

# HITHER GREEN LANE, REDDITCH: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL OF A PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Prepared for: Barratt Homes Mercia

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## DRAWINGS

- HG-01: Landscape Designations Plan
- HG-02A: Existing Landscape Character Classifications
- HG-02B: Existing Landscape Character Classifications
- HG-03: Viewpoint Location Plan
- HG-04
- to HG-41 Existing views from viewpoints 1 to 13
- HG -42 landscape Masterplan

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

SLR Consulting Ltd (SLR) was instructed by Barratt Homes Mercia (Barratt) to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) of a proposed new residential development site at Hither Green Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire, Warminster. Barratt is seeking detailed permission for the provision of 216 homes.

The main objectives of the appraisal are as follows:

- To identify the landscape character of the site and its context, as well as the nature of views towards and from the site, in order to help shape the landscape masterplan;
- To assess the potential landscape and visual effects which would be likely to occur if the proposed development were to take place.

The landscape masterplan for the proposed development is included at drawing HG-42, appended to this report.

### 1.1 Definitions

Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is *“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). Landscape does not apply only to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside. Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposed development.

### 1.2 Methodology

This report identifies the potential landscape and visual receptors which could be affected by the proposed development, and then assesses the potential level of effects which could occur for these receptors if the development were to take place. In providing this assessment the report does not define whether these effects are likely to be significant or not, since this is not an EIA development. It is for this reason that this report is termed a landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) rather than a landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA).

The terminology and principles of this appraisal are in accordance with the recommendations within the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition, 2013, also known as GLVIA3, produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013). Judgements on landscape value also follow guidance produced by the Landscape Institute in 2021 (*“Assessing Landscape Value outside National Designations”*, Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21), and photographs have been prepared and presented in accordance with Landscape Institute guidance (*“Visual Representation of Development Proposals”*, Technical Guidance Note 06/19, 2019). A full method statement is included at Appendix A.

This appraisal is based upon a desk top assessment of relevant plans, guidance and character assessments, as well as two site assessments carried out in May 2021.

### 1.3 The Site and Study Area

The application site is defined with a red line on drawing HG-1, and this drawing also defines the wider study area for this appraisal. At present the site comprises the following elements:

- Surfaced car park and maintenance area, at the north-eastern corner of the application site and immediately to the west of Hither Green Lane;
- Areas of tall grassland, scrub, mature and semi-mature trees and a pond, concentrated at the north-east of the site and also along the site’s western boundary;

- An existing golf course, which is located at the centre and south of the site. The majority of the golf course extends beyond the southern boundary of the application site, and to the north and south of existing houses on Hither Green Lane.

The study area includes the wider setting of northern Redditch. This does not imply that all areas illustrated on this drawing would experience landscape and/or visual effects as a result of the proposed development, but rather that this forms the starting point for understanding the context of the site.

## 2.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

### 2.1 National Policy: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 11 sets out the fundamental principle of this document: that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. All development that is in accordance with the development plan should be approved *“without delay”* and that *“where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date”* permission should be granted for development *“unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.”*

In relation to landscape, the NPPF defines sustainability as including the protection and enhancement of the *“natural, built and historic environment”* (paragraph 8).

Paragraphs 124, 128 and 130 relate to the need for good design in new developments. Paragraph 124 states that *“good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities”*. Paragraph 128 states that applicants should work closely *“with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs which take account of the views of the community”*. Paragraph 130 states that *“permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions”*.

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF states that the planning system, *“should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [inter alia] ...protecting and enhancing valued landscapes”* and by *“recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”*. Paragraph 171 states that the planning system should *“distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites”*.

In paragraph 172 it is stated that *“great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty”*.

### 2.2 Designations

Landscape and landscape-related designations are set out on drawing HG-1. The application site is not within or near to a national landscape designation, such as an AONB or National Park, and nor is it within or close to a Local Authority landscape designation.

However, all of the trees within the site (and the adjacent golf course) are covered by a blanket Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Land to the north of Dagnell End Road is designated as Green Belt. Green Belt is a spatial planning designation, and does not imply landscape value.

There are no public footpaths crossing the application site. The nearest public rights of way is therefore footpath 628C, to the north of the site and north of Dagnell End Road. There is also a footway along Dagnell End Road and Hither Green Lane, to the east of the site, and a permissive footpath to the south of the site.

### 2.3 The Development Plan: Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4 (adopted 2017)

The Redditch Local Plan was adopted in January 2017 and provides the overarching planning policy framework for the Borough until 2030.

The application site is currently defined as Primarily Open Space (Policy 13) and is adjacent to the existing settlement edge to the south and east. As drawing HG-1 illustrates, the Primarily Open Space area in the locality of the application site is extensive, covering not only the golf course but also the Arrow Country Park to the south

and south east of the site. Drawing HG-2 also illustrates that the Local Plan has allocated significant areas of new residential development at Brock Hill East, to the west of the A441 and just over 500 metres from the application site. It was notable on the site visit that many of these area (but not all) have been, or are being, built out.

Policy 13 states that *“open space will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced to improve quality, value, multifunctionality and accessibility. In order to maintain the levels of open space provision in the Borough, proposals which would result in the total or partial loss of Primarily Open Space will not normally be granted planning permission unless it can be demonstrated that the need for development outweighs the value of the land as an open area.”*

Policy 13 goes on to set out the factors that will be considered if applications for development are made on Primarily Open Space. These are as follows:

- i. the environmental and amenity value of the area;*
- ii. the recreational, conservation, wildlife, historical, visual and community amenity value of the site;*
- iii. the merits of retaining the land in its existing open use, and, the contribution or potential contribution the site makes to the Green Infrastructure Network, character and appearance of the area;*
- iv. the merits of protecting the site for alternative open space uses;*
- v. the location, size and environmental quality of the site;*
- vi. the relationship of the site to other open space areas in the locality and similar uses within the wider area;*
- vii. whether the site provides a link between other open areas or as a buffer between incompatible uses;*
- viii. that it can be demonstrated that there is a surplus of open space and that alternative provision of equivalent or greater community benefit will be provided in the area at an appropriate, accessible locality; and*
- ix. the merits of the proposed development to the local area or the Borough generally.*

Policy 16 regarding Natural Environment states that a high quality natural environment and landscape is integral to delivering the vision of the Local Plan. In order to achieve this, proposals are expected to:

- i. demonstrate how the use of natural resources will be minimised;*
- ii. protect and, where appropriate, enhance the quality of natural resources including water, air, land, wildlife corridors, species (including protected species), habitats biodiversity and geodiversity;*
- iii. demonstrate the Borough’s distinctive landscape is protected, enhanced or restored, as appropriate and proposals are informed by, and sympathetic to, the surrounding landscape character;*
- iv. avoid any significant adverse impact on skylines and hill features, including established views of these features;*
- v. where possible retain existing trees (including Ancient Trees), woodlands (including ancient woodlands) and hedgerows (including important hedgerows) and semi-natural habitats with appropriate management. Particular emphasis should be placed on the expanding and linking of ancient woodlands, and the creation of targeted new native woodland for wider benefits; and*
- vi. contribute to the achievement of relevant Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan targets where appropriate.*

## 2.4 Summary of Planning Context

The site is not within a designation based upon landscape value, nor is it crossed by or adjacent to formal rights of way. However, the site does include trees covered by a TPO. In the adopted Redditch Local Plan the site is allocated as Primarily Open Space.

Significant areas of new residential development have been allocated at Brock Hill East, to the west of the application site and the A441, and these areas have now been partly built out.

## 3.0 ASPECTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CAUSE LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

### 3.1 Introduction

The proposed landscape masterplan (drawing HG-42) illustrates how the landscape elements within the site could be treated in order to conserve the existing landscape structure, enhance biodiversity, and provide an attractive place to live.

Key design elements of the landscape masterplan relevant to this LVA include the following:

- The overall area of the application site is 9.8ha, and this comprises 3.3ha of golf course amenity grassland, 4.8ha of scrub and long grassland, 1.5ha of existing trees, and 0.2ha of car park and works compound.
- The proposed development includes 216 new homes, with 1.38ha of new gardens. 1.36ha of mature trees would be retained within the site, and other new habitats would include species rich grassland, scrub, and orchard. An existing pond (0.17ha) would be retained and enhanced, and a new wet basin surrounded by damp grassland would be created (0.4ha).
- The site access would be via the existing access from Hither Green Lane, at the north-east corner of the application site;
- Retention and enhancement of the existing hedgerows to the west and north of the site, with approximately 450 m of hedgerow being removed at the centre of the site and 350 metres of new hedgerow being established.

### 3.2 Location and Scale

As has been noted, the application site currently comprises an overflow car park and maintenance area, at the north-eastern corner, an area of tall grassland and scrub, and a part of an existing golf course.

The site is contained to the west by an existing hedgerow, with the Meadow Farm public house and hotel to the west of this boundary, and open fields to the north and south of the hotel. Further to the west is the A441, with the new housing area of Brock Hill East being built out to the west of this road.

To the north the site is defined by a hedgerow, with the Dagnell End Road (B4101) passing along the northern edge of this boundary. A single row of detached and semi-detached houses is located to the north of Dagnell End Road and north-west of the site, and further to the north is open countryside, with the exception of ribbon development on either side of the A441.

To the east is the Abbey Hotel and existing housing along Hither Green Lane. Hither Green Lane has a crescent form, and thus loops back to the north to join Dagnell End Road. Cul de sacs branch from this road, with further residential development. The golf course envelopes these houses, with fairways to the north and south of Hither Green Lane and footways linking the holes that run through the estate.

To the south is the continuation of the golf course, housing branching from Hither Green Lane, and the course of the River Arrow. Abbey Stadium, with its leisure facilities and athletics track, is located to the south-west of the application site and east of the A441. Redditch Crematorium is directly to the south.

The application site is thus surrounded by existing residential development, albeit that residential development to the west is separated from the site by some open fields. It is also immediately adjacent to Dagnell End Road, to the north, Hither Green Lane, to the east, and is less than two hundred metres to the east of the A441, which forms one of the main routes into Redditch.



### 3.3 Height and Density

The proposed development would comprise 2 and 2.5 storey homes, in keeping with the existing homes found to the east of the application site (typical ridge heights of approximately 9 metres), and also west of the A441.

The gross density of development on the site would be 22 dwellings per hectare (dph), which is a very low density appropriate for a settlement edge development.

### 3.4 Access

The access for the development would be onto Hither Green Lane, immediately to the east of the application site. The wider road network would then be accessed via Dagnell End Road, which passes along the northern edge of the site.

There is the potential for a footpath connection with an existing permissive right of way at the south of the application site. This permissive path in turn connects with footways along the A441 further to the west.

### 3.5 Loss of Landscape Elements

The proposed development would result in a change of use for much of the site, with some existing areas of tall grassland and scrub being replaced by new housing and gardens. A total length of approximately 450m of hedgerow would be removed, as well as approximately 18 category B trees and 80 category C trees. No category A trees would be removed.

However, most of the existing mature tree groups and hedgerows, as well as the existing pond at the north of the site, would be retained and enhanced.

### 3.6 Lighting

The proposed development would introduce street lighting and domestic lighting into an area which currently contains few light sources. However, as an extract from CPRE's dark skies map shows (see **Plate I**, below), the site is already strongly influenced by surrounding light sources from the residential areas to the west, east and south, as well as street lighting along the A441 to the west. This is not, therefore a landscape characterised by dark skies, but is instead a settlement edge location influenced by existing lighting sources.

