

FORMER COWLEY CONSERVATIVE CLUB SITE,
BETWEEN TOWNS ROAD, OXFORD

SUMMARY LANDSCAPE & VISUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR
PROPOSED STUDENT RESIDENCE DEVELOPMENT

prepared for

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY

- 1.1 This summary landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) has been commissioned by Cantay Estates to describe the landscape and visual effects of a proposed student residence development at the former Cowley Conservative Club site, Between Towns Road, Oxford.
- 1.2 Adams Habermehl is a landscape consultancy practice with broad experience of development related LVIA studies in urban and rural context. The architectural design proposals have been prepared by Penwarden Hale Architects, with landscape design proposals by Adams Habermehl. Verified views and associated photomontage images of the development proposals have been prepared by Realm.
- 1.3 The development proposals will form a planning submission to Oxford City Council (OCC). The scheme analysis and design development processes have been informed by, amongst other factors, working stage LVIA desk and field study processes; response to the 2015 report 'Assessment of The Oxford View Cones'¹; the Oxford High Buildings Study (OHBS - evidence base & technical advice reports)² and; local built environment and landscape character appraisal.
- 1.4 The LVIA is accompanied by verified view montage images from the tower of St Mary the Virgin on Oxford High Street and; the tower of St Mary and St John, Cowley Road (Appendix 6). The montage views seek to demonstrate the degree of potential visibility and relationship to context of the proposed development from publicly accessible heritage viewpoints. The tower of St Mary the virgin is a popular tourist viewpoint and taken as typical of the range of city centre viewpoints suggested by OCC within the OHBS. The tower of St Mary & St John does not currently have public access, but has been open on church fete days in the past and is a much closer potential viewpoint.
- 1.5 The purpose of the summary LVIA is to identify landscape and visual impacts where they occur and is primarily prepared as a technical document for officer review. The study assumes familiarity with the development proposals, the site and context, as well as the content and purpose of the OCC adopted reports which provide a baseline for much of the assessment studies.
- 1.6 The LVIA study process is based upon the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition (GLVIA)'³. Consideration of landscape character draws upon current guidance⁴ as well as the OCC studies identified above.

¹ Assessment of the Oxford View Cones – report by Oxford Preservation Society and Historic England, for Oxford City Council, 2015.

² Oxford High Buildings Study (evidence base report and, technical advice note) prepared by LDA design and Headland Archaeology for Oxford City Council, October 2018

³ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment- Third Edition. (The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, pub Routledge 2013 - ISBN 978-0-415-68004-2)

⁴ An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, October 2014, Christine Tudor, Natural England and; Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland pub 2002, Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.

2.0 EXISTING SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 The application site is formed from the combined sites of the former Cowley Conservative Club, the adjoining bookmakers and barbers shops and car park to the rear. The site fronts onto Between Towns Road, and flanks St Luke's Road, in Cowley, east Oxford (see Location Plan Appendix 1). The site is within Oxford's 'eastern suburbs' approximately 3.75 km south-east of the city centre. The urban character and landscape of the city centre and eastern suburbs are separated by the River Cherwell corridor with its well treed water meadows.
- 2.2 The broad context of Cowley includes extensive residential, commercial and industrial development areas, with open and wooded space on locally rising ground towards Headington. Beyond Cowley and the eastern ring-road, the broader landscape context is defined by low hills at Garsington and Shotover, which define the edge of the Thames Valley and form a backdrop for long landscape views across the city.
- 2.3 The application site area is brownfield land of approximately 0.314 Ha, comprising the former Cowley Conservative Club buildings with the adjoining Betfred and former barber's shops. Existing buildings are predominantly inter-war and extended 2 storeys, facing north-west onto Between Towns Road and partially flanking St Luke's Road, with car-parking and lock-up garages to the rear (south-east) of both site areas. The site is fully developed with either buildings or hard surfacing, and with no soft landscape elements
- 2.4 The site is currently framed to the north-west by a mid-height brick walled boundary to Between Towns Road and, the same wall to the south-west and St Luke's Road. The north-east boundary abuts the Watkin Jones site with newly built student residence development 'Between Towns Court' and a tall close-board fence boundary. The south-eastern boundary adjoins rear gardens to houses on Coleridge Close, with brick and block walls, lock up garages, and Coleridge Close garden trees providing the established boundary features.
- 2.5 Between Towns Road is a wide road with twin lanes to each direction and a linear central island. The road forms a shallow arc, providing a sequence of views along the road. The application site is at the outer edge of the curve, between the substantial building masses of 'Between Towns Court' at 5 storeys (ground plus 4) and the 3 storey 'Knights Court' Oxfordshire CC offices. The large-scale buildings extend west to the NHS Raglan Court offices and then the Templars Court shopping centre. To the west of the site and St Luke's Road, the BT phone exchange extends the scale and bulk of the Between Towns Road frontage office buildings.
- 2.6 The north side of Between Towns Road from the site has large street frontage buildings, with the 'New Testament Church of God' and the Cowley Workers Social Club opposite the site. The 4 storey Trinity House building is to the east, whilst to the west, the former Murco site is awaiting development as 3 to 5 storey residential proposals.

- 2.7 The local site context is the busy distributor road of Between Towns Road fronted with mid to large scale (2 to 5 storey) office, institutional, retail and flatted residential buildings forming a distinct development corridor fronting the. North and south of this corridor, development scale and density steps down to broader areas of 2 storey interwar semi-detached estate housing. The Between Towns Road corridor also includes a number of mature trees including plane, birch and pine which make a positive contribution to local character.
- 2.8 The western limit of the Temple Cowley Conservation Area extends to the Oxford Road / Between Towns road junction, approximately 150m east of the Application Site (Appendix 2). The Conservation Area was designated in 1986 in order to protect the buildings and street scene of special character particular to that area. St Luke's church provides a prominent Conservation Area building at the street junction. However, there is clear separation through distance and intervening building groups and the Application Site is not considered to be important to the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 2.9 The Application Site is not covered by planning designation defined by landscape or visual quality. The site's established visual and landscape character is undistinguished and commonplace for a suburban context.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The application scheme is for demolition of the existing site buildings and development of student halls of residence of 3 to 5 storeys, with associated single storey cycle and bin stores, structural and amenity landscape measures, access arrangement and disabled car parking.
- 3.2 The development proposals are set out on Penwarden Hale Architects' proposed site plans within the application documents. The development layout and landscape proposals are also described in Adams Habermehl landscape plan 0763.1.1, which is included as Appendix 4.
- 3.3 The proposed building frontage to Between Towns Road reflects the scale and massing of established built form to the road corridor. The horseshoe form of the building and central landscape quad provides a positive street presence and an open southern aspect towards the St Luke's Road / Coleridge Close housing. The development also steps down from north to south, with lower level components, open space and landscape screening to the southern residential aspect. Formal street frontage tree and hedge boundaries, climber screens, green wall planting, informal courtyard tree planting and green roof buildings all contribute to a strong landscape framework and transition from urban north corridor to residential southern aspect.

