

Landscape Advice Note

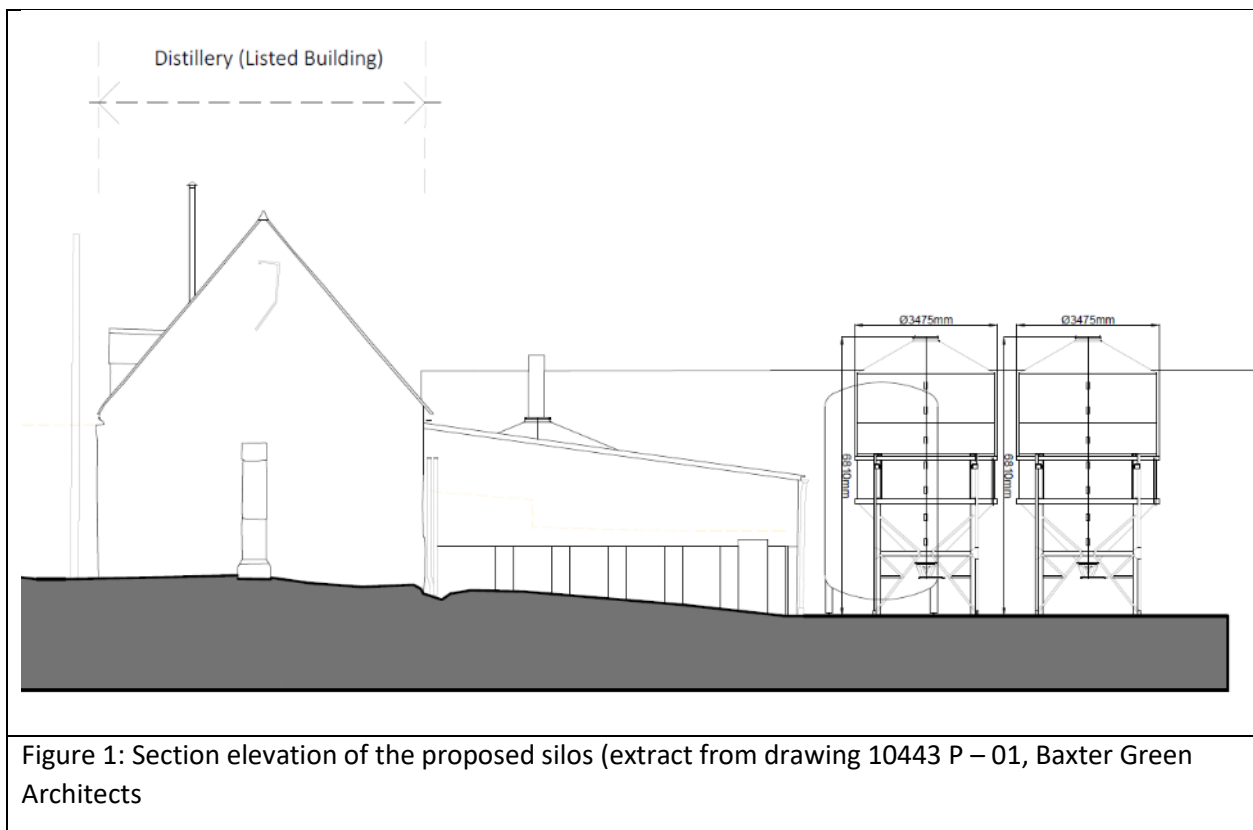
Job Number/Title:	3509 Witchmark Distillery, Fonthill Bishop
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File Ref and Revision/Status:	3509-APA-ZZ-XX-FN-L-4100 P01

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This initial Landscape and Visual advice note has been commissioned by The Wiltshire Distilling Company Limited and prepared by Landscape Architects, Allen Pyke Associates Ltd. It provides initial commentary on the landscape and visual sensitivities of the Site at The Witchmark Distillery, Fonthill Bishop.

Proposals

- 1.2. The Witchmark Distillery are looking to double production capacity and are proposing to install two silos at the Site within an enclosed yard. The section elevation in Figure 1 illustrates the proposed height of the silos at circa 7m and their relationship with existing buildings around the yard.



