

## Langett, London Road, Cheltenham – Landscape and Visual Statement

### Instruction and scope of assessment:

MHP Design Ltd. have been instructed to produce a landscape and visual statement for the extension and remodelling of an existing single dwelling (Langett), which is located to the east of Cheltenham Town within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The site lies within close proximity to the Cotswold Way National Trail which is located beyond the eastern boundary of the garden. The purpose of this statement is to assess the potential impacts on views from the adjoining footpath following redevelopment of the site. Viewpoint photographs of existing views from the Cotswold Way are included within **Appendix A** of the report.

### Site location:

The site is located off the A40 London Road on the eastern edge of Cheltenham Town. The area is located within the Cotswolds AONB which washes over much of the land to the east of the town. The linear shaped parcel of land contains a single dwelling, situated centrally within the plot, with garden curtilage to the north and south. The land adjoining to the north is agricultural pasture and to the east lies areas of established trees and Dowdeswell reservoir. The escarpment slopes are located to the north east which are characterised by dense established woodland. Despite its semi-rural location, both residential and commercial development are within proximity.

The site comprises of an existing single storey residential dwelling and separate garage building.

Existing established vegetation and trees are located around the boundaries of the site and provide containment to the domestic curtilage and extents of the land ownership.

### Description of development proposals:

Redevelopment and remodelling of the exiting property will see the building split over two levels into the slope of the site, comprising a lower and upper ground level. The ridge height is proposed to be no higher than the ridge of the existing dwelling. Materials are to comprise natural Cotswold Stone and timber cladding providing character enhancement over the existing dwelling. The remodelling of the dwelling will result in the eastern elevation being within 2.5m (approx.) from the eastern boundary of the site.

Refer to architects' site layout proposals drawing Urban Aspects NBR20.01

<b>Context &amp; Designations:</b>	
Greenbelt	The site is not located within the Cheltenham Green Belt
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	The Cotswolds AONB washes over the site and surrounding land
Listed buildings	None on site or adjoining its boundary.
Registered Park and Garden	No
Conservation Area	No
Open access land/public rights of way	The Cotswold Way runs adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site for a short duration
National Character Area	107 Cotswolds
County/District Character Area	Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment. <b>Escarpment Character Type</b> – Coopers Hill to Winchcombe Character Area
<b>Landscape Character context</b>	
<b>Natural Elements:</b>	
Landform	The land is generally level with a gentle north south gradient. The wider landscape to the north and east becomes steeply sloping as it rises towards the well wooded slopes of the Cotswold Escarpment.
Vegetation	Boundaries of the site are well vegetated with a mix of native trees and hedges. There is dense vegetation and trees immediately to the east of the site.
Hydrology	Dowdeswell reservoir and the River Chelt are within close proximity to the north and east. There are no streams, open watercourses or standing water on the site.
<b>Cultural Elements:</b>	
Land Use	The wider plot comprises of domestic curtilage associated with the single residential dwelling
Boundaries and enclosure pattern	Boundaries comprise established dense hedges and trees. Field patterns beyond the site comprise large open pasture fields with native hedges with occasional hedgerow trees.
Time depth/historic landscape	The site itself has a very limited time depth and is domestic and urban in character. The open pasture landscape and wooded escarpment slopes to the north and east impart a sense of time depth to the wider landscape.
Relationship to built form/settlement	The site is accessed from the A40 to the south which is a main arterial vehicle route into Cheltenham Town.

	Modern residential dwellings and commercial development line the road (A40) to the west on approach to the centre of the town.
Amenity/recreation use	No Public Rights of Way pass through the site. The Cotswold Way National Trail runs along the eastern boundary beyond the established hedge. The site is not publicly accessible.
Perceptual qualities	Low/moderate sense of tranquillity due to sites location within proximity to a major road. There is a low/moderate sense of activity related to the residential/commercial context to the south and west.

### Visual context

#### Potential Key Visual Receptors:

Users of the Cotswolds Way National Trail for a short duration of the path

Residents of dwellings within proximity to the south

#### Visual Context and Prominence:

A site visit was undertaken in April 2020 when trees and vegetation were in partial/full leaf. Views from Cotswold Way which is located beyond the eastern boundary of the site have been photographed and are presented in Appendix A.

The site is visually well contained from open views from within the AONB to the east due to mature established trees on the escarpment slopes. Due to the small size of the plot and dense boundary vegetation the existing dwelling is not prominent in views identified during site assessment work.