4.0 SUMMARY RECORD OF ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW PROCESSES (LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT)

- 4.1 The application proposals have been established through a range of iterative assessment and design development processes through the design stage to planning. As well as a working LVIA process, the proposals have considered potential effects on views and heritage in response to OCC Conservation Area, View-Cones and High Building guidance. The scheme development included a design workshop and formal design review, co-ordinated by the Design Council, in which Officers from the City Council participated."

Temple Cowley Conservation Area

- 4.2 As shown in Appendix 2, the Temple Cowley Conservation Area extends to meet the east side of Oxford Road approximately 150m NE of the site and separated by distance and substantial buildings. The Oxford High Buildings Evidence Base Report (OHBEBR) finds that there are no noted views in or out of the Temple Cowley Conservation Area that contribute to significance; or Heritage Assets experienced in a wider setting beyond the immediate surroundings of the Conservation Area.

- 4.3 The site is assessed as separate from the Conservation Area and not part of the immediate surroundings. From the OHBEHR advice and this LVIA, the proposals do not impact on the Conservation Area.

Oxford View-cones Study

- 4.4 As identified in Appendix 3, the Application Site is not located within, or within the context, of any of the designated Oxford View Cones.
- 4.5 Considering the wider view-cone study, there is a distant south facing view-cone viewpoint from Port Meadow (Wolvercote) facing towards the city centre and, theoretically, towards the Application Site as a city backdrop. However, both distance (7.5km) and the intervening city skyline prevent any backdrop view of the Application Site or proposed development.
- 4.6 Whilst the view cones don't include views of the application proposals, the site location on rising ground suggests an opportunity for views from the city centre towards the site, with views needing to be tested against the Oxford High Buildings Study.

Oxford High Buildings Study - Oxford High Building Evidence Base Report (OHBEBR) and Technical Advice Note (TAN)

- 4.7 The primary purpose of the Oxford High Buildings Study is to better understand where there are opportunities in the OCC land area to accommodate high buildings, with the starting point being an understanding of the significance of the city's historic environment and its sensitivity to high buildings. The study therefore addresses the potential for a high building within the setting of a heritage asset to affect our experience of that asset in such a way that it harms its significance. The reports' focus on the relationship of development to heritage assets has overlap and application to LVIA methodology. The reports provide a useful synthesis of the character of Oxford and identify four ways in which heritage assets within the city may be affected visually by high buildings. These are set out and used in the LVIA to 'test' the Application Site proposals.
- 4.8 In order to understand the relationship between high buildings and heritage significance the heritage study firstly poses the following three questions (summarised):
- Q1 How (in principle) could the placing of high buildings in the setting of a heritage asset in Oxford harm its significance? - this is addressed by the 4 tests set out below
- Q2 Which heritage assets are susceptible to harm from high buildings because of the nature of the contribution that setting makes to their significance?

Q3 Which areas of Oxford are therefore sensitive to the construction of high buildings?

4.9 Heritage assets relevant to the Cowley Conservative Club Application Site are considered to be the relationship with the Temple Cowley Conservation Area and, the city centre Central Conservation Area. As previously noted, the HBSEB finds that there are no noted views in or out of the Temple Cowley Conservation Area that contribute to its significance, or heritage assets experienced in a wider setting beyond the immediate surroundings of the Conservation Area. It is therefore assessed that the Application Site proposals do not impact on local heritage assets.

4.10 The setting of heritage assets can be influenced by views into and out of the city and the assets of the Central Conservation Area. As noted, analysis of the view-cones study has found no impacts on key views into the city that would influence the perception of the Central Conservation Area heritage assets.

4.11 In terms of views out of the city, the OHBEER Study takes the tower view of St Mary The Virgin (High Street) as representative of city centre heritage asset viewpoints. Figure 8 of the OHBEER – ‘Heritage Analysis: Views from Historic Centre’ shows the Application Site to be at the limits of the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) from St Mary’s. The same figure also shows the site at an edge zone of potential skylines of the ZTV, reflecting the site’s position on local higher ground. Assessment of this view, and other central area views, are set out in Table 1 and further illustrated in photographs at Appendix 5, and verified view CGI’s at Appendix 6.

4.12 Page 25 of the OHBEER describes other viewpoints in the city centre:

The compact townscape of the historic centre affords few opportunities for views out into its wider landscape setting but there are a limited number of elevated viewpoints where it is possible to appreciate the setting of the city. Six publicly accessible viewpoints on buildings have been identified and these are plotted on Figure 8. Five of these buildings are heritage assets in their own right:

Carfax Tower (Church of St Martin), at the Carfax;

Church of St Mary the Virgin, High Street;

Church of St Michael at the North Gate;

St Georges Tower, Oxford Castle; and

Cupola of the Sheldonian Theatre, Broad Street.

It is important to note that, in the present context, the views that can be obtained from these buildings contribute to the significance of the historic centre rather than the buildings themselves. In this respect, the viewing opportunities provided by the sixth location on the roof terrace

of the newly constructed Westgate Centre are of equal value to those from historic buildings

4.13 Page 27 of the OHBEER notes:

Elevated viewpoints within the historic centre therefore contribute to heritage significance in two different ways:

- They provide opportunities to experience and appreciate the historic character of central Oxford and the architecture of individual historic buildings in short range views; and*
- They provide longer-range views illustrating the historic relationship between the city and its rural setting.*

High buildings could affect this significance through:

- Obstruction of informative views to the surrounding landscape;*
- Visual competition with prominent historic buildings in views, including the skylining of high buildings, increasing their visual prominence; and*
- Changes to townscape and landscape character, affecting legibility of historic setting*

4.14 Public views from all 6 viewpoints are considered in this assessment. All viewpoints except the Westgate terrace offer 360-degree panoramas, whilst the Westgate has an arc of easterly and southerly views. The Application Site is 3.5 to 4 km to the east-south-east of any of the city centre viewpoints, separated by the historic core, the well treed Cherwell corridor, and the mixed urban development of Cowley, set before and beyond the site. In addition to the 6 OHBEER viewpoints, the applicant has commissioned verified CGI views from St Mary the virgin (representing the 6 OHBEER views) and a closer possible viewpoint at St Mary & St John, Cowley Road. These are included in the Table 1 assessment summary.

