

BRACKNELL DATA CENTRE

Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment
20305B-RPS-00-XX-RP-L-9722



JSL3708
Bracknell Data Centre
Final
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Approval for issue

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1 March 2021

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

- 1.1.1 This Landscape, Townscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared to support a planning application for the development of Land at Cain Road, Bracknell.
- 1.1.2 The purpose of this report is to identify and assess the landscape and visual effects which would result from the proposed development of a data centre on a 9.9 ha site located south of Cain Road and east of Beehive Road, Amen Corner, Bracknell. The Application Site is made up of 2 distinct sections. The Main site (7.5 ha) and an area of land (2.4 ha) to the south on the opposite side of Beehive Road (the 'Former Recreation Site').
- 1.1.3 Cain Road links a series of large business and commercial sites on the eastern side of Bracknell to the north of the A329 and railway corridor.
- 1.1.4 The Application Site is located within east Bracknell, Berkshire at National Grid Reference (NGR) SU508913. The Application Site is bounded by Cain Road to the north, beyond which are areas of rough ground (surrounded by solid panel timber fence), open space and recreation areas that separate the residential development of Popeswood. Office, commercial and industrial buildings, and an ice rink and dry ski slope complex are located to the west of the site. To the east and south-east are extensive areas of car parking associated with other office buildings interspersed with areas of vegetation. To the south-west the Application Site is bisected by Beehive Road, beyond which is a disused golf driving range, areas of open space and woodland blocks.
- 1.1.5 Existing areas of trees and shrubs contain the site and blocks of woodland or open space break up the urban area surrounding the Application Site including the vegetation along the railway line and A329. The Application Site lies within the administrative area of Bracknell Forest Council. The assessment forms part of the planning application to Bracknell Forest Council for the proposal, which is hereinafter referred to as the 'proposed development'.

1.2 Scope

- 1.2.1 This report provides an assessment of the effects of the proposed development on the existing landscape / townscape resource and character and on the visual amenity of the surrounding environment. These assessments have been carried out in accordance with the methodologies set out below.
- 1.2.2 The report provides an overview of the Application Site within the landscape, townscape and visual context of the surrounding area and sets out the planning context of the site with reference to landscape matters. The existing baseline landscape features and landscape / townscape character, which together make up the landscape resource, are described, and reference is made to published landscape character studies and landscape designations. The current visibility of the Application Site from Representative Viewpoints within the surrounding landscape / townscape are also assessed.
- 1.2.3 A description of the proposed development is provided (Section 5) and the potential effects of the proposals on the landscape / townscape resource and the visual environment, are identified. Where appropriate and possible, landscape measures are proposed to prevent, reduce or offset adverse effects identified.
- 1.2.4 An assessment is then made of the effects of the proposed development on the landscape, townscape and visual environment during the first winter following completion of the development (Year 1) after the landscape measures have been implemented and for summer 15 years after completion of the development (Year 15).

- 1.2.5 Landscape impacts refer to changes arising from the proposed development on the physical elements that make up the landscape / townscape and which influence its character (the landscape / townscape resource). Visual impacts refer to the changes to existing views available to people living, working and travelling through the landscape / townscape surrounding the Application Site (the visual resource).

1.3 Study Area

- 1.3.1 The landscape, townscape and visual assessment study area extends to 5 km radius from the outer edges of the Application Site and has been adopted due to the 15 m height of the proposed flues to be included as part of the building. It is anticipated that any potential significant effects of the proposed development would be within this radius. A plan showing the location of the site and relevant landscape designations within the study area are shown on Figure 1. Figure 2 shows the topographical variation across the study area.
- 1.3.2 In order to determine views of the proposed development, a computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has been completed. The ZTV is defined as the theoretical area of the surrounding landscape where parts of the proposed development may be visible and broadly defines the extent of potential visibility within the 5 km study area for both the landscape character and visual assessment. The ZTV is shown on Figure 3.

1.4 Consultation

- 1.4.1 Table 1.1 below provides a summary of the consultation undertaken with Bracknell Forest Council; regarding landscape and visual matters.

Table 1.1 Summary of Consultation Undertaken with Statutory Consultees Regarding Landscape and Visual Matters.

Date	Consultee and Issues Raised	How/ Where Addressed
14 January 2021 Email	J Betts (RPS) to J. Male (Bracknell Forest) Sending ZTV with locations of the representative viewpoint photography that had been undertaken to date. Requesting comments on the locations.	
RRE/2000220 Pre-Application Advice (11 th February 2021)	Bracknell Forest Council J Male (Case Officer) The pre-application advice was given in response to and enquiry by the Applicant on 22 January 2021 The pre-application advice notes, <i>“the character of the immediately surrounding area is changing, with residential development being introduced to the east, north and west of the site. It is essential that any future development responds appropriately to this changing character”</i> and <i>“The transitional character of this area is a key consideration for any redevelopment of this site”</i> . With regards to tree loss there is some concern regarding the loss of existing planting and <i>“further information is required in relation to landscaping, biodiversity and visual impact...”</i> and <i>“of primary importance is the established boundary planting along Cain Road and Beehive Road and an area of emerging woodland in the site’s south western corner”</i> .	The future baseline is described and effects of landscape change considered at paragraphs 3.5.15 and 3.5.17 The proposed Landscape Strategy is included at Appendix C of this document and a description of the landscape proposals is at paragraphs 5.1.9 to 5.1.13. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment is provided separately as part of this application (doc ref 20305B-RPS-XX-XX-RP-P-9733).

With respect to landscaping *“existing/proposed landscaping is considered key to the successful integration of a building of this nature into a mixed use area. The intention should be to provide sufficient screening from the public realm such that only glimpses of the building are available”.*

Regarding the south-east boundary *“It is noted that there is not landscaping proposed along the site’s south-eastern edge, rendering the building very visible from beyond the site.”*

In response to the submitted ZTV and viewpoint selection to inform the LVIA the Landscape Officer *“has confirmed that the selected viewpoints appear to cover the ZTV*, however possible viewpoints to the south-east of the site within Jennetts’ Park and Wildridings are suggested.

Landscape and Visual effects during the operational phase are considered at section 6.2.

Viewpoint 4 and Viewpoint 6 from locations south and south-west of the Application Site illustrate the visual effects pertaining to the south-eastern boundary at paragraphs 6.2.50 and 6.2.55.

The ZTV and representative viewpoint locations are illustrated on Figure 3 and the panoramic photography is at Figures 5 to 31. The residential edge of Jennett’s Park is within Viewpoint 7. The ZTV does not indicate any potential visibility within the wider residential areas of Jennett’s Park or Wildridings.

2 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This report identifies the national and local policies of relevance to landscape matters, which have informed the baseline assessment and subsequent landscape and visual impact assessment for the proposed development. The aims of the various policies, at national, county and local level, are outlined.

2.2 Planning Policy Context

- 2.2.1 As part of establishing the existing baseline environment, this assessment has reviewed and considered relevant planning policies within the currently adopted Local Development Plan for Bracknell Forest District (Table 2.1 and 2.2). Other documents, of material consideration, are reviewed in paragraphs 2.2.7 to 2.2.18.

The Development Plan

- 2.2.2 For the purposes of Bracknell Forest, the Development Plan relevant to this application is considered to consist of the following:

- Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adopted February 2008);
- Saved Policies of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (adopted January 2002);
- Binfield Neighbourhood Plan (adopted April 2016);
- Bracknell Forest Borough Policies Map (2013);
- Bracknell Forest Council Site Allocations Local Plan (adopted July 2013); and
- South East Plan (*Policy NRM6, which deals with the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, remains in place*).

- 2.2.3 These documents have been reviewed and planning policies, relevant to landscape and visual matters and to the proposed development are summarised in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 below.

Bracknell Forest Core Strategy Development Plan, 2008

- 2.2.4 The Core Strategy sets out the vision for Bracknell Forest to 2026. Bracknell Forest have developed a strategy that responds to aspirations and how these will be delivered to guide and manage development working in partnership with everyone with a stake in the future of the district.

Table 2.1: Relevant Landscape Planning Policies from the Bracknell Forest Core Strategy (2008)

Plan Policy	Details
Policy CS1: Sustainable Development Principles	<p><i>"Development will be permitted which;</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. Makes efficient use of land, buildings and infrastructure; and</i> <i>ii. Is located so as to reduce the need to travel; and</i> <i>iii. Promotes a mix of uses; and</i> <i>iv. Conserves the use of resources including water and energy through a reduction in their use; and</i> <i>v. Supports the economic well being of the population; and</i> <p><i>Protects and enhances:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>vi. The health, education and safety of the local population; and</i>

Plan Policy	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vii. <i>The quality of natural resources including water, air, land and biodiversity; and</i> viii. <i>The character and quality of local landscapes and the wider countryside; and</i> ix. <i>The historic and cultural features of acknowledged importance.”</i>
Policy CS7: Design	<p><i>“The Council will require high quality design for all development in Bracknell Forest.</i></p> <p><i>Development proposals will be permitted, which;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. <i>Build on the urban, suburban and rural local character, respecting local patterns of development and the historic environment;</i> ii. <i>Provide safe communities;</i> iii. <i>Enhance the landscape and promote biodiversity;</i> iv. <i>Aid movement through accessibility;</i> v. <i>Enable a mix of uses;</i> vi. <i>Provide high quality usable open spaces and public realm;</i> vii. <i>Provide innovative architecture; and</i> viii. <i>Provide well designed and integrated public art.</i> <p><i>Development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they have responded to the above criteria through the submission of Design and Access Statements, clear and informative plans, elevations and streetscenes and where required site Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Codes.”</i></p>

Saved Policies of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan, 2002

- 2.2.5 Planning Policies within BFLP 2002 were partially replaced by the Core Strategy (2008). A number of policies, which have not been replaced and are therefore saved are considered relevant to this assessment.

Table 2.2: Relevant Landscape Planning Policies from Saved Polices of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan (2002)

Plan Policy	Details
Policy EN1: Protecting tree and hedgerow cover	<p><i>“Planning permission will not be granted for development which would result in the destruction of trees and hedgerows which are important to the retention of (inter alia):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii. <i>The character and appearance of the landscape or townscape.”</i>
Policy EN2: Supplementing tree and hedgerow cover	<p><i>“In imposing landscaping conditions to secure additional tree and/or hedge planting, the borough council will require developers to include in their schemes the planting of indigenous trees appropriate to the setting and character of the area and a variety of other indigenous plants. According to circumstances, these may include grasses, heathland or wetland species.”</i></p>
Policy EN20: Design considerations in new development	<p><i>“In their determination of applications for planning permission, the borough council will have regard to the following considerations (inter alia):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. <i>Be in sympathy with the appearance and character of the local environment and appropriate in scale, mass, design, materials, layout and siting, both in itself and in relation to adjoining buildings, spaces and views;</i> ii. <i>Retain beneficial landscape, ecological or archaeological features and, where reasonable, enhance these features;</i>

Plan Policy	Details
	<p>iii. <i>Ensure that the design of the development promotes, or where necessary creates, local character and a sense of local identity;</i></p> <p>vi. <i>Avoid loss of important open areas, gaps in frontages and natural or built features (such as trees, hedges, walls, fences and banks) which it is desirable to retain.</i></p> <p>vii. <i>Not adversely affect the amenity of surrounding properties and adjoining area."</i></p>
Policy R8: Public Rights of Way	<p><i>"Material consideration in the determination of planning applications will be the protection, extension and enhancement of public right of way including:</i></p> <p>a) <i>The Ramblers Route; and</i></p> <p>b) <i>Bridleway networks."</i></p>

Emerging Local Plan, 2019

- 2.2.6 Bracknell Forest Council are currently preparing a new local plan which will set the long-term spatial vision and development strategy for the borough up to 2036. Once adopted it will replace the Bracknell Forest Local Plan (2002) and the Core Strategy (2008). The document has not been through examination in public so less weight can be given to any of the policies. However, it does give a clear direction to future Bracknell Forest Council policies.

Table 2.3: Relevant Landscape Planning Policies from Emerging Local Plan (2019)

Plan Policy	Details
Policy LP1 'Sustainable Development Principles'	<p><i>"Proposals for development will be permitted that:</i></p> <p>i) <i>provide suitable land/buildings to help meet development needs;</i></p> <p>ii) <i>make efficient use of land/buildings;</i></p> <p>iii) <i>create a high quality built environment, enhance and maintain local character and landscapes, and reduce and prevent crime;</i></p> <p>iv) <i>protect and enhance the natural environment and heritage assets together with their settings;</i></p> <p>v) <i>minimise the use of natural resources, address the waste hierarchy and respond to climate change;</i></p> <p>vi) <i>protect and include essential infrastructure, services and facilities required, and enhance the green infrastructure network;</i></p> <p>vii) <i>promote healthy lifestyles and maximise health and wellbeing;</i></p> <p>viii) <i>are located so as to reduce the need to travel; and,</i></p> <p>ix) <i>offer a choice of modes of travel with minimal reliance on the private car."</i></p>
Policy LP19 'Design'	<p><i>"All new development must achieve a high standard of design that positively contributes to placemaking. Development should respond to and enhance the distinctive character, amenity and or appearance of the local area. All development should create attractive places that people want to live and work in and that contribute to inclusive, connected, healthy communities and, to this end, proposals will be assessed in</i></p>

Plan Policy	Details
	<p><i>terms of their level of accessibility. Proposals should be designed and will be supported where they:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. provide details of a full site appraisal that informs the proposals submitted and retains site assets of quality and/or visual value such as trees and hedgerows and other site features that are of ecological or heritage value, and where appropriate these features should be enhanced;</i> <i>ii. ensure layouts make efficient use of land, having regard to topography, location and other factors affecting good design;</i> <i>iii. have regard to solar orientation, include measures to ease living with a change in climate, opportunities for energy efficiency and are designed to prevent overheating;</i> <i>iv. include a mix of uses appropriate to the scale and location of the development with the aim of creating safe, walkable, easily connected developments and communities;</i> <i>v. enable easy, inclusive, safe and well designed access to, and within development and buildings for all potential users, including disabled people, and provide appropriate facilities to achieve ease of access;</i> <i>vi. provide housing to meet the needs of all the community, with provision being appropriate to the site and location; and</i> <i>vii. do not prejudice by way of design and layout the comprehensive development of a wider area. Masterplans and Design Codes will be required for larger, complex and more sensitive developments to agree an overall vision and strategy for a development as a whole that demonstrates a comprehensive and inclusive approach to design. These documents will be required to be agreed with the Council prior to the submission of any planning applications for the site."</i>
Policy LP43 - Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Development in the Borough will be expected to achieve a measurable net gain for biodiversity. 2. . Relevant development proposals will be expected to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i. provide an adequate level of suitable ecological survey information and assessment to establish biodiversity net gains and the extent of any potential impact on wildlife corridors (including river corridors), ecological features such as ancient woodland, veteran trees, hedgerows, orchards, waterbodies, protected species, priority species or priority habitat that may be affected</i>

Plan Policy	Details
	<p>during and after development (16), protected species, priority species or priority habitat may be affected during and after development. This information shall be provided prior to the determination of an application;</p> <p>ii. retain, protect and buffer ecological features and provide for the appropriate management of those features;</p> <p>iii. where possible, create new ecological features and design-in provisions for wildlife to maximise opportunities for biodiversity; and</p> <p>iv. avoid fragmentation of habitats and create coherent ecological networks through the urban and rural areas such as improvements to Biodiversity Opportunity areas.</p> <p>3. Where the adverse impacts of development on biodiversity are identified, they must be proportionately addressed in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy of:</p> <p>i. avoidance;</p> <p>ii. mitigation; and,</p> <p>iii. compensation.</p> <p>4. Where the requirements of this hierarchy cannot be met, development will be refused.</p> <p>5. Where the biodiversity has been intentionally removed or degraded (including through neglect), the Council will view biodiversity value to be as it is likely to have been had the removal or degradation not have occurred.</p> <p>6. The Council will secure effective avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures which will be maintained over the lifetime of the development through the imposition of planning conditions or planning obligations as appropriate, including monitoring for the effectiveness of these measures.”</p>

Binfield Neighbourhood Plan, 2016

- 2.2.7 The Binfield Neighbourhood Plan was brought into legal force by Bracknell Forest Council on 20th April 2016. It forms part of the development plan for Bracknell Forest and is used for determining planning applications in the Binfield Parish. The Application Site is within the designated neighbourhood area boundary. Beehive Lane is identified as an historic route for cycling and walking.

Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 2.2.8 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
- 2.2.9 The NPPF emphasises the importance of sustainable development. Paragraph 7 states: *“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.”* This includes an environmental role, contributing to protect and enhance our natural environment.
- 2.2.10 NPPF paragraph 8 sets out the overarching objectives of the planning system. The objectives include an environmental objective at paragraph 8 c) *“to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment...”*. The NPPF requires strategic policies within development plans to make provision for the *“conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure...”* (paragraph 20 d). Non-strategic policies should set out more detailed policies for specific areas, including the allocation of sites, establishing design principles, as well as conserving and enhancing the natural environment (paragraph 28).
- 2.2.11 Section 11 deals with making effective use of land and recognises the need to safeguard and improve the environment when meeting the needs for development. Paragraph 118 promotes new habitat creation or the improvement of public access to the countryside. Paragraph 122 recognises the *“desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting...or promoting regeneration and change”* and *‘the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places’*.
- 2.2.12 Section 12 of the NPPF is concerned with well-designed places. Paragraph 127 b) explains that developments should be *“visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping”*. Paragraph 127 c) requires that developments *“are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. While not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)”*. Developments should also *“establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangements of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit”* (paragraph 127 d).
- 2.2.13 NPPF Section 15 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, is of relevance to this assessment. Paragraph 170 explains that *“planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
“protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ...” and
“recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside...” including the benefits of trees and woodland.
- 2.2.14 Paragraph 172 states that *“Great weight should be given to conserving 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 these issues”*. The Application Site is not located in either of these statutorily designated areas.