Residential dwellings within proximity have not been visited during the site assessment work. Aerial imagery indicates that the nearest dwellings are located to the south of the site contained and are by substantial vegetation and trees which is likely to significantly limit potential views towards the site.

Potential views from higher elevations to the north and east on the escarpment slopes footpaths, including the Cotswold Way are contained within woodland which obscure and filter views towards the site.

A degree of containment is provided to the site by the adjoining reservoir and trees, where steeply sloping landform contains the site from potential views from the A40 highway and rights of way in those locations.

## Views from the Cotswold Way:

**Appendix A: Viewpoints 1 – 4** are representative of existing baseline views from the Cotswold Way. The National Trail is located within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and views from the footpath are typically **higher value** views. There are no identified public viewing points or points of interest identified on Ordnance Survey mapping within proximity where there are views of the site.

Upon approach from the south (**VP1**) views of the site and the existing dwelling are available for a short duration of the path as the footpath approaches the from the footbridge. This is for a short duration where the existing vehicle entrance allows an open view into the site towards the dwelling. Dense boundary vegetation located further to the south restricts and filters all views towards the dwelling, which is not visible in views from the location beyond the bridge.

When within proximity to the existing dwelling (**VP 2 and VP3**) the beech hedge which is approximately 2.0 - 2.5m high limits and filters views towards the eastern elevation of the dwelling. Where glimpsed views are available for a short duration of the footpath, the majority of the lower portion of the building is obscured by this boundary vegetation. Views of the site and the existing dwelling are limited to a very short duration of the footpath.

Further to the north the footpath is contained within existing established trees which obscure and filter potential views towards the site. When within closer proximity the dwelling is obscured from view by the existing hedge (**VP4**). No open views of the existing dwelling have been identified from further north along the footpath on approach to the dwelling due to the containment provided by the existing trees and hedgerow.

## Assessment of Effects on Views

The extension and remodelling of the existing dwelling will bring the side elevation of the building within 2.5m approximately of the boundary. The existing beech hedge is well established and dense and filters and obscures views from the footpath. Whilst the massing of the proposed building will increase the quantum of development on the site, the perceived changes to views from the footpath will be very limited due to the screening effect provided by the boundary hedge. The effectiveness of the screening provided by the hedge is not likely to be significantly affected in a winter landscape, where vegetation would otherwise have lost its leaves, due to Beech species holding its leaves throughout the winter months. The beech hedge if maintained and managed to its existing height it is expected to provide an effective screen to the footpath and potential views of new built form on the site.

Through redevelopment of the existing dwelling there are opportunities for enhancement of the existing character of the site, the use of local natural stone and timber for building materials will enhance the site providing a more characteristic dwelling in this location in accordance with the aspirations of the Cotswold Design Guide.

The overall magnitude of effect on views from the Cotswold Way, post development of the site, are therefore expected to be **negligible**.

**Mitigation and Enhancement Potential:**

There are opportunities to maintain and enhance the existing landscape structure to the site boundaries through proactive maintenance and management. Where feasible additional tree planting along the site boundary to augment the hedge would both contribute to wider Green Infrastructure and further filter potential views into the site from the adjoining footpath.

Biodiversity enhancement can also be achieved a site level, even in smaller residential sites, where areas of lawn are over seeded with wildflower mixes and native tree and shrub planting to garden areas is undertaken where space allows.

**OVERALL SUMMARY:**

The site lies within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which makes it potentially sensitive to development. There is an existing dwelling on the site that is proposed to be extended and remodelled. The site is well contained from sensitive views from the Cotswold Way which is adjoining, with a limited number of receptors obtaining potential views into the site from residential dwellings, footpaths and roads. Where glimpsed views are available, these are limited to a very short duration of the adjoining footpath.

Due to the site's location, containment by existing vegetation and trees and current built form, the overall magnitude of effect on views from the Cotswold Way brought about by the extension and remodelling of the dwelling is assessed to be negligible.

There is further opportunity to improve and enhance the character of the site through proposals which consider characteristic contemporary Cotswold style vernacular and additional native planting to bring an overall enhancement to the development.