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2 LANDSCAPE POLICY OVERVIEW

- 2.1. The following landscape policies are considered of relevance to the Site¹. However, if the LPA request further assessment such as a Landscape Appraisal or Landscape and Visual Impact then these and other policies and guidance would be reviewed in more detail.

National Policy (NPPF)

- Section 15 and paragraph 189: *'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues'.*

Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015

- Core Policy 27 and key issues and considerations in paragraph 5.146 requires *'all development within the Community Area will need to conserve the designated landscape of Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and its setting, and where possible enhance its locally distinctive characteristics'.*
- Core Policy 51: Landscape – *'Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures...'*
- Core Policy 58: Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment *'Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment...'*

National Landscape Management Plan

- Policy LAN1 *'...Promote and champion the conservation and enhancement of the landscape character, tranquillity and special qualities of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape and its setting, particularly those that are sensitive to change...'*
- Policy LAN2 *Proposals that are likely to impact on, or create change in, the landscape of the National Landscape must seek to further the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape... '...There should be a presumption against the loss of key characteristics identified in the landscape character assessments...'*

¹ The list of policies is not exhaustive and the extracts are selected to emphasize key points.

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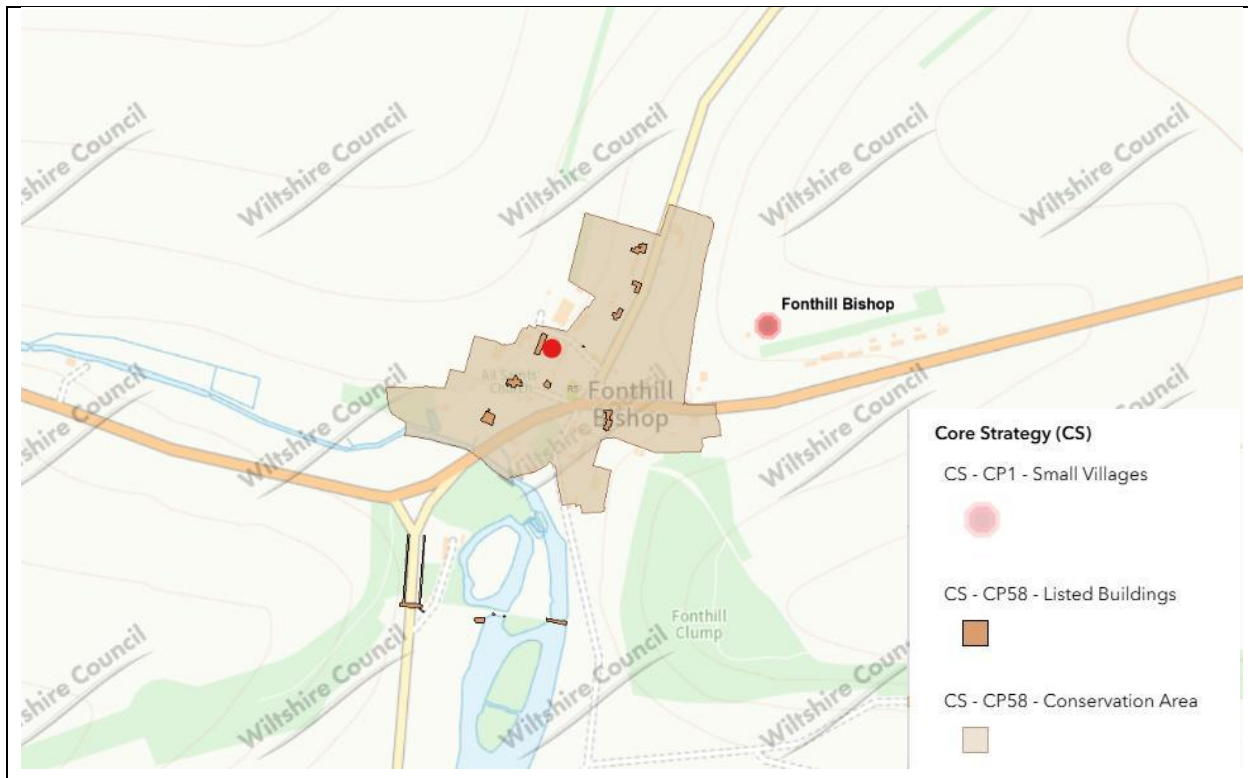


Figure 2: Extract from Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy Map. The red dot indicates the approximate Site location.