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.2.15 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (DCLG, 2014) is a web-based guidance resource that was introduced in 2014 in order to bring together existing planning practice guidance for England in an accessible and useable way. The NPPG was last updated by MHCLG in October 2019.

- 2.2.16 The NPPG sets out details in relation to protected landscapes and the need for local planning authorities to undertake landscape character assessments.

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 2.2.17 There are a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), which accompany the Bracknell Forest Core Strategy (2008). Those which are relevant to this assessment, particularly in relation to landscape, include Character Area Assessment SPD (2010) and Design SPD (2017)

Bracknell Forest Design SPD

- 2.2.18 The adopted Design SPD forms part of the Council's policy context and will be a material consideration in determining planning applications submitted to Bracknell Forest Council (BFC). The Bracknell Forest Design SPD sets out general advice on design principles that apply to all forms of development although it is predominantly aimed at residential development. The SPD focuses on how development proposals respond to their surroundings and sets out principles relating to understanding a site and the context including responding positively to the existing local character.

Bracknell Forest Character Area Assessment SPD

- 2.2.19 The adopted Character Area Assessment SPD (March 2010) defines the character of specific areas in the borough and interprets Core Strategy. The SPD identifies areas with distinctive and positive character and provides recommendations relating to developing and enhancing character within these specific areas and does not cover the whole borough. The SPD seeks to inform change and guide future development.

2.3 Summary of Planning Policy

- 2.3.1 The NPPF (2019) sets out overarching aims to ensure development is appropriately located, well designed and sustainable. In summary, the policies set out to improve the overall quality of an area, establish a strong sense of place and create an attractive and comfortable location, responding to local character. National policies seek to conserve, protect and enhance valued landscapes and provide protection to scenic areas within nationally designated areas such as National Parks and AONBs.
- 2.3.2 The Bracknell Forest Core Strategy and Bracknell Forest Local Plan collectively incorporate strategies to conserve and enhance (where possible) the important features, elements and characteristics of the landscape and townscape by avoiding visually intrusive development and promote good quality design which incorporates appropriate green infrastructure. Emerging policy also reflects these requirements.
- 2.3.3 In accordance with national policy the local development framework is based on the principles of sustainable development whilst promoting good design. New development would be encouraged to maintain and enhance the character of the local landscape where possible.

3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.1 Landscape and Townscape Baseline

- 3.1.1 This section sets out the context of the Application Site within the surrounding area, with reference to published landscape assessments and, where relevant, landscape designations at national and local levels. It describes the location, topography and drainage, land use, vegetation cover, existing rights of way and existing landscape character. The location of the Application Site, and relevant landscape planning context, are shown at Figure 1 and in the photographs at Figures 5 to 31.

Landscape Character

- 3.1.2 During 1997 there was a significant change in government attitudes towards landscape conservation. Whereas, prior to this, landscape conservation efforts focussed on designated and protected areas, such as AONBs and locally designated, e.g. Special Landscape Areas, the new approach recognised that landscape character exists everywhere and that all areas deserve consideration.
- 3.1.3 The European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, ratified 2006) (ELC) requires that each party (member state) “*establish and implement landscape policies aimed at landscape protection, management and planning...*” through the adoption of specific measures (Article 5). Landscape Protection is defined in Article 1d as “*actions to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by its heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or from human activity.*” The specific measures set out at Article 6 require, amongst other matters, each party to undertake an analysis of the characteristics and the forces and pressures on its landscapes (Article 6C, 1a (ii)) and “*to assess the landscapes identified taking into account the specific values assigned to them by the interested parties and the population concerned*” (Article 6C, 1b).
- 3.1.4 Landscape character areas and landscape character types can be defined at a variety of scales and a substantial amount of published information is available at the national, county and district scales. The principal published information comprises Natural England’s national landscape characterisation of England (Natural England, 2015) and characterisations undertaken at the district level are contained within the Bracknell Forest Borough Landscape Character Assessment (BFB LCA) (September 2015). There are local landscape / townscape characterisation studies which cover the local area and are of relevance to this assessment.
- 3.1.5 While the National and County landscape character assessments have been referred to below and illustrated on Figure 4, the local (district) level characterisation studies within BFB LCA and BFB SPD Character Assessment have been used when considering the potential landscape effects of the proposed development as these studies are the most up to date and detailed available shown on Figure 4.

National Landscape Character

- 3.1.6 Natural England divides England into 159 distinct natural areas or National Character Areas (NCAs). Each NCA is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment. At a national level, the project site is identified within National Character Area 115: Thames Valley (Figure 4).
- 3.1.7 The key characteristics of NCA 115: Thames Valley character area pertinent to the study area are as follows:

- *“Flat and low-lying land, rising to low, river-terraced hills, which include the prominent local outcrop of chalk on which Windsor Castle sits.*
- *The underlying geology is dominated by the London Clay which, over much of the area, is overlain by river-lain sands and gravels.*
- *The numerous hydrological features provide unity to an area which otherwise lacks homogeneity; these features include the River Thames and its tributaries, streams, lakes, canals and open water bodies (the result of restored gravel workings).*
- *Woodlands characterise the north-western area, with the wooded character extending up to the southern edge of the Chiltern Hills.*
- *Farming is limited. Where it survives, grazed pasture is the major land use within a generally open, flat and featureless landscape. The field pattern is medium-scale and irregular, with smaller fields to the west. Localised areas of species-rich hay meadows provide a splash of colour in summer.*
- *Although densely populated and developed, pockets of woodland, open grassland, parkland, wetlands and intimate meadows provide escape and tranquillity, and include a variety of habitats supporting important populations of many species.*
- *There are small but biologically important areas of lowland heathland- including a small area to the south falls within the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) buffer zone.*
- *The area has an urban character, and there are very few villages of more traditional character, although almost half of the area is greenbelt land and development has been restricted in areas like Crown Estate land and Eton College grounds.*

3.1.8 A further National Character Area borders NCA 115 to the south and is NCA 129: Thames Basin Heaths. The town of Bracknell straddles the boundary of these character areas therefore the southern part of the 5 km study is within the Thames Basin Heaths. There would be no direct characterising effects upon this NCA as a result of the proposed development however some potential intervisibility would occur.

Bracknell Forest (District) Landscape Character

- 3.1.9 Whilst the relevant landscape character areas from the national level landscape character studies are included above, the assessment of potential landscape effects uses the district level landscape characterisation study as its baseline.
- 3.1.10 The Application Site falls within the Bracknell Forest authority and the current Landscape Character Assessment for this area is the Bracknell Forest Borough Landscape Character Assessment (BFB LCA) (September 2015) and further information within the Bracknell Forest Character Area Assessment SPD (March 2010). The BFB LCA is for land outside defined settlements and identified eight Landscape Character Types (LCTs), which are broad tracts of landscape with similar characteristics. These LCTs are subdivided into eleven Landscape Character Areas within the BFB LCA which are single unique geographical areas with a recognisable pattern of landscape characteristics that combine to create a distinct sense of place. Further information and Landscape Character descriptions are included within Appendix A of this assessment for reference and shown on Figure 4.
- 3.1.11 The Application Site itself, is located within the Urban area type of west Bracknell identified in the BFB LCA and which adjoins Landscape Type C1: Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland north of the A329 and Landscape Type G1: Easthampstead Wooded Estate south of the A329.
- 3.1.12 Parts of the study area fall within Wokingham, and Windsor and Maidenhead Councils and so the character studies for these have also been used for this assessment. Other landscape character areas that fall within the study area include those within adjacent districts, the closest to the west

being I1: Ashridge Farmed Clay Lowland, J1: Wokingham-Winnersh Settled and Farmed Clay and N1: Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland identified within the Wokingham District Landscape Character Assessment (2004).

- 3.1.13 Given the exclusion of the urban townscape from the district level landscape character assessment, this assessment has characterised the local urban area into six townscape character areas in order to form a baseline for the potential effects upon the local townscape resource.
- 3.1.14 The description/key characteristics of the townscape within the ZTV for the proposed development and therefore potentially affected are provided in the table below.

Townscape Character

Bracknell Local Townscape Character (RPS 2020)

- 3.1.15 Due to the exclusion of the urban/industrial areas in which the project site is located and the neighbouring urban/residential areas, RPS have included an overview of the broad townscape character areas (TCA) potentially affected. A sensitivity judgement for each TCA has been assigned in accordance with the Methodology.

Table 3.1: Key Townscape Characteristics

TCA	Key Characteristics	Sensitivity
Cain Road Enterprise Campus	Commercial enterprise use based along Cain Road. Medium to large scale commercial / industrial and business buildings and headquarters set back from road frontage. Wide road verges and landscape planting. Security gates and fencing. Extensive areas of car park providing space around buildings. Loose campus style layout with areas of open space between users. Farley Wood Community Centre and Farley Moor Lake.	Low
Binfield Residential	Residential settlement pattern with varied architecture and house types. Clear hierarchy of streets including London Road and Beehive Road. Cul-de-sacs set behind the principal street frontages. Generally tight grain residential development. Institutional buildings set within grounds to the north. Some views along streets to landmark features. Roadside tree belts and garden trees. Influence of surrounding rural landscape.	Medium
Amen Corner Mixed Use	Areas of brownfield land with potential contamination Cluster of Victorian houses/terrace. Small scale industrial uses and storage. Residential development under construction and further allocated housing site. Scattered buildings and uses separated by rough ground, informal open space and woodland blocks or tree belts. Distinctive Coppid Beech Hotel and prominent dry ski slope.	Low
Jennett's Park Residential	Recent residential settlement pattern. Remnant older cottages and farm buildings. Informal open space and woodland blocks or tree belts Influence of large-scale buildings associated with industry and commerce.	Medium

- 3.1.16 The Application Site is located within the Cain Road Enterprise Campus townscape character area.

3.2 Site Description

Location, Land Use and Development Context

- 3.2.1 The Application Site is located within the urban area of Bracknell in Berkshire. It is located north of the railway mainline from Reading to London Waterloo that takes a route parallel to the A329 Berkshire Way. The Application Site is immediately adjacent to Cain Road to the north and Beehive Road to the west with the former recreation area part of the Application Site across Beehive Road to the south. Office buildings and areas of carpark/hardstanding are located east and south-east of the site. A disused golf driving range is south-west of Beehive Road that separates the site from a group of residential properties a North View and South View. There is residential development to the north of the site beyond an area of open land, enclosed by solid wooden fencing, and Farley Wood Community Centre with associated playing fields and open land. The commercial / industrial development of Bracknell extends west from the site and includes the John Nike sports complex, office buildings, the Coppid Beech Hotel, car dealership, building merchant and other industrial units. New homes are currently being constructed at Amen Corner on the north side of B3408 London Road.
- 3.2.2 It is understood that in 2020 there was announcement that the John Nike sports complex was not to reopen following the current Covid-19 pandemic. For the purposes of this assessment, it remains identified as a leisure facility.
- 3.2.3 The residential areas of Popeswood and Binfield extend north from the Application Site and are contained by fields and woodland blocks to the west and parkland and golf course to the east. A similar context applies to the residential area of Jennett's Park that extends south from the site beyond the railway and A329 with fields, Easthampstead Park and golf course that contains the residential area to the west. The woodland blocks of Wykery Copse break-up the residential area and provide a buffer to the West Bracknell industrial area.
- 3.2.4 The Application Site currently comprises of two three storey office buildings surrounded by extensive area of car parking with intermittent amenity tree, shrub and hedgerow planting. There is extensive boundary tree and shrub planting provided alongside Cain Road and Beehive Road. Intermittent tree planting within a further expanse of car parking provides separation from the adjacent office development to the south-east. Access to the site is from two locations on Cain Road via access points off two separate roundabouts. A third gated emergency access exists off Beehive Road to the south. The Application Site is bisected by Beehive Road and the former recreation area is located south across Beehive Road.
- 3.2.5 There remains extant permission to construct further office accommodation and a multi-storey car park on Application Site as part of a historic permission, the most recent reference for which is 10/00310/REM. This position has been confirmed by the LPA. This illustrates the consideration, and acceptability of, built form on the site at a similar height to the proposed data centre, with a greater proximity to the boundaries.

Topography

- 3.2.6 The topography of the Application Site is generally flat at approximately 65 m AOD with a slight mound forming the boundary at the corner of Cain Road with Beehive Road.
- 3.2.7 The land to the north of the Application Site rises gently to 80m AOD at Binfield with the settlement of Binfield located along a north to south orientated ridge. West of the Application Site the land

reaches 90 m AOD at the B3408 and includes a communications tower on the higher ground. To the south the land is gently undulating up to 80 m AOD in the vicinity of Easthampstead Park.

- 3.2.8 Further south, within Crowthorne Wood, high points of up to 125 m AOD are reached.

Hydrology and Drainage

- 3.2.9 Surface water features are not prominent within the study area. The nearest surface water feature includes a small pond located within the former recreation area of the Application Site south of Beehive Road, and Farleymoor Lake north-east of the Application Site is an amenity feature within the business campus. Small water courses flow within the valley east and west of the Binfield ridge including The Cut to the east. Emm Brook flows north through Wokingham to a confluence with the River Lodden at Reading.

Vegetation of the Application Site

- 3.2.10 The Application Site benefits from a comprehensive landscape scheme that was part of the original development of the site as offices. The planting has matured and integrates the buildings with the site and contributes to the overall landscape of the area. The planting within the Application Site includes individual mature trees, blocks of ornamental shrubs and lengths of hornbeam hedge that contain and separate areas of car park. There is much tree species diversity on the Application Site with Rowan, Sycamore, Norway Maple, Scots Pine and Silver birch being abundant. At the south-western corner of the site is a small wooded area with grassland between which has not been maintained.
- 3.2.11 The boundary landscape treatment is mature tree and shrub planting that provides a vegetation screen between the surrounding roads and the interior of the Application Site from many locations. Mown grass verges occur at the site entrance and along the verge of Cain Road adjacent to boundary amenity shrub planting.
- 3.2.12 Part of the Application Site includes a former recreation area south of Beehive Road that primarily consists of young to early-mature groups of trees. There is species diversity with Hornbeam, Willow and Oak being abundant and some plantings that suggest that the area has been designed. There is open grassland and a coppice of Alder Buckthorn.

Vegetation of the Surrounding Area

- 3.2.13 The immediate surrounding urban area of the Application Site is characterised by amenity landscape tree and shrub planting associated with the office campus sites along and either side of Cain Road. Remnant roadside tree belts and field hedgerow boundaries are located along Beehive Road and define parcels of open land and link with occasional blocks of woodland. Isolated blocks of woodland and tree belts punctuate the residential and industrial areas of western Bracknell providing a pattern of retained or new woodland across the urban area.
- 3.2.14 Extensive Crowthorne Wood and Swinley Forest define the edge of the urban area to the south and east of Bracknell. The woodland consists of coniferous plantation of varying ages.
- 3.2.15 Within the study area the agricultural land to the west of Binfield is a patchwork of irregular shaped arable and pasture fields defined by hedgerows and punctuated by occasional blocks of woodland and mature trees. Areas of parkland are associated with Popes Manor and Newbold College.

Access and Infrastructure

- 3.2.16 The major road corridor within the study area is the M4 approximately 5 km north-west of Bracknell with the A329(M) connecting spur that links Reading to Bracknell. The A329 continues east through Bracknell and ultimately provides connection to the M3 approximately 9 km south-east of

the Application Site. Beyond the urban area a network of minor roads link villages and settlements within the wider study area.

- 3.2.17 The proposed development would be accessed from three locations. The main entrance would be from a roundabout off Cain Road with a second entrance from a roundabout off Cain Road at the north-east corner of the site (both these locations provide existing access to the site). A third entrance for emergency use only is proposed off Beehive Road to the south of the Application Site, replacing an existing emergency entrance further to the south along this road.
- 3.2.18 No Public Rights of Way (PRoW) cross the site. There is roadside pavement along Cain Road, also marked as a cycle route, and pavement on the west side of Beehive Road from the Cain Road roundabout to North View. Beehive Road (south) provides access to a pedestrian and cycle bridge to the south of the Application Site connecting with the Jennett's Park residential development south of the A329.
- 3.2.19 West of the Application Site, a footpath (BRA FP15) takes a route from North View to join footpath (BRA FP14) that connects with London Road. Several other footpaths are located within the urban area and link with the PRoW network that extends to the countryside.

3.3 Landscape Value

- 3.3.1 As part of the baseline description of the study area the value of the landscape that would be affected by the proposed development has been established. The NPPF at paragraph 170 states that *"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by; protecting and enhancing valued landscapes."*
- 3.3.2 GLVIA3 defines value as *"the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society, bearing in mind that a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons... A review of existing landscape designations is usually the starting point to understanding landscape value, but the value attached to undesignated landscapes also needs to be carefully considered and individual elements of the landscape – such as trees, buildings or hedgerows may also have value."*

Designated Landscapes

- 3.3.3 The Application Site is an existing office development that is part of the urban area of Bracknell which has no statutory designations in relation to landscape quality. No designated landscapes of national importance are located within the study area.
- 3.3.4 There are three Registered Park and Gardens located within the study area. The closest being Newbold College located approximately 750 m north from the Application Site. South Hill Park and Broadmoor Hospital are located 2.75 km and 4.60 km south from the Application Site respectively.
- 3.3.5 There are a number of listed buildings within the study area and these are identified in the Heritage Statement (20305B-RPS-XX-XX-RP-T-9728).

Non-designated Landscapes

- 3.3.6 As discussed in paragraphs 3.3.3 to 3.3.5, the Application Site does not lie within a nationally or locally designated landscape. This does not mean that the Application Site has no value. As described in paragraph 3.1.3, the ELC requires that account should be taken of all landscapes, designated or not. GLVIA3, Box 5.1, sets out a range of factors that might be considered to help in the identification of valued landscapes which are discussed below and are used in this assessment to establish value.

Landscape Quality

- 3.3.7 Landscape quality, or condition, measures 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.
- 3.3.8 The Application Site is currently an office development consisting of two buildings and carparking within a designed landscape setting. Features associated with the Application Site include lighting columns, bollards, signage, barriers, gates and fences that are of low value. The landscape scheme consists of individual trees at intervals within the carparks, hedges around carparks and amenity planting within the internal site of medium value. Groups of trees and amenity shrubs at the western boundary, trees and amenity shrubs along the Cain Road boundary and a tree belt with understorey shrubs along the southern boundary with Beehive Road have higher value. The trees, shrubs and grassland around the pond within the part of the Application Site south of Beehive Road have higher value. The quality of the trees is assessed in more detail in the Tree Survey Report, within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (20305B-RPS-XX-XX-RP-P-9733).

Scenic Quality

- 3.3.9 This measures the degree to which the landscape appeals primarily to the visual senses.
- 3.3.10 The buildings, carparks and planting within the Application Site have medium scenic value as part of the campus landscape. The planting along Cain Road and Beehive Road provide an attractive edge to the Application Site and the vegetation within the recreation area south of Beehive Road contribute positively to the scenic quality of the surrounding area. Limited close views of the site are available, and parts of the adjacent industrial landscape are lower quality.

Rarity and Representativeness

- 3.3.11 Rarity is concerned with the presence of rare features and elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare character type or elements within the site and its surroundings which are considered particularly important examples, which are worthy of retention.
- 3.3.12 The buildings, carparks and planting are integral to the office use within the urban area of Bracknell. The Application Site is not considered as important but does include boundary planting worthy of retention despite it being an ordinary example of amenity planting within the local landscape. Although the planting is not particularly fine it does include trees and shrubs associated with the site boundary and provides a visual screen along parts of Cain Road and Beehive Road.

Conservation Interests

- 3.3.13 This considers the presence of features of wildlife, earth science, historical and cultural interest that can add value to a landscape.
- 3.3.14 There are no ecological or heritage designations on the site to increase its value. The planting within the site and at the boundaries is generally ornamental amenity planting of lower conservation value. However, the former recreation site that includes areas of hedgerow, deciduous woodland and ponds within the Application Site form better quality habitats of a medium value. There are listed buildings and a conservation area at Binfield located within the study area.

Recreational Value

- 3.3.15 This considers any evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important.

- 3.3.16 There is no public access to the Application Site therefore, it has no direct recreational value. Public access is afforded to Beehive Lane which is identified as an historic / ramblers route for cycling and walking and therefore afforded higher recreational value.

Perceptual Aspects

- 3.3.17 A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities, notably wildness and/or tranquillity.
- 3.3.18 The landscape of the Application Site is urban. It is developed land contained by existing roads to the south, west and north. The Application Site does not exhibit a sense of tranquillity and is part of the urban and commercial / industrial area of Bracknell.

Associations

- 3.3.19 This considers any evidence of artistic endeavours and historic events that contribute to the perceptions of the natural beauty of an area.
- 3.3.20 The Application Site and its surroundings do not have any special cultural, literary or artistic associations. The proposed development would be the next evolution of landscape change for this developed site.

Summary of Landscape Value

- 3.3.21 The value of the landscape of the Application Site and its surroundings is considered to range from low to medium. The buildings, carparks and planting are not rare within the urban area and are an ordinary example of landscape quality within a developed landscape. The Application Site has no formal recreational value and has limited visibility from areas with public access. The Application Site is not wild or tranquil and is part of the urban area of Bracknell. The Application Site has limited positive landscape elements or wildlife interest, so the site is not considered to be highly valued apart from the former recreation area south of Beehive road which includes habitats of higher conservation value. The areas of boundary planting offer some elements of greater value compared to the internal part of the Application Site.

3.4 Visual Baseline

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

- 3.4.1 Areas from which views of the proposed development would theoretically be possible were determined by means of the ZTV analysis (Figure 3). Selected visual receptors located within the ZTV, likely to experience visual change were identified through field work, and their sensitivity established in accordance with best practice guidance.
- 3.4.2 The ZTV indicates that potential views of the proposed development would be experienced from a relatively contained area to the north-east and south-west with limited views available from the urban edge of Bracknell. The ZTV show the worst case as it does not take into consideration the screening effect of vegetation other than main woodland blocks, as shown on the 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey mapping.
- 3.4.3 The extent of the ZTV (and study area for the visual assessment) is limited to a 5 km buffer from the boundary of the Application Site. Although the proposed development could theoretically be visible from specific points beyond 5 km in periods of very good visibility, it is considered unnecessary to extend the study area because over 5 km the degree of visual change would be negligible and not significant.
- 3.4.4 Table 3.1 below lists each of the viewpoints included in the study and describes the existing view from each. It also sets out the distance from the site and the perceived sensitivity of the view.

- 3.4.5 Winter photographs were taken in December 2020. Visibility was good during the day when the photographs were taken. The photographs were taken with a digital camera with a 50 mm lens (equivalent focal length) at approximately 1.6 metres high. Viewpoint locations are shown on Figure 3 and photographs are presented on Figures 5 to 31. Photowire illustrations are included in this assessment that follow the methodology in Appendix B. The use of winter photography presents the worst case scenario when deciduous vegetation is without leaf, judgements are necessarily made with respect to the summer situation when the proposed development is likely to benefit from the increased screening effect provided by deciduous vegetation in full leaf.

3.5 Consultation

- 3.5.1 Following production of the ZTV, site verification viewpoint locations were submitted to Bracknell Forest Council for comment on 14 January 2021. No direct response to the viewpoint selection has been made. However, a response to pre-application advice was received which states “*The Landscape Officer has confirmed that the selected viewpoints appear to cover the ZTV*”. Possible viewpoints within Jennett’s Park and Wildridings were suggested, however apart from the residential edge of Jennett’s Park (Viewpoint 7) the ZTV does not indicate any potential visibility within the wider residential areas of Jennett’s Park or Wildridings. A total of eight viewpoint locations are presented as part of this assessment.

Representative Viewpoints

- 3.5.2 The visual assessment has primarily been based on an assessment of eight representative viewpoints described in Table 3.1. In addition, ZTV information supplemented by site visits has been used to identify and consider all of the main visual receptors within the vicinity of the Application Site.

Table 3.1: Description of Views from Representative Viewpoints

Viewpoint and Location	Distance from Site	Receptor and Sensitivity	Description
1: Cain Road	39 m	Vehicle travellers Low Pedestrians / cyclists Medium	Close view looking south from pavement on Cain Road adjacent to allocated development site. The view is across road carriageway to the roadside tree and shrub boundary vegetation that contains the Application Site. Views of the ground level of the Application Site are prevented by landform and planting. Heavily filtered views of parts of the roof and second and third floor windows of the office building are available where vegetation is less dense or without leaf. Roadside lighting columns, signage and bollards are features of the view. In summer more extensive screening across the view and of the Application Site would be achievable when deciduous vegetation is in full leaf.
2: Farley Wood Community Centre	143 m	Users of public open space Medium	Close view looking south-west across sports pitches. Generally open foreground with view across amenity grass to retained field boundary vegetation, hedgerow and trees. Intervening vegetation prevents views of the ground level of the Application Site and only limited parts of the second and third floor windows of the office building and a section of roof are visible above vegetation. The majority of the

Viewpoint and Location	Distance from Site	Receptor and Sensitivity	Description
			Application Site office building is heavily filtered by filigree of winter vegetation. Car park lighting columns are visible vertical features visible above intervening vegetation. Distant woodland blocks are discernible features of the skyline. In summer more extensive screening of views of the Application Site would be achievable.
3: Beehive Road (historic/ramblers route)	5 m	Vehicle travellers Low Pedestrians / cyclists Medium	Close view looking north from Beehive Road. View is over and through gaps in Application Site boundary vegetation. Hedgerow, low level planting and timber fence generally prevent views of the ground level of the Application Site with views of the building generally filtered by filigree of winter vegetation. Between the gap for the secondary site entrance the view is open over a metal gate to part of the carpark, section of building and internal amenity tree and shrub planting. Beyond an internal hedge the top section of the adjacent Dell office building is visible. Lighting columns are vertical features along Beehive Road and within the Application Site.
4: Foot / cycle bridge over railway and A329	61 m	Pedestrians / cyclists Medium	Close view looking north from the elevated location of the well-used foot/cycle bridge over the railway and A329. The elevated view is across a foreground of rough ground with ruderal vegetation that includes storage containers and timber fenced compound. An extensive area of car park is prominent in the foreground. A belt of mature trees and boundary vegetation separate the prominent area of car park from the Application Site and provide screening to the office building. Glimpse views of ground level of the Application Site are available, and parts of the office building are visible or filtered by filigree winter vegetation. The screening effect of boundary vegetation would be increased during the summer situation. The palisade security boundary fence is visible across the view together with lighting columns and pole mounted CCTV cameras as vertical features within the view. Other office buildings and distant higher ground provide a backdrop to the view.
5: Footpath BIN FP14	454 m	Walkers High	Close view looking north-east from elevated location at Amen Corner. Open view over rough grassland to woodland belt within the middle ground. Part of the roof of the building within the Application Site is discernible filtered by winter vegetation where the vegetation belt is less dense. The building is seen in context with other buildings, some of them high

Viewpoint and Location	Distance from Site	Receptor and Sensitivity	Description
			rise, and the wider urban area of Bracknell.
6: Peacock Meadows	1.0 km	Users of public open space Medium	Medium distance open view looking north over grassland of public open space area. View is towards a recently established woodland belt and prominent block of mature trees. The row of original cottages on Peacock are visible on the skyline with residential development of Jennett's Park partly filtered by intervening vegetation. The high-rise Fujitsu building is visible above woodland to the right of the view.
7: Peacock Lane and Footpath BRA FP18		Vehicle travellers Low Pedestrians / cyclists Medium	Close view looking north from pavement on Peacock Lane. The view is across road carriageway and roundabout to residential edge of Jennett's Park. The view is cluttered with lighting columns, signage, bollards and fences. Recent roadside planting softens the view and partly filters views of new development in the winter situation. The roof of the office building located within the Application Site is distinguishable partly filtered by intervening vegetation.
8: Footpath WAR FP3, Warfield		Walkers High	Long distance view looking south-west from footpath at Warfield. The view is through a gap in hedgerow over a post and rail fence. The view is across a small pasture field contained by timber post and rail fencing. A single mature oak tree is a prominent feature of the view. In the distance gently sloping arable fields and blocks of woodland characterise the view. Some recent residential development at the edge of Bracknell is evident below the wooded ridgeline but barely perceptible at this distance and appears contained by vegetation even in winter.

Views from Residential Properties

- 3.5.3 In the planning system no individual has the right to a view. The Landscape Institute has provided guidance on residential visual amenity in Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (LI TGN 2/19).
- 3.5.4 The residential areas of Bracknell are generally well screened by vegetation or built form from views towards the Application Site. The main locations where there could be potential visual impacts on residential properties at the edge of the urban area or elevated locations comprise:
- Popeswood to the north;
 - Jennett's Park to the south;
 - Properties at North and South View to the south-west, and
 - Properties at more elevated locations near West End and Newell Green to the north-east.
- 3.5.5 Site survey observations have indicated that vegetation and intervening built environment is such that the majority of these areas do not receive views of the site. Where residential views might be

gained, from properties at higher elevations, these have been considered in combination with local and publicly accessible views.

- 3.5.6** Views of the proposed data centre development would neither overwhelm properties within the study area or the proposed residential development north of Cain Road (currently pending determination ref [20/00947/FUL](#)), nor render these properties so *“unattractive a place to live that planning permission should be refused”* (Inspector Kingaby, Burnthouse Farm Wind Farm, APP/D0515/A/10/2123739, Inspector’s Report, paragraph 119) (also at paragraph A1.6 of LI TGN 2/19). Inspector Kingaby noted that *“There needs to be a degree of harm over and above identified substantial effect to take a case into the category of refusal in the public interest. Changing the outlook from a property is not sufficient”* (Inspector’s Report, paragraph 120) (also at paragraph A1.7, LI TGN 2/19). The Inspector, in the Langham Wind Farm decision, noted that *“The planning system controls development in the public interest, and not in the private interest. The preservation of open views is a private interest”* (Langham Wind Farm Appeal Decision APP/D2510/A/10/2130539) (also at LI TGN 2/19, paragraph A1.11).
- 3.5.7** Parts of the existing office buildings within the Application Site are visible from surrounding residential properties. All but the upper section of the proposed development would be screened from residential properties within the ZTV. The closest properties that lie within the ZTV are at Turnpike Road (approximately 71 m) and proposed residential development off Cain Road (approximately 22 m). As such, no residential properties have potential to experience a degree of harm over and above substantial (as set out in paragraph 3.5.7, above) to make considering private views a public interest matter. As such, private views are not considered further in this report.

Views from Public Rights of Way

- 3.5.8** Reference to the Ordnance Survey map and web based definitive interactive map for Bracknell Forest has confirmed the extent and status of PRoW in the immediate vicinity of the Application Site. Open views of the site are generally restricted and are not achievable from public accessible locations due to vegetation cover or intervening buildings. However, partial views of the Application Site can be gained from the following receptors:
- Beehive Road (historic/ramblers route section) adjacent to the site;
 - Footpath (BIN FP14) at Amen Corner; and
 - Other more distant public rights of way in the surrounding area.

Views from Community Facilities

- 3.5.9** People using community facilities or indoor activities where attention is not focused on the landscape are less sensitive to change and are generally considered to have a medium sensitivity to change. The main locations where there could be potential visual effects on recreational users include:
- Farley Wood Community Centre; and
 - John Nike leisure complex.
- 3.5.10** There are currently views of part the existing buildings from the external areas of these community facilities or filtered views through winter vegetation.

Views from Commercial and Industrial Property

- 3.5.11** Receptors at the workplace are considered to be low sensitivity and would include the closest visual receptors at the adjacent commercial and industrial areas of Bracknell including:

- Various office premises to the north, east and west;
- Garages and car sales showrooms; and
- Other warehouse, commercial and industrial businesses.

3.5.12 Currently adjacent commercial properties have limited views of the existing buildings within the Application Site which are generally screened by intervening built form or vegetation.

Views from Surrounding Roads Network and Railway

3.5.13 There are some dynamic views of the Application Site from nearby major roads, other roads and railway within the ZTV. These include:

- A329;
- Cain Road;
- Beehive Road;
- Turnpike Road;
- John Nike Way;
- North View and South View;
- Harvest Ride; and
- Reading to London Waterloo mainline.

3.5.14 The closest roads to the Application Site are Cain Road and Beehive Road which have boundaries with the Application Site. Views from these roads despite being close have restricted visibility due to boundary and site vegetation that screens the lower elevations of the existing buildings particularly in summer. Glimpse views into the Application Site would be achieved between gaps available at the site access points. Views from other roads have more restricted visibility towards the Application Site due to intervening buildings and vegetation however glimpse views of the buildings can be gained.

Future Baseline Conditions

3.5.15 Having established the existing baseline character of the area, it should be noted that landscapes are dynamic and all subject to change. The landscape is always changing to accommodate new development or removal of old. There is a need to accommodate change while maintaining and enhancing the quality of the landscape where possible. New development should respect the environment and its location by way of scale, design and landscape treatment. The Application Site itself is currently developed for commercial use.

3.5.16 There is much planning activity within the Bracknell area. The following allocated sites within the study area may affect the baseline conditions over the coming years:

- Allocated Amen Corner South (west of Beehive Road);
- Allocated housing site 194 (land between Cain Road and Turnpike Road) and 316 (south of A329 Berkshire Way); and
- Other allocated housing sites within the study area.

3.5.17 The majority of allocations are located within the urban area of Bracknell at close to medium distance from the Application Site. The named allocated sites above would potentially have some intervisibility between them and the Application Site due to proximity. If built, these developments would intensify the urban grain and would extend the residential edge closer to the Application Site and therefore introduce residential receptors closer to the Application Site. At the time of writing an

application has been submitted for the allocated housing site 194, land north of Cain Road (ref [20/00947/FUL](#)). The illustrative layout includes a care home and residential properties proposed adjacent to the Application Site. Other allocated sites would have limited intervisibility between them due to topography, built form and existing vegetation.

4 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

4.1 Relevant Guidance

- 4.1.1 As a matter of best practice, this assessment has been undertaken based on the relevant guidance on landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) described in the following documents:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition (GLVIA3) (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment, 2013);
 - Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland (The Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002); and
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England, 2014).

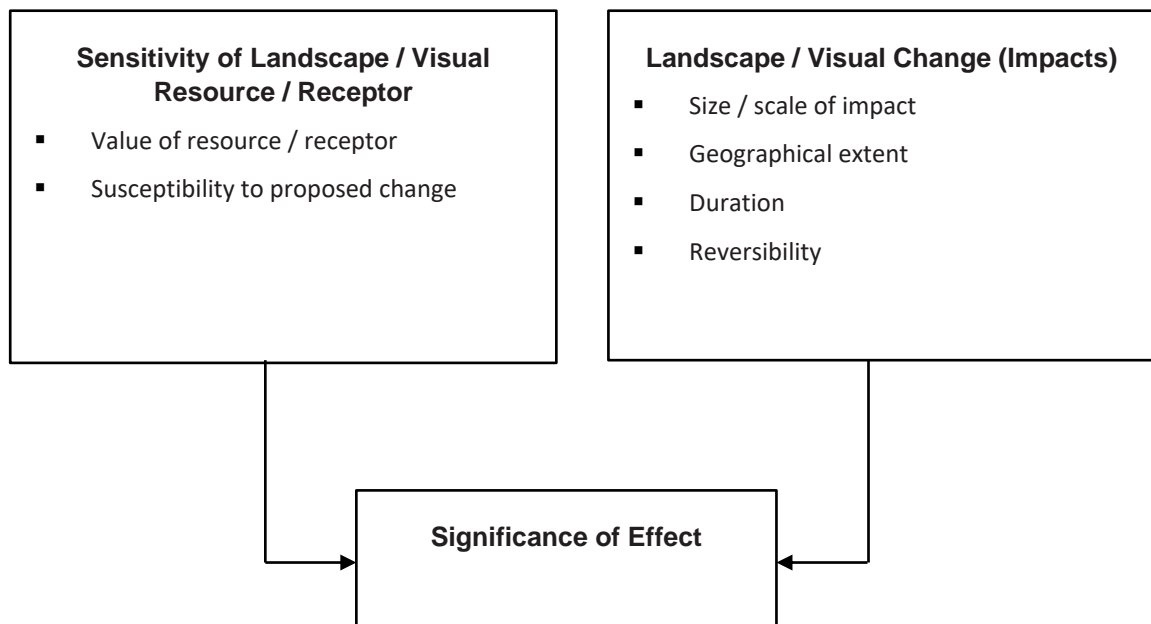
4.2 Distinction Between Landscape and Visual Effects

- 4.2.1 As set out in the GLVIA3 landscape and visual effects are assessed separately, although the procedure for assessing each is closely linked. A clear distinction has been drawn between landscape and visual effects as described below:
- Landscape effects relate to the effects of the proposed development on the physical and other characteristics of the landscape and its resulting character and quality.
 - Visual effects relate to the effects on views experienced by visual receptors (e.g. residents, footpath users, tourists etc) and on the visual amenity experienced by those people.

4.3 Assessment Criteria and Assignment of Significance of Effects

- 4.3.1 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) (GLVIA3) sets out broad guidelines rather than detailed prescriptive methodologies. The methodologies tailored for the assessment of this development is based on GLVIA3 guidance, which recommends that an LVIA “*concentrates on principles and process*” and “*does not provide a detailed or formulaic recipe*” to assess effects, it being the “*responsibility of the professional to ensure that the approach and methodology are appropriate to the task in hand*” (preface to GLVIA3). The effects on the landscape resources or visual receptors (people) are assessed by considering the proposed change in the baseline conditions (the impact of the proposal) against the type of landscape resource or visual receptor (including the importance and sensitivity of that resource or receptor). The methodology is set out in detail below and summarised in Diagram 4.1. These factors are determined through a combination of quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) assessment using professional judgement.

Diagram 4.1: Assessment Methodology Summary



4.4 Sensitivity

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

4.4.1 The sensitivity of a landscape receptor is a combination of “*judgements of their susceptibility to the type of change or development proposed and the value attached to the landscape*” (GLVIA, para 5.39). For the purpose of this assessment, susceptibility and value of landscape receptors are defined as follows:

- Landscape susceptibility: “*the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the proposed change without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies*” (GLVIA, para 5.40).
- Value of the landscape receptor: “*The value of the Landscape Character Types or Areas that may be affected, based on review of designations at both national and local levels, and, where there are no designations, judgements based on criteria that can be used to establish landscape value; and, the value of individual contributors to landscape character, especially the key characteristics, which may include individual elements of the landscape, particularly landscape features, notable aesthetic, perceptual or experiential qualities, and combinations of these contributors*” (GLVIA, para 5.44).

4.4.2 Sensitivity is not readily graded into bands. However, descriptions of landscape susceptibility and value are set out in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Definitions of Landscape Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors Landscape Resource/Receptor Susceptibility	Landscape Resource/Receptor Value
Very High	Exceptional landscape quality, no or limited potential for substitution. Key elements / features well known to the wider public.	Nationally/internationally designated/valued landscape, or key elements or features of nationally/internationally designated landscapes.
High	Strong/distinctive landscape/townscape character; absence of landscape detractors.	Regionally/nationally designated/valued countryside and landscape features.
Medium	Some distinctive landscape/townscape characteristics; few landscape detractors.	Locally/regionally designated/valued countryside and landscape features.
Low	Absence of distinctive landscape/townscape characteristics; presence of landscape detractors.	Undesignated countryside and landscape features.
Negligible	Absence of positive landscape/townscape characteristics. Significant presence of landscape detractors.	Undesignated countryside and landscape features.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

4.4.3 Visual receptors are always people. The sensitivity of each visual receptor (the particular person or group of people likely to be affected at a specific viewpoint) *“should be assessed in terms of both their susceptibility to change and in views and visual amenity and also the value attached to particular views”* (GLVIA, para 6.31). For the purpose of this assessment, susceptibility and value of visual receptors are defined as follows:

- Visual susceptibility: *“The susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity is mainly a function of: The occupation or activity of people experiencing views at the particular locations; and, the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations”* (GLVIA, para 6.32).
- Value of views: Judgements made about the value of views should take account of: *“recognition of the value attached to particular views, for example in relation to heritage assets, or through planning designations; and, indicators of value attached to views by visitors, for example through appearances in guidebooks or on tourist maps, provision of facilities for their enjoyment (such as parking places, sign boards or interpretive material) and references to them in literature or art...”* (GLVIA, para 6.37).

4.4.4 Sensitivity is not readily graded in bands and GLVIA notes, with regards to visual sensitivity, that the division of who may or may not be sensitive to a particular change *“is not black and white and in reality, there will be a gradation in susceptibility to change”* (GLVIA, para 6.35). In order to provide both consistency and transparency to the assessment process, however, Tables 4.2 and 4.3 define the criteria which have guided the judgement as to the intrinsic susceptibility and value of the resource/receptor and subsequent sensitivity to the proposed development.

Table 4.3: Definitions of Visual Sensitivity

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors Visual Receptor Susceptibility	Value of View
Very High	Observers, drawn to a particular view, including those who have travelled from around Britain and overseas to experience the views.	See paragraph 4.4.2, above
High	Observers enjoying the countryside from their homes or pursuing quiet outdoor recreation are more sensitive to visual change.	See paragraph 4.4.2, above

Sensitivity	Typical Descriptors Visual Receptor Susceptibility	Value of View
Medium	Observers enjoying the countryside from vehicles on quiet/promoted routes or pedestrians on less scenic rights of way are moderately sensitive to visual change.	See paragraph 4.4.2, above
Low	Observers in vehicles or people involved in outdoor activities where attention is not focused on landscape are less sensitive to visual change.	See paragraph 4.4.2, above
Negligible	Observers in vehicles or people involved in frequent or frequently repeated activities are less sensitive to visual change.	See paragraph 4.4.2, above

4.5 Magnitude of Impact

Magnitude of Impact on Landscape Resources / Receptors

4.5.1 The magnitude of impact or change affecting landscape receptors depends on the size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. These factors are described below:

- Size or scale: *“The extent of the existing landscape elements that will be lost, the proportion of the total extent that this represents and the contribution of that element to the character of the landscape...; the degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered either by removal of existing components of the landscape or by addition of new ones...”* and, *“whether the effect [impact] changes the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character”* (GLVIA, para 5.49).
- Geographical extent: Distinct from scale or size, this factor considers the geographical area over which the landscape impacts will be felt, it might, for example, be a moderate loss of landscape receptors or character over a large area, or a large loss of receptors or character over a very localised area. At para 5.50 GLVIA3 notes that *“in general effects [impacts] may have an influence at the following scales, although this will vary according to the nature of the project and not all may be relevant on every occasion: at the site level within the development site itself; at the level of the immediate setting of the site; at the scale of the landscape type or character area within which the proposal lies; and, on a larger scale, influencing several landscape types or character areas.”* For the purposes of this report, the assessment considers the impact of the proposed development on the published landscape character areas and units, both at county and national level, i.e. the third and fourth landscape scales.
- Duration and reversibility: Duration is categorised as short, medium or long-term. GLVIA3 explains that as there are no standard lengths of time within these categories, the appraisal must state what these are and why these have been chosen (GLVIA3, para 5.51). Reversibility is described as *“a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation”* (GLVIA3, para 5.52). Projects can be considered to be permanent (irreversible), partially reversible or fully reversible. For the purposes of this assessment the proposed development is considered to be permanent.

Magnitude of Impact on Visual Receptors

4.5.2 As with the magnitude of landscape impacts, the magnitude of impact or change affecting visual receptors depends on the size or scale, geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and reversibility. These factors are described below:

- Size or scale: Judgements need to take account of: *“the scale of the change [impact] in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its*

composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development; the degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture; and, the nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses” (GLVIA3, para 6.39).

- Geographical extent: This will vary from viewpoint to viewpoint and will reflect: “the angle [orientation] 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 the changes [impacts] would be visible” (GLVIA, para 6.40).

4.5.3 Duration and reversibility of visual effects: As with landscape impacts, duration should be categorised as short, medium or long-term and projects considered to be permanent (irreversible), partially reversible or fully reversible (GLVIA3, para 6.41). For the purposes of this appraisal the impacts on views of the proposed development are considered to be permanent.

4.5.4 The magnitude of the predicted impact has been described using criteria outlined above and Diagram 4.1 and detailed in methodology below. Magnitude of impact has been classified on a four-point scale (Large, Medium, Small and Negligible,). The definitions of terms relating to the magnitude of impact are set out in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Example Definitions of Magnitude of Impact

Magnitude of Impact	Typical Descriptors	
	Landscape Resource	Visual Resource
Large	Total loss or addition or/very substantial loss or addition of key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of dominant, uncharacteristic elements with the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Complete or very substantial change in view, dominant involving complete or very substantial obstruction of existing view or complete change in character and composition of baseline, e.g., through removal of key elements.
Medium	Partial loss or addition of or moderate alteration to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be substantially uncharacteristic with the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Moderate change in view: which may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of baseline i.e., pre-development view through the introduction of new elements or removal of existing elements. Change may be prominent but would not substantially alter scale and character of the surroundings and the wider setting. Composition of the views would alter. View character may be partially changed through the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.
Small	Minor loss or addition of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape.	Minor change in baseline i.e., pre-development view – change would be distinguishable from the surroundings whilst composition and character would be similar to the pre-change circumstances.

Magnitude of Impact	Typical Descriptors	
	Landscape Resource	Visual Resource
Negligible	Very minor loss or addition of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape approximating to a 'no-change' situation.	Very slight change in baseline i.e., pre-development view – change barely distinguishable from the surroundings. Composition and character of view substantially unaltered.

Significance of Effects

- 4.5.5 It is recognised that new development will lead to some landscape and visual effects. However, it should be stressed that not all landscape and visual effects arising will be significant.
- 4.5.6 GLVIA3 explains, at paragraph 5.55, that a staged approach can be adopted when assessing landscape significance “*susceptibility to change and value can be combined into an assessment of sensitivity for each receptor, and size/scale, geographical extent and duration and reversibility can be combined into an assessment of magnitude for each effect. Magnitude and sensitivity can then be combined to assess overall significance.*”
- 4.5.7 Within this assessment, the assessment of significance has taken the following into account (as appropriate):
- reference to regulations or standards;
 - reference to best practice guidance;
 - reference to policy objectives;
 - reference to criteria, for example designations or protection status;
 - outcomes of consultation to date; and
 - professional judgement based on local / regional / specialist experience.
- 4.5.8 Significance varies depending on the receptor's sensitivity and the magnitude of impact of the project. The distance to the development can be a major factor in determining the magnitude of the impact. Those resources or receptors closer to the project are likely to experience a greater significance of effects than those further away.
- 4.5.9 A significant effect would not necessarily mean that the effect is unacceptable in planning terms. What is important is that the likely effects of any proposal are transparently assessed and understood in order that the determining authority can bring a balanced and well-informed judgement to bear when making any decision. This judgement should be based upon weighing up the benefits of the proposal against the anticipated effects, both positive and negative.
- 4.5.10 The following matrix has been used to guide the assessment of effects. Where the matrix provides a choice of level of effects, e.g., Minor or Moderate, the assessor has exercised professional judgement in determining which of the levels is more appropriate.

Table 4.5: Assessment Matrix

Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact			
	Negligible	Small	Medium	Large
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor
Low	Negligible or Minor	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Minor or Moderate

Medium	Negligible or Minor	Minor	Moderate	Moderate or Major
High	Minor	Minor or Moderate	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial
Very high	Minor	Moderate or Major	Major or Substantial	Substantial

- 4.5.11 The significance of effect on landscape, views and visual amenity has been described according to the five-point scale shown in the above matrix (Substantial, Major, Medium, Minor or Negligible). A description of these terms is provided in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Definitions of Significance Criteria

Magnitude	Typical Descriptors Landscape Resource	Visual Resource
Substantial	Where proposed changes would be uncharacteristic and/or would significantly alter a landscape of exceptional landscape quality (e.g., internationally designated landscapes), or key elements known to the wider public of nationally designated landscapes (where there is no or limited potential for substitution nationally).	Where proposed changes would be uncharacteristic and/or would significantly alter a view of remarkable scenic quality, within internationally designated landscapes or key features or elements of nationally designated landscapes that are well known to the wider public.
Major	Where proposed changes would be uncharacteristic and/or would significantly alter a valued aspect of (or a high quality) landscape.	Where proposed changes would be uncharacteristic and/or would significantly alter a valued view or a view of high scenic quality.
Moderate	Where proposed changes would be noticeably out of scale or at odds with the character of an area.	Where proposed changes to views would be noticeably out of scale or at odds with the existing view.
Minor	Where proposed changes would be at slight variance with the character of an area.	Where proposed changes to views, although discernible, would only be at slight variance with the existing view.
Negligible	Where proposed changes would have an indiscernible effect on the character of an area.	Where proposed changes would have a barely noticeable effect on views/visual amenity.

4.6 Limitations of the Assessment

- 4.6.1 The visual assessment is based on analysis of OS mapping of the site and surrounding area, and on field survey and analysis of views towards the site from publicly accessible viewpoints in the surrounding landscape. Although every effort has been made to include viewpoints in sensitive locations and locations from which the proposed development would be most visible, not all public viewpoints from which the proposed development would potentially be seen have necessarily been included in the assessment. Where impacts to residential and other private views (e.g. commercial occupiers) are noted, these have necessarily been estimated.
- 4.6.2 The fieldwork and visual assessment were carried out during winter 2020 when deciduous vegetation was without leaf. As such, the winter photography in the assessment is presenting the 'worst case' scenario. However, visibility on winter days can be more limited due to weather conditions. Judgements have necessarily been made regarding the summer situation when vegetation is in full leaf for the viewpoint locations.
- 4.6.3 The information provided in this assessment is considered to allow a robust assessment of the likely landscape, townscape and visual effects of the proposed development to be made.

5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Development Proposals

Description of Proposed Development

- 5.1.1 The application seeks consent for a data centre building, with associated office administration areas, emergency generators and emission flues (15 m high), diesel tanks and filling area, electrical switchroom, a water sprinkler pump room and storage tank, a gate house / security building, site access, internal access roads, drainage infrastructure and hard and soft landscaping.
- 5.1.2 The building would be contained by inner perimeter security fence comprising 3.5 m weld mesh panel security fence. Secondary outer security fencing provided around the Application Site is proposed as 2.65 m weld mesh panel fence. Both fence designs would be of consistent green finish. 2.65m high fencing is proposed around the emergency generators and 2.4m high fencing around the MV compound. CCTV would be installed on 8 m high poles at 50 m intervals along the security fence or change in fence direction. Refer to Proposed Fence Type plan ref 20305B-RPS-00-XX-DR-A-9504 for details).

Layout

- 5.1.3 The building is located within the central east part of the 7.5 ha element of the Application Site, aligned parallel to the boundary with the adjacent Dell site. The main entrance to the Application Site is off Cain Road, off an existing roundabout, at an approximate central location along the site boundary. A secondary entrance is located to the south east off the existing roundabout. A third, emergency access is off Beehive Road, replacing an existing access further to the south. The internal road network provides vehicular access around the building and links to the car park. A total of 35 car parking spaces are proposed including three accessible spaces. Cycle parking would accommodate 10 bicycles. The building and installations are set within a landscape framework that is described below at paragraphs 5.1.10 to 5.1.11.
- 5.1.4 An area of former recreation land south of Beehive Road (2.4 ha) would be utilised in a drainage capacity, as existing, with ecological enhancements and ongoing landscape maintenance and management. No intrusive works are proposed for this part of the Application Site. As such, impact assessment of the former recreation area is not considered further in this report.

Lighting

- 5.1.5 Lighting layout plans have been produced for the proposed development.
- 5.1.6 The Application Site is currently lit (including high level lighting at the former recreation area south of Beehive Road) and the proposed development would include external road and security lighting at the site. The proposed site-wide security lighting strategy would seek to minimise light levels when practical, without compromise to safety and security. Energy use and light pollution would be minimised as far as possible through:
- minimise potential for sky glow by reducing upward reflected light;
 - employing high quality luminaire optics and shields to precisely focus light; and
 - employing a lighting control system to intelligently switch lighting.
- 5.1.7 The scale of the lighting, i.e. the mounting heights of the luminaires, shall respond to the use of the route or space. Light fittings within the site, including those used for security, to light roads, spaces and surface carparks, would be a maximum height of 8 m for road lighting at approximately 28-30

m apart, to ensure that light trespass is avoided as far as possible and that the view of the site is not compromised after dark.

- 5.1.8 The use of LEDs is proposed across the Application Site to help minimise energy use, manage the lit image of the Application Site and limit light spill. Lighting control systems would allow lighting to be switched off according to the time of day. The Application Site would be lit from dusk to dawn. This would ensure that an appropriate quantity of security light is delivered at all times, however light spill is generally retained within the site boundary.

The Landscape Scheme

- 5.1.9 The landscape proposals have been designed as an integral part of the proposed development to provide treatment and landscape integration for the perimeter and internal part of the site, and mitigation and visual amenity from the properties, PRoW and roads adjacent to the site boundary. The proposed landscape design comprises predominantly native tree and shrub planting, and wildflower grassland focussed on the enhancement of the local landscape.
- 5.1.10 The Landscape Strategy of the proposed development is illustrated on Drawing 20305B-RPS-SI-XX-DR-A-9530_P05 (Appendix C) and is focused on the following key objectives:
- to provide a high-quality landscape setting for the buildings, at the enhance to the site and compliment the site's wider context;
 - to strengthen the site's containment particularly at its north-eastern, and south-western and southern edge adjacent to Cain Road and Beehive Road, by extending areas of woodland blocks, interspersed with areas of individual trees and meadow grass areas in order to increase the potential biodiversity value;
 - to extend native species trees and other landscape features into the site along access routes; and
 - maintain biodiversity and conservation interest to land south of Beehive Road.
- 5.1.11 The landscape proposals include the following features:
- retained and proposed tree and shrub planting (to be underplanted / infilled where practicable);
 - avenue and parkland trees to be planted in informal groups of three or more and within more formal avenues, particularly at the two Cain Road entrances. Avenues and tree groups to consist of mixed species;
 - native shrub planting as underplanting to tree belts at perimeter of site;
 - wildflower turf cut frequently to maintain height of 75 mm to allow security requirements;
 - meadow grassland, maintained to 300 mm or mown annually in autumn to maintain floristic diversity.
 - woodland interplanting, proposed native hedgerows and restored grassland to land off Beehive Road.
- 5.1.12 The Application Site layout will enable the retention of areas of existing tree and shrub planting adjacent to Beehive Road and part of the northern section of Cain Road, which would be protected as necessary during construction and augmented using native species to extend and reinforce the native vegetation boundary treatment.
- 5.1.13 The landscape proposals seek to improve the character of the site and the surrounding landscape by establishing vegetation using native species appropriate to the local area, which will provide screening and connectivity to the surrounding area and as an enhancement to the existing site conditions. The building would be enclosed by woodland belts and contained within a parkland

setting. Despite the proposed development requiring the removal of 166 existing trees, the landscape proposal includes 338 standard trees to be planted at a range of 4 – 6m high

- 5.1.14 The landscape proposals include former recreation land off Beehive Road by retaining, establishing and maintaining native tree and shrub planting, grassland and fauna habitat creation in conjunction with ecologist for biodiversity enhancement.
- 5.1.15 All trees and shrubs are to be sourced responsibly, in the first instance, from UK Nurseries / suppliers, where they have been propagated and/or grown on for a minimum of five years in the UK (two years for shrubs).

6 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

6.1 Assessment of Construction Effects

Introduction

- 6.1.1 The construction phase would be temporary and is expected to last for a period of approximately 10-12 months and will comprise external construction and civils activities. This is forecast to commence in Q3 2021 (subject to the progress of the planning process). The construction phase will be followed by the installation and testing of the IT equipment and then the creation of the data networks and various cloud computing services that will operate from the facility. The project is anticipated to utilise standard construction methodologies for infrastructure and buildings.
- 6.1.2 The construction activity would be adjacent to existing commercial and industrial uses to the east and west of the Application Site and road and rail corridors along the southern boundary. During site clearance (including demolition of the existing office buildings and removal of trees) and construction, the Application Site would be surrounded by solid perimeter fencing / hoarding. The construction phase would require temporary site offices, storage materials and spoil and the use of cranes, resulting in a temporary change of character due to the intensity of use and movement. Following the installation of substructures and foundations the proposed superstructure and process equipment would be constructed, and mitigation planting would be implemented. It is the intention to reuse all spoil, arising from the reconfiguration of the site and the construction of the data centre, on site where possible, keeping vehicle movements off site to a minimum, where possible.
- 6.1.3 The assessment of construction effects upon the landscape and visual resources assumes a 'worst- case scenario' whereby the tallest elements of the project would be constructed during the winter season, when trees are without leaf.

Landscape and Townscape Effects

- 6.1.4 The potential effects on landscape features, elements, characteristics and character, and townscape fabric and character are set out in Appendix D (Table D.1) and described below.

National Character Areas

- 6.1.5 Temporary construction works would occur within the NCA 115: Thames Valley (Figure 4)
- 6.1.6 The direct impact of the temporary construction works would be on the section of the NCA 115 that lies north of Beehive Road. As a whole the Application Site has been previously developed and recontoured with a small area of natural planting retained at boundaries south of Beehive Road. The direct impacts are considered to be Small. There will be no impact on the key characteristics of NCA 115 (set out in paragraph 3.1.7). The indirect impacts on NCA 115 from where it is visible are considered to be Negligible. This part of NCA 115 is considered to have a Low sensitivity to the proposed temporary construction works.
- 6.1.7 Overall, the presence of construction vehicles and tall plant / machinery used for the temporary construction works is judged to have a **Negligible adverse** effect on NCA 115 which is not considered to be significant.

Bracknell Forest (District) Landscape Character

- 6.1.8 The temporary construction works would occur within the Bracknell Forest (BF) Urban Character Type. Those Bracknell Forest Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) that would be indirectly affected

would be BF LCA C1 Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland; and BF LCA G1 Easthamstead Wooded Estate (Figure 4).

- 6.1.9 The Application Site is a previously developed commercial site within the Urban area of Bracknell. Given the urban nature of this townscape/landscape type and visual influences of the adjacent urban areas including existing commercial built form, residential and pockets of neglected land the direct impacts on the Urban area at the Application Site is considered to be Small. The sensitivity of the Urban area to the proposed temporary construction including presence of tall plant and machinery and is considered to be Low leading to an overall **Minor adverse** significance of effect during construction. This temporary effect is not judged to be significant.
- 6.1.10 The indirect impacts on the remaining BF LCAs of C1 Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland and G1 Easthamstead Wooded Estate are similar. Given the distance and amount of intervening vegetation or built form the impact of temporary construction work including tall plant is judged to be Negligible. The sensitivity of these LCAs to these indirect impacts is considered to be Medium. Overall, the presence of tall plant used for temporary construction work is judged to cause a **Negligible adverse** effect. The temporary effects on these character areas are not judged to be significant.

Bracknell Local Townscape Character (RPS 2020)

- 6.1.11 To further define the Townscape characteristics of the Urban area an RPS assessment is set out at paragraph 3.1.15.
- 6.1.12 As described in paragraph 3.1.16 the Application Site lies within Townscape Character Area (TCA) Cain Road Enterprise Campus. The temporary construction works would occur within the Cain Road Enterprise Campus. The other TCAs that would be indirectly affected would be Binfield Residential, Amen Corner Mixed Use and Jennett's Park Residential, illustrated on Figure 4.
- 6.1.13 The presence of construction vehicles, tall plant / machinery, materials and spoil storage used for the temporary construction works would cause a Medium magnitude of impact on the Cain Road Enterprise Campus TCA. There would be direct effects upon the townscape due to the construction activity however it is considered to have an overall Low sensitivity to construction of this nature. This would result in overall **Minor adverse** effect during construction which is not judged to be significant.
- 6.1.14 The indirect impacts on the remaining TCAs of Binfield Residential, Amen Corner Mixed Use and Jennett's Park Residential differ and given the considerable amount of screening around the application site and local vegetation cover the impact varies between Negligible and Small depending on distance and intervisibility. The sensitivity of these TCAs to these indirect impacts is either Low or Medium and these TCAs are judged to experience **Negligible to Minor adverse** effects. None of the temporary effects on these TCAs are judged to be significant.

Site and Immediate Surroundings

- 6.1.15 The Application Site lies within the Urban area of Bracknell and is a developed area of land that includes office buildings and has features and characteristics of the Cain Road Enterprise Campus. Given the current use, the Application Site has a Medium sensitivity to the proposed construction works
- 6.1.16 The temporary construction operations would involve the removal of the office buildings, removal of trees within the area to be redeveloped, alteration to ground levels, reconfiguration of the road layout within the Application Site. New security fencing would be erected around the buildings and roads. The direct impact of the site clearance and construction works on the character of the Application Site would be Medium.

- 6.1.17 The temporary significance of effects on the character of the Application Site would be **Moderate adverse**, which is not judged to be significant.

Visual Effects

- 6.1.18 Visual impacts would result from change to the appearance of the Application Site in its landscape / townscape context, resulting from the site clearance and construction works. A ZTV was produced to establish the extent to which the proposed development would theoretically be visible (Figure 3). Although this is for the finished building, the tallest construction plant would be visible. Where there would be the potential for an increased change of potential visual effects, such as movement on the skyline of taller plant compared to a finished building, then these effects would be temporary whereas the operational phase effects would be long term and permanent.
- 6.1.19 The height of the cranes required to construct the building are anticipated to be slightly greater height than the 15 m flues (on which the ZTV was based). There would be potential views of this high-level construction plant from some locations. However, due to variation in the topography, level of vegetation cover around the site and intervening buildings, barring the tops of cranes, other machines/plant and materials storage would be screened from most locations. There would be restricted views of the lower level construction work directly into the entrance of the Application Site and from the elevated view from the pedestrian / cycle bridge over the A329. Even in these cases, any views would be screened in part by hoarding around the entirety of the Application Site. Vehicles accessing the Application Site are also considered, as part of the construction impacts. Visual impacts are always direct impacts.

Views from Residential Properties

- 6.1.20 As described in paragraph 3.5.3, in the planning system, no individual has the right to a view.
- 6.1.21 Views of the existing office buildings are visible from surrounding high sensitivity residential properties. During the construction phase all but the upper section of high level demolition and construction activity, including cranes, would be visible from residential properties within the ZTV. Low level construction, vehicle movements and material storage would generally be concealed by security hoarding surrounding the Application Site. The closest properties would be those at Turnpike Road and proposed at Cain Road and although the construction activities would appear as new elements within the existing views for high sensitivity receptors the magnitude of impact would be small and result in a temporary **Minor adverse** effect which is not considered significant.
- 6.1.22 Other properties at the edge of the residential areas of Popeswood, Jennett's Park, North and South View would potentially obtain a distinguishable glimpse of high level construction activity that would be of small magnitude resulting in in **Minor adverse** effect which is not considered significant.
- 6.1.23 Distant elevated properties at the edge of West End and Newell Green would experience negligible impact of barely distinguishable introduction of cranes in views this distance resulting in **Minor adverse** effect which is not considered significant.

Views from Public Rights of Way

- 6.1.24 Due to the vegetation surrounding the Application Site, there would be limited open views of the Application Site from PRow. However, glimpse views of construction work might be gained from Beehive Road (historic / ramblers route) where high level activity would appear above the surrounding hoarding and a more open view including low level construction activity would be achievable from the pedestrian/cycle bridge over A329. The sensitivity of people walking this route within the urban area to the proposed construction is considered to be Medium. The magnitude of

impact of the proposed construction works is considered to be Small to Medium resulting in a **Minor to Moderate adverse** effect.

- 6.1.25 People using PRow Footpath BIN FP14 would experience a **Minor adverse** significance of effect. All other receptors using the PRow network, where the construction work would be visible, would experience **Minor adverse** significance of effect. None of these temporary effects are not judged to be significant.

Views from Community Facilities and Public Open Space

- 6.1.26 People visiting and using community facilities at Farley Wood Community Centre and John Nike leisure complex to north and west of the Application Site would have limited views of the proposed construction work and are likely to be focused on a recreation activity. People using these facilities are considered to have Medium sensitivity to the proposed construction work and the impact would be Small leading to a **Minor adverse** effect. This temporary effect is not judged to be significant.

Views from Commercial and Industrial Property

- 6.1.27 People working or visiting commercial property or industrial sites are considered to have Low sensitivity to the proposed construction. Any available views of construction works would vary from adjacent offices, garages and warehouses, however any views would be partly screened by or glimpsed through gaps in intervening vegetation and the change would be Small. The impact on people at commercial or industrial property would be **Negligible adverse** effect. The temporary effect is not judged to be significant.

Views from Surrounding Roads Network and Railway

- 6.1.28 Dynamic views of the plant undertaking the construction work at the Application Site from the local road network within the ZTV would be possible. The closest roads include Cain Road and Beehive Road which form boundaries on three sides of the Application Site. Turnpike Road and John Nike Way approach the Application Site from elevated land offering potential glimpse of construction work. People travelling on A329 and railway are at low level with views generally restricted by woodland and roadside vegetation, any potential glimpse of high level construction would be obtained from a small section of the routes. The magnitude of impact would range from Small to Negligible leading to **Negligible to Minor adverse** effect.
- 6.1.29 For people travelling west on Harvest Ride potential dynamic views of construction work at the Application Site would be available but likely to be restricted by intervening vegetation resulting in **Negligible adverse** effect. None of these temporary effects are judged to be significant.

Representative Viewpoints

- 6.1.30 The eight representative viewpoints are described in Table 3.1, and illustrated on Figure 3. The representative viewpoint photowires are at Figures 5 to 31. The effects on views from the eight identified viewpoint locations during construction are described in Appendix D, Table D.2.

Viewpoint 1: Cain Road, Bracknell

- 6.1.31 Representative Viewpoint 1 (Figures 5 to 7) lies approximately 39 m north-west of the Application Site. It might be possible to distinguish the tallest elements of plant constructing the data centre building. However, the amount of vegetation surrounding the Application Site together with landform and boundary hoarding would prevent views of vehicle movements and low level construction activity. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Small. The sensitivity of road users is Low (people in vehicles) or Medium (pedestrians or cyclists) using Cain Road, as they are on a pavement in an urban area.

- 6.1.32 The significance of the temporary effect is judged to be **Minor adverse**, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 2: Farley Wood Community Centre, Bracknell

- 6.1.33 Representative Viewpoint 2 (Figures 8 to 10) lies approximately 143 m north of the Application Site. It would be possible to distinguish demolition and the tallest elements of plant constructing the data centre building. However, the dense intervening vegetation would prevent views of low level construction activity. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Small. The sensitivity of people using the sports ground is Medium, as they will be involved recreation and other sporting activities.
- 6.1.34 The significance of the temporary effect is judged to be **Minor adverse**, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 3: Beehive Road, Bracknell

- 6.1.35 Representative Viewpoint 3 (Figures 11 to 16) lies approximately 5 m south-west of the Application Site. The view would be blocked by boundary hoarding which would prevent views of low level construction activity. It would be possible to notice demolition and elements of high level plant constructing the data centre. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Medium. The sensitivity of road users is Low for (people in vehicles) or Medium (pedestrians and cyclists) using Beehive Road, as they are travelling within an urban area.
- 6.1.36 People using Beehive Road would experience a **Minor to Moderate adverse** significance of effect. This temporary effect is not considered to be significant.