Produced by: **MHP Design Ltd**, Chartered Landscape Architects on behalf of Urban Aspects Ltd

Date: April 2020



- KEY
-  Study Site
  -  Cotswold Way
  -  Viewpoint Location/Direction

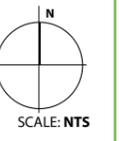
Base map reproduced from OS Explorer 1:25000

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Project Name:  
**Langett, London Road Cheltenham**

MHP Reference:

Revision:	Status:	Date:
	FINAL V1	24/04/2020



**Figure 1** Site Location, Viewpoint Locations and Context  
20069 Langett, London Road, Cheltenham



**Figure 2 Viewpoint Photograph 1 - Single Frame View**  
20069 Langett, London Road, Cheltenham

Visualisation Type: **Type 1**  
Projection: **Planar**  
Enlargement factor: **100% @A3**  
Image captured: **April 2020**

Camera Make/Model: **Nikon D7200**  
Camera Lens: **Nikon DXPrime 35mm**  
HfOV: **39.6°**  
Direction of view: **Looking north from Cotswold Way**



Study Site

**Figure 3 Viewpoint Photograph 2 - Single Frame View**  
20069 Langett, London Road, Cheltenham

Visualisation Type: **Type 1**  
Projection: **Planar**  
Enlargement factor: **100% @A3**  
Image captured: **April 2020**

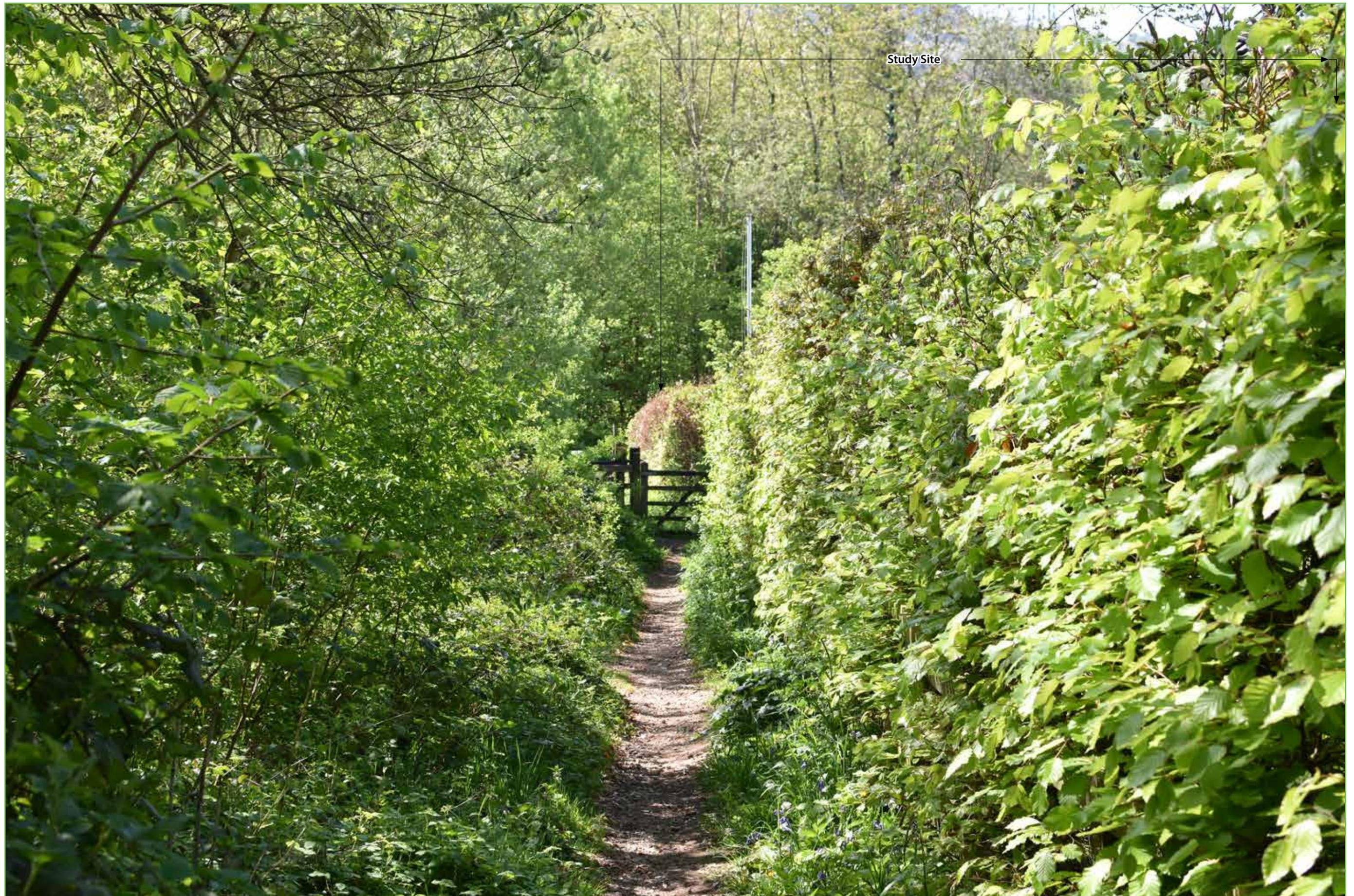
Camera Make/Model: **Nikon D7200**  
Camera Lens: **Nikon DXPrime 35mm**  
HfOV: **39.6°**  
Direction of view: **Looking north from  
Cotswold Way**