4.15 Figure 15 of the OHBEER identifies the Application Site in an 'Area of Greater Potential' for high buildings (Area 5B South-East Suburbs). These areas are where the OHBEER study has identified relatively limited heritage sensitivity and where growth opportunities are greatest.

4.16 The conclusions to the OHBEER provide a helpful summary to some of the key characteristics of Oxford, as well as the four tests for assessing the visual effects of high buildings:

Place

Oxford is a place that has experienced change and will continue to change. The EBR has confirmed the city has a strong and important relationship with its surroundings; this setting is very important to its appreciation both in terms of the city's identity and sense of place, and also as a heritage asset.

The key characteristics of Oxford comprise:

``The iconic spires and silhouette of the historic city centre.

``The green (wooded or agricultural) backdrop to the city which form a backdrop to elevated views from within the city.

``The open and natural character of the river floodplains which bring the countryside into the heart of the city.

``The enclosed and often intimate views within the city centre.

The EBR has also identified there is a complex and intricate interaction between heritage and the visual amenity of the city and its appreciation. The EBR identifies the four following ways in which assets, including heritage assets, within the city may be affected visually by high buildings.

``Visual obstruction - the physical obstruction of a feature or component in the view caused by a high building. This may result in full or partial blocking of the feature or component and may affect the interpretation of the feature and / or the legibility or character of the townscape. If the affected view makes a positive contribution to the significance of a heritage asset, obstruction may harm that significance.

``Visual competition/complement - the siting of a high building within the same view as the feature such that the two are viewed together. The high building may be perceived to compete with the feature either in the foreground, middle ground or background of the view affecting the ability to discern or interpret the feature. If a heritage asset is currently appreciated as a prominent feature in views, the introduction of a high building that distracts the attention of a viewer, could harm the heritage significance of the asset.

``Skylining - the breaking of the horizon, skyline or silhouette by a high building within views/general visual environment. Location in relation to topography is often a critical factor.

``Change to character - the composition of a view is altered to the extent the character of the view is discernibly different to that of the existing. This may be a result of an individual high building strongly influencing the composition or cumulative small incremental changes within the view leading to a notable change. Change of character may include a combination of obstruction, competition / complement and skylining. If the existing character of an area of townscape makes a positive contribution to the significance of a heritage asset, any change has the potential to harm that significance.

- 4.17 The proposed Application Site development does not change the identified 'key characteristics' of Oxford: (*The iconic spires and silhouette of the historic city centre; the green backdrop to elevated views from within the city; the open and natural character of the river floodplains or; enclosed and intimate views within the city centre*).
- 4.18 The four ways in which assets, including heritage assets, within the city may be affected visually by high buildings: *visual obstruction; visual competition/complement; skylining and; change to character*, are tested against the Application Site development proposals in Table 1 following the LVIA section at the end of Section 4.

Landscape and Visual Impact

- 4.19 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is a tool used to identify and assess the significance of and the effects of change resulting from development on both the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity'.

'The two components of LVIA are:

1. Assessment of landscape effects: assessing effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right;
2. Assessment of visual effects: assessing effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.'

- 4.20 Landscape and visual impacts (effects) of development are considered separately. Landscape impact describes the effects on the physical landscape components of the site, whilst visual impact describes the likely effects of the development on existing viewpoints.

- 4.21 The existing landscape and visual context of the Application Site is set out in section 2, and the development proposals in section 3. As set out in the assessment methodology (Appendix 7) the level of impact significance is the sum of the magnitude of the proposals, and the sensitivity of the receptor. The LVIA considers the effects of the application proposals after year 1 of establishment allowing for initial planting establishment and at year 10, allowing for further landscape establishment where relevant.

- 4.22 This LVIA therefore identifies and evaluates development related changes to the site's landscape, as well as identifying visual receptors (people that have views of the development) and evaluating the change in visual amenity that results from the development. Within a range of local to international value thresholds, the baseline site and findings of this LVIA have been found to represent, and are recorded at, a local context level. The significance of Oxford's visual and historic heritage is then recognised through definition of receptor sensitivity levels.

- 4.23 All baseline desk and field-based findings including site specific assessment, view-cone and high buildings studies feed into and inform the LVIA process.

Landscape impacts

- 4.24 The current site consists of low-grade buildings, vehicular hard surfacing and functional brick, block and timber boundaries, with no positive landscape components. The proposed development introduces positive structural and amenity landscape measures through definition of distinct landscape spaces; provision of tree, hedge, shrub, climber, green roof planting, and; enhanced hard surface and site boundary treatment.

- 4.25 In context, the existing landscape is considered to have a low receptor sensitivity and the proposed landscape enhancement measures are assessed as a medium impact magnitude of change.

- 4.26 On completion and planting, this balance of hard and soft landscape effects is assessed to represent a local level year 1 **minor/moderate positive landscape impact**. After 10 years planting establishment this is expected to change to **moderate positive landscape impact**.