Viewpoint 4: Pedestrian / Cycle Bridge Over A329 and Railway, Bracknell

- 6.1.37 Representative Viewpoint 4 (Figures 17 to 19) lies approximately 61 m south of the Application Site. Due to the elevation of the pedestrian / cycle bridge above that of the Application Site it would be possible to distinguish the demolition work, some low level construction and the tallest elements of the planting constructing the data centre. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Small. The sensitivity to construction for people using the footbridge would be Medium.
- 6.1.38 The significance of temporary effect is judged to be **Minor adverse**, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 5: PRow BIN FP4 at Amen Corner, Bracknell

- 6.1.39 Representative Viewpoint 5 (Figure 20 to 22) lies approximately 454 m west of the Application Site. From this elevated viewpoint, it would be possible to distinguish the tallest elements of the plant constructing the data centre building. However, the intervening vegetation would make it hard to distinguish and the plant would be seen with a backdrop of woodland or buildings of Bracknell. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Small. The sensitivity of walkers using the PRow is High.
- 6.1.40 The significance of temporary effect is judged to be **Minor adverse**, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 6: Peacock Meadows, Bracknell

- 6.1.41 Representative Viewpoint 6 (Figures 23 to 25) lies approximately 1 km south of the Application Site. It might be possible to distinguish the tallest elements of plant construction the data centre. However, the intervening vegetation would make it hard to distinguish. Where views are possible the magnitude of impact is considered to be Negligible. The sensitivity of walkers or people involved in recreational activity at Peacock Meadows is considered to be Medium.
- 6.1.42 The significance of temporary effect is judged to be **Negligible adverse**, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 7: Peacock Lane, Bracknell

- 6.1.43 Representative Viewpoint 7 (Figures 26 to 28) lies approximately 637 m south of the Application Site. From this viewpoint, it would be possible to distinguish the tallest elements of plant constructing the data centre building. However, intervening vegetation or buildings would restrict views of the entire extent of construction. Where visible the plant would be seen against a backdrop of topography and vegetation. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Small. The sensitivity of road users is Low for (people in vehicles) or Medium (pedestrians and cyclists) using Peacock Lane as there are travelling in an urban area.
- 6.1.44 People using Peacock Lane would experience a **Minor adverse** effect. This temporary effect is not considered to be significant.

Viewpoint 8: PRow WAR FP3, Warfield

- 6.1.45 Representative Viewpoint 8 (Figures 29 to 31) lies approximately 4.5 km north-east of the Application Site. It might be possible to distinguish the tallest elements of plant constructing the data centre building. However, the amount of intervening vegetation would make it hard to distinguish, at this distance. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Negligible. The sensitivity of the walkers on the PRow is High.
- 6.1.46 The significance of effect is judged to be **Minor adverse**, which is not significant.

Landscape Mitigation

- 6.1.47 Proposed planting included in the Landscape Strategy for the proposed development should be incorporated where possible within the first phase of construction to allow it to have the best chance to mature and offer screening as early as possible within the development programme. No further mitigation is proposed.

Future Monitoring

- 6.1.48 Landscape management would be required for a period of five years following completion of the development to ensure that the newly planted areas become well established and meet their landscape potential. Management would include the replacement of dead, dying or damaged stock or those that fail to establish satisfactorily. Pruning that would be beneficial for plant growth, form and plant health would be promoted. A detailed Landscape Management Plan is provided as a separate document as part of the planning submission (ref 20305B-RPS-XX-XX-RP-P-9723).

6.2 Assessment of Operational Effects

- 6.2.1 This section considers the landscape and visual effects of the operational phase of the proposed development. As already described, the development site is currently developed as office buildings and car park which will require demolition and clearance as part of the development proposal. The overall condition of the Application Site is considered to be ordinary.
- 6.2.2 The proposed development would include the provision of a new large scale and high-quality building to a finished height of approximately 12 m (main building) and of 15 m (flues) above existing ground level. The introduction of the proposed data centre would create a distinguishable new element within the existing commercial / industrial setting in the study area. Some existing on-site vegetation would be removed to allow for the development. Perimeter landscape features including an area of trees and shrubs would be retained and strengthened where possible. Existing site boundary fencing would be replaced by security fencing as part of the proposals and external lighting design altered within the Application Site. New native trees, shrubs, meadow / grassland, amenity planting and further ecological enhancement measures are proposed.

- 6.2.3 A Landscape Strategy has been developed and is shown in Appendix C as Drawing 20305B-RPS-SI-XX-DR-A-9530_P05. The proposed use of native trees and shrubs would help to provide a link with existing perimeter woodland blocks and hedgerows to maintain a buffer between adjacent land uses and would help to screen the lower levels of the buildings within views from the local area once matured. External spaces within the site would be of good quality landscape design in terms of types of native planting, meadow grassland and the use of hard materials.

Landscape and Townscape Effects

- 6.2.4 The likely effects on the landscape and townscape fabric and character during the operational phase at winter Year 1 are set out in Appendix D (Table D.3) and described below. This includes details of where mitigation planting would reduce any potential effects by Summer Year 15, when landscape proposals would have matured to reach their design intention. Photowires have been produced for representative viewpoints, these are illustrated on Figures 5 to 31.

National Character Areas

- 6.2.5 The proposed development is located within NCA 115 Thames Valley (Figure 4)
- 6.2.6 The direct impact of the proposed development would be on the section of NCA 115 that lies north of the A329 within the urban area of Bracknell. As described in paragraph 3.2.3, the whole site has been previously developed and little natural planting remains on the Application Site. The direct impacts on the NCA are considered to be Negligible. The indirect impacts on NCA 115 would be from those elements of the data centre building that would be visible, i.e. the uppermost part of the building and flues. From those locations of the NCA that the building is visible from, the indirect impact is considered to be Negligible. There will be no impact on the key characteristics of NCA 115 (set out in paragraph 3.1.7). Due to the existing use as office building and car park and the geographical extent of NCA 115, it is considered to have a Low sensitivity to the proposed development.
- 6.2.7 Overall, the proposed development is judged to have a **Negligible adverse** effect on NCA 115 Thames Valley. This effect on the NCA is not judged to be significant. The direct effects would reduce over time as the proposed planting matures.
- 6.2.8 During night-time the intensification of site-wide lighting would be barely noticeable within the lit urban context of Bracknell including lit adjacent roads and land uses, resulting in **Negligible adverse** effect on the NCA.

Bracknell Forest (District) Landscape Character

- 6.2.9 The proposed development would lie within Bracknell Forest District Urban character type which is directly affected. This character type is poor to ordinary condition. The Application Site is located within an existing commercial / industrial area, which is characteristic of this part of the Bracknell Urban area. Although the scale of the development would be large, it is considered that it could be accommodated within the context of the commercial / industrial area, which includes existing large scale buildings, without significant effects on key features and characteristics. The significance of the effect on the Bracknell Urban character type would be **Minor adverse**.
- 6.2.10 During night-time the intensification of site-wide lighting within the lit urban context of Bracknell Urban area would be a **Minor adverse** effect.
- 6.2.11 Those Bracknell Forest (BF) LCAs that would be indirectly affected would be BF LCA C1 Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland and BF LCA G1 Easthampstead Wooded Estate (Figure 4).
- 6.2.12 The key characteristics of BF LCAs C1 Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland and BF LCA G1 Easthampstead Wooded Estate are set out in Appendix A. The majority of these characteristics are locational, which the proposed development would not affect. There are no direct impacts on

BF C1 or G1. There are indirect impacts on medium sensitivity receptors BF C1 Binfield and Warfield Farmland and G1 Easthampstead Wooded Estate. However, there would be limited potential for indirect change to the inherent character these LCAs. Given the considerable amount of screening, provided by woodland and tree belts surrounding the Application Site, the impact of the proposed development (the upper parts of the building and the flues) is considered to be Negligible.

6.2.13 Overall, the proposed development would cause **Minor adverse** significance of effect to the BF LCAs.

6.2.14 During night-time the effect of intensification of light on the site would be **Negligible adverse** in the context of the lit character of Binfield and Warfield Farmland, and Easthampstead Wooded Estate.

Bracknell Local Townscape Character (RPS 2020)

6.2.15 To further define the Urban area of Bracknell, as part of this assessment RPS has included an overview of townscape characteristics described previously at paragraph 3.1.15.

6.2.16 The majority of the proposed development lies within Townscape Character Area (TCA) Cain Road Enterprise Campus. The direct impact of the proposed development would be on the section of TCA Cain Road Enterprise Campus that lies south of Cain Road at the intersection with Beehive Road. This part of the Application Site has been previously developed and little natural planting remains. Due to the existing use as office buildings and car park it is considered to have Low sensitivity to the proposed development. The direct impacts on the TCA are considered to be Small

6.2.17 The former recreation area, part of the Application Site, south of Beehive Road, proposed for ecological enhancements lies within TCA Amen Corner Mixed Use. This part of the TCA is considered to have Low sensitivity to the proposed development. The direct impact of the proposed development on this part of the TCA is considered to be Negligible.

6.2.18 Overall, the proposed development is judged to have **Minor adverse** significance of effect on Cain Road Enterprise Campus and Amen Corner Mixed Use, the direct effects would reduce over time as the proposed planting matures. None of the effects on these TCAs are judged to be significant.

6.2.19 During night-time the effect of intensification of light on the TCAs would be **Negligible to Minor adverse** in the context of the lit character of Cain Road Enterprise Campus and Amen Corner Mixed Use.

Site and Immediate Surrounds

6.2.20 Given the existing land use of the site as office buildings and car park within a largely commercial / industrial context with typical commercial units the proposed development would not be out of character or unusual within the immediate townscape context. The reduction of overall hardstanding and the implementation of new landscape proposals would provide some beneficial effects which would partly offset any adverse effects, particularly at a local scale.

6.2.21 The Application Site is developed and does not exhibit many positive landscape characteristics and is considered to have Low sensitivity to the type of development proposed. The proposed development requires the removal of trees and vegetation from the internal area of the Application Site to allow for the new large-scale buildings on site. The proposed development offers the opportunity to enhance the urban area Bracknell through the provision of a high-quality building, landscape structure planting, individual and groups of trees, areas of shrubs, grassland and enhanced boundary treatments. The building is set back from the site boundaries to provide a security and landscape buffer between the buildings and adjacent roads. The small area of

woodland at the south-east corner of the site is retained and the former recreation area would benefit from ecological enhancements.

- 6.2.22 The high quality, structural design and finish of the proposed development would assist in breaking up the mass of new buildings and infrastructure, and taking into consideration the localised improvements of less hardstanding and implementation of new landscape treatment it is considered that the proposed development would result in a Small magnitude of impact to the established urban character of the existing site, resulting in **Minor adverse** effect.
- 6.2.23 By summer Year 15, the new planting proposals associated with the project would have matured to provide intended amenity, screening and ecological value. Furthermore, the ecological enhancements and improved management of the former recreation area to the south of Beehive Road would provide some localised improvement. However, due to the large scale of the building and infrastructure persisting within the site, the overall effect upon the Application Site character would remain as **Minor adverse**.
- 6.2.24 During night-time the intensification of site wide lighting with in the lit urban context of adjacent roads and land use would result in a **Minor adverse** effect.

Visual Effects

- 6.2.25 Visual impacts would result from change to the appearance of the Application Site in its landscape and townscape context, resulting from the proposed development. A ZTV was generated, using the height of the flues (15 m) to establish the extent to which the proposed development would theoretically be visible (Figure 3).
- 6.2.26 The Application Site currently includes buildings that are visible from views towards the site. Existing commercial and industrial buildings within the surrounding townscape are often prominent within the baseline view together with the wider urban area of Bracknell. The change to built development of a similar commercial / industrial nature, although relatively large scale, would not be uncharacteristic or at odds with the adjoining townscape/landscape. In many instances, therefore, the proposed development would appear as an extension or slight intensification to the existing commercial / industrial area within the urban area of Bracknell. Therefore, although the project is large, the perceived level of change is considered to be relatively low, due to the existing urban context into which the proposed data centre building would be located.
- 6.2.27 There would be views of the upper parts of the data centre building and flues from some locations. However, due to variation in the topography, intervening built form, and level of vegetation cover around the Application Site, lower buildings and all other associated infrastructure would be screened from views outside the Application Site, barring at the entrances to the new development. All visual impacts are direct.

Views from Residential Properties

- 6.2.28 As described in paragraph 3.5.3, in the planning system, no individual has the right to a view.
- 6.2.29 The proposed development would be discernible within available views from residential receptors within the study area at the edge of residential areas. The closest views would be from properties at Turnpike Road or proposed at Cain Road (Viewpoint 1). It is considered that due to the scale and height of the proposed development at worst only the upper parts of the building or flues would be visible and appear similar to the existing view of office buildings within the Application Site. Views of the lower parts of the proposed development would be initially concealed by existing boundary vegetation and in the long term supplemented by additional proposed boundary and internal planting. The sensitivity of residential receptors is considered to be High, the impact of the proposed development is considered to be Negligible. The significance of effect is judged to be **Minor adverse** at Year 1, reducing to **Negligible adverse** by Year 15.

- 6.2.30 Available views from residential properties at the edge of Jennett's Park or North and South View would generally be restricted by intervening vegetation. Any change in view is judged to be small to negligible resulting in **Minor adverse** effects reducing to **Negligible adverse** in the long term.
- 6.2.31 Some distant views are potentially available from elevated properties at West End or Newell Green. Due to distance and intervening vegetation effects would be no more than **Minor adverse** at this distance.
- 6.2.32 None of the effects on residential receptors is judged to be significant.

Views from Public Rights of Way

- 6.2.33 The ZTV (Figure 3) indicates those PRoW along which views of the proposed development might be possible.
- 6.2.34 Due to the vegetation surrounding the Application Site, there would be no open views of the Application Site from PRoW. However, glimpsed views of the flues of the data centre building might be gained from sections of public footpath BIN FP14 at Amen Corner (Viewpoint 5, Figures 20 to 22) and public footpath BRA FP18 south of A329 (Viewpoint 7, Figures 26 to 28) located west and south of the Application Site. These views would be restricted by intervening vegetation and in the case of BRA FP18, existing residential buildings. The sensitivity of people travelling along these PRoW is considered to be High, the impact of the proposed development is considered to be Negligible resulting in **Minor adverse** to **Negligible adverse** significance of effect.
- 6.2.35 Sections of other more distant public rights of way in the surrounding area that lie within the ZTV include those within the parish of Warfield. WAR FP3 (Viewpoint 8, Figures 29 to 31). These people would potentially see the upper most part of the data centre and flues against a backdrop of vegetation, or as part of the context of the wider view that includes the urban edge of Bracknell. The sensitivity of people using the PRoW network to the proposed development is considered to be High. The magnitude of impact of the proposed development is considered to be Negligible. Receptors using the PRoW network, where the proposed development is visible, would experience **Minor adverse** significance of effects.
- 6.2.36 None of these effects is judged to be significant.

Views from Community Facilities and Public Open Space

- 6.2.37 The sensitivity of those people using community facilities or areas of public open space (POS), such as that at Farley Wood Community Centre and playing field (Viewpoint 1, Figures 5 to 7) to the proposed development will vary depending on the location of the POS and the presence of any intervening vegetation or buildings. The people using the POS are usually involved in some sort of recreation, be it walking a dog or playing a sport of some sort. These people are considered to have a Medium sensitivity to the proposed development. The impact of users at Farley Wood Community Centre would be Small as only the upper part and flues of the data centre building would be visible. People using the POS would experience a **Minor adverse** significance of effect.
- 6.2.38 The people visiting John Nike leisure complex would be engaged in sporting activity be considered Medium sensitivity receptors. Any potential views of the building or flues of the data centre would be restricted by intervening vegetation or buildings apart from people accessing the ski slope hill to the west. The impact of users at John Nike would be **Negligible** leading to **Minor** to **Negligible adverse** significance of effect.
- 6.2.39 None of these effects are judged to be significant.

Views from Commercial and Industrial Property

- 6.2.40 People working or visiting commercial property or industrial sites are considered to have Low sensitivity to the proposed development. Any available views of the data centre would vary from adjacent offices, garages and warehouses, however any views would be partly screened by or glimpsed through gaps in intervening vegetation and the change would be Small. The impact on people at commercial or industrial property would be **Negligible adverse** effect. The effect is not judged to be significant.

Views from the Surrounding Roads Network and Railway

- 6.2.41 Dynamic views of the upper parts of the data centre building and its flues from the closest roads, including Cain Road and Beehive Road, the A329 and some minor roads within the ZTV would be possible. The streetscene of Cain Road and Beehive Road would be maintained with the building set back from the road behind retained existing boundary vegetation and proposed boundary trees and shrubs, and internal trees. The minor roads include Harvest Road north-west of the Application Site. People travelling on Harvest Road would be aware of the proposed development along a short section travelling in a southerly direction. People travelling in vehicles along these roads would have a Low sensitivity to the proposed development. The impact on people travelling along roads, ranges from Negligible to Small resulting in **Negligible adverse** to **Minor adverse** significance of effect.
- 6.2.42 None of these effects are judged to be significant.

Representative Viewpoints

- 6.2.43 The eight representative viewpoints are described in Table 3.1, and their locations illustrated on Figure 3. The representative viewpoint panoramas and photowires are at Figures 5 to 31. The effects on views from the eight identified viewpoint locations during operation are summarised in Appendix D, Table D.4. Potential effects upon the visual resource during the operational phase of the project includes an assessment at Winter Year 1 (a worst case) and at Summer Year 15, when proposed planting would have achieved its design and mitigation functions. The photowire methodology is set out at Appendix B.

Viewpoint 1: Cain Road, Bracknell

- 6.2.44 Representative Viewpoint 1 (Figures 5 to 7) lies approximately 39 m north-west of the Application Site. It would be possible to distinguish the tallest elements of the data centre building. However, the amount of vegetation surrounding the Application Site would conceal lower parts of the building and infrastructure and screen or filter most of the building with only glimpse views available. The streetscene from this location would be maintained with the building set back from the road. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Negligible. The sensitivity of people using the road or pavement, to the proposed development is Medium for pedestrians and cyclists and Low for vehicle users.
- 6.2.45 The significance of the effect is judged to be **Minor adverse** at Year 1, reducing to **Negligible adverse** by Year 15 once the proposed planting has matured, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 2: Farley Wood Community Centre, Bracknell

- 6.2.46 Representative Viewpoint 2 (Figures 8 to 10) lies approximately 143 m north of the Application Site. It would be possible to see the upper part and flues of the data centre building from this location. However, the amount of intervening vegetation conceals the lower part of the building and views to distant woodland are retained. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Small.