**Figure 4 Viewpoint Photograph 3 - Single Frame View**  
20069 Langett, London Road, Cheltenham

Visualisation Type: Type 1  
Projection: Planar  
Enlargement factor: 100% @A3  
Image captured: April 2020

Camera Make/Model: Nikon D7200  
Camera Lens: Nikon DXPrime 35mm  
HfOV: 39.6°  
Direction of view: Looking north east from  
Cotswold Way



Study Site

**Figure 5 Viewpoint Photograph 4** - Single Frame View  
20069 Langett, London Road, Cheltenham

Visualisation Type: **Type 1**  
Projection: **Planar**  
Enlargement factor: **100% @A3**  
Image captured: **April 2020**

Camera Make/Model: **Nikon D7200**  
Camera Lens: **Nikon DXPrime 35mm**  
HfOV: **39.6°**  
Direction of view: **Looking south from  
Cotswold Way**

## 2 APPENDIX B – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Characterisation</b>	The process of identifying areas of similar landscape character, classifying and mapping them and describing their character.
<b>Designated landscape</b>	Areas of landscape identified as being of importance at international, national or local levels, either defined by statute or identified in development plans or other documents.
<b>Elements</b>	Individual parts which make up the landscape, such as, for example, trees, hedges and buildings.
<b>Geographical Information System (GIS)</b>	A system that captures, stores, analyses, manages and presents data linked to location. It links spatial information to a digital database.
<b>Green Infrastructure (GI)</b>	Network of green spaces and watercourses and water bodies that connect rural areas, villages, towns and cities.
<b>Indirect effects</b>	Effects that result indirectly from the proposed project as a consequence of the direct effects, often occurring away from the site, or as a result of a sequence of interrelationships or a complex pathway. They may be separated by distance or in time from the source of the effects.
<b>Iterative design process</b>	The process by which project design is amended and improved by successive stages of refinement which respond to growing understanding of environmental issues.
<b>Key characteristics</b>	Those combinations of elements which are particularly important to the current character of the landscape and help to give an area its particularly distinctive sense of place.
<b>Land use</b>	What land is used for, based on broad categories of functional land cover, such as urban and industrial use and the different types of agriculture and forestry.
<b>Landform</b>	An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and /or human factors.
<b>Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)</b>	A tool used to identify and assess the likely significance of the effects of change resulting from development both on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.
<b>Landscape Character</b>	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
<b>Landscape Character Areas (LCA's)</b>	These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape type.
<b>Landscape Character Assessment</b>	The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape, and using this information to assist in managing change in the landscape. It seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscape distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Characterisation Assessment.
<b>Landscape Effects</b>	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.
<b>Landscape quality (condition)</b>	A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual

	areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.
<b>Landscape receptors</b>	Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal.
<b>Landscape value</b>	The relative value that is attached to different landscape by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.
<b>Magnitude (of effect)</b>	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration.
<b>Photomontage</b>	A visualisation which superimposes an image of a proposed development upon a photograph or series of photographs.
<b>Scoping</b>	The process of identifying the issues to be addressed by an EIA. It is a method of ensuring that an EIA focuses on the important issues and avoids those that are considered to be less significant.
<b>Sensitivity</b>	A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor.
<b>Significance</b>	A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic.
<b>Susceptibility (or vulnerability)</b>	How susceptible or vulnerable the landscape receptor is to accommodate the proposed development without undue negative consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation
<b>Time depth</b>	Historical layering – the idea of a landscape as a ‘palimpsest, a much written –over manuscript.
<b>Tranquillity</b>	A state of calm and quietude associated with peace, considered to be a significant asset of landscape.
<b>Visual amenity</b>	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.
<b>Visual effects</b>	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.
<b>Visual receptors</b>	Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal.
<b>Visualisation</b>	A computer simulation, photomontage or other technique illustrating the predicted appearance of a development
<b>Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)</b>	A map, usually digitally produced, showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible.