriction barrier set further back from the site boundary. The proposed access will achieve excellent visibility with an X – dimension of 2.4 metres and Y- dimensions exceeding 43 metres in both directions (note drawing J1710-SCH-04). This is above minimum junction visibility requirements along a 30 mph speed limit public carriageway outlined within ‘Manual for Streets’. The width of the access will be sufficient to allow two vehicles to pass one another unhindered, thus ensuring smooth traffic flow and the avoidance of congestion. The main car parking area will include a total of 47 car parking spaces (including disabled and EV parking). It should be noted that the proposed development does not include cycle parking provision. This is for reason that, should planning permission be granted, existing cycle parking facilities managed by Kirton in Lindsey Town Council will be upgraded/expanded. The proposal will therefore facilitate off-site cycle parking provision. This matter can be addressed through use of a Grampian condition if necessary. The application site is located within the town centre and adjoins a public

pavement. The car park will benefit from a high level of pedestrian permeability/accessibility.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The proposed scheme, which follows pre-application consultation with the Local Planning Authority, seeks to redevelop an area of derelict scrubland located close to Kirton in Lindsey town centre in order to provide a public car park. This new facility will help to improve access to local shops, places of employment, leisure and community services by addressing the present undersupply of car parking space within the settlement. The scheme will help to remedy traffic problems including localised congestion arising from on-street parking. The proposal can be accommodated without the loss of significant trees or detrimental impacts upon the character and appearance of the area. The development will not give rise to significant adverse environmental effects or compromise levels of amenity afforded by neighbouring occupants. The granting of planning permission would strongly accord with the provisions of the Development Plan and national planning policy. The proposal will cause no demonstrable harm.