Visual effects of development

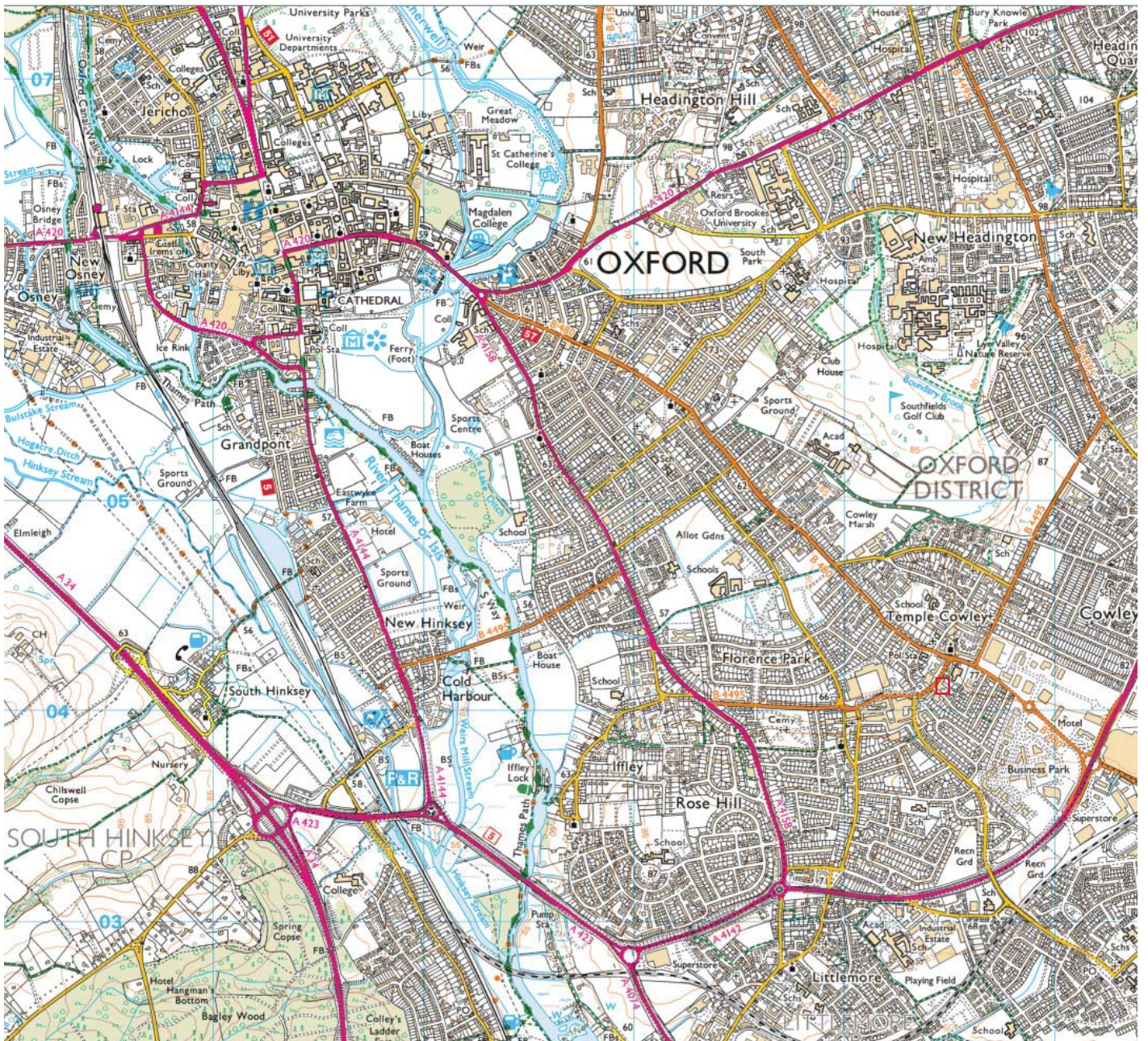
- 4.27 Description of the view-cones and high buildings studies distil potential visual receptors into two main groups: those immediately local to the development who observe the proposals closely within their setting and; receptors at city centre elevated viewpoints, considering possible visual change within the context of important heritage assets.
- 4.28 Local receptors are assessed as pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and other road users on Between Towns Road and St Luke's Road; established residents in properties with views to the site from Coleridge Close and St Luke's Road and; new residents overlooking the site from the adjacent Between Towns Court student housing development.
- 4.29 pedestrians, cyclists and motorists are all viewing the site within the context of a built environment setting. They are not primarily relying on the quality of the view for recreational or amenity purposes and are considered to be low sensitivity receptors in this context. GLVIA3 places a greater emphasis on public viewpoints than private residential views, with residential amenity assessment noted as being distinct from LVIA. Residents have a range of filtered or open views to the site and existing built development. However, resident's views overlooking the site will change through the development process. As a group, surrounding residents are assessed as medium sensitivity receptors.
- 4.30 The application development proposals will remove existing visually low-quality development and replace it with a coherent pattern of new building and landscape measures. The building proposals are considered a clear visual improvement over existing development, but at a larger scale. The landscape proposals both contribute as structural landscape measures within the townscape and as visual amenity / mitigation measures for onlooking receptors.
- 4.31 The proposed balance of building and landscape measures (see Appendix 4) are assessed to improve visual character, and improve over time as planting establishes.
- 4.32 At year 1, the development effects are assessed to represent a low to medium sensitivity view with local minor to medium impact magnitude change to give a **minor to low moderate positive visual impact**.
- 4.33 At year 10, the further establishment of landscape cover will provide positive landscape structure, amenity and mitigation of development. The visual effect remains as low to medium sensitivity views and local medium impact magnitude change, but with a more beneficial balance of components to give a **moderate positive visual impact**.

- 4.34 As set out in Table 1, the site proposals are expected to be visible from four of the six city centre viewpoints at Carfax (St Martin's), St George's Tower, the Sheldonian, St Mary the Virgin, and possible glimpsed winter views from the Westgate terrace. The city centre viewpoint visitors considered to be sensitive receptors. However, as set out in Table 1, the proposed development is in the range of 3.5 to 4km from the viewpoints. The development will be a small component within the view, which in turn is a small part of the 360 degree panoramas available from the viewpoints. The development proposals will sit within a similar local skyline of built development form. In turn this is set below the landscape skyline and back-drop of higher ground to the east of the city. An additional theoretical viewpoint from St Mary & St John, Cowley is included in Table 1.
- 4.35 Appendix 5 shows city centre viewpoint photographs and Appendix 6 shows proposed verified CGI image views by Realm.
- 4.36 The proposals are small elements within the city views and equal in scale and character to other established built elements of the city backdrop. The proposals don't create visual obstruction, competition or complement to city centre heritage buildings, or change the character of their backdrop. The proposals do not materially change the character or composition of the city-centre (or Cowley tower) viewpoint views.
- 4.37 At this distance, it is unlikely that any site related landscape measures would change the character of the available view within a 10 year timescale and so year 1 and 10 are assessed together.
- 4.38 Thus for year 1 and year 10 city centre (and Cowley tower) viewpoints, the development effects are assessed to represent a high sensitivity view with low-negligible impact magnitude change, to give a **minor, but neutral, visual impact**.