3 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Site Context

- 3.1. The site is located within the small village of Fonthill Bishop in the county of Wiltshire, which is also the local authority for the non-metropolitan areas of the county.
- 3.2. The village is located along the B3089, approximately 3km north of Tisbury and 13km southeast of Warminster. The Site lies towards the northwestern edge of the village and consists of a series of largely historic farm buildings along an access track. The buildings are arranged to form two yards. The village sits within a dry valley with the undulating wooded landscape of Fonthill Park (a Registered Park and Garden) to the south and the open farmland plateau rising to the north. The village is set within the Cranbourne Chase National Landscape.
- 3.3. The Site is part of a former farm with a mix of historic and modern agricultural buildings, domestic properties and outbuildings. The eastern most yard is where the proposed silos will be located. Its western boundary is formed by a single storey modern, green aluminium agricultural building that forms an extension to a large historic (listed) barn, while the northern boundary is formed by

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a single storey building of stone and timber with modern aluminium roof and flues, these three buildings form the core of the distillery operations. The eastern boundary is formed by another historic barn which is not within the ownership or use of the distillery. The southern boundary consists of a tall wall with a garden and residential property beyond.

- 3.4. There are several other listed buildings within the context including the Grade I listed All Saints Church. The village, including the Site, is designated a Conservation Area.
- 3.5. There is an extensive PRow network within the immediate context including a bridleway which passes through the Site, footpath through the churchyard extending westwards and Monarch's Way to the east and west.

Site Features

- 3.6. The Site operates as a yard for the distilling business, it contains a small shipping container, several liquid storage IBC units, large wheelie bins, and timber pallets. At the time of the visit there was a pickup truck with trailer and another small skip bucket parked in the yard.

Published Assessments

- 3.7. At a National Scale the Site falls within the southern part of Salisbury Plain and West Wiltshire Downs (National Character Area 132). Key characteristics relevant to the Site include;
- *Many small, sheltered river valleys, such as the Wylye, with narrow flood plains and meandering river courses.*
 - *A sparsely settled landscape, with few settlements of any size, and notable for nucleated villages at the foot of the scarp along the springline. Large-scale farmsteads are a prominent feature.*
 - *Abundant use made in older buildings of local stone such as flint, Chilmark stone and clunch, together with timber frame and chalk cob.*
 - *Large parks and estates found in the valleys, with related groups of estate housing in common style*
- 3.8. At a regional scale there are two Landscape Character Assessments. The main Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment covers the whole of the county at 1:50,000 scale, while more detailed assessments at 1:25,000 divide the county into 4 broad areas by district.