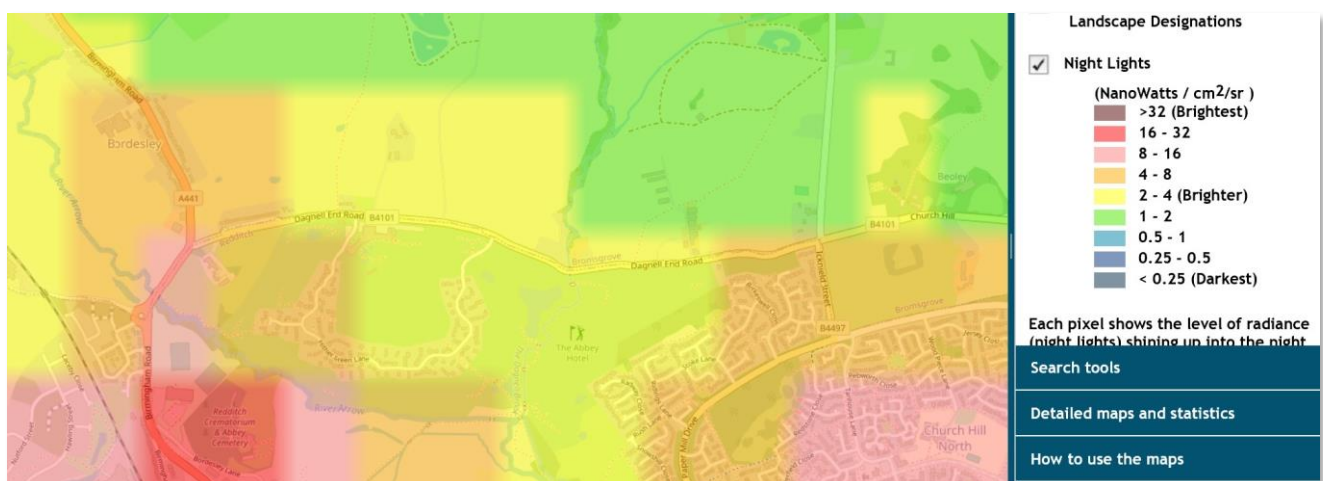


Plate I: Extract from CPRE Dark Skies Map showing the application site in the 4-8 nanowatts category.

### 3.7 Proposed Mitigation

New areas of habitat would also be created, including over 350 metres of new native hedgerow, species-rich grassland and new areas of scrub/grassland mosaic. Orchards underlain by A new wet attenuation feature, including a new reedbed, would be provided at the southern end of the site. A new reedbed would also be provided within the existing pond at the northern end of the site.

## 4.0 POTENTIAL LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

### 4.1 Introduction

The following landscape appraisal is based upon both a desk top assessment of existing character assessments and plans as well as a site-based survey. In accordance with GLVIA3 existing landscape character assessments are first reviewed, and then an independent landscape appraisal for the site and its context is provided. The main landscape receptors, (individual landscape elements, aesthetic characteristics, overall character), which have the potential to be affected by the proposed allocation are then identified and their sensitivity to residential development has been assessed by considering their value and susceptibility.

The potential landscape effects of the proposed residential development are then assessed by combining the sensitivity to development with the likely magnitude of effects.

This section should be read in conjunction with Appendix B, which sets out clearly how judgements regarding landscape value, susceptibility and magnitude have been determined based upon the criteria set out in GLVIA3 chapter 5.

### 4.2 Existing Landscape Character Assessments

There is a series of existing character assessments which provide a useful context to assessing and classifying the character of the site. Drawings HG-3A and HG-3B summarise classification provided by these assessments, but further details of each are set out below.

#### 4.2.1 National Assessment: NCA 97, Arden

At a national scale the site is included within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 97, Arden. The key characteristics of NCA 97 of relevance to the application site, include the following:

- *Well-wooded farmland landscape with rolling landform.*
- *Mature oaks, mostly found within hedgerows, together with ancient woodlands, and plantation woodlands that often date from the time of enclosure. Woodlands include historic coppice bounded by woodbanks.*
- *Narrow, meandering clay river valleys with long river meadows*
- *Diverse field patterns, ranging from well hedged, irregular fields and small woodlands that contrast with larger semi regular fields on former deer park estates.*
- *Complex and contrasting settlement pattern with some densely populated where traditional settlements have amalgamated to form the major West Midlands conurbation while some settlements remain distinct and relatively well dispersed*
- *North-western area dominated by urban development and associated urban edge landscapes such as managed greenspace, for example allotments, gardens, parks, golf courses (rough areas) and public open spaces; playing fields, churchyards, cemeteries and institutional grounds (schools, hospitals).*
- *Transport infrastructure, the M42, M40, M6 and M5 are major transport corridors that sit within the landscape of this NCA.*
- *Large arable fields predominate, with generally very few hedgerows or obvious boundary features; there are often wide grass buffer strips.*

## 4.2.2 County Level: Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment (2011)

At a county scale the site is identified within the Arden Regional Character Area and the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Type. This landscape type is described as being a “*large scale, wooded agricultural landscape of isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional small estate villages. Key visual elements in this landscape are the many large, irregularly shaped ancient woodlands, often prominently situated on low crests*”

Key characteristics of relevance to the application site and its context include the following:

- *Large discrete blocks of irregularly-shaped woodland*
- *Mixed farming land use*
- *Rolling topography with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpments*
- *Semi-regular pattern of large, hedged fields*
- *Discrete settlement clusters often in the form of small estate villages*
- *Medium distance framed views*

The assessment notes that there is a need to “*conserve and restore the hedgerow fabric*”, and there is also scope for “*large scale new woodlands*”.

It is notable that the description of the Wooded Estatelands does not mention the influence of roads, residential areas or settlement edge uses such as golf courses. However as drawing HG-3B illustrates this landscape type is bordered to the south and east by existing urban areas, and to the north by the Dagnell End Road. Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England, 2002), one of the foremost guides on how to carry out landscape character assessment in the UK, states (see 6.20, page 40) that whilst boundaries around character areas are required for assessment purposed “*in reality landscape is a continuum and character does not, in general, change abruptly*”. It follows that the urban area and nearby roads have some influence over this part of the Wooded Estatelands, due to views of existing houses but also through noise and light from the settlement edge.

## 4.3 The Landscape of the Site and its Context

### 4.3.1 Description of the Character of the Site and Landscape Receptors

GLVIA3 recommends that a landscape character assessment should be carried out as part of the baseline study (paragraph 5.4). This should consider:

- The elements that make up the landscape (physical, land cover and the influence of human activity);
- Aesthetic and perceptual aspects;
- The overall character of the area.

The application site slopes gently from around 100m AOD at the northern end, adjacent to Dagnell End Road, to approximately 90m AOD at the southern end of the site, close to the River Arrow. The site comprises three main land-uses: a maintenance yard and car park in the north east corner; hedgerow-bound fields of rank grassland and scrub with a large pond; and golf course fairways with mature and semi-mature tree groups. The site is partially influenced by views of existing houses, to the east, as well as glimpses of the Meadow Farm hotel and more distant views of houses on elevated ground at Brock Hill East, to the west. There is also the influence of traffic noise from the A441 to the west, Dagnell End Road to the north and, to a lesser extent, from Hither Green Lane to the east.

Outside of the application site the landscape to the south and east has predominantly suburban and/or urban character, with the existing golf course, existing housing on Hither Green Lane, and the sports facilities at Abbey Stadium. Land to the west and north of the application site is more representative of the Wooded Estatelands landscape type, with some open pasture around the Meadow Farm to the west, and open fields with gappy hedgerows to the north of Dagnell End Road to the north.

The application site is therefore more influenced by settlement edge uses and road corridors than the description of the Wooded Estatelands in the Worcestershire, but areas to the west and north are more representative of this character area.

Key landscape elements and features within the application site which would have the potential to be affected by residential development include:

- Enclosed tall grassland and scrub;
- Enclosed golf course fairways with mature tree groups;
- Existing pond;
- Hedgerow network with hedgerow standards and small woodlands;
- Enclosed car parking and maintenance depot.

The character of the site is transitional between urban/suburban and the Wooded Estatelands landscape type. Outside of the site there are two main character sub-areas which have potential to be affected:

- Urban and suburban landscapes to the east and south of the application site (includes the hotel, car parking, existing houses and the existing golf course to the south)
- Wooded Estatelands to the west and north of the site (including the River Arrow corridor, open fields to the west of the site and north of Dagnell End Road).

#### **4.3.2 The Changing Landscape**

GLVIA3 notes that LVIA's should consider not only the site as it is at present, but also how it will become, particularly in the context of local planning policy or land management practices.

As was noted in section 2.0 of this appraisal, whilst the application site itself is not allocated for residential development, significant areas of new residential development have been allocated at Brock Hill East, to the west of the application site and the A441, and these areas will continue to be built out.

#### **4.3.3 Susceptibility of the Landscape Receptors**

Table B2 in the Appendices sets out the assessment of susceptibility for each of the landscape receptors. This assessment is summarised below.

The enclosed tall grassland and scrub receptor is inherently susceptible to the introduction of new built form, and existing development around the application site has little visual influence over the character of this area (although there is some influence of noise and light from adjacent uses). This receptor therefore has high susceptibility to the proposed development.

The enclosed golf course element of the application site is less susceptible to the proposed development, since although this area is currently free from buildings it is also intensively managed with a more suburban character. This area is therefore of medium susceptibility to the proposed development.

The existing pond at the north of the application site would be retained and enhanced in the proposed masterplan, and consequently this area has a low susceptibility to the proposed development.

Hedgerows, trees and woodlands are an important part of the local landscape and are inherently susceptible to built development. However, the proposed masterplan would retain the majority of existing hedgerows, as well as most of the mature trees and small woodlands on the site. This therefore reduces the susceptibility of these elements to medium.

The enclosed car parking and maintenance depot has a low susceptibility to the proposed development, since this area is already characterised by built form and vehicle movements.

In relation to the aesthetic and perceptual attributes of the application site, the enclosed, medium scale nature of the site has a medium susceptibility to the proposed development, since new residential development would retain the sense of enclosure, but potentially decrease the perceived scale of the landscape. The generally simple (with some influence from adjacent built form, noise and light) has a high/medium susceptibility to the proposed development, since the development has potential to introduce much greater diversity of colours and forms.

In relation to the overall character of the site and its context, the transitional area between the more rural Wooded Estatelands and the urban and suburban areas to the south and east – within which the application site is located – have a medium susceptibility to the proposed development, since this area is partly characterised by influence from the existing settlement edge and nearby roads.

In contrast, the urban and suburban areas to the south and east of the site have a low susceptibility to the proposed development, since these areas are already characterised by residential development of a similar scale and form.

The more rural parts of the Wooded Estatelands to the west and north of the application site are more inherent susceptible to residential development, but these areas would experience no direct effects from the proposed development and visual effects are also likely to be limited. As a consequence, this character area has medium susceptibility to the proposed development.

#### 4.3.4 Value of the Landscape

In determining the value of landscapes, it is helpful to start with landscape and landscape-related designations. As has been noted, the site is not included in any landscape or landscape-related designations, although the trees are included within a blanket TPO.

Given the largely undesignated nature of the site it is helpful to consider other factors which might confer value, such as those included in table 1 of Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21<sup>1</sup>. In this context it is important to note that the site does not have formally recognised natural or heritage conservation value, nor does it have any formal associations with art, literature or events. The condition of the site is variable, with hedgerows often breached or in poor condition and intrusive elements such as car parking and views of the adjacent hotel and houses. Similarly, the scenic quality of the site is reduced by the car park and maintenance depot and glimpsed views of the adjacent housing and hotel, although the mature tree groups are an attractive element. Recreational access to much of the site is limited, but golfers use the course itself and the southern part of the site can also be viewed from a permissive footpath.

In overview, the site is therefore of low/community value, although the small woodlands and tree groups are of Local Authority value due to the TPO.

In relation to the value of areas outside of the application site, it is important to note that the more rural parts of the Wooded Estatelands are largely within Green Belt. Whilst this indicates that the openness of this area is

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<sup>1</sup> Technical Guidance Note 02/21 Assessing Landscape Designations Outside National Designations (Landscape Institute 2021)

an important consideration, it does not necessary indicate landscape value. It is concluded that this character area is of community value, since it possesses scenic qualities which will be valued.

#### 4.3.5 Sensitivity of the Landscape Receptors

The sensitivity of landscape receptors can be defined by combining susceptibility with value.

It follows that the enclosed tall grassland and scrub receptor, and the hedgerow network and trees receptor, both have a medium sensitivity to the proposed development. The golf course fairways have a medium to low sensitivity, and the existing pond and car parking are both of low sensitivity.

In relation to the aesthetic receptors, the enclosed, medium scale receptor has medium/low sensitivity to the proposals, and the generally simple and still receptor has a medium sensitivity.