Table 1. Assessment of city centre public viewpoints, and Cowley Rd possible viewpoint, to the Cowley Conservative Club (CCC) site				
Viewpoint and visibility	Are the heritage asset viewpoints affected by:			
	Visual obstruction	Visual competition / compliment	Sky-lining	Change to character / composition of the view
Carfax (St Martin's Tower) - the proposals are assessed to be distantly visible over intervening rooflines and to the side of the Town Hall cupola / weather vane. The proposals will form a limited part of the city backdrop from this 360 degree viewpoint. See Appendix 5, photos 1 & 2.	No - the proposals are set 3.75km from the viewpoint and beyond all city centre heritage assets.	No, the proposals are small elements within the view and equal in scale and character to other established elements of the city backdrop.	No, the proposals are visible as part of a building skyline within Cowley, but are set well below the surrounding landscape skyline.	No, the proposed WMC development is a small component within the view, which in turn is a small part of the 360 degree panorama. The proposals do not materially change the character or composition of the view.
St Mary the Virgin The proposals will be distantly visible but set beyond the context of a range of foreground city centre heritage buildings. This is a 'busy' view with extensive and complex foreground detail and middle-distance focal points, as well a 360 degree panorama. The proposals will form an insignificant part of the city backdrop from this viewpoint. See Appendix 5 photos 3 & 4 and the 'Realm' verified CGI view.	No - the proposals are set approximately 3.5km from the viewpoint and beyond all city centre heritage assets.	No, the proposals are small elements within the view and equal in scale and character to other established elements of the city backdrop.	No, the proposals are visible as part of a building skyline within Cowley, but are set well below the surrounding landscape skyline.	No, the proposed CCC development is a small component within the view, which in turn is a small part of the 360 degree panorama. The proposals do not materially change the character or composition of the view.
St Michael at the Northgate. The proposals are set approximately 3.75km from the viewpoint and are screened by the intervening tower of All Saints Church (Lincoln College Library) within a broad panorama of the city. See Appendix 5 photos 5 and 6.	No - the proposals are set approximately 3.75km beyond, and behind an intervening heritage asset: All Saints Church tower.	No, the proposals are not expected to be visible.	No, the proposals are not expected to be visible.	No, the proposals are not expected to be visible.
St George's tower. The proposals are set approximately 4.km from the viewpoint and will form part of a distant city backdrop. The site is viewed over the Westgate complex, but the line of sight is set well away from any heritage building group, rendering the distant site proposals inconsequential. See Appendix 5 photographs 7 & 8.	No - the proposals are set approximately 4km away and beyond the context of any heritage assets.	No, the proposals are small elements within the view and equal in scale and character to other established elements of the city backdrop.	No, the proposals are visible as part of a building skyline within Cowley, but are set well below the surrounding landscape skyline.	No, the proposed CCC development is a small component within the view, which in turn is a small part of the 360 degree panorama. The proposals do not materially change the character or composition of the view.
Sheldonian cupola. The proposals will be distantly visible over All Souls College and a range of city centre heritage buildings. The view includes extensive and complex foreground detail and middle-distance focal points, as well a 360 degree panorama. The proposals will form an insignificant part of the city backdrop from this viewpoint. See Appendix 5 photos 9 and 10.	No - the proposals are set approximately 3.75km from the viewpoint, beyond all city centre heritage assets.	No, the proposals are small elements within the view and equal in scale and character to other established elements of the city backdrop.	No, the proposals are visible as part of a building skyline within Cowley, but are set well below the surrounding landscape skyline.	No, the proposed CCC development is a small component within the view, which in turn is a small part of the 360 degree panorama. The proposals do not materially change the character or composition of the view.
The Westgate terrace forms an extended viewpoint but views to the east are screened by a range of foreground to middle distance buildings and tree canopy vegetation. Given intervening tree cover, there may be very limited opportunity for a distant filtered glimpsed view to the proposal following winter leaf fall. See Appendix 5 photos 11 & 12.	No, the proposals are set approximately 3.75km from the viewpoint and set behind a range of intervening late 20th C buildings and strong tree canopies.	No, the proposals are not expected to be generally visible and, if glimpsed winter views do occur, it's in the context of late 20th C buildings and tree canopy cover.	If visible in filtered winter views, the proposals are assessed to sit within the existing development roofline, and below the landscape backdrop skyline.	The proposals are not expected to be generally visible. If glimpsed in filtered winter views, the proposals are not assessed to materially change the character or composition of the view.
St Mary & St John, Cowley Road, Oxford Possible tower view - not typically open to the public. This church is well outside the city centre heritage area and the proposals are not seen in the context of any city-centre heritage buildings. Key Cowley Conservation Area buildings are visible, with the application proposals forming an insignificant element in the same view	No - the viewpoint to the proposals is set beyond all city centre heritage assets and the proposals do not obstruct any other heritage element.	No, the proposals are small elements within the view and equal in scale and character to other established elements of the city backdrop.	No, the proposals are visible as part of a building skyline within Cowley, but are set well below the surrounding landscape skyline.	No, the proposed CCC development is a small component within the view, which in turn is a small part of the 360 degree panorama. The proposals do not materially change the character or composition of the view.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 This summary LVIA document provides a technical paper to identify landscape and visual assessment processes, and to understand the effects of proposed residential development at the Cowley Conservative Club and adjoining Betfred Application Site
- 5.2 The assessment process is based on best practice LVIA assessment methodology and is refined to reflect relevant policy designation and technical advice studies prepared for Oxford City Council.
- 5.3 The assessment process has identified that the proposals do not cause landscape, visual, or associated impact on the heritage assets of the Temple Cowley Conservation Area.
- 5.4 The proposals are not visible within, or impact on, the view-cone views identified within the Oxford View-Cone study
- 5.5 The proposals are visible at distance from four city centre viewpoints identified within the Oxford High Building Study, with effects identified under landscape and visual impacts.
- 5.6 The balance of landscape effects of the proposals is considered to represent a local level year 1 **minor/moderate positive landscape impact**, with a **neutral to minor-moderate positive landscape impact** after 10 years planting establishment.
- 5.7 The visual effects are assessed against local site context and city centre criteria. Local context year 1 effects are assessed as **minor to low moderate positive visual impact**, and following early establishment at year 10 to give a **moderate visual impact**.
- 5.8 For city centre views at year 1 and year 10, the development effects are assessed to represent a high sensitivity view with low-negligible impact magnitude change to give a **minor, but neutral, visual impact**.
- 5.9 To place this assessment in context, the OCC OHBEBR identifies the Application Site in an 'Area of Greater Potential' for high buildings. This defines the site in an area of relatively limited heritage sensitivity, where growth opportunities are amongst the greatest.
- 5.10 In conclusion, it is assessed that the proposed Cowley Conservative and Betfred site development can be implemented within an acceptable positive range of initial and long-term landscape and visual effects. Based on this assessment, landscape and visual effects are not seen as a constraint to approval of the application scheme.



Scale 1km

Proposed site

APPENDIX 1 COWLEY CONSERVATIVE CLUB SITE LOCATION PLAN



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Oxford City Council
LA 078921



Scale 1:2500

Temple Cowley Conservation Area

Designated 24 March 1986

Extended N/A

COWLEY CONSERVATIVE CLUB SITE - APPROXIMATE LOCATION IN RELATION TO TEMPLE COWLEY CONSERVATION AREA

Temple Cowley Conservation Area, No.15

Temple Cowley, its name recalling the long lost medieval house of the Knights Templar, is situated to the south-east of Oxford City centre. It is bounded to the south by Oxford Road, on the east by Hollow Way, by the residential dwellings of Crescent Road to the north and public recreational buildings to the west.