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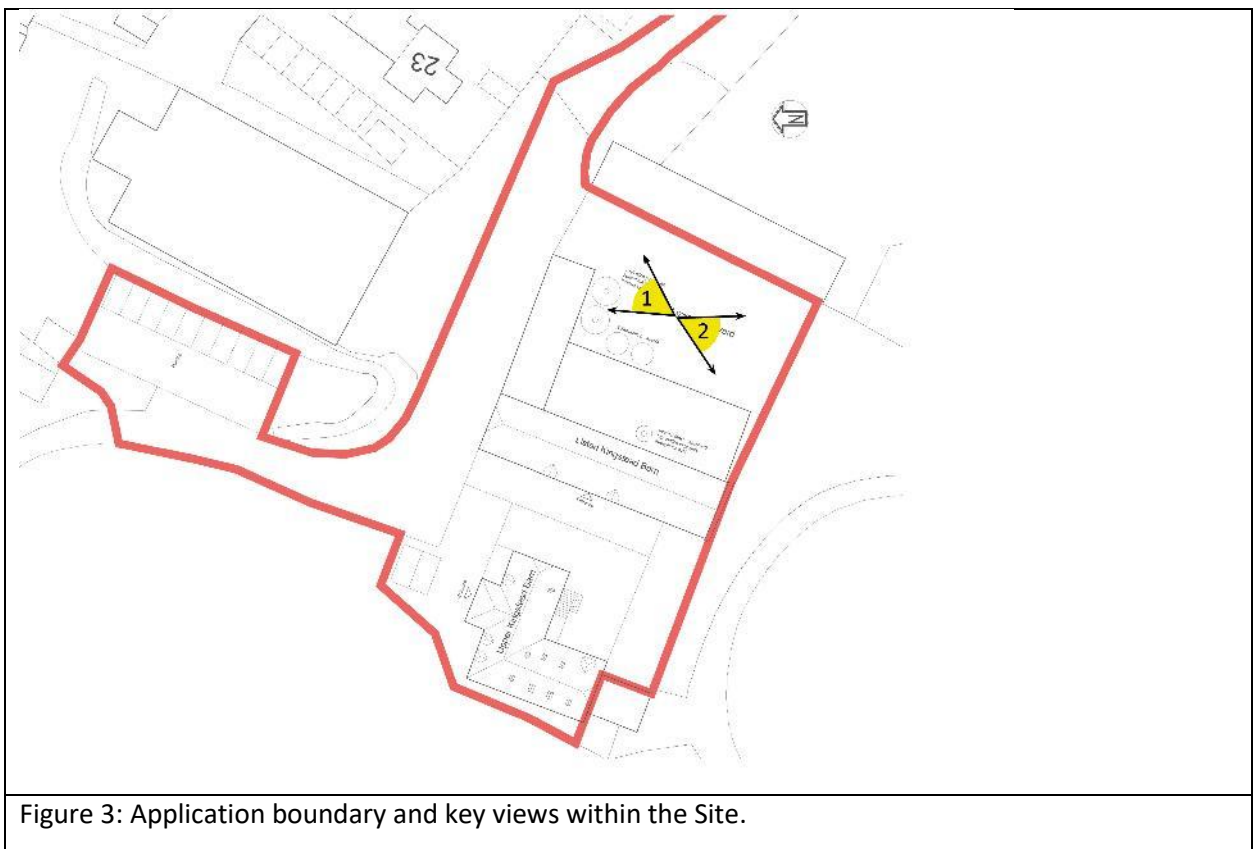
- 3.9. In the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment 2005, the Site falls within Landscape Character Type 2: Wooded Downland and Landscape Character Area 2E: West Wiltshire Downs Wooded Downland. Key descriptions relevant to the site include; *an area of broad rolling hills; At its western and southern edges dramatic scarp slopes descend to the adjacent Greensand Terrace; The shallow valley sides have been exploited for arable cultivation with the same pattern of large rectangular fields as on the downland; Settlement comprises isolated farmsteads, dispersed hamlets and a few small villages such as Teffont Magna and Fonthill Bishop which tend to be located on the sheltered south facing slopes.*
- 3.10. In the Salisbury District Landscape Character Assessment 2008, the Site falls within the Landscape Character Type D: Chalk Downland and Landscape Character Area D1: West Wiltshire Downs Chalk Downland. Key landscape characteristics relevant to the Site include;
- A large-scale landscape of broad rolling hills and undulating land separated by dry river valleys;
 - Dominated by an Upper Chalk surface geology with drift clay with flints capping on higher ground;
 - A series of wide, open spaces contrast with substantial areas of woodland which is often extensive remnants of hunting forests;
 - Woodland also includes small rectilinear game copses or woods;
 - Grovely Wood Royal forest, and Stockton Wood, reflecting clay-with-flint soils;
 - Straight-sided fields representing late 18th/early 19th century Parliamentary enclosure, with largescale fields resulting from 20th century boundary loss;
 - Settlement pattern comprising small villages, dispersed hamlets and isolated farmsteads;
 - Villages tend to be located on the south facing slopes where the landform offers increased shelter;
- 3.11. In addition to these county level assessments and broadly aligning with them, the Cranbourne Chase National landscape, Landscape Character Assessment 2004 locates the Site within Landscape Type 2: Open Chalk Downland and Landscape Character Area 2A: West Wiltshire Downs Open Chalk Downland. Key Characteristic relevant to the Site include;
- A large-scale landscape of broad rolling hills and undulating land separated by dry river valleys.

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- Dominated by an Upper Chalk surface geology with drift clay with flints capping on higher ground.
- Straight-sided fields representing late 18th/early 19th century Parliamentary enclosure, with large-scale fields resulting from 20th century boundary loss.
- Settlement pattern comprising small villages, dispersed hamlets and isolated farmsteads.
- Villages tend to be located on the south facing slopes where the landform offers increased shelter.

4 Visual Sensitivity

- 4.1. Figures 3 and 4 illustrate the location of 7 key views which have been selected and described over the following pages to explain the key landscape and visual sensitivities of the Site



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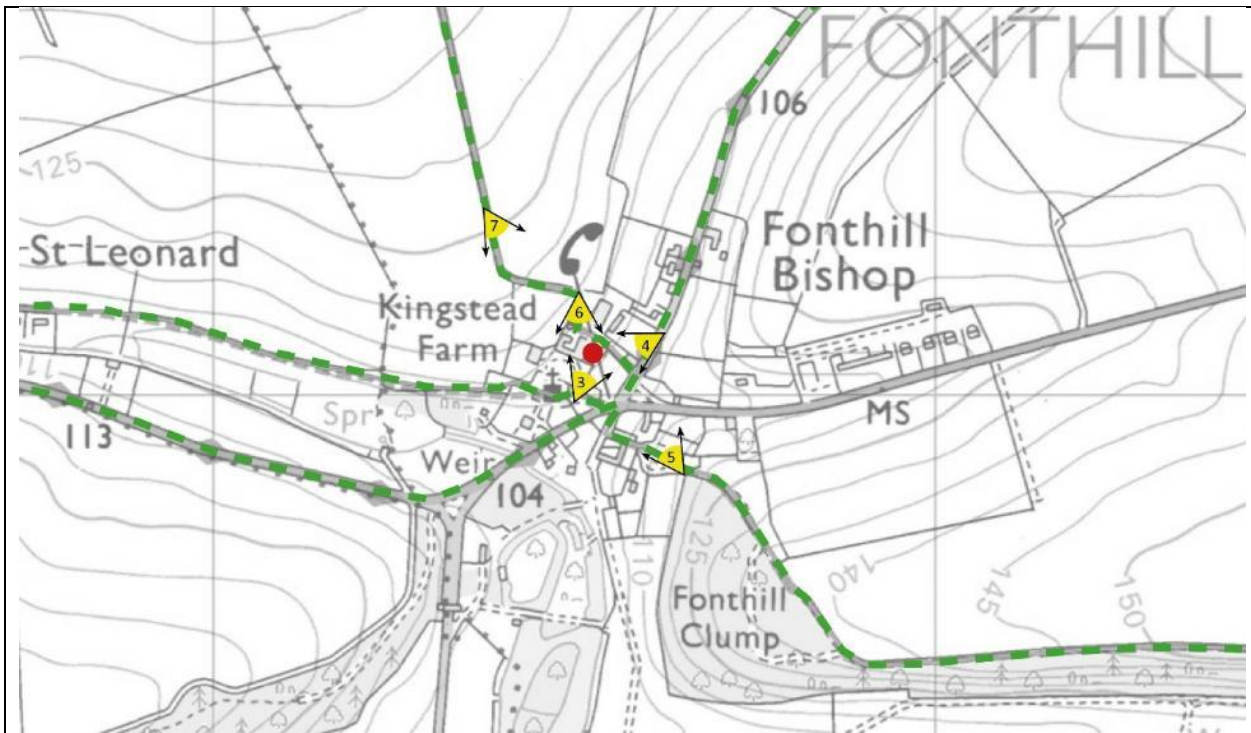


Figure 4: Indicative site boundary and key views near the Site. The Site is indicated with a red dot and the PRoW by green dashed lines.



View 1: Within the yard looking northwards at the proposed location of the silos. The courtyard is enclosed except for the access point onto the farm track which is also the route of a Bridleway (FBIS 4). The residential property opposite the access has views into part of the yard and the mature trees south of the Site over the wall. Users of the bridleway FBIS 4 will have the same view, albeit transient at 90 degrees to the direction of travel. There are various storage containers and pallets as well as wheelie bins and a vehicle.

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View 2: Within the yard looking southwards. The courtyard is enclosed and the southern boundary wall (circa 2m) screens any direct views into the garden of an adjacent residential property. There are views over the top of the wall, filtered by mature trees within the garden and the landscape beyond.



View 3: Along the footpath (FBIS 5) accessing All Saints Church there is a transient, narrow and glimpsed view at 90 degrees to the direction of travel. The view is through a private drive and garden of a residential property. The southern wall of the yard within the Site can be seen and the red pallets can be seen over the wall silhouetted against the wall of the northern building of the yard. Two small flues associated with the distilling operation can be seen on the pitch of the roof with sky beyond.

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View 4: From the lane (Monarch's Way) that leaves the village northwards connecting to the A303. The view is looking south over the mown lawns of residential properties north of the Site. Several buildings associated with the Site are in the view and flues associated with the distilling operations are visible towards the centre of the view. The yard (location of the proposed silos) is not visible in the view and is screened by the surrounding historic farm buildings. The mature coniferous trees south of the Site are clearly visible. The church tower is also screened from view.

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View 5: From the Bridleway (FBIS 1) southeast looking towards the Site. The view is from an elevated position over the village which sits in the bottom of a dry valley. The Site is in the midground with the yard screened from view by the intervening built form and mature trees. Steam from the distillery flues marks the location of the yard. Beyond the farm buildings within and around the Site, the landscape rises gently to the horizon.

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View 6: From Bridleway (FBIS 4) as it passes through the Site. The steam from the flues identifies the building on the northern side of the yard where the proposed silos will be located. The yard is screened by the building. From this slightly elevated view, the farm buildings are nestled within the lower sides of the valley with the mature parkland planting of Fonthill Park in the distance. The pitched roof to the tower of All Saints Church is barely perceptible through the mature coniferous trees within the gardens south of the Site.

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View 7: From Bridleway (FBIS 4) north of the Site. The Site is nestled in the valley bottom in the middle distance and largely obscured by the topography and hedgerow along the bridleway. Riders on horseback would have a slightly more elevated view, but the experience would be similar. Steam from the flues helps to locate the yard where the proposed silos will be located.

- 4.2. In general, the sloping topography, boundary features and mature landscape context provides a moderate to high degree of enclosure and a corresponding restricted visual envelope to the site. The yard is particularly well enclosed by existing built form on the Site and from mature evergreen trees directly to the south.
- 4.3. Notwithstanding views from within the Site itself, views towards the yard are mainly confined to elevated sections of nearby bridleways as they pass near the yard and through the village context to the north and southeast. Narrow gaps between buildings and vegetation allow some partial views into the yard within the immediate setting. Elsewhere there are views towards the yard from the adjacent roads to the south and east and the fringes of Fonthill Park. There are no views from further within Fonthill Park.

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- 4.4. The most sensitive visual receptors are likely to be:
- Users of Bridleway FBIS 4
 - Residents of adjacent properties to the south and opposite the yard.
- 4.5. In any middle distance views the Site is seen in the context of agricultural building's and dwellings that form the wider village. In any longer distance views, the Site and village is largely obscured by the topography and intervening mature vegetation.

5 SUMMARY

- 5.1. The principle of the proposed silos would not be out of context with the current land uses on the Site or nature of nearby agricultural buildings.
- 5.2. The scale of the proposed silos and their location within an enclosed yard will result in them being largely screened in views apart from the footpath up to the church and the potential for a view through the entrance of the yard from the bridleway. Both these views are transient and glimpsed. It is likely that the top of the silos will be partially visible in these and other identified near views, but they will be seen within the context of adjacent agricultural buildings and structures.
- 5.3. With regard to the National Landscape and potential views in the immediate context, it is recommended that the colour and finish of the silos is considered so that they blend in with the surrounding materials and not be of a finish that might become reflective in the sunshine and unduly visible.
- 5.4. It is our view that the Site has the ability to accommodate the proposed silos within the yard without undue harm to visual amenity or landscape character and conclude that further landscape assessment would not be necessary.