The character of the transitional area between the urban area and the more rural part of the Wooded Estatelands has a medium/low sensitivity to the proposed development, and the urban areas to the south and east of the site are of low sensitivity. The more rural elements of the Wooded Estatelands are of medium sensitivity to the proposed development.

#### 4.3.6 Potential Magnitude of Landscape Effects

GLVIA3 states that the magnitude of landscape change can be determined by assessing the size and scale, geographic extent and duration and reversibility of the proposed development.

The proposed development would cause a large scale of change to the enclosed tall grassland and scrub receptor, since new buildings would be introduced to simple, open fields. These changes would occur over a small geographical area and would be permanent, and consequently the magnitude of effects for this receptor would be **substantial/medium**.

The enclosed golf course fairways would also undergo a large scale of change, with new buildings and roads being introduced to what is currently largely open grassland with trees. The geographical extent of this change would again be limited to the site itself, and the duration of the change would be permanent. The magnitude of effect for this receptor would therefore be **substantial/medium**.

The existing pond at the northern end of the application site would undergo only a small scale of change, since the extent of the pond would not change but new marginal habitats would be created. This change would affect only a small proportion of the site and would therefore represent a negligible geographical extent. The change would again be permanent, and thus the overall magnitude of change would be **slight**.

The network of hedgerows with small woodlands would undergo a medium scale of change, as one hedgerow approximately 400 metres long at the centre of the site would be retained, with all other hedgerows around the edges of the site being retained. Approximately 325m of new hedgerows would be established. The geographical extent of this change would be small and the duration of change would be permanent. The overall magnitude of change for the hedgerows and woodlands would therefore be **medium**.

The enclosed car parking and maintenance depot receptor would undergo a medium scale of change; whilst new buildings would be introduced to a largely flat area, this part of the site is already characterised by built elements and hard surfaces. The geographical extent of this change is negligible and the duration is permanent, and consequently the overall magnitude of change would be **medium/slight**.

In relation to the aesthetic receptors, the enclosed, medium scale receptor would undergo a **medium** magnitude of change, since the site would become more enclosed as a result of new housing, and the generally simple and still receptor would also undergo a medium magnitude of change, since although the development would introduce new built form and movement, there is already some influence from built form, light and noise around the site.

Turning to the effects on character, for the transitional area between the Wooded Estatelands and the urban edge (which includes the application site itself), there would be a medium scale of change, since the proposed development would not significantly alter the existing settlement pattern, and development would be focused on a golf course and car park which already have suburban characteristics. The geographical extent of this change would be small, since the change to character would be almost entirely limited to the site itself, and the duration of change would be permanent. The overall magnitude of change for this character receptor would therefore be **medium**.

In contrast the magnitude of effects of the proposed development upon the urban and suburban areas to the south and east of the application site would be **slight**, since there would be no direct changes to this landscape, and visual changes would be limited to views of new homes from the edges of the character area. Similarly, the magnitude of change for the more rural part of the Wooded Estatelands, to the west and north of the application site, would also be **slight**, since again there would be no direct effects from the proposed development, and views of the new homes from this area would be seen within the context of existing housing around the site.

#### 4.4 Potential Landscape Effects of Development

As GLVIA3 notes, the potential landscape effects should be determined by combining the sensitivity of receptors with the potential magnitude of effects.

It follows that the proposed development would result in a **major/moderate and negative effect on the enclosed tall grassland and scrub receptor**, as the proposed development would introduce new homes to an area of enclosed fields. The effects on the **enclosed golf fairways and the car parking and maintenance depot areas would be moderate and negative**, and the effects on the **hedgerow network would also be moderate and negative**. The effects of the proposed development upon the **existing pond would be minor and positive**, and the effects on the **existing car parking and maintenance depot area would be moderate/minor and negative**.

In relation to the effects on character, the effects would be largely focused upon the site itself: there would therefore be a **moderate and negative effects on the transitional area between the Wooded Estatelands and the urban/suburban area**, **minor and neutral effects on the urban/suburban area**, and **moderate/minor and neutral effects on the more rural part of the Wooded Estatelands**.

#### 4.5 Conclusions of the Landscape Appraisal

A landscape appraisal has been carried out by experienced landscape architects, using both a desk top assessment and site survey.

At a national scale the site is included within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 97, Arden. At a county scale the site is identified within the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment as part of the Arden Regional Character Area and the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Type. The appraisal has concluded that the character of the site is transitional between urban/suburban areas and the more rural parts of the Wooded Estatelands landscape type. Outside of the site there are two main character sub-areas which have potential to be affected, the urban/suburban areas to the east and south, and the more rural Wooded Estatelands to the north and west.

The appraisal has concluded that the effects of the proposed development upon landscape receptors would be localised and concentrated upon the site itself. There would be a major/moderate and negative effect upon the enclosed tall grassland and scrub receptor, and a moderate and negative effect on the enclosed golf fairways. The hedgerow network would also undergo moderate and negative effects. In character terms the landscape effects would be focused on a transition area on the settlement edge, and these effects would be moderate and negative. For the landscapes outside of the site the effects would be minor or moderate/minor and neutral in nature.



In summary, the negative landscape effects of the proposed development would be focused upon part of the application site, but landscapes outside of the site would experience only relatively minor and neutral effects.

## 5.0 POTENTIAL VISUAL EFFECTS

### 5.1 Introduction

The following visual appraisal is based upon desk top review and a site-based assessment undertaken in clear conditions. Judgements have been made by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect. The assessment was undertaken in the summer months, but estimates have been made of the degree to which the loss of foliage in the winter months might change the nature and extent of views.

Overall visibility has been determined by desk top analysis of topographic surveys and maps, as well as site-based assessment. Thirteen viewpoints have been selected to represent the range of available views towards the site, focusing on those views which are most likely to be affected by the proposed development.

This section should be read in conjunction with Appendix C, which provides a detailed analysis of the sensitivity of receptors, the potential magnitude of visual effects and the overall level of visual effects which would be experienced at each of the representative viewpoints. A summary of the potential effects for each of the receptor groups is then provided in this section.

### 5.2 Overall Visibility

The overall visibility of the site is defined by topography, existing housing to the east and by structural vegetation:

- To the north, views are contained by high ground at Bordesley (around 140m AOD), and filtered by intervening hedgerows and trees;
- To the east, views are contained by the buildings and vegetation around the Abbey hotel and also the existing houses and mature vegetation either side of Hither Green Lane;
- To the south, views are contained by high ground at Enfield (c. 115m AOD), but with filtering of views by intervening built form and mature vegetation;
- To the west views are contained by High Ground at Butlers Hill (156m AOD), and filtered by intervening vegetation and buildings.

### 5.3 Potential Visual Receptors

Within the overall potential area of visibility defined above the following types of visual receptors have the potential to experience changes in their views:

- Walkers on footpath 628 C, to the north of Dagnell End Road, and also on the footway along Hither Green Lane, to the east of the site. There is also the potential for views by walkers on the footway along Birmingham Road, as well as users of the permissive path that crosses the golf course, connecting with Hither Green lane to the south of the site.
- Residents at the hotel and visitors to the Meadow Farm pub and hotel.
- Spectators/those undertaking informal recreation at the Abbey Stadium.
- Residents on Dagnell End Road, Hither Green Lane, Birmingham Road and Brockhill East
- Vehicle users on Hither Green Lane, Dagnell End Road, Birmingham Road and Brockhill East.

At the time of writing this report the development at Brockhill East was still being constructed, and consequently some parts of the proposed public open space were not accessible. Viewpoint 13, at Nutford Street, was therefore included to represent views from this direction and distance.

Thirteen viewpoints were selected to represent the potential views within and around the site. The viewpoint locations are illustrated on Figure HG-3, and photographs from these viewpoints are shown on Figures HG-4 to HG -41. Individual viewpoint assessments are included at Appendix C.

## 5.4 Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

As Appendix A notes, the sensitivity of visual receptors is determined by combining the value of the viewpoints with the susceptibility of the receptor. Table C1 analyses the value of each of the viewpoint locations, as well as the susceptibility of each of the receptor groups that might use these locations.

For viewers on public footpaths, the value of the view is Local Authority, whereas the value of viewpoints along footways on roads is low. The susceptibility of walkers to changes in views is generally high, since they tend to be focused on the countryside. It follows that viewers on the local footpath network are generally of medium to high sensitivity, and walkers on footways are of medium sensitivity.

Residential properties are of low or medium value, depending upon the precise location of the viewpoint. However, residents are particularly susceptible to changes in their views. It follows that residents around the site are mostly of medium or medium to high sensitivity.

Viewpoints on roads around the site are generally of low value, since these are often not intended as scenic routes and many of the roads do not have footways. The susceptibility of vehicle users on the roads around the site is generally medium, since traffic moves at moderate speeds and therefore passengers will have the opportunity to take in views of the landscape. As a result, the sensitivity of viewers in vehicles on roads such as Dagnell End Road is medium/low.

## 5.5 Potential Magnitude of Visual Effects for Receptor Groups

As Appendix A explains, the magnitude of visual effects can be defined by determining the size/scale of effect, the geographical extent over which those effects would be experienced, and the duration of the effect. Table C2 assesses the potential magnitude of effects for each of the representative viewpoints. This assessment is focused upon the effects of the development immediately following construction, since this is the period when visual effects would be at their greatest.

The following sections analyses these potential effects for each of the main receptor groups, with reference to some of the viewpoints.

### 5.5.1 Walkers

The views of walkers on footpath 628C, to the north of Dagnell End Road, are illustrated by viewpoints 6 (close to Dagnell End Road) and 7 (further to the north, on higher ground). From the lower section of this path, close to the Dagnell End Road, ridgelines and roof planes of new homes would be partially visible above the retained hedgerows along Dagnell End Road, although the majority of the view would remain unchanged. From higher ground to the north this footpath would afford views into the proposed development, and therefore roof planes and also the upper parts of some elevations would be visible. However, these new homes would be viewed in the context of existing houses on Dagnell End Road, to the left of the view, and Brock Hill East, to the right of the view. The new homes would not, therefore be introducing new elements into these views. The overall magnitude of effect for walkers at these viewpoints is would therefore be **medium/slight**.

For walkers on footways along Hither Green Lane (viewpoints 2, 3, 4 and 5), views of the proposed development would be largely screened by existing homes along this lane, and any glimpsed views of new homes would be seen in the context of existing housing. The magnitude of effect only increases close to the site entrance (see viewpoints 4 and 5), where there would be some open views of new homes. The potential magnitude of effect

for these receptors therefore varies between **slight** within housing areas, rising to **medium** closer to the site entrance.

Walkers on the permissive footpath that currently passes to the south of the application site are represented by viewpoint 1. Walkers would see a **substantial/medium** magnitude of change at this viewpoint: trees on the existing settlement edge would be retained, and the golf course and vegetation along the river to the right of the view would also remain; but at the centre of the view a new pond and damp grassland would be created, and to the left of the view the existing hedgerow would be removed and new homes would be seen set back from the edge of the new pond.

For walkers on the footway along Birmingham Road (see for example viewpoint 10) views of the proposed new homes would be largely screened by intervening vegetation. It is possible that some ridgelines and roof planes would be visible, although these would be seen in the context of existing housing along Dagnell End Road and more prominent new housing at Brockhill East. The magnitude of effect for these walkers would therefore be **slight**.

### 5.5.2 Residents

The views of residents at Hither Green Lane, to the east of the site, are represented by viewpoints 2, 3 and 4. In general the views of the proposed new homes from houses and gardens would be limited by retained belts of woodland, and new housing would also be seen in the context of existing housing along Hither Green Lane. The visibility of new homes increases in only a few locations where there is no intervening woodland, or close to the entrance of the proposed development (see for example viewpoint 5). The overall magnitude of effect for residents at Hither Green Lane is therefore generally **slight**, rising to **medium** close to the site entrance.

Views from homes on Dagnell End Road are represented by viewpoint 8. The majority of views from these properties would be screened by the retained, intervening hedgerow along the road, although some roof planes and gable ends would be visible above this hedgerow. Any visibility of new homes would, however, be seen in the context of the existing houses in the foreground of this view, as well as the existing road. The magnitude of change for these residents would therefore be **medium/slight**.

Residents on the Birmingham Road a slightly further from the application site, and these houses have their gable ends orientated towards the site. There is therefore reduced scope for views from windows, although some potential for views from some gardens. Viewpoint 10 represents the views from this direction, and there is some potential for views of new homes over intervening hedgerows. The potential magnitude of effects is therefore **slight**.

The views of residents at Brockhill East is represented by viewpoint 13. The elevated position of these new homes affords potential glimpsed views of the proposed development, although these glimpses would be seen in the context of existing development around the application site. The magnitude of effect for these residents is therefore likely to be **slight**.

The views of hotel residents at Meadow Farm are represented by viewpoint 9. Whilst the hedgerow in the foreground would be retained, it is possible that there would be some visibility of new roof planes over the top of this, as well as some glimpsed views through the hedgerow in the winter months. These views would, however, be seen in the context of the existing buildings, car parks and lighting around the hotel. The magnitude of change for these residents would therefore be **medium/slight**.

The views of hotel residents at the Abbey hotel are represented by viewpoint 5. The clearest views from the hotel are from the entrance to the hotel and the adjacent car park. New homes at the new site entrance would be clearly visible from this perspective, although these would be seen in the context of the existing buildings and car parking in the foreground. The magnitude of effect would therefore be **medium** for these receptors.

### 5.5.3 Vehicle Users

The views of vehicle users on Hither Green Lane are represented by viewpoints 2, 3, 4 and 5. Views of the proposed development would be largely screened by existing homes along this lane, and any glimpsed views of new homes would be seen in the context of existing housing. The magnitude of effect only increases close to the site entrance (see viewpoints 4 and 5), where there would be some open views of new homes. The potential magnitude of effect for these receptors therefore varies between **slight** within housing areas, rising to **medium** closer to the site entrance.

Views of vehicle users on Dagnell End Road are represented by viewpoint 6 and 8. For both of these locations, the views of the new development would be largely screened by the existing roadside hedgerow. However there is some potential for views of roof planes above the hedgerow, as well as some glimpsed through hedgerows in the winter months. The potential magnitude of effect for these viewers would therefore be **medium/slight**.

Vehicle users approaching Redditch on the Birmingham Road are represented by viewpoint 10. There is some potential for glimpsed views of proposed hedgerows over intervening hedgerows, and therefore the potential magnitude of visual effects is **slight**.

## 5.6 Potential Visual Effects of Development

By combining the sensitivity of receptors with the potential magnitude of effect it is possible to determine the likely level of visual effect which would result from the proposed development (see table C3, Appendix C). These effects on the different receptor groups are summarised in the following paragraphs.

There is potential for **major/moderate effects** for only one receptor group, walkers on the permissive path that crosses the southern part of the application site.

All other visual effects would be moderate or less. **Moderate** effects would occur for some residents on Hither Green Lane, hotel residents at the Abbey hotel, walkers on footpath 628C and residents at the Meadow Farm hotel.

The higher and moderate visual effects would thus be localised upon the site itself and the immediate locality of the site. For viewers further from the site the new homes would be partially screened by existing vegetation and seen in the context of existing buildings.

## 5.7 Summary of Visual Effects

A visual appraisal of the potential visual effects of the proposed development has been carried out by an experienced landscape architect following the approach advocated in GLVIA3.

The proposed development would be visible by a number of receptors within and around the site, including from elevated ground to at Brockhill East, to the West, and on the Birmingham Road, to the north. The main receptor groups which would be affected include walkers, residents and vehicle users.

Higher and moderate visual effects would be localised on focused on areas close to the application site. Major/moderate effects would occur for walkers on the permissive footpath that crosses the southern end of the site, but all other visual effects would be moderate or less.

## 6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

SLR Consulting Ltd was instructed by Barratt Homes Mercia to undertake a Landscape and Visual Appraisal of a proposed new residential development of up to 216 homes on land at Hither Green Lane, near Redditch.

The main objectives of the study were to assess the potential landscape and visual effects which would be likely to occur if the proposed development were to take place.

This assessment has been carried out by an experienced Chartered Landscape Architect following the principles within GLVIA3.

### Summary of Planning Context

The site is not within a designation based upon landscape value, nor is it crossed by or adjacent to formal rights of way. However, the site does include trees covered by a blanket TPO. In the adopted Redditch Local Plan the site is allocated as Primarily Open Space.

Significant areas of new residential development have been allocated at Brock Hill East, to the west of the application site and the A441, and these areas have now been partly built out.

### Conclusions of the Landscape Appraisal

A landscape appraisal has been carried out by experienced landscape architects, using both a desk top assessment and site survey.

At a national scale the site is included within Natural England's National Character Area (NCA) 97, Arden. At a county scale the site is identified within the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment as part of the Arden Regional Character Area and the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Type. The appraisal has concluded that the character of the site is transitional between urban/suburban areas and the more rural parts of the Wooded Estatelands landscape type. Outside of the site there are two main character sub-areas which have potential to be affected, the urban/suburban areas to the east and south, and the more rural Wooded Estatelands to the north and west.

The appraisal has concluded that the effects of the proposed development upon landscape receptors would be localised and concentrated upon the site itself. There would be a major/moderate and negative effect upon the enclosed tall grassland and scrub receptor, and a moderate and negative effect on the enclosed golf fairways. The hedgerow network would also undergo moderate and negative effects. In character terms the landscape effects would be focused on a transition area on the settlement edge, and these effects would be moderate and negative. For the landscapes outside of the site the effects would be minor or moderate/minor and neutral in nature.

In summary, the negative landscape effects of the proposed development would be focused upon part of the application site, but landscapes outside of the site would experience only relatively minor and neutral effects.

### Conclusions of the Visual Appraisal

A visual appraisal of the potential visual effects of the proposed development has been carried out by an experienced landscape architect following the approach advocated in GLVIA3.

The proposed development would be visible by a number of receptors within and around the site, including from elevated ground to at Brockhill East, to the West, and on the Birmingham Road, to the north. The main receptor groups which would be affected include walkers, residents and vehicle users.

Higher and moderate visual effects would be localised on focused on areas close to the application site. Major/moderate effects would occur for walkers on the permissive footpath that crosses the southern end of the site, but all other visual effects would be moderate or less.

## Overall Conclusions

This appraisal has concluded that the landscape and visual effects of the proposed development would be localised, with all landscape effects further from the site being moderate or less.

The site is visually contained by a strong network of existing hedgerows and trees, as well as existing buildings, and this reduces landscape and visual effects further from the site.

In addition, the site is close to existing development to the north, east, south and west, and is also adjacent to Dagnell End Road to the north and Hither Green Lane to the east. This proximity to existing development that also reduces landscape and visual effects on receptors outside of the application site.

## APPENDIX A

# Criteria and Definitions Used in Assessing Landscape and Visual Effects



## Introduction

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify the effects of development on “*landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity*” (GLVIA3, paragraph 1.1). GLVIA3<sup>2</sup> (paragraph 2.22) states that these two elements, although inter-related, should be assessed separately. GLVIA3 is the main source of guidance on LVIA.

Landscape is a definable set of characteristics resulting from the interaction of natural, physical and human factors: it is a resource in its own right. Its assessment is distinct from visual assessment, which considers effects on the views and visual amenity of different groups of people at particular locations. Clear separation of these two topics is recommended in GLVIA3.

As GLVIA3 (paragraph 2.23) states, professional judgement is an important part of the LVIA process: whilst there is scope for objective measurement of landscape and visual changes, much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements. It is critical that these judgements are based upon a clear and transparent method so that the reasoning can be followed and examined by others.

Impacts can be defined as the action being taken, whereas effects are the changes result from that action. This method of assessment assesses landscape and visual effects.

Landscape and visual effects can be positive, negative or neutral in nature. Positive effects are those which enhance and/or reinforce the characteristics which are valued. Negative effects are those which remove and/or undermine the characteristics which are valued. Neutral effects are changes which are consistent with the characteristics of the landscape or view

In LVIAs which form part of an EIA, it is necessary for identify significant and non-significant effects. In non-EIA LVIAs, also known as appraisals, the same principles and process as LVIA may be applied but, in so doing, it is not required to establish whether the effects arising are or are not significant given that the exercise is not being undertaken for EIA purposes (see GLVIA3 statement of clarification 1/13 10-06-13, Landscape Institute).

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<sup>2</sup> Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (Third Edition, April 2013)

## Landscape Effects

Landscape, as defined in the European Landscape Convention, is defined 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). Landscape does not apply only to special or designated places, nor is it limited to countryside.

GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.34) recommends that the effect of the development on landscape receptors is assessed. Landscape receptors are the components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposed development, and can include individual elements (such as hedges or buildings), aesthetic and perceptual characteristics (for example sense of naturalness, tranquillity or openness), or, at a larger scale, the character of a defined character area or landscape type. Designated areas (such as National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are also landscape receptors.

This assessment is being undertaken because the proposed development has the potential to remove or add elements to the landscape, to alter aesthetic or perceptual aspects, and to add or remove characteristics and thus potentially change overall character.

Judging landscape effects requires a methodical assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

### Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity of landscape receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of landscape receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the landscape. (GLVIA3, paragraph 5.39).

#### Value Attached to Landscape Receptors

Landscape receptors may be valued at community, local, national or international level. Existing landscape designations provide the starting point for this assessment, as set out in Table A1 below.

The table sets out the interpretation of landscape designations in terms of the value attached to different landscape receptors. As GLVIA3 (paragraph 5.24) notes, at the local scale of an LVIA study area it may be found that the landscape value of a specific area may be different to that suggested by the formal designation.

Table A1: Interpretation of Landscape Designations

Designation	Description	Value
World Heritage Sites	Unique sites, features or areas identified as being of international importance according to UNESCO criteria. Consideration should be given to their settings especially where these contribute to the special qualities for which the landscape is valued.	International

National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Scenic Areas	Areas of landscape identified as being of national importance for their natural beauty (and in the case of National Parks the opportunities they offer for outdoor recreation). Consideration should be given to their settings especially where these contribute to the special qualities for which the landscape is valued.	National
Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest	Gardens and designed landscapes included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest as Grade I, II* or II.	National
Local Landscape Designations (such as Special Landscape Areas, Areas of Great Landscape Value and similar) included in local planning documents	Areas of landscape identified as having importance at the local authority level.	Local Authority
Undesignated landscapes of community value	Landscapes which do not have any formal designation but which may possess some/several indicators of value.	Local Authority/Community
Landscapes of low value	Landscapes in poor condition or fundamentally altered by presence of intrusive man-made structures. Landscapes which possess few or no indicators of value.	Low

Where landscapes are not designated and where no other local authority guidance on value is available, an assessment is made by reference to criteria in the Table A2 below. This is based on Table 1 of Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/21. These factors are not fixed, and should be reviewed on a case by case basis. When assessing landscape value of a site it is important to consider not only the site itself but also its context.

Landscapes may be judged to be of local authority or community value on the basis of one or more of these factors. There may also be occasional circumstances where an undesignated landscape may be judged to be of national value, for example where it has a clear connection with a nationally designated landscape, or is otherwise considered to be of equivalent value to a national designation. Similarly, on occasions there may be areas within designated landscapes that do not meet the designation criteria, or demonstrate the key characteristics/special qualities in a way that is consistent with the rest of the designated area.

An overall assessment is made for each landscape receptor, based on an overview of the above criteria, to determine its value - whether for example it is comparable to a local authority landscape designation or similar, or whether it is of value to local people and communities. For example, an intact landscape in good condition, where scenic quality, tranquillity, and/or

conservation interests make a particular contribution to the landscape, or where there are important cultural or historical associations, might be of equivalent value to a local landscape designation. Conversely, a degraded landscape in poor condition, with no particular scenic qualities or natural or cultural heritage interest is likely to be considered of limited landscape value.

Table A2: Factors Considered in Assessing the Value of Non-Designated Landscapes

Factor	Definition (with Examples for Clarification)
<b>Natural Heritage</b>	Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest. Presence of wildlife and habitats that contribute to the sense of place. Landscape which contains valued natural capital assets that contribute to ecosystem services.
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest. Landscape which contributes to the significance of heritage assets. Landscape which offers a dimension of time depth.
<b>Landscape Condition</b>	Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure. Absence of detracting/incongruous features.
<b>Associations</b>	Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts.
<b>Distinctiveness</b>	Landscape that has a strong sense of identity or place. Presence of distinctive features that are characteristic of a place, or presence of rare/unusual features that confer a strong sense of place. Includes landscape that makes an important contribution to the character or identity of a settlement.
<b>Recreational</b>	Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important. Includes open access areas, common land and rights of way where appreciation of the landscape is an important element of the experience. Landscape that forms part of a view that that is important to the enjoyment of a recreational activity.
<b>Perceptual (Scenic)</b>	Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense. Distinctive features, or distinctive combinations of features. Strong aesthetic qualities. Visual diversity or contrasts. Memorable/distinctive views or landmarks, or landscape that contributes to these.
<b>Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)</b>	Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably remoteness, wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies.
<b>Functional</b>	Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape. Natural hydrological systems, important parts of the green infrastructure network, pollinator rich habitats. Landscapes that have strong physical or functional links with an adjacent national landscape designation, or are important to the appreciation of the designated landscape and its special qualities.

## Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors to Change

As set out in GLVIA3, susceptibility refers to the ability of the landscape receptor to “*accommodate the proposed development without undue adverse consequences for the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies*”. Judgement of susceptibility is particular to the specific characteristics of the proposed development and the ability of a particular landscape or feature to accommodate the type of change proposed, and makes reference to the criteria set out in Table A3 below. Aspects of the character of the landscape that may be affected by a particular type of development include landform, skylines, land cover, enclosure, human influences including settlement pattern and aesthetic and perceptual aspects such as the scale of the landscape, its form, line, texture, pattern and grain, complexity, and its sense of movement, remoteness, wildness or tranquillity.

For example, an urban landscape which contains a number of industrial buildings may have a low susceptibility to buildings of a similar scale and character. Conversely a rural landscape containing only remote farmsteads is likely to have a high susceptibility to large scale built development.

Table A3: Landscape Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is highly susceptible to the proposed development because the key characteristics of the landscape have no or very limited ability to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Medium	The landscape receptor is moderately susceptible to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape have some ability to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.
Low	The landscape receptor has low susceptibility to the proposed development because the relevant characteristics of the landscape are generally able to accommodate it without transformational adverse effects, taking account of the existing character and quality of the landscape.

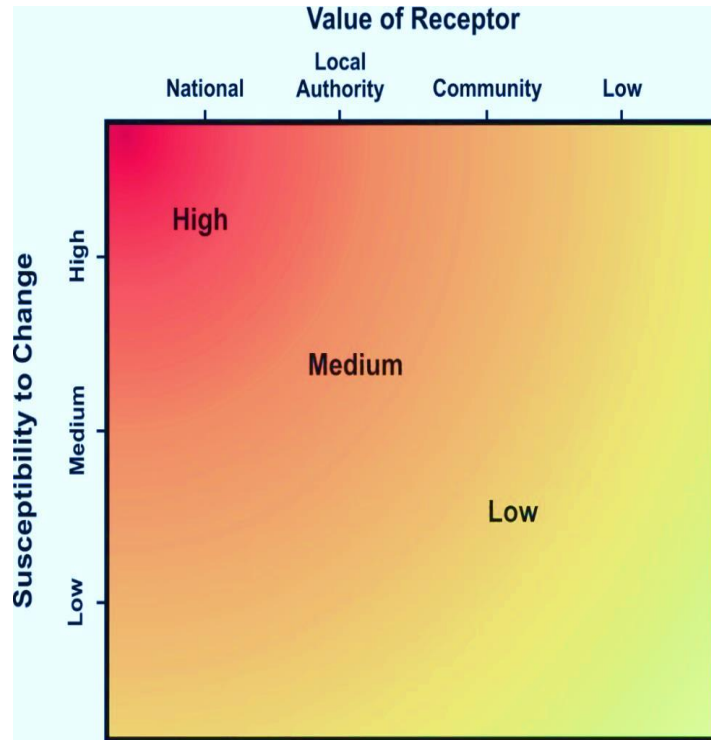
## Defining Sensitivity

As has been noted above, the sensitivity of landscape receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between value and susceptibility to change as indicated in Figure A1 below. This summarises the general nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Professional judgement is applied on a case by case basis in determining sensitivity of individual receptors with the diagram only serving as a guide.

Table A4 below summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Judgements are made about each landscape receptor, with the table serving as a guide.

Where, taking into account the component judgements about the value and susceptibility of the landscape receptor, sensitivity is judged to lie between levels, an intermediate assessment of high/medium or medium/low is adopted. In a few limited cases a category of less than low (very low) may be used where the landscape is of low value and susceptibility is particularly low.

**Figure A1: Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors**



**Table A4: Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors**

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	The landscape receptor is of international or national value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development OR The landscape receptor is of national value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.

Sensitivity	Criteria
Medium	<p>The landscape receptor is of international or national value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have high susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development</p>
Low	<p>The landscape receptor is of local authority value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have medium susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The landscape receptor is of community value and is considered to have low susceptibility to the effects of the proposed development.</p>

### Magnitude of Landscape Change

The magnitude of landscape change is established by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change.

### Size and Scale of Change

The size and/or scale of change in the landscape takes into consideration the following factors:

- the extent/proportion of landscape elements lost or added; and/or
- the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and
- whether this is likely to change the key characteristics of the landscape.

The criteria used to assess the size and scale of landscape change are based upon the amount of change that will occur as a result of the proposed development, as described in Table A5 below.

Table A5: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Description
Large level of landscape change	<p>There would be a large level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, the proposed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• becomes a dominant feature in the landscape, changing the balance of landscape characteristics; and/or</li> <li>• would dominate important visual connections with other landscape types, where this is a key characteristic of the area.</li> </ul>
Medium level of landscape change	<p>There would be a medium level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the proposed development would be more prominent but would not change the overall balance or composition of the landscape; and/or</li> <li>• key views to other landscape types may be interrupted intermittently by the proposed development, but these views would not be dominated by them.</li> </ul>
Small level of landscape change	<p>There would be a small level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there would be no introduction of new elements into the landscape and the proposed development would not significantly change the composition/balance of the landscape.</li> </ul>
Negligible/no level of landscape change	<p>There would be a negligible or no level of change in landscape character, and especially to the key characteristics if, for example, the proposed development would be a small element and/or would be a considerable distance from the receptor.</p>

#### Geographical Extent of Change

The geographical extent of landscape change is assessed by determining the area over which the changes will influence the landscape, as set out in Table A6. For example this could be at the site level, in the immediate setting of the site, or over some or all of the landscape character types or areas affected.



Table A6: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Geographical Extent

Category	Description
Large extent of landscape change	Affects a wider area further from the site itself.
Medium extent of landscape change	Landscape change extends beyond the site boundaries
Small extent of landscape change	The change will affect a small geographical area. A localised change, often focused on the site itself.
Negligible extent of landscape change	Change affects only a very small geographical area

#### Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the landscape change is categorised in Table A7 below, which considers whether the change will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

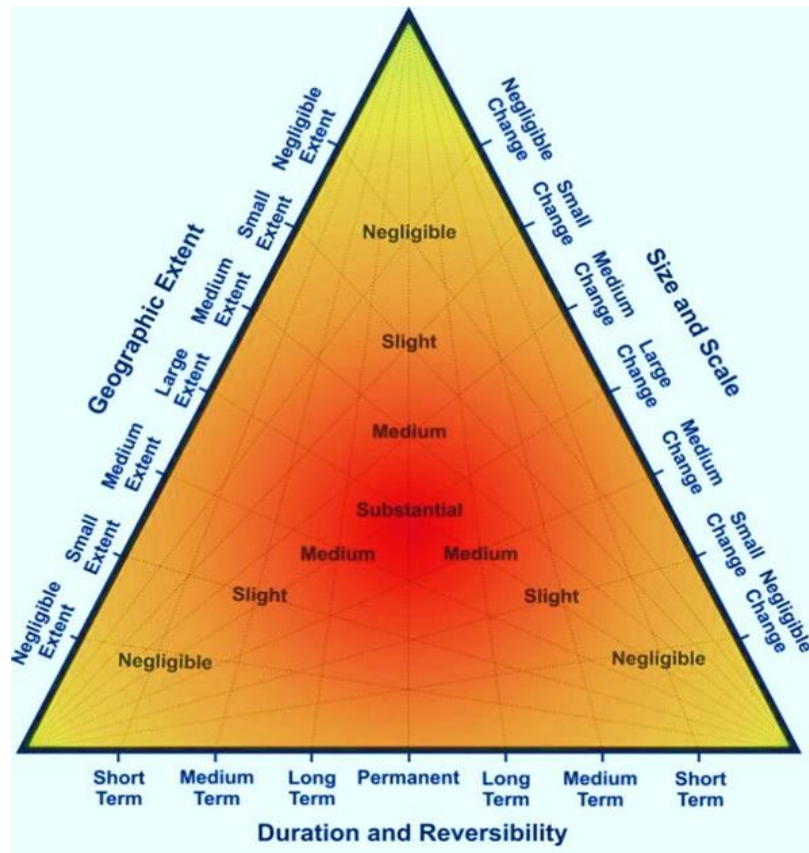
Table A7: Magnitude of Landscape Change: Duration and Reversibility

Category	Description
Permanent/Irreversible	Magnitude of change that will last for 25 years or more is deemed permanent or irreversible.
Long term reversible	Effects that are theoretically reversible but will endure for between 10 and 25 years.
Medium term reversible	Effects that are reversible and/or will last for between 5 and 10 years.
Temporary/Short term reversible	As above that are reversible and will last from 0 to 5 years - includes construction effects.

#### Deciding on Overall Magnitude of Landscape Change

The relationships between the three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of landscape effects are illustrated graphically, as a guide, in Diagram A2 below. Various combinations are possible and the overall magnitude of each effect is judged on merit rather than by formulaic application of the relationships in the diagram.

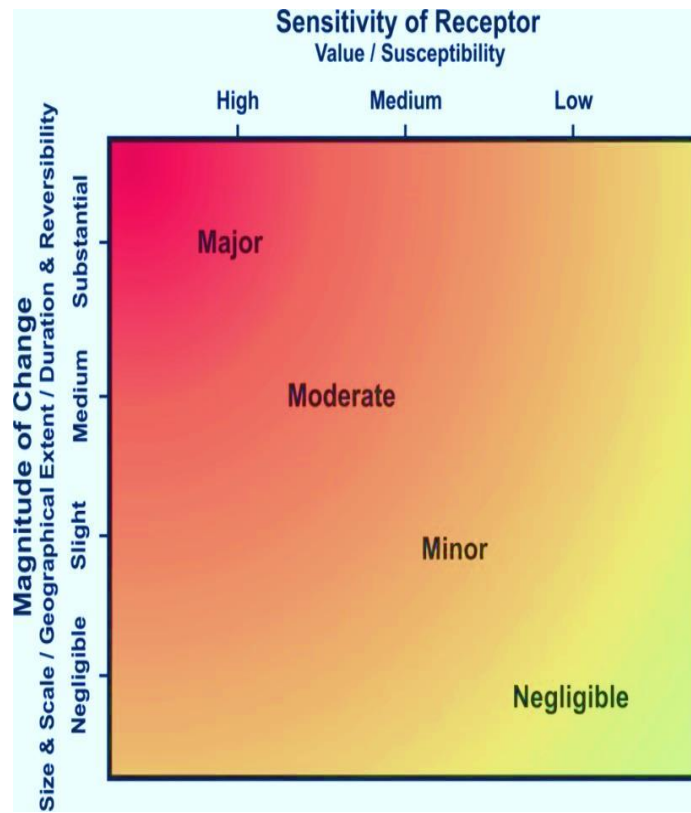
Figure A2: Determining the magnitude of landscape change



### Assessment of Landscape Effects

The assessment of overall landscape effects is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the landscape receptors and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A3) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic. Judgements are made about each landscape effect using this diagram as a guide.

Fig A3: Assessment of Landscape Effects



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## Visual Effects

Visual effects are the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the proposed development. They generally include users of public rights of way or other recreational facilities or attractions; travellers who may pass through the study area because they are visiting, living or working there; residents living in the study area, either as individuals or, more often, as a community; and people at their place of work.