Superimposed on the surviving buildings of the 18th century rural settlement are the 19th and 20th century suburbs. Several institutions built the impressive 19th century complexes of the former Salesian College and the former Military Academy, later William Morris' first car factory and then the Nuffield Press. A school, St Christopher's, was erected in 1877 to serve the expanding population and St Luke's Church was erected in 1937-8 through the benevolence of Lord Nuffield.

Temple Cowley is comprised of stone houses and cottages representing its origins as a small village with religious, manufacturing and educational institutional buildings of stone and brick as reminders of 19th and 20th century expansion and enterprise. All these are linked by boundary walls, predominantly of stone which unify the area.

The City Council designated Temple Cowley a Conservation Area on 24th March 1986, in order to protect the buildings and street scene of special character particular to this area.



The ten view cones shown in the Oxford Local Plan 2001 - 2016

APPENDIX 3
OXFORD VIEWCONES - FIGURE 1.2 FROM 'ASSESSMENT OF THE OXFORD VIEWCONES' 2015 REPORT
SHOWING THE COWLEY CONSERVATIVE CLUB SITE OUTSIDE ANY DESIGNATED VIEWCONES

BETWEEN TOWNS ROAD

ST. LUKES ROAD

WATKIN JONES SITE



FRAMEWORK LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

- SEMI-PASTICATE TREES TO BUILDING FRONTAGE - PROPOSED AS ORNAMENTAL PLANT TO INTEGRATE WITH APPROVED TREE PLANTING FOR WATKIN JONES STUDENT HOUSING SITE AND ESTABLISH COMMON STREET FRONTAGE.
- TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING PROVIDING SOFT INTERFACE WITH BUILDING, STREET AND WATKIN JONES SITE ENTRANCE AREA. GRASS MAINTENANCE PATH ADJACENT BUILDING, WITH LOW KEY BRANDED STREET BARRIER LOST IN PLANTING.
- RESIN BOUND GRAVEL PAVED TREATMENT UPON RETAIL ELEVATION FOR ACCESS AND FRONTAGE DISPLAY.
- ST. LUKES ROAD BOUNDARY WITH RESIDENTIAL LANDSCAPE SCALE AND CHARACTER: BEECH / HORSEBEAM HEDGE AND SEMI-PASTICATE ROMANY / CHAM-APPLE TREES. SECURITY / PRIVACY WITH HEDGE CENTRE LINE REINFORCED WITH BRANDED CABLE BARRIER. AMENITY AND PRIVACY SHRUB PLANTING TO BUILDING EDGE.
- CLIMBERS ON CABLES TO SOUTHERN ELEVATION, SOFTENING INTERFACE WITH RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURS.
- DENSE GREEN SCREEN PLANTING TO BUILDING GABLE END, SOFTENING SOUTHERN ELEVATION FROM STREET AND NEIGHBOUR VIEWS. BUILDINGS WITH DIVERSE SEDUM ROOFS FOR BUGS AND BIODIVERSITY VALUE.
- SERVICES ACCESS ENTRANCE WITH AMENITY PLANTING AND SECURE SITE BOUNDARY.
- BOUNDARY TO NEIGHBOUR WITH GREEN ROOF BIN AND BIN STORES. SEMI-MATURE TREE PLANTING AND CLIMBERS TO FENCE LINE. CYCLE STORES AS SIMPLE STRUCTURES WITH OPEN BACK AND SIDES TO MAXIMIZE VALUE OF CONTAINING LANDSCAPE.
- GARAGE REARWALL AND NEW WORKS CARRIED OUT WITH CARE TO SHAPED AND MATURE CYPRESS TREE ON ADJOINING GARDEN, BUT FORMING A STRONG FEATURE ON THE SOUTHERN SITE BOUNDARY.
- EASTERN BOUNDARY TO WATKIN JONES SITE. TIMBER FENCE ALREADY INSTALLED BY WJS. LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS SOFTEN VIEWS OF FENCE LINE FROM GROUND FLOOR ROOMS.
- SHARED ROOF TERRACE WITH PLANTED STREET BOUNDARY TO SOFTEN THE ELEVATION WITH VISIBLE GREENING SEEN FROM STREET LEVEL AND AMENITY TO THE ROOF TERRACE.
- PRIVACY PLANTING TO GROUND FLOOR ROOMS INCLUDING SLOES GARDEN ACCOMMODATING SURFACE WATER IN STORM EVENTS. FLOOD BARRIER TO TOLERANT SPECIES PLANTED THROUGH DRAINAGE BASE.
- REINFORCED TURF LAWNS PROVIDING WEAR RESISTANT AMENITY SURFACE, AND SOFT SURFACE FOR THE PLAYING. AMENITY TREE PLANTING THROUGH QUAD AS BIRD CHERRY, HIMALAYAN BIRCH, OR SIMILAR.
- EXTERNAL SOCIAL SPACE WITH GROUP DRIVING TABLES, HUBBET BENCH, TRISTLE / PINK TABLE FURNITURE, CULINARY HERB BEDS ETC. CONNECTED TO GROUND FLOOR LIVING AND STAIR WELLS.
- REINFORCED TURF LAWNS WITH TREE PLANTING AND TREE SEATS AS INFORMAL GROUP SPACE. AMENITY AND PRIVACY SHRUB PLANTING TO BUILDING ELEVATIONS.
- SERVICES COURT ACCOMMODATING DISABLED PARKING AND ALSO PLANTING, SOLID PAVING, SEATING, AND MID-SCALE TREE PLANTING (JANUS ALDER), PASTICATE HORNBARK FOR SCENTS, AND NEIGHBOURS TO THE SOUTH.

GENERAL LANDSCAPE NOTES

PREPARATION FOR SOIL PLACEMENT

- THE SITE IS TO BE GRADDED TO REDUCED LEVELS AS REQUIRED TO ACCOMMODATE THE PROPOSED SOIL DEPTHS
- ALL SITE DEBRIS, WASTE AND ANY CONTAMINATED MATERIALS ARE TO BE REMOVED FROM PROPOSED SOFT LANDSCAPE AREAS
- ENSURE ALL LANDSCAPE AREA SITE BASES ARE DE-COMPACTED AND CULTIVATED. SITE BASE AREAS ARE TO BE RESPECTED AND APPROVED BY THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT OR SUPERVISING AGENT PRIOR TO COVERING WITH ANY NEW SUBSOIL OR TOP SOILS
- SOILS FOR GENERAL LANDSCAPE AREAS
- TOPSOIL AND SUBSOILS USED IN THE WORKS ARE TO BE NATURALLY OCCURRING AS DUG SOILS AND SHALL NOT BE MANUFACTURED OR SAND-BASED GRADED SOILS. AND SHALL MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF BS881 - GENERAL PURPOSE GRADE TOPSOIL AND BODICE ECONOMY GRADE TOPSOIL FOR SUBSOIL USES RESPECTIVELY. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL PROVIDE A SAMPLE, TOGETHER WITH TEST CERTIFICATES FOR APPROVAL.
- EXISTING AND PROPOSED SUBSOIL LAYERS ARE TO BE THOROUGHLY CULTIVATED TO RELIEVE ANY SOIL COMPACTION AND ENSURE FREE DRAINAGE CONDITIONS PRIOR TO PLACING TOPSOIL.
- GRADE AREAS TO HAVE 300MM TOPSOIL OVER WELL CULTIVATED SUBSOIL.
- STANDARD TREE PITS NOT LESS THAN 1000MM SQUARE BACKFILLED WITH 600MM TOPSOIL, OVER 300MM FREE DRAINING OR CULTIVATED SUBSOIL TO PIT BASE.
- INCORPORATE 10MM OF WELL ROTTED FARMYARD MANURE OR SPENT MUSHROOM COMPOST INTO ALL SHRUB, HERBACE AND TREE PLANTING AREAS.
- FRESH ALL PLANTING AREAS WITH MULCH OF 50MM PROPRIETARY GRADED AMENITY BARK MULCH

GENERAL PLANTING

- PROVIDE ROOT BARRIERS AND COMPRESSION BOARD ETC WHERE REQUIRED TO PROTECT WALLS, BUILDINGS OR OTHER STRUCTURES FROM EXISTING OR PROPOSED PLANTING MEASURES
- HEDGEROWS TO BE PLANTED IN DOUBLE STRAGGLED ROWS
- ALL HEDGEROWS ARE TO INCLUDE A BRANDED WIRE FENCE THROUGH THE CORE OF THE HEDGELINE TO ENSURE PROTECTION UNTIL THE HEDGE IS FULLY ESTABLISHED
- ALL PLANT MATERIALS, LANDSCAPE MATERIALS AND OPERATIONS ARE TO BE CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH BEST HORTICULTURAL PRACTICE AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH APPROPRIATE BRITISH STANDARDS AND CODES OF PRACTICE.
- ALL PROPOSED SHRUBS AND HERBS PLANTED AREAS ARE TO BE KEPT ENTIRELY CLEAR OF GRASS AND WEEDS FOR THE FIRST 3 YEARS FROM PLANTING. ALL TREES IN GRASS AREAS ARE TO HAVE A 1.5M GRASS FREE ZONE AT THE BASE, WITH A 1.5M BLACK WOVEN POLYESTER PROPRIETARY MULCH MAT INSTALLED AND PEGGED ROUND THE BASE OF THE TREE.
- THE CONTRACTOR IS TO CONFIRM THE LOCATION OF ALL SERVICES PRIOR TO UNDERTAKING LANDSCAPE WORKS AND PROVIDE PROTECTION TO SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH BEST PRACTICE. ROOT BARRIER (SUCH AS GREENLEAF ROOTBARRIER) ARE TO BE INCORPORATED WHERE TREES ARE LESS THAN SPECIFIED DISTANCE AWAY FROM SERVICES. THE ROOT BARRIER DEPTH IS TO EXTEND TO A MINIMUM OF 300MM BELOW ADJACENT SERVICES.
- ALL PLANTING AND WALL DESIGN IS TO INCLUDE ALL FOUNDATION DEPTHS, TOGETHER WITH TREE ROOT BARRIERS AND OTHER MEASURES AS NECESSARY DEPENDING ON SOIL PLASTICITY, TO ENSURE THAT THE RELATIONSHIP OF BUILDINGS WITH EXISTING AND PROPOSED TREE PLANTING CONFORMS WITH THE NATIONAL HOUSE BUILDING COUNCIL, FH803 STANDARDS BUILDING NEAR TREES.

KEY

- EXISTING TREES
- PROPOSED TREE PLANTING
- SHRUB PLANTING & CLIMBERS
- GRASS AREAS
- REINFORCED GRASS AREAS
- HEDGE PLANTING
- SEDUM ROOF TO MAIN BUILDING AND BIN STORES
- SLOES SWALE PLANTERS
- CLOSE BOARD FENCING - 2M
- METAL FENCING 2M
- BRANDED CABLE FENCE AS BARRIER WITH HEDGE AND SHRUB PLANTING
- BLOCK PAVING
- RESIN BOUND GRAVEL
- SET PAVING
- ROOF TERRACE WITH PLANTED EDGE AS VISIBLE GREENING FROM STREET LEVEL
- SEATING / BENCH SEATING, TRISTLE / PINK TABLES AND CIRCULAR TREE SEATS

CANTAY ESTATES
BETWEEN TOWNS ROAD
LANDSCAPE FRAMEWORK PLAN
 AUG19 1:125@A1 0763.1.2.B
 ADAMS HABERMEHL



PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2 VIEWS FROM CARFAX (ST MARTIN'S)

Red boxes frame the approximate development zone and not the visible extent of proposed development



PHOTO 3



PHOTO 4 VIEWS FROM ST MARY THE VIRGIN

Red boxes frame the approximate development zone and not the visible extent of proposed development



PHOTO 5



PHOTO 6 VIEWS FROM ST MICHAEL AT THE NORTHGATE

Dashed red boxes indicate the approximate development zone, set behind intervening All Saints Church tower



PHOTO 7



PHOTO 8 VIEWS FROM ST GEORGE'S TOWER OXFORD CASTLE

Red boxes frame the approximate development zone and not the visible extent of proposed development



PHOTO 9



PHOTO 10 VIEWS FROM THE SHELDONIAN THEATRE CUPOLA

Red boxes frame the approximate development zone and not the visible extent of proposed development



PHOTO 11



PHOTO 12 VIEWS FROM THE WESTGATE SHOPPING CENTRE TERRACE

Dashed red boxes frame the estimated approximate development zone, set behind intervening buildings and vegetation, with no site elements or contextual setting visible or identifiable at the time of assessment.