- Communities within settlements (i.e. towns, villages and hamlets);
- Residents of individual properties and clusters of properties;
- People using nationally designated or regionally promoted footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways and others using areas of Open Access Land agreed under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Users of the local public rights of way (PRoW) network;
- Visitors at publicly accessible sites including, for example, gardens and designed landscapes, historic sites, and other visitor attractions or outdoor recreational facilities where the landscape or seascape is an important part of the experience;
- Users of outdoor sport and recreation facilities;
- Visitors staying at caravan parks or camp sites;
- Road users on recognised scenic or promoted tourist routes;
- Users of other roads;
- Rail passengers;
- People at their place of work.

Judging visual effects requires a methodical assessment of the sensitivity of the visual receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of effect which would be experienced by each receptor.

Viewpoints are chosen, in discussion with the competent authority and other stakeholders and interested parties, for a variety of reasons but most commonly because they represent views experienced by relevant groups of people.

### Visual Sensitivity

Sensitivity of visual receptors is assessed by combining an assessment of the susceptibility of visual receptors to the type of change which is proposed with the value attached to the views. (GLVIA3, paragraph 6.30).

### Value Attached to Views

Different levels of value are attached to the views experienced by particular groups of people at particular viewpoints. Assessment of value takes account of a number of factors, including:

- Recognition of the view through some form of planning designation or by its association with particular heritage assets; and
- The popularity of the viewpoint, in part denoted by its appearance in guidebooks, literature or art, or on tourist maps, by information from stakeholders and by the evidence of use including facilities provided for its enjoyment (seating, signage, parking places, etc.); and

- Other evidence of the value attached to views by people including consultation with local planning authorities and professional assessment of the quality of views.

The assessment of the value of views is summarised in Table A9 below. These criteria are provided for guidance only.

Table A9: Factors Considered in assessing the Value Attached to Views

Value	Criteria
High	<p>Views from nationally (and in some cases internationally) known viewpoints, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have some form of planning designation; or</li> <li>• are associated with internationally or nationally designated landscapes or important heritage assets; or</li> <li>• are promoted in sources such as maps and tourist literature; or</li> <li>• are linked with important and popular visitor attractions where the view forms a recognised part of the visitor experience; or</li> <li>• have important cultural associations.</li> </ul> <p>Also may include views judged by assessors to be of high value.</p>
Medium	<p>Views from viewpoints of some importance at regional or local levels, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have some form of local planning designation associated with locally designated landscapes or areas of equivalent landscape quality; or</li> <li>• are promoted in local sources; or</li> <li>• are linked with locally important and popular visitor attractions where the view forms a recognised part of the visitor experience; or</li> <li>• have important local cultural associations.</li> </ul> <p>Also may include views judged by the assessors to be of medium value.</p>
Low	<p>Views from viewpoints which, although they may have value to local people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have no formal planning status; or</li> <li>• are not associated with designated or otherwise high quality landscapes; or</li> <li>• are not linked with popular visitor attractions; or</li> <li>• have no known cultural associations.</li> </ul> <p>Also may include views judged by the assessors to be of low value.</p>

#### Susceptibility of Visual Receptors to Change

The susceptibility of different types of people to changes in views is mainly a function of:

- The occupation or activity of the viewer at a given viewpoint; and

- The extent to which the viewer's attention or interest be focussed on a particular view and the visual amenity experienced at a given view.

The susceptibility of different groups of viewers is assessed with reference to the guidance in Table A10 below. However, as noted in GLVIA3 *“this division is not black and white and in reality there will be a gradation in susceptibility to change”*. Therefore the susceptibility of each group of people affected is considered for each project and assessments are included in the relevant text in the report.

Table A10: Visual Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	Residents; People engaged in outdoor recreation where their attention is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views; Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views of the surroundings are an important part of the experience; Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by the residents.
Medium	Travellers on scenic routes where the attention of drivers and passengers is likely to be focused on the landscape and on particular views. People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which may involve appreciation of views e.g. users of golf courses.
Low	People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve appreciation of views; People at their place of work whose attention is focused on their work Travellers, where the view is incidental to the journey.

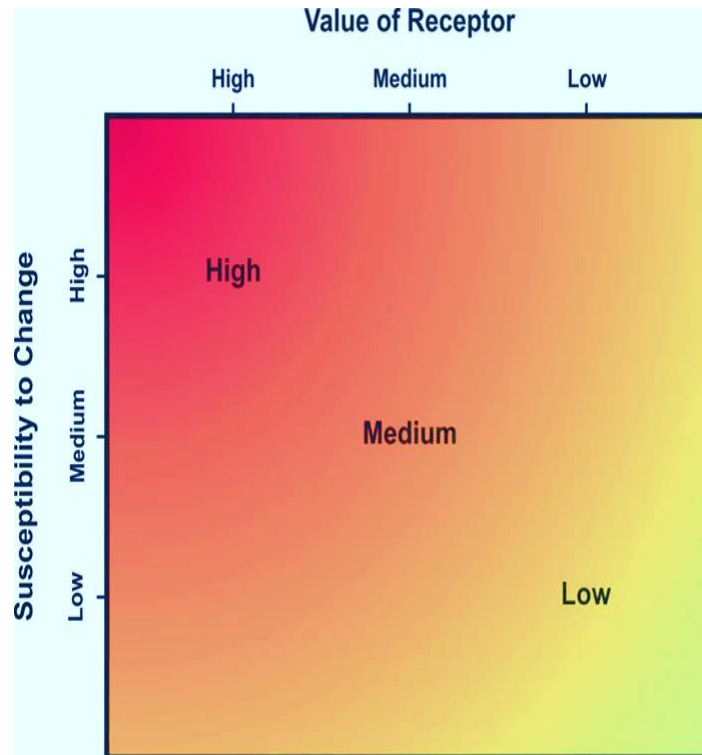
### Defining Sensitivity

The sensitivity of visual receptors is defined in terms of the relationship between the value of views and the susceptibility of the different receptors to the proposed change. Figure XX below summarises the nature of the relationship; it is not formulaic and only indicates general categories of sensitivity. Judgements are made on merit about each visual receptor, with the table below only serving as a guide. Table A11 sets down the main categories that may occur but again it is not comprehensive and other combinations may occur.

Table A11: Levels of Sensitivity defined by Value and Susceptibility of Visual Receptors

Sensitivity	Criteria
High	<p>The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of high value</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of high value.</p>
Medium	<p>The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The visual receptor group is highly susceptible to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the high level.</p>
Low	<p>The visual receptor group has a medium level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the medium level</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The visual receptor group has a low level of susceptibility to changes in views and visual amenity and relevant views are of value at the low level.</p>

Figure A4 Levels of Sensitivity Defined by Value and Susceptibility of Visual Receptor Groups



#### Magnitude of Visual Change

The magnitude of visual change is established by assessing the size or scale of change, the geographical extent of the area influenced and the duration and potential reversibility of the change.

#### Size and Scale of Change

The criteria used to assess the size and scale of visual change at each viewpoint are as follows:

- the scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view, changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development and distance of view;
- the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of factors such as form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture; and
- the nature of the view of the proposed development, for example whether views will be full, partial or glimpses or sequential views while passing through the landscape.

The above criteria are summarised in the Table A12 below.



Table A12: Magnitude of Visual Change: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Criteria
Large visual change	The proposed development will cause a complete or large change in the view, resulting from the loss of important features in or the addition of significant new ones, to the extent that this will substantially alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers.
Medium visual change	The proposed development will cause a clearly noticeable change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will alter to a moderate degree the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be partial/intermittent.
Small visual change	The proposed development will cause a perceptible change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will partially alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be partial only.
Negligible visual change	The proposed development will cause a barely perceptible change in the view, resulting from the loss of features or the addition of new ones, to the extent that this will barely alter the composition of the view and the visual amenity it offers. Views may be glimpsed only.
No change	The proposed development will cause no change to the view.

#### Geographical Extent of Change

The geographical extent of the visual change identified at representative viewpoints is assessed by reference to a combination of the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), where this has been prepared, and field work, and consideration of the criteria in Table A13 below. Representative viewpoints are used as 'sample' points to assess the typical change experienced by different groups of visual receptors at different distances and directions from the proposed development. The geographical extent of the visual change is judged for each group of receptors: for example, people using a particular route or public amenity, drawing on the viewpoint assessments, plus information about the distribution of that particular group of people in the Study Area.

The following factors are considered for each representative viewpoint:

- the angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor;
- the distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development; and
- the extent of the area over which changes would be visible.

Thus, low levels of change identified at representative viewpoints may be extensive or limited in terms of the geographical area they are apparent from: for example, a view of the proposed development from elevated Access Land may be widely visible from much or all of the accessible area, or may be confined to a small proportion of the area. Similarly, a view from a public footpath may be visible from a single isolated viewpoint, or over a prolonged stretch of the route. Community views may be experienced from a small number of dwellings, or affect numerous residential properties.

Table A13: Magnitude of Visual Change: Geographical Extent of Change

Category	Description
Large extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors in many locations across the Study Area or from the majority of a linear route and/or by large numbers of viewers; or the effect on the specific view(s) is extensive.
Medium extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors from a medium number of locations across the Study Area or from a medium part of a linear route and/or by a medium number of viewers; or the effect on the specific view is moderately extensive.
Small extent of visual change	The proposed development is seen by the group of receptors at a small number of locations across the Study Area or from only limited sections of a linear route and/or by a small number of viewers; or the effect on a specific view is small.
Negligible extent of visual change	The proposed development is either not visible in the Study Area or is seen by the receptor group at only one or two locations or from a very limited section of a linear route and/or by only a very small number of receptors; or the effect on the specific view is barely discernible.

#### Duration and Reversibility of Change

The duration of the visual change at viewpoints is categorised in Table A14 below, which considers whether views will be permanent and irreversible or temporary and reversible.

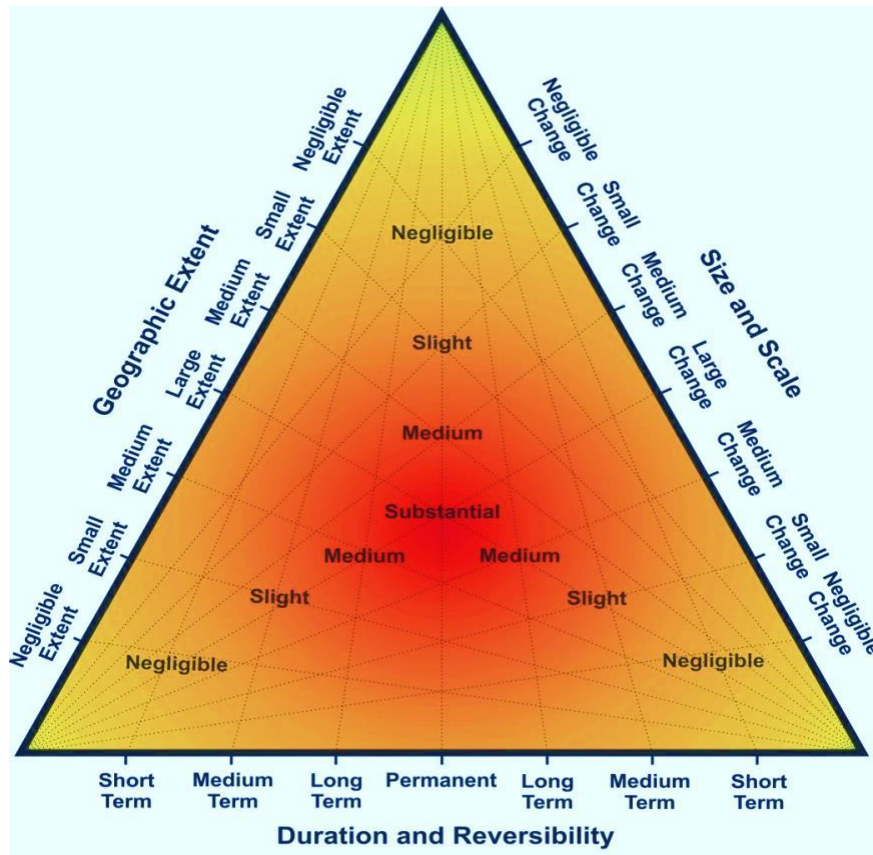
Table A14: Magnitude of Visual Change: Duration and Reversibility

Category	Description
Permanent/ Irreversible	Change that will last for over 25 years and is deemed irreversible.
Long term reversible	Change that will endure for between 10 and 25 years and is potentially, or theoretically reversible.
Medium term reversible	Change that will last for up to 10 years and is wholly or partially reversible.
Temporary/ Short term reversible	Change that will last from 0 to 5 years and is reversible - includes construction effects.

#### Deciding on Overall Magnitude of Visual Change

The relationships between the three factors that contribute to assessment of the magnitude of visual effects are illustrated graphically, as a guide, in Figure A5, below. Various combinations are possible and the overall magnitude of each effect is judged on merit rather than by formulaic application of the relationships in the diagram.

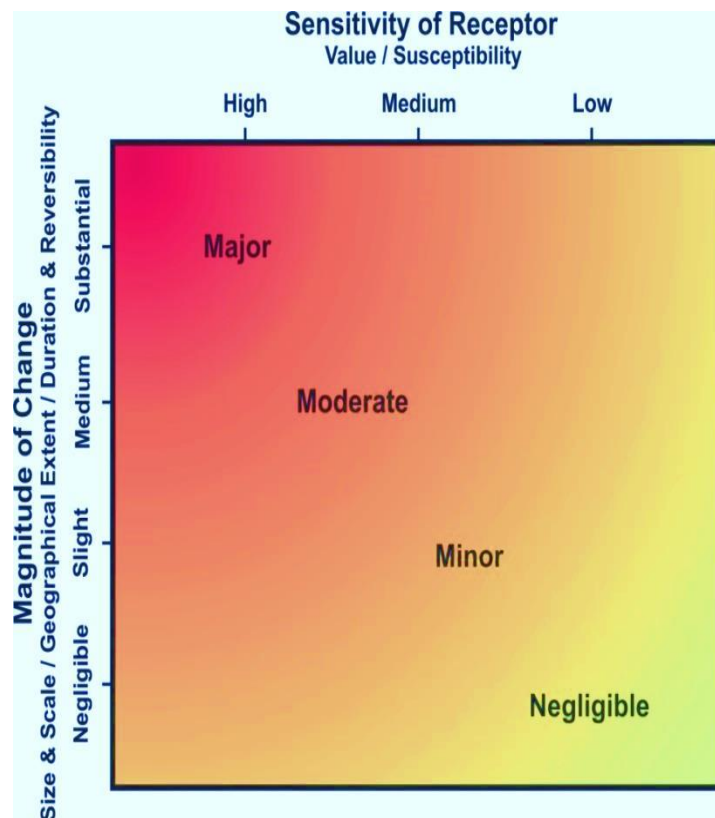
Figure A5: Determining the magnitude of visual change



Assessment of Visual Effects

The assessment of visual effects is defined in terms of the relationship between the sensitivity of the visual receptors (value and susceptibility) and the magnitude of the change. The diagram below (Figure A6) summarises the nature of the relationship but it is not formulaic and only indicates broad levels of effect. Judgements are made about each visual effect using this diagram as a guide.

Figure A6: Assessment of Visual Effects



## APPENDIX B

# Assessment of Potential Landscape Effects

The following tables set out the sensitivity of the landscape receptors to the proposed development, and the magnitude of landscape effects that those receptors would experience as a result of the proposed development. A commentary on the significance of landscape effects is also included in this section.

These tables should be read in conjunction with section 4.0 of the report, which provides a narrative explanation of the potential landscape effects of the development.

**Table B1: EVALUATION OF THE VALUE OF THE SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT IN ACCORDANCE WITH TABLE 1 of TGN 02/21**

Factor	Assessment	Notes
<b>Natural Heritage</b>	Community	<p>The framework of hedgerows with hedgerow standards, and the small areas of woodland, have been identified in the Preliminary Ecological Assessment as being a Local BAP target and also Habitats of Principal Importance. The trees on site are also included within a blanket TPO, and consequently these should be considered as being of Local Authority value.</p> <p>However, the site is not included within, or immediately adjacent to, a national or local authority ecological designation. Furthermore, much of the site is occupied by an existing golf course, and part of the site is also occupied with hardstanding, and consequently much of the site is of low ecological value.</p>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	Low	<p>There are no significant features of heritage value on the application site, and the site is not within or adjacent to any designated heritage elements. There is a listed building at Meadow Farm hotel to the west of the site.</p>
<b>Landscape Condition</b>	Community	<p>The influence of housing and the hotel and car park to the east, and the incursion by the golf course fairways and overflow car park/maintenance yard upon the site itself, introduces incongruous elements into the Wooded Estatelands. However, some trees and hedgerows are in good condition.</p>
<b>Associations</b>	Low	<p>The application site itself has no associations with art, literature or events.</p>
<b>Distinctiveness</b>	Community	<p>The site and its locality do not have a particularly strong sense of identity. It is partially occupied by a golf course, and also includes car parking and a maintenance depot. Parts of the site are unmanaged grassland and scrub. With the exception of some mature trees and hedgerows the site and its locality therefore have few distinctive elements and makes a relatively small contribution to the wider Wooded Estatelands landscape type.</p>
<b>Recreational</b>	Community	<p>There is no formal access to much of the application site, but there is a permissive route crossing the fairway at the southern end of the site, as well as access for players to the golf course itself.</p>

<b>Perceptual (Scenic)</b>	Low/Community	The openness of the fields and fairways will be valued by residents on Hither Green Lane. However, glimpsed views of the hotel and housing, combined with the use of part of the site as a golf course, car park and maintenance depot, gives a clear sense that this is not an entirely rural site, but instead one which is on the settlement edge. The site and its locality therefore lacks memorable or distinctive views, or strong aesthetic qualities.
<b>Perceptual (Wildness and Tranquillity)</b>	Low/Community	The site is not within a dark skies area, and is influenced to some extent by road noise from the A441 and Dagnell End Road. There is therefore little sense of remoteness, wildness or tranquillity.
<b>Functional</b>	Low/Community	The application site does not perform a clearly identifiable landscape function. It is not an important part of the green infrastructure network, and nor does it have a physical or functional link with a national landscape designation. Part of the site is within floodplain, and the woodland areas do perform a role as a carbon sink.

In summary the value of the application site and its immediate context is therefore assessed as being of **Low/Community** level.

**Table B2: Assessment of Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors on the Application Site and its Context**

Landscape Receptors	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Notes
<b>Individual Elements and Features</b>				
Enclosed tall grassland and scrub	Low/ Community	High	Medium	Tall grassland and scrub is inherently susceptible to the introduction of built form, and existing development within and around the site has little influence on the character of these areas.
Enclosed golf course fairways with mature tree groups	Low/ Community	Medium	Medium/Low	Whilst golf course fairways are open, and new residential development therefore has the potential to change the character of this landscape type, the character of a golf course is also intensively managed and suburban in character, with alien features such as tee boxes and bunkers. Golf courses are thus less susceptible to residential development than the more rural parts of the site.
Existing pond	Low/ Community	Low	Low	Whilst the existing pond is inherently susceptible to development, the proposed form of development would retain and enhance this feature. The existing pond thus has low susceptibility to the proposed development.
Hedgerow network with hedgerow standards and small woodlands	Local Authority	Medium	Medium	Hedgerows and trees have a generally high susceptibility to residential development. However, the proposed development would conserve and manage most of the existing hedgerows and trees within the site. These features therefore have medium susceptibility to the proposed development. The trees on site are protected by TPOs and consequently these elements are of Local Authority value.
Enclosed car parking and maintenance depot	Low	Low	Low	This area contains hard surfaces and structures, and is also immediately adjacent to Hither Green Lane. It therefore has a low susceptibility to residential development.
<b>Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects</b>				
Enclosed, medium scale	Low/ Community	Medium	Medium/Low	Housing would retain and intensify the sense of enclosure, and the scale of the landscape could be reduced further – although not dramatically - by the introduction of built form.



Landscape Receptors	Value	Susceptibility	Sensitivity	Notes
Generally simple and still with influence from nearby built form, noise and light	Low/ Community	High/Medium	Medium	The application site has some influence from built form in its north-eastern corner, and the golf course also includes complex landforms such as tees, greens and bunkers. However the more simple parts of the site are more susceptible to the introduction of built form.
<b>Overall Character</b>				
Transitional area between Wooded Estatelands and urban/suburban areas (the character of the site itself and its immediate context)	Low/ Community	Medium	Medium/Low	This area is partially characterised by influence from the settlement edge, road noise, and lighting, and also includes some existing built form.
Urban and suburban areas (south and east of the site)	Low	Low	Low	The existing uses to the east and south of the application site are similar to those being proposed, and consequently these areas have a low susceptibility to the proposed development.
Wooded Estatelands (west and north of the site)	Community	Medium	Medium	This more rural character area has a higher susceptibility to built form, although it is already influenced by lighting, built form and noise. However, the direct and indirect effects of development upon these areas would be limited.

**Table B3: Assessment of Magnitude of Landscape Change**

Landscape Receptors	Size and Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/ Reversibility	Magnitude	Notes
<b>Individual Elements and Features</b>					
Enclosed tall grassland and scrub	Large	Small	Permanent	Substantial/Medium	There would be a large scale of change to the 5.3ha of tall grassland and scrub within the application site as a result of the proposed development, with new homes and roads being introduced to the existing fields of tall grassland. The change would be focused on the site itself and would be permanent.
Enclosed golf course fairways with mature tree groups	Large	Small	Permanent	Substantial/Medium	There would be a large scale of change to the 4.45ha of golf course within the application site as a result of the proposed development, with new homes and roads being introduced to the existing fairway. The change would be focused on the site itself and would be permanent.
Existing pond	Small	Negligible	Permanent	Slight	The existing pond is retained in the proposed masterplan for the development, and would be managed to encourage biodiversity, including creation of a new reedbed. The extent of change would be focused on a small part of the site and the change would be long term.
Hedgerow network with hedgerow standards and small woodlands	Medium	Small	Permanent	Medium	One hedgerow at the centre of the site would be removed (approximately 400 metres long), although tree groups along this hedgerow would be retained. Hedgerows around the edges of the site would be retained, and approximately 325 metres of new hedgerows would be established.  The majority of mature trees would be retained in the proposed masterplan. Of the trees that would need to be removed, no category A trees would be removed, 18 category B trees and 80 category C trees.

Landscape Receptors	Size and Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/ Reversibility	Magnitude	Notes
Enclosed car parking and maintenance depot	Medium	Negligible	Permanent	Medium/Slight	New houses and roads would be introduced to an area that is already characterised by car parking with some buildings. The proposed houses would be more prominent than existing uses.
<b>Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects</b>					
Enclosed, medium scale	Medium	Small	Permanent	Medium	Approximately 44% of the application site would be occupied by new houses and roads, and a further 17% would be occupied by gardens. These new elements would introduce barriers which would increase the sense of enclosure and would also reduce the sense of scale to
Generally simple and still with influence from nearby built form, noise and light	Medium	Small	Permanent	Medium	The proposed development would introduce diverse forms and colours, as well as new texture and forms. However, the site is partially influenced by glimpses of the settlement edge, as well as noise and light from adjacent roads. The site also includes car parking and buildings at its north eastern corner.
<b>Overall Character</b>					
Transitional area between Wooded Estatelands and urban/suburban areas (the character of the site itself and its immediate context)	Medium	Small	Permanent	Medium	The change in character to this area would be limited to a small extension of existing built form which would not extend further north than existing housing on Dagnell End Road, would be contained by existing housing to the south and east, and would also be adjacent to a public house/hotel and car park to the west. Therefore, the proposed development would not significantly alter the overall settlement pattern in this location, and development would be focused on an area which already includes a car park and golf course.

Landscape Receptors	Size and Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration/ Reversibility	Magnitude	Notes
Urban and suburban areas (south and east of the site)	Small	Small	Permanent	Slight	There would be no direct changes to these parts of the character area. The proposed development would be visible from the edges of this area, but given that residential views are already a key characteristic of this area this would result in little change.
Wooded Estatelands (west and north of the site)	Small	Small	Permanent	Slight	There would be no direct changes to this character area, and views of the development would be both limited, and seen within the context of existing residential development.

**Table B4: Assessment of Landscape Effects**

Landscape Receptors	Sensitivity	Magnitude	Landscape Effects	Nature of Effect (Positive, Neutral or Negative)
<b>Individual Elements and Features</b>				
Enclosed tall grassland and scrub	Medium	Substantial/Medium	Major/Moderate	Negative
Enclosed golf course fairways with mature tree groups	Medium/Low	Substantial/Medium	Moderate	Negative
Existing pond	Low	Slight	Minor	Positive
Hedgerow network with hedgerow standards and small woodlands	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Negative
Enclosed car parking and maintenance depot	Low	Medium/Slight	Moderate/Minor	Negative
<b>Aesthetic and Perceptual Aspects</b>				
Enclosed, medium scale	Medium/Low	Medium	Moderate/Minor	Negative
Generally simple and still with influence from nearby built form, noise and light	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Negative
<b>Overall Character</b>				
Transitional area between Wooded Estatelands and urban/suburban areas (the character of the site itself and its immediate context)	Medium/Low	Medium	Moderate	Negative
Urban and suburban areas (south and east of the site)	Low	Slight	Minor	Neutral
Wooded Estatelands (west and north of the site)	Medium	Slight	Moderate/Minor	Neutral

## APPENDIX C

# Assessment of Potential Visual Effects

The following tables set out the sensitivity of visual receptors to the proposed development and the magnitude of visual effects that those receptors would experience as a result of the proposed development

In assessing the magnitude, the effects immediately following completion of construction have been assessed, since this is the worst case in terms of visual effects.

These tables should be read in conjunction with section 5.0 of this report, which provides a full explanation of the potential visual effects of the development.

**Table C1: Analysis of Sensitivity of Viewpoints/Visual Receptors**

Viewpoint	Value Attached to View	Potential Receptors	Susceptibility of Receptors	Overall Sensitivity	Notes
<b>1. Permissive footpath, southern end of application site</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> </ul>	Permissive footpath linking Hither Green Lane with Birmingham Road
<b>2. Cul de sac from Hither Green Lane, east of the application site</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Residents</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> <li>High</li> <li>Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Footway within residential area.
<b>3. Hither Green Lane, east of the application site</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Resident</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> <li>High</li> <li>Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Footway within residential area.
<b>4. Hither Green Lane, east of the application site and south of proposed site access</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Resident</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> <li>High</li> <li>Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Footway at entrance to residential area.
<b>5. Entrance to the Abbey Hotel, east of the proposed site access</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Hotel Residents</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> <li>High</li> <li>Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Entrance to the Abbey Hotel, adjacent to car park.



Viewpoint	Value Attached to View	Potential Receptors	Susceptibility of Receptors	Overall Sensitivity	Notes
<b>6. Junction between PROW 628C and Dagnell End Road</b>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High/Medium</li> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	Start of footpath at junction with Dagnell End Road. No footway along road at this point.
<b>7. PROW 628C, north of Dagnell End Road</b>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High/Medium</li> </ul>	Footpath in open countryside.
<b>8. Private homes on Dagnell End Road</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> <li>• Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• High</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Medium/Low</li> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	Views from a private road running parallel to, and north of, the Dagnell End Road, serving approximately 19 private homes.
<b>9. Car Park of the Meadow Farm pub and restaurant</b>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> <li>• Guests/Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• High</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• High/Medium</li> </ul>	Location of three grade II listed buildings. Viewpoint is located in car park at point close to the application site. Restaurant, pub and hotel rooms are provided, and consequently guests may be short stay or overnight. Most of the windows face away from the site, but there is potential for oblique views, as well as for views from garden spaces and the car park.
<b>10. Birmingham Road (A441), north-west of site</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Footway along A441, one of the main routes into Redditch.
<b>11. Junction between Birmingham Road and permissive footpath</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	Footway along A441, and junction with permissive path leading towards Hither Green Lane.

Viewpoint	Value Attached to View	Potential Receptors	Susceptibility of Receptors	Overall Sensitivity	Notes
	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium/Low</li> </ul>	
<b>12. Abbey Stadium</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spectators /informal recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Raised ground adjacent to athletics track at Abbey Stadium, suitable for spectators or informal recreation.
<b>13. Nutford Street, Brockhill East</b>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> <li>• Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• High</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Medium/Low</li> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	Footway adjacent to Public Open Space in new residential area at Brockhill East. Also represents views from proposed new POS to the north of this point, which was not accessible on the site visit.

**Table C2: Analysis of Magnitude of Visual Change**

Viewpoint	Size and Scale of Change	Geographical Extent	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude of Change (Year 1 unless stated)	Notes
<b>1. Permissive footpath, southern end of application site</b>	Large	Small	Permanent	Substantial/ Medium	Trees on the existing settlement edge would be retained, and much of the fairway in the foreground of this view would be replaced by gently grading grassland slopes sloping down to a new permanent water feature with reedbed. To the left of the view the existing hedgerow would be removed, with views of new homes fronting on to the new water feature filtered by new tree planting. Existing scrub and trees along the River Arrow would be largely retained. The permissive footpath would be replaced by a new footpath on a different route.
<b>2. Cul de sac from Hither Green Lane, east of the application site</b>	Negligible	Small	Permanent	Slight	Existing housing on Hither Green Lane would continue to form the foreground of this view, and existing tree groups would be retained and thus continue to be visible in the background to this view. Glimpses of new homes could potentially be visible in the winter months, but would be largely screened when foliage is on trees.
<b>3. Hither Green Lane, east of the application site</b>	Negligible	Small	Permanent	Slight	Existing housing on Hither Green Lane would continue to form the foreground of this view, and existing tree groups would be retained and thus continue to be visible in the background to this view and along the vista provided by the footpath. Glimpses of new homes could potentially be visible in the winter months, but these would be largely screened when foliage is on trees.

Viewpoint	Size and Scale of Change	Geographical Extent	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude of Change (Year 1 unless stated)	Notes
<b>4. Hither Green Lane, east of the application site and south of proposed site access</b>	Medium	Small	Permanent	Medium	The proposed development would be visible in the middle ground of this view, set back behind both existing and proposed vegetation. Houses would be fronting on, and ridgelines would be visible on the skyline. The new access would be visible, in approximately the same place as the existing access to the car park.
<b>5. Entrance to the Abbey Hotel, east of the proposed site access</b>	Medium	Small	Permanent	Medium	Existing views of the car park in the middle ground would be replaced by views of new homes, filtered by existing and proposed vegetation. The hotel car park, hotel buildings and Hither Green Lane would continue to form the foreground and setting for views of the new homes.
<b>6. Junction between PROW 628C and Dagnell End Road</b>	Small	Small	Permanent	Medium/Slight	Proposed new homes would be largely screened by the retained hedgerow to the south of Dagnell End Road. However, there would be some views of new roof planes and gables above the hedgerow.
<b>7. PROW 628C, north of Dagnell End Road</b>	Small	Small	Permanent	Medium/Slight	A short section of this footpath provides views over the retained hedgerow on the northern boundary of the site, and consequently new roof planes and the upper parts of new elevations would be visible within this view. However, these would be seen in the context of existing buildings in the middle ground of this view, including the prominent new homes at Brock Hill East, at the right of the view, and existing homes along Dagnell End Road.

Viewpoint	Size and Scale of Change	Geographical Extent	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude of Change (Year 1 unless stated)	Notes
<b>8. Private homes on Dagnell End Road</b>	Small	Small	Permanent	Medium/Slight	The roof planes and gable ends of a small number of new homes would be visible above and through the existing, retained hedgerow in the middle ground, particularly in the winter months. These would, however, be viewed in the context of existing houses on Dagnell End Road and the road itself.
<b>9. Car Park of the Meadow Farm pub and restaurant</b>	Small	Small	Permanent	Medium/Slight	The roof planes and gable ends of a small number of new homes would be visible above and through the existing, retained hedgerow in the middle ground, particularly in the winter months. These would, however, be viewed in the context of the existing car park and hotel buildings in the foreground to this view.
<b>10. Birmingham Road (A441), north-west of site</b>	Negligible	Small	Permanent	Slight	From this perspective the proposed development would be set back behind an existing, retained field, and at least two retained hedgerows with existing mature and semi-mature trees. It is possible that some new ridgelines/roof planes would be visible over these hedgerows, but these would be seen in the context of existing housing along Dagnell End Road to the left of the view, and more prominent housing at Brockhill East to the right of the view, (as well as the Citroen garage and the A441 in the foreground of the view).

Viewpoint	Size and Scale of Change	Geographical Extent	Duration and Reversibility	Magnitude of Change (Year 1 unless stated)	Notes
<b>11. Junction between Birmingham Road and permissive footpath</b>	Negligible	Small	Permanent	Slight	The proposed development would be set back from this viewpoint behind two intervening fields and at least two retained existing hedgerows. There is therefore a small potential for glimpsed views of new ridgelines and roof planes, although these visible in the context of existing glimpsed views of built form in the view, as well as the A441 in the foreground of the view.
<b>12. Abbey Stadium</b>	Negligible	Negligible	Permanent	Slight/Negligible	The proposed development would be set back from this viewpoint behind an intervening field at least one retained hedgerow and a tree belt along the River Arrow. There is therefore a negligible potential for glimpsed views of new ridgelines and roof planes, since these would be almost entirely screened by intervening vegetation. The geographical extent of this view is very limited, as it is seen from only the high point of a mound adjacent to the athletics track.
<b>13. Nutford Street, Brockhill East</b>	Small/Negligible	Small	Permanent	Slight	The elevated position of this viewpoint affords glimpsed views of existing buildings at Meadow Farm and also homes on Hither Green Lane. Roof planes of new homes could also be visible, interspersed with and filtered by retained existing vegetation. New built form would, however, be seen in the context of the existing development both in the foreground and also in the background of this view.

**Table C3: Assessment of Visual Effects**

Viewpoint	Receptors	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Visual Effects	Nature of Effect (Negative, Positive, Neutral)
<b>1. Permissive footpath, southern end of application site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> </ul>	Substantial/ Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major/Moderate</li> </ul>	Negative for residential area, positive for new habitat
<b>2. Cul de sac from Hither Green Lane, east of the application site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Residents</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor</li> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> <li>Minor</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>3. Hither Green Lane, east of the application site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Resident</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor</li> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> <li>Minor</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>4. Hither Green Lane, east of the application site and south of proposed site access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Resident</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> <li>Moderate</li> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>5. Entrance to the Abbey Hotel, east of the proposed site access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Hotel Residents</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> </ul>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> <li>Moderate</li> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> </ul>	Negative

Viewpoint	Receptors	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Visual Effects	Nature of Effect (Negative, Positive, Neutral)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium/Low</li> </ul>			
<b>6. Junction between PROW 628C and Dagnell End Road</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High/Medium</li> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	Medium/Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Moderate/Minor</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>7. PROW 628C, north of Dagnell End Road</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High/Medium</li> </ul>	Medium/Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate/Minor</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>8. Private homes on Dagnell End Road</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> <li>• Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Medium/Low</li> <li>• Medium</li> </ul>	Medium/Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate/Minor</li> <li>• Moderate/Minor to Minor</li> <li>• Moderate/Minor</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>9. Car Park of the Meadow Farm pub and restaurant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> <li>• Guests/ Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• High/Medium</li> </ul>	Medium/Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate/Minor</li> <li>• Moderate</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>10. Birmingham Road (A441), north-west of site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkers</li> <li>• Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderate/Minor</li> <li>• Minor</li> </ul>	Negative



Viewpoint	Receptors	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Change	Visual Effects	Nature of Effect (Negative, Positive, Neutral)
<b>11. Junction between Birmingham Road and permissive footpath</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> <li>Minor</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>12. Abbey Stadium</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spectators/informal recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium/Low</li> </ul>	Slight/Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor/Negligible</li> </ul>	Negative
<b>13. Nutford Street, Brockhill East</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkers</li> <li>Vehicle Users</li> <li>Residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium</li> <li>Medium/Low</li> <li>Medium</li> </ul>	Slight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> <li>Minor</li> <li>Moderate/Minor</li> </ul>	Negative

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