APPENDIX 6 REALM VERIFIED VIEW CGI IMAGES

Verified CGI Images to the former Cowley Conservative site and proposed development by Realm for Cantay Developments.

Tower views from:

St Mary The Virgin church, High Street, Oxford

St Mary and St John church, Cowley Road, Oxford





APPENDIX 7 SUMMARY LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- 1 The assessment technique adopted draws upon the 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Third Edition' prepared by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment⁵, providing 'best practice' methodology.

The assessment approach

- 2 The approach may be summarised in the following key stages:
- Definition of the study area.
 - Baseline assessment. The assessment of the existing landscape and visual resource within the study area and identification of landscape character types.
 - Identification of the development proposals and identification of key sources of likely impacts.
 - Description of mitigation proposals.
 - Identification and assessment of the impact the proposed development will have on the existing landscape resource.
 - Definition of the visual envelope. Identification and assessment of the impacts the proposed development will have on the visual receptors and visual amenity within the visual envelope.
 - Summary of effects.

Methodology

- 3 Both landscape and visual impacts are assessed for the development proposals. Potential impacts are considered, in year 1 on immediate completion of works and; at year 10 from completion, allowing for the establishment of landscape mitigation / accommodation measures.

Landscape Impacts

- 4 Landscape impacts result from changes to actual components of the landscape and/or the character or quality of the landscape. Therefore, the landscape impacts are predicted on the basis of the order of change to baseline conditions prevalent at the time of the assessment. The assessment considers impact upon individual landscape features and secondly, considers impact upon landscape character. As a register of change, impacts can be recorded as either positive or negative changes to the landscape.
- 5 The landscape impacts identified are broadly assessed in terms of Substantial, Moderate, Minor or, Negligible. Moderate and Substantial impacts are considered to be in need of appropriate mitigation.
- **Substantial** impacts may be defined as loss, damage or change of a high or medium magnitude to largely unspoilt or highly sensitive landscape resources.
 - **Moderate** impacts may be defined as loss, damage or change of a medium magnitude to landscape resources of medium sensitivity or quality.
 - **Minor** impacts may be defined as loss, damage or change of a low magnitude to landscape resources of medium or low sensitivity or quality.

⁵ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment- Third Edition. (The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, pub Routledge 2013 - ISBN 978-0-415-68004-2

- **Negligible** impacts may be defined as loss, damage or change of a very low magnitude to landscape resources of low sensitivity or quality.

- 6 The criteria used to define the magnitude of change include:
- character and quality of existing landscape and determinants of that character including topography, development pattern, land use management, cultural associations etc.;
 - key features of the existing landscape;
 - the nature of predicted impacts including the duration of the change; the spatial extent of change, permanence or reversibility and; whether the impact is of a direct, indirect or secondary nature;
 - degree of change to key features;
 - the ability of the landscape to accommodate change; and
 - the significance of change within a local, regional and national context.

Landscape Character

- 7 Landscape character is determined by a distinct pattern or combination of elements that occur in the landscape. The overall landscape character may result from a combination of 'character areas', which are geographic areas with a distinctive character.
- 8 Unless caused by 'off site' works, direct landscape impacts will be limited to the site itself. However, changes to landscape character may extend beyond the site if changes to the site landscape can be seen to alter the character of a wider area.

Visual Impacts

- 9 Visual impacts result from changes to the appearance of the landscape as a result of the development proposals either intruding into, or obstructing existing views, or by their overall impact on visual amenity. The degree of visual impact depends not only on the degree of change brought about by the development but also the sensitivity of the receptors to visual change.
- 10 The criteria used to assess the degree of visual impact are as follows:
- value of existing views;
 - the degree of change to existing views;
 - the availability and amenity value of alternative views;
 - sensitivity of the receptor;
 - activity of the receptor;
 - the extent of visibility of the visual change and distance from the receptor;
 - the period of time for which the view is changed and the period for which the receptor is exposed to the change;
 - seasonal changes to screening vegetation.
- 11 Receptors vary in their degree of sensitivity to change depending on such factors as proximity, activity and period of time exposed to the change. For example, recreational amenity views from footpaths and other public spaces, or the permanent views of residents, would be considered to be more sensitive than the transient views of motorists or temporary views of nearby workers. Within residential views, ground floor (main living room) views are assessed as more important than first floor views. Seasonal changes in vegetation cover can reduce or increase screening effects and are taken into account in assessing impacts on views.

- 12 Visual impacts are broadly assessed as Substantial, Moderate, Minor or Negligible. Moderate and substantial impacts are considered to be in need of appropriate mitigation.
- **Substantial** impacts may be defined as highly sensitive receptors exposed to intrusion, obstruction or change of a high or medium magnitude for prolonged periods.
 - **Moderate** impacts may be defined as the result of moderately sensitive receptors exposed to intrusion, obstruction or change of a medium magnitude.
 - **Minor** impacts may be defined as the result of receptors of low sensitivity exposed to intrusion, obstruction or change of a low magnitude for short periods of time.
 - **Negligible** impacts may be defined as the result of receptors of low sensitivity exposed to very limited intrusion, obstruction or change of a low magnitude for short periods of time, such that there is apparent change, but minimal 'harm' results from that change.
- 13 Significance thresholds (Substantial, Moderate, Minor or Negligible) can be determined for landscape or visual impacts from different combinations of sensitivity and magnitude to effect corresponding variation on the examples given. Where appropriate, the threshold descriptions have been combined e.g. 'Moderate - Substantial' to give greater precision to description of impacts. Impacts may be adjusted up or down according to specific overriding factors and will be noted in the text and will be defined as 'negligible' or 'none' where there is very limited or no change as a result of the proposals.
- 14 The significance of visual impacts must take into account the nature of the existing view. For example, an existing view may be dominated by industrial buildings, or by an attractive area of woodland and, by comparison, the overall visual impact of proposed development might be positive or negative. The amenity value of alternative views will also be taken into account. The following table shows the how the relationship of the impact magnitude (degree of change of the view) combined with the sensitivity of the receptor, can be used to determine the impact significance (significance of the change).
- 15 Table 1 Matrix of impact magnitude and sensitivity of receptor to determine impact significance.

IMPACT MAGNITUDE	IMPACT SIGNIFICANCE: EFFECTS OF PROPOSALS		
	SUBSTANTIAL	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial
MEDIUM	Minor / Moderate	Moderate	Moderate / Substantial
MINOR	Minor	Minor / Moderate	Moderate
NEGLECTIBLE	Negligible / Minor	Minor	Minor /Moderate
	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
	RECEPTOR SENSITIVITY		

L VIA methodology Table 1 matrix