The sensitivity of people using the recreation ground is Medium, as they would be involved with leisure or other sporting activities.

- 6.2.47 The significance of the effect is judged to be **Minor adverse** at Year 1 and Year 15, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 3: Beehive Road, Bracknell

- 6.2.48 Representative Viewpoint 3 (Figures 11 to 16) lies approximately 5 m south-west of the Application Site. It would be possible to see the data centre building and flues above or filtered by intervening boundary vegetation. The existing access would be stopped up and planted with native trees and shrubs thus maintaining and enhancing the existing vegetated streetscene at this location with glimpse views of the building available. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Small. The sensitivity of people using the road, to the proposed development is Medium for pedestrians and cyclists and Low for vehicle travellers.
- 6.2.49 The significance of the effect is judged to be **Minor adverse** at Year 1 and Year 15, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 4: Bridge over A329 and Railway, Bracknell

- 6.2.50 Representative viewpoint 4 (Figures 17 to 19) lies approximately 61 m south of the Application Site. It would be possible to see the data centre building and flues from this elevated location. The building would be partly obscured by intervening boundary vegetation. The data centre would be more prominent from this location and cause partial obstruction to the view. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Medium. The sensitivity of pedestrians and cyclists using the bridge, to the proposed development is Medium at this location.
- 6.2.51 The significance of the effect is judged to be **Moderate adverse** at Year 1 and Year 15, which is not considered to be significant.

Viewpoint 5: PRoW BIN FP14, Amen Corner, Bracknell

- 6.2.52 Representative viewpoint 5 (Figures 20 to 22) lies approximately 454 m west of the Application Site. From this viewpoint it would be possible to distinguish the upper parts and flues of the data centre building. However, the intervening vegetation would make it hard to distinguish and the proposed development would be seen with a backdrop of vegetation and the urban form of Bracknell, and the character and composition of the view would not change. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Negligible. The sensitivity of walkers using the footpath is High.
- 6.2.53 The significance of the effect is judged to be **Minor adverse** at Year 1 and Year 15, which is not considered to be significant.

Viewpoint 6: Peacock Meadows, Bracknell

- 6.2.54 Representative viewpoint 6 (Figures 23 to 25) lies approximately 1.0 km south-west of the Application Site. From this viewpoint it would not be possible to distinguish the data centre due to the screening provided by intervening vegetation and the context of the view would remain that includes the residential edge of Jennett's Park. There would be no change to the existing view for these Medium sensitivity receptors. The long-term effect on this view would be **No Change** at Year 1 and Year 15.

Viewpoint 7: Peacock Lane and PRoW BRA FP18, Bracknell

- 6.2.55 Representative viewpoint 7 (Figures 26 to 28) lies approximately 637 m south of the Application Site. From this location it would be possible to distinguish the upper part and flues of the data

centre building. However much of the building would be screened by existing residential buildings or partly obscured by intervening vegetation. The view includes many visual detractors. The magnitude of impact is considered to be Negligible. The sensitivity of pedestrians to the proposed development using the footpath at this location is Medium and for vehicle travellers is Low.

- 6.2.56 The significance of the effect is judged to be **Negligible adverse** at Year 1 and Year 15, which is not significant.

Viewpoint 8: PRow WAR FP3, Warfield

- 6.2.57 Representative viewpoint 8 (Figures 29 to 31) lies approximately 4.5 km north-east of the Application Site. From this viewpoint it would not be possible to distinguish the date centre due to the screening provided by intervening vegetation and the context of the view would remain. There would be no change to the existing view for these High sensitivity receptors using the footpath. The long-term effect on this view would be **No Change** at Year 1 and Year 15.

Night-time Visual Effects

- 6.2.58 The proposed lighting at the Application Site is described in paragraphs 5.1.5 to 5.1.8. The proposed lighting is not expected to increase the level of light at the Application Site. Together with the type of lighting proposed and the depth of planting around and within the Application Site the light spill beyond the Application Site will be minimal. The magnitude of this impact is judged to be Negligible. The sensitivity of the night-time character to the light levels is considered to be Low. The significance of the effects of any increase in the lighting level is judged to be **Negligible to Minor adverse**, which is not a significant effect.

Further Mitigation

- 6.2.59 The proposed development incorporates a Landscape Strategy that is included as an integral part of the design (Appendix C) and would be implemented as part of the proposals. No additional mitigation requirement has been identified.

Future Monitoring

- 6.2.60 Landscape management would be required for a period of five years following completion of the development to ensure that the newly planted areas become well established and meet their landscape potential. Management would include the replacement of dead, dying or damaged stock or those that fail to establish satisfactorily. Pruning that would be beneficial for plant growth, form and plant health would be promoted. A detailed Landscape Management Plan is provided as a separate document as part of the planning submission (ref 20305B-RPS-XX-XX-RP-P-9723).

Accidents / Disasters

- 6.2.61 With respect to landscape, townscape and visual matters, potential accidents/disasters relevant to the proposed development are unlikely. There is a potential risk of introduced diseases affecting vegetation, for example ash dieback disease (*Hymenocyphus fraxineus*). In this case, and as a precautionary measure ash would not be specified within proposed planting mixes.

6.3 Assessment of Cumulative Effects

- 6.3.1 The significance of cumulative effects on the existing landscape and townscape character and visual resources of the proposed development with other schemes that are allocated, consented or for which planning permissions are currently being sought, are listed in paragraph 3.74, have been assessed.

- 6.3.2 There are two sites identified for development close to the Application Site that lie within the same Bracknell Urban area as the proposed development. These include the allocated housing site of Amen Corner South and allocated housing site 194 (land north of Cain Road) for which a planning application has recently been submitted. If developed, these developments would intensify the built form within the Urban character type. The intrinsic character and qualities of the area would remain the same.
- 6.3.3 Overall, it is considered that the Bracknell Urban area has the capacity to absorb the proposed future developments and that the overall character of the Bracknell Urban area would remain intact. Depending on the quality of other new development, there is some potential for a beneficial cumulative effect. The condition of the urban character area would remain poor to ordinary and the sensitivity would be Low. The cumulative schemes, together with the proposed development would result in a Small magnitude of impact leading to a **Minor adverse** cumulative townscape effect.
- 6.3.4 With respect to visual effects, the proposed new residential housing development in the study area would be low level but would introduce some new visual receptors into the area. These new residential receptors would be of the same degree of sensitivity as the residents of existing housing areas. Visual receptors at Turnpike Road would gain the cumulative effect of the rooftops of new houses closer to the existing properties and screening the upper sections of the proposed development. Visual receptors at Viewpoint 5 would have views of new housing development closer to the viewpoint location and appearing more dominant than the proposed development which would be screened in the cumulative situation.
- 6.3.5 Overall, the contribution of the proposed development to any cumulative effects would be relatively small in the context of the existing urban area and it is not considered that the data centre would contribute to any significant cumulative landscape or visual effects.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Summary of Landscape Effects

- 7.1.1 The overall context of the Application Site is that of a Commercial Enterprise Campus townscape to the west of Bracknell adjacent to Cain Road. Cain Road provides the main access to the site. The existing townscape is influenced by a variety of land uses including office buildings, showrooms, industrial warehouses, open land, transport corridors and residential development. The data centre would complement the adjoining land uses and would be of a similar scale to existing large-scale buildings set within a landscape structure. The proposed development would therefore be consistent with the local commercial / industrial character of the urban area.
- 7.1.2 During the temporary construction phase the magnitude of impact on landscape character would range from Negligible to Medium resulting in Moderate adverse significance of effect for the character of the project site and Negligible to Minor adverse for the character of the surrounding area. The movement of construction vehicles would not be out of character with the surrounding area and the introduction of buildings under construction and associated plant such as cranes within the study area would not be significantly out of character due to the urban and commercial / industrial nature of the site and immediate context.
- 7.1.3 It is considered that permanent changes that would occur in the Bracknell Urban area landscape character type as a result of the proposed development would be accommodated within the commercial / industrial area, which has the capacity to absorb the development of a data centre. The ordinary condition of the existing townscape at the site provides the opportunity of introducing the new building without significant effects. Indeed, the proposed development would result in the replacement of existing office buildings with a modern purpose built data centre, including an integrated landscape scheme. The proposed modern design of the building, together with appropriate site layout and landscape strategy, would seek to ensure that the site would function well and add to the overall character and quality of the area with Negligible to Minor adverse effects on townscape and landscape character.
- 7.1.4 At night-time the effect of site lighting on the surrounding area ranges from Minor adverse to Negligible adverse.
- 7.1.5 The landscape mitigation and enhancement proposals have been included as an integral part of the project. The landscape strategy includes native tree and shrub planting, individual trees, hedgerows, wildflower meadow and amenity grassland. As the landscape proposals mature, they would become an important aspect of the development, capable of further softening and enhancing the quality of the townscape.

7.2 Summary of Visual Effects

- 7.2.1 The Application Site includes existing office buildings and is currently not prominent in views from the surrounding area. The site is contained along Cain Road and Beehive Road by boundary vegetation. Large scale office buildings, showrooms and warehouses are to the east and west of the site. From visual receptors within adjacent character areas, the proposed development of the site would be seen in the context of the existing urban fabric and the data centre would generally be integrated in views from the surrounding area.
- 7.2.2 During the temporary construction phase the effects on a range of visual receptors from the construction activity including cranes and high-level construction activity the effect would range from Negligible to Moderate adverse.
- 7.2.3 The location of the Application Site within a commercial / industrial area is such that there would be a relatively small number of visual receptors within Bracknell and the surrounding area that

would experience a change in view. Where a view is possible of the building and flues the tops of these features would generally be seen above intervening vegetation, or as glimpse and in context of other large-scale buildings or against a backdrop of vegetation and urban form. The visual effects would range from Negligible to Moderate adverse.

- 7.2.4 Overall, the quality and character of the landscape and townscape together with visual resources would be maintained in the long term.

7.3 Summary of Cumulative Effects

- 7.3.1 In terms of cumulative effect, it is considered that the Bracknell Urban area has the capacity to absorb the data centre together with other proposed future developments identified in the cumulative assessment. The character of the urban area would remain intact.
- 7.3.2 Some new residential receptors would be introduced to the area but would be of the same degree of sensitivity as existing receptors.
- 7.3.3 Overall, the contribution of the proposed development to any cumulative effects would be relatively small in the context of the existing urban area and visual resource and it is not considered that the data centre would add any significant cumulative landscape, townscape or visual effects.

REFERENCES

Bracknell Forest Core Strategy Development Plan, 2008

Bracknell Forest Local Plan, 2002

Bracknell Forest Local Plan 2019

Binfield Neighbourhood Plan, 2016

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), 2014

Bracknell Forest Design SPD, 2016

Bracknell Forest Character Area Assessments SPD, 2010

European Landscape Convention (2006)

Natural England, National Character Area (NCA) Profiles 115 Thames Valley, 2012 and 129 Thames Basin Heaths, 2014

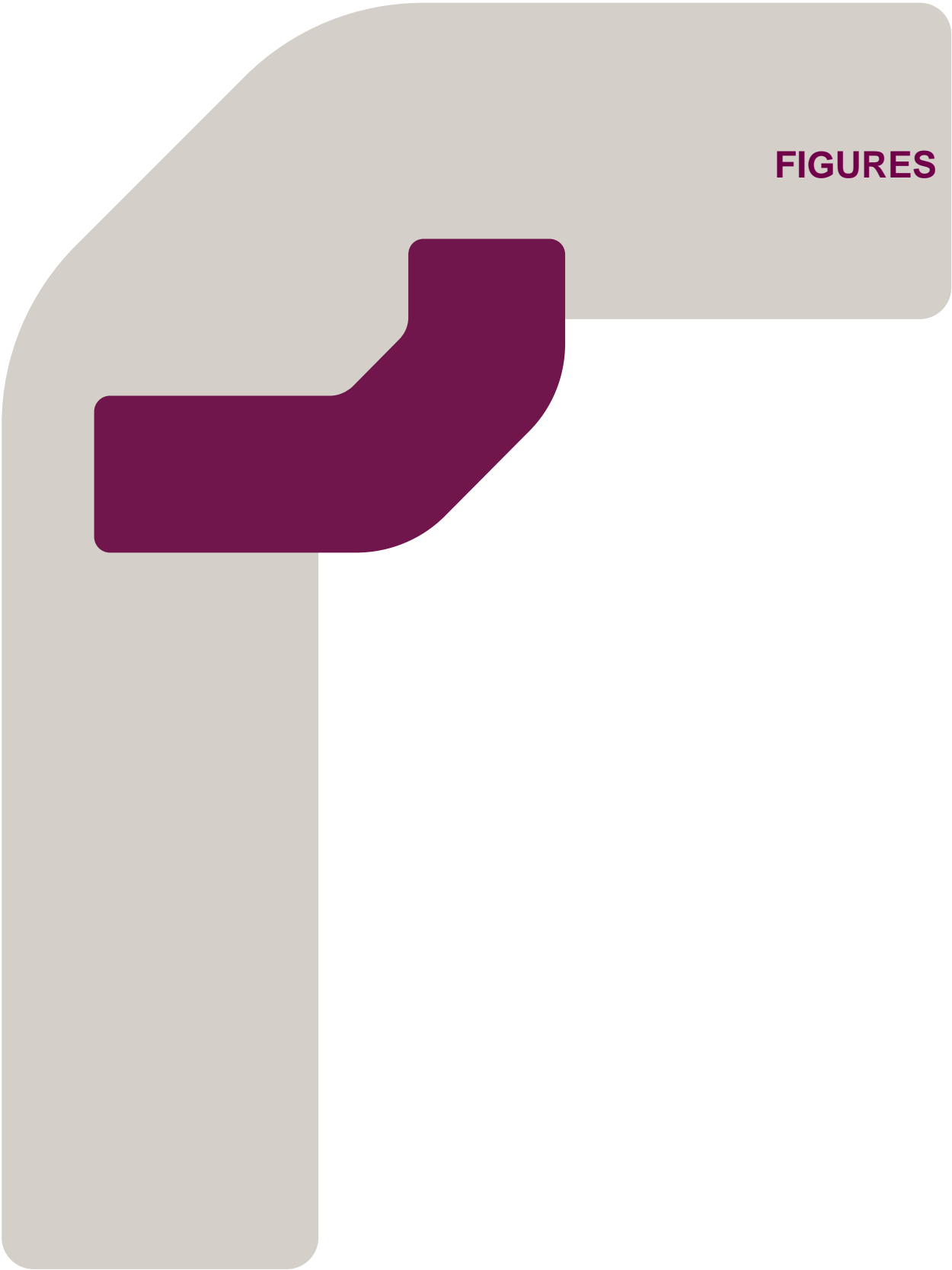
Bracknell Forest Borough Landscape Character Assessment, 2015

Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (GLVIA3) (2013).

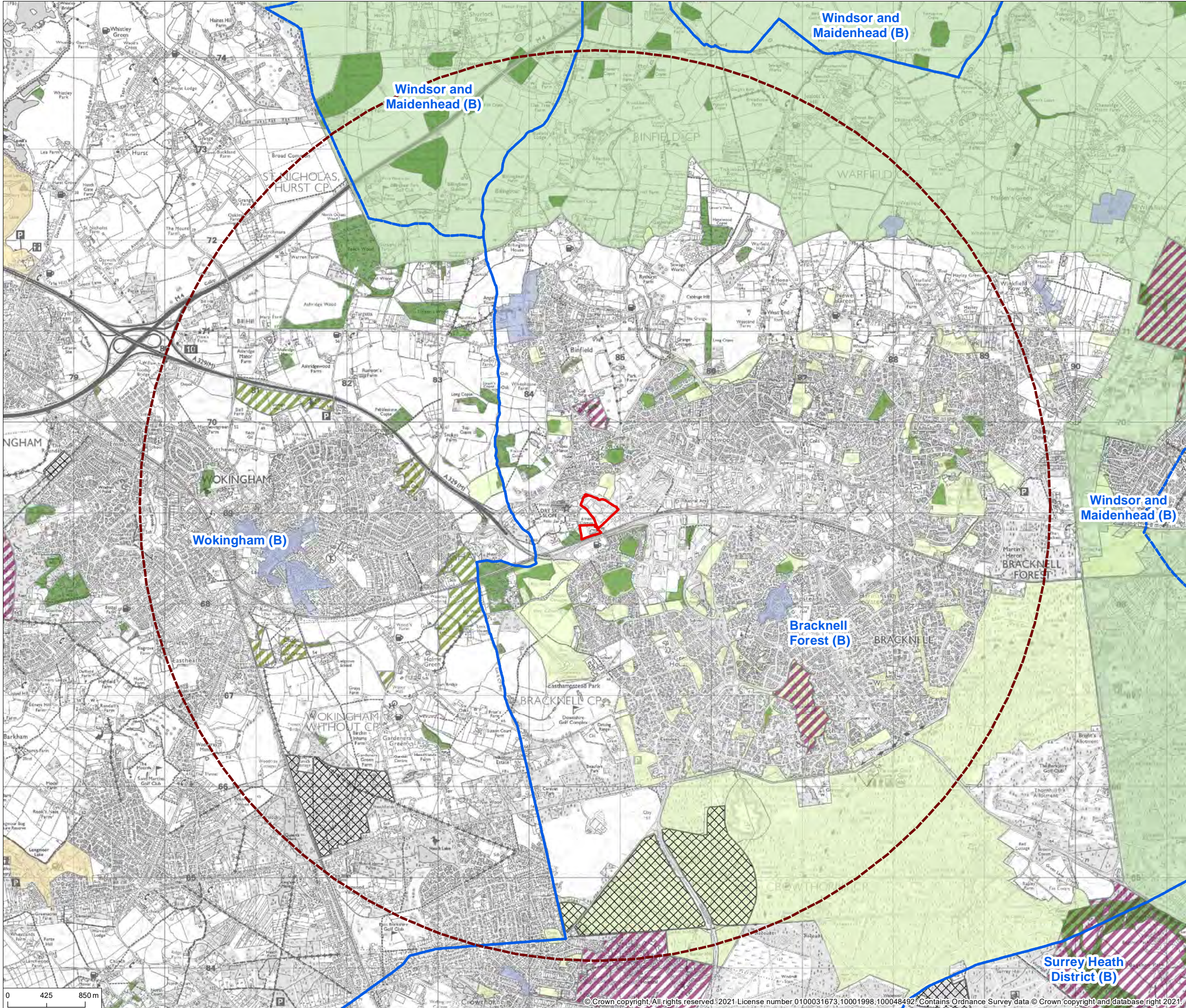
Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19, 2019

Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/19 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment, 2019.

FIGURES



JSL3708_Bracknell_Figure 1 Landscape Planning Designations



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Legend

- Application Site Boundary
- Study Area (5km Radius)
- Borough Boundary
- Ancient Woodland
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- CRoW Access Land
- Country Parks
- London Green Belt

Bracknell Forest Borough, LDF, Core Strategy 2008

- Conservation Areas
- Green Spaces

Wokingham Borough, LDF, Core Strategy 2010

- Conservation Areas
- Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

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Lakesbury House, Hiltbury Road, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire SO53 5SS
T:02380 810 440 E: rpssso@rpsgroup.com

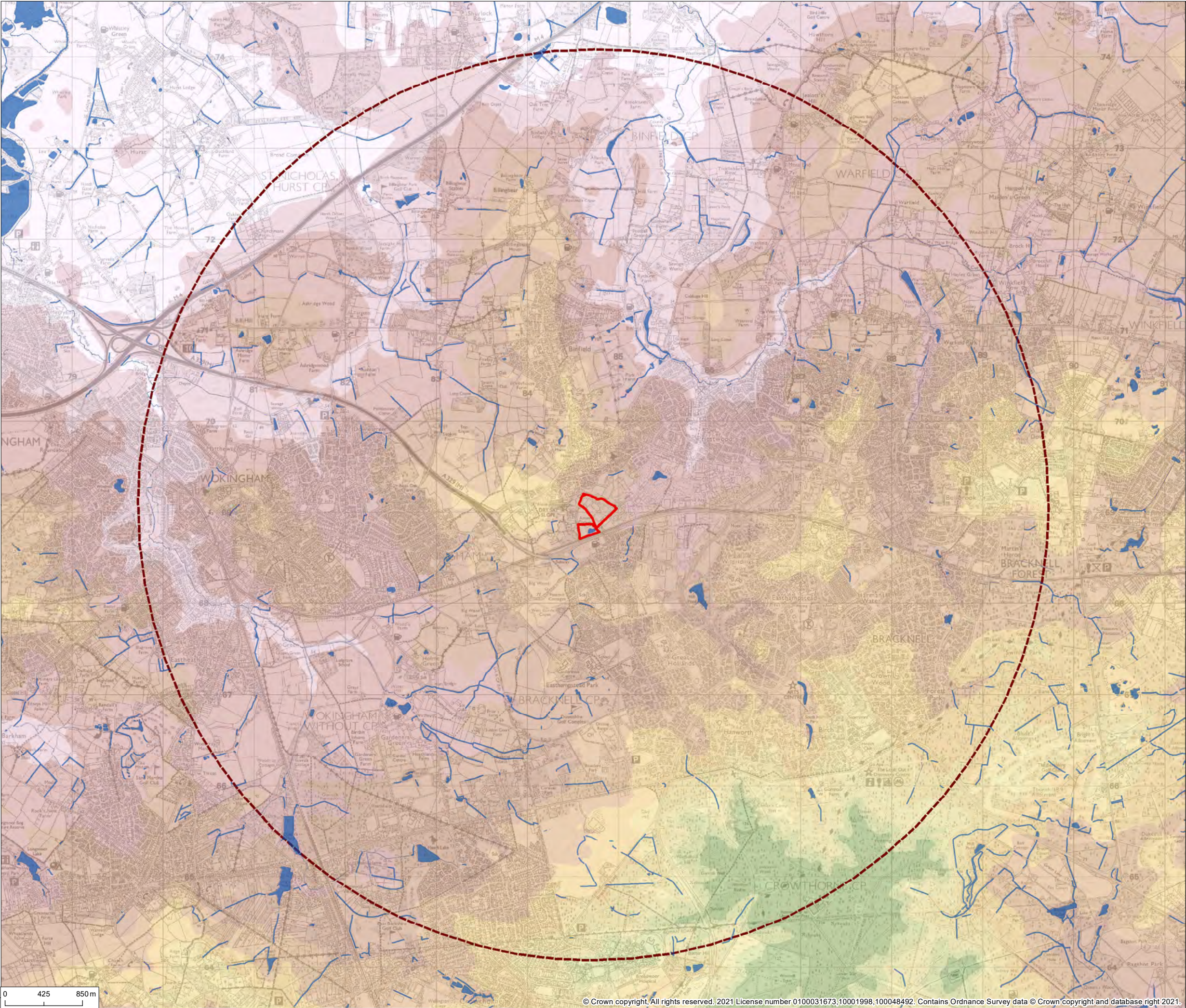
Client

Project **Bracknell Data Centre**

Title **Site Location and Landscape Planning Designations**

Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked By
DRAFT	GL	JB / CD
Project Number	Scale @ A3	Date Created
JSL3708	1:40,000	FEB 2021
Figure Number		Rev
1		-

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Legend

- Application Site Boundary
- Study Area (5km Radius)
- Waterbodies

Topography (mAOD)

- 33.00 - 43.00
- 43.00 - 53.00
- 53.00 - 63.00
- 63.00 - 73.00
- 73.00 - 83.00
- 83.00 - 93.00
- 93.00 - 103.00
- 103.00 - 113.00
- 113.00 - 123.00
- 123.00 - 133.00
- 133.00 - 143.00



Rev	Description	By	CB	Date



Lakesbury House, Hiltlingbury Road, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire SO53 5SS
T:02380 810 440 E: rpsso@rpsgroup.com

Client

Project Bracknell Data Centre

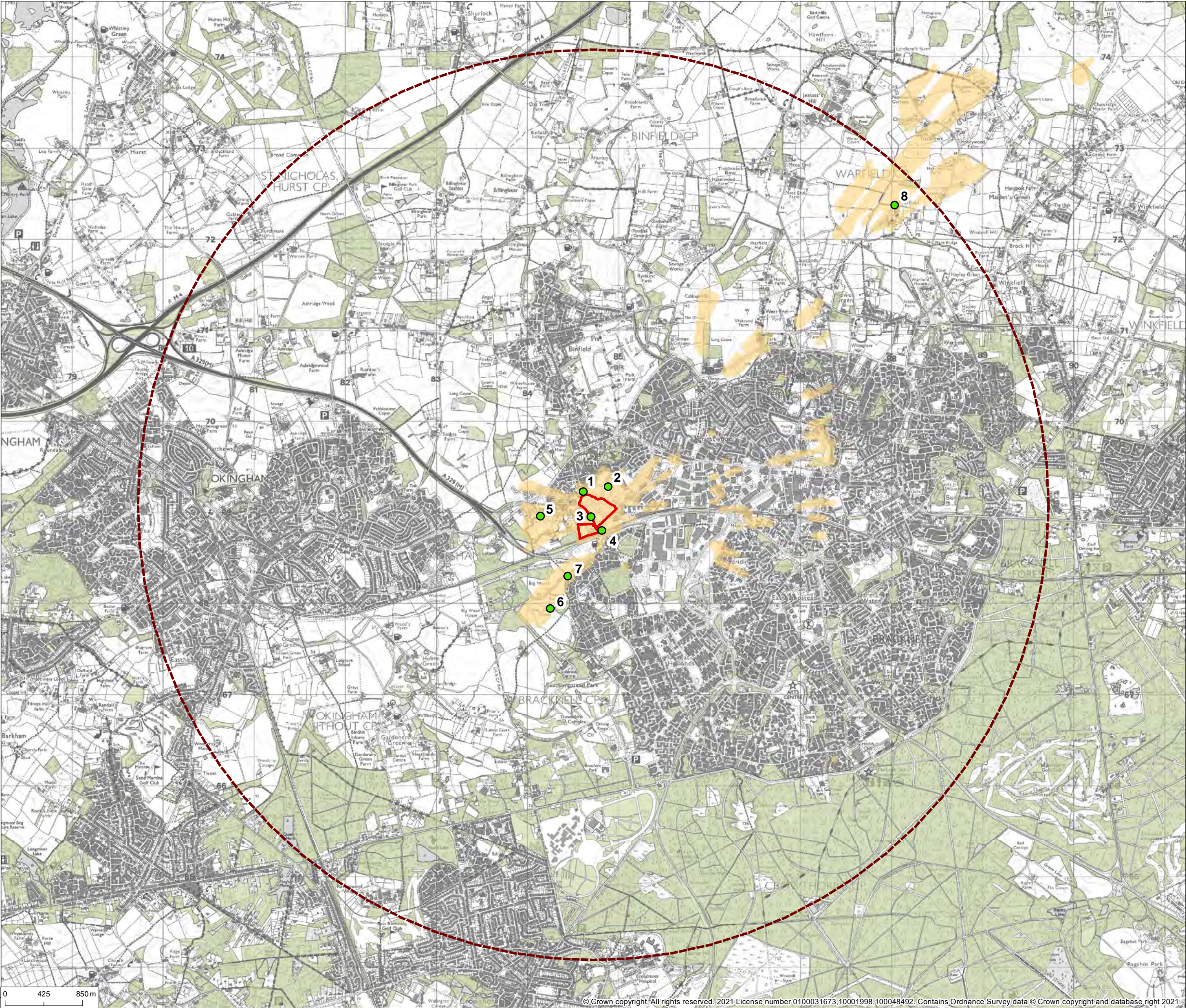
Title Topography and Drainage

Status DRAFT Drawn By GL PM/Checked By JB

Project Number JSL3708 Scale @ A3 1:40,000 Date Created FEB 2021

Figure Number 2 Rev -

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Legend

- Application Site Boundary
- Study Area (5km Radius)
- Representative Viewpoints
- ZTV (Indicative extent of surrounding landscape from where views to the proposed development may be available)
- Woodland
- Settlement

Note:

ZTV compiled assuming observer height as 1.5m at eye level, and takes into account screening effects of local settlements at 9m and existing vegetation / woodland at a height of 12m.

Five origin points, from within the Application Site, have been used to illustrate the ZTV. It is based upon a maximum ridge height of a proposed development at 15m AOD. Located at the four corners of the proposed main building and the approximate centre of it.

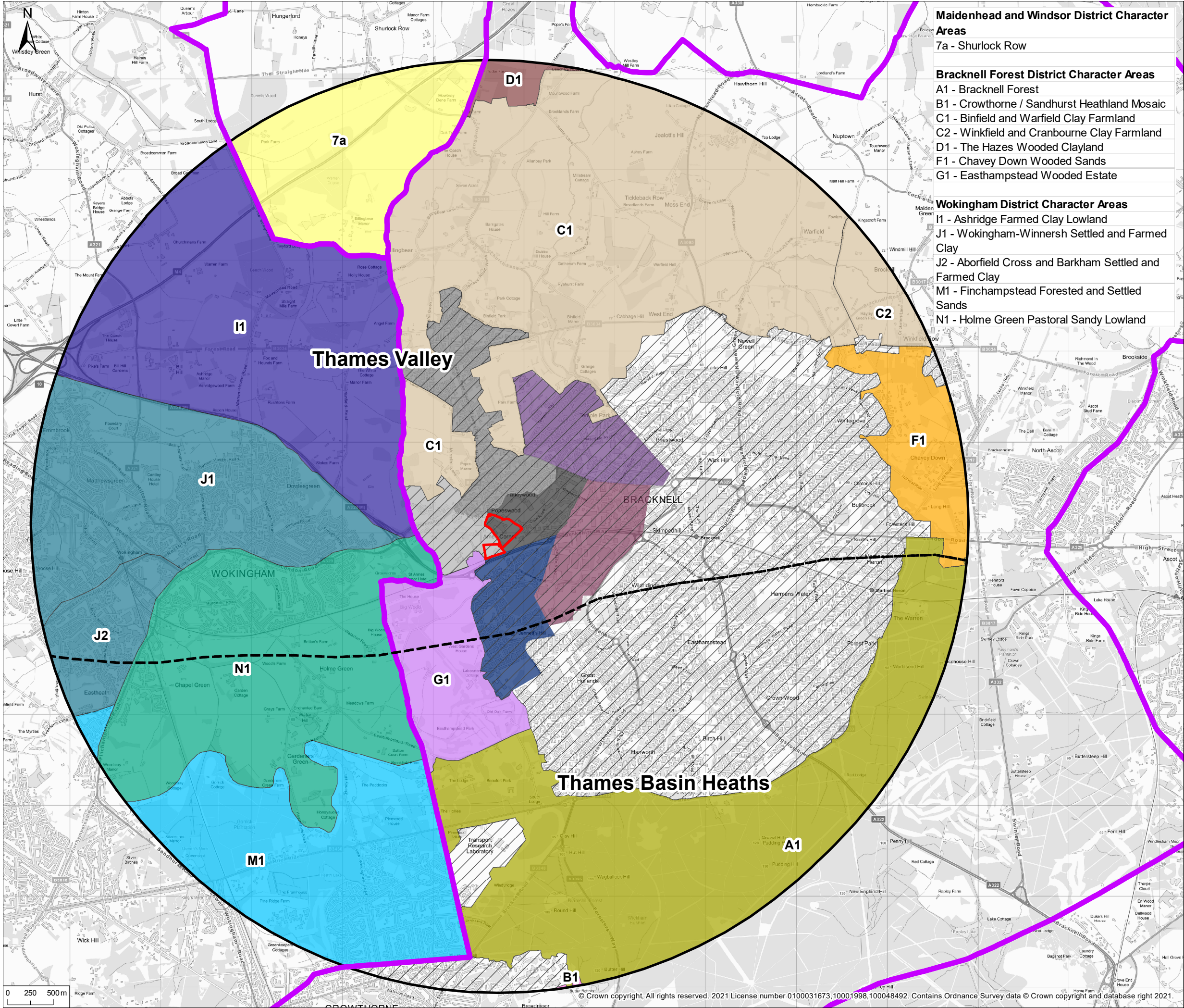
OS Terrain 5 data has been used for generating the ground model.

Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

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Lakesbury House, Hiltbury Road, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire SO53 5SS
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Client	Bracknell Data Centre		
Project	Bracknell Data Centre		
Title	Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) - (inc. Representative Viewpoints)		
Status	Drawn By	PM/Checked By	
DRAFT	GL	JB	
Project Number	Scale @ A3	Date Created	
JSL3708	1:40,000	FEB 2021	
Figure Number			Rev
3			-



Maidenhead and Windsor District Character Areas

7a - Shurlock Row

Bracknell Forest District Character Areas

- A1 - Bracknell Forest
- B1 - Crowthorne / Sandhurst Heathland Mosaic
- C1 - Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland
- C2 - Winkfield and Cranbourne Clay Farmland
- D1 - The Hazes Wooded Clayland
- F1 - Chavey Down Wooded Sands
- G1 - Easthampstead Wooded Estate

Wokingham District Character Areas

- I1 - Ashridge Farmed Clay Lowland
- J1 - Wokingham-Winnersh Settled and Farmed Clay
- J2 - Aborfield Cross and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay
- M1 - Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands
- N1 - Holme Green Pastoral Sandy Lowland

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Legend

- Application boundary
- 5km search area
- District boundary
- National Character Areas
- Maidenhead and Windsor District Character Types
 - Wooded Clay Farmland
- Bracknell Forest District Character Types
 - Forested Sands
 - Heathland Mosaic
 - Clay Farmland
 - Wooded Clayland
 - Settled Wooded Sands
 - Wooded Estates
 - Urban
- Wokingham District Character Types
 - Farmed Clay Lowland
 - Forested and Settled Sands
 - Pastoral Sandy Lowland
 - Settled and Farmed Clay
- Townscape Areas (RPS Assessment 2020)
 - Amen Corner Mixed Use
 - Binfield Residential
 - Cain Road Enterprise Campus
 - Jennet's Park Residential
 - Priestwood Residential
 - West Bracknell Industrial

Rev	Description	By	CB	Date

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Client -

Project Bracknell Data Centre

Title Landscape and Townscape Character Areas

Status DRAFT Drawn By CR PM/Checked By JB

Project Number JSL3708 Scale @ A3 1:40,000 Date Created FEB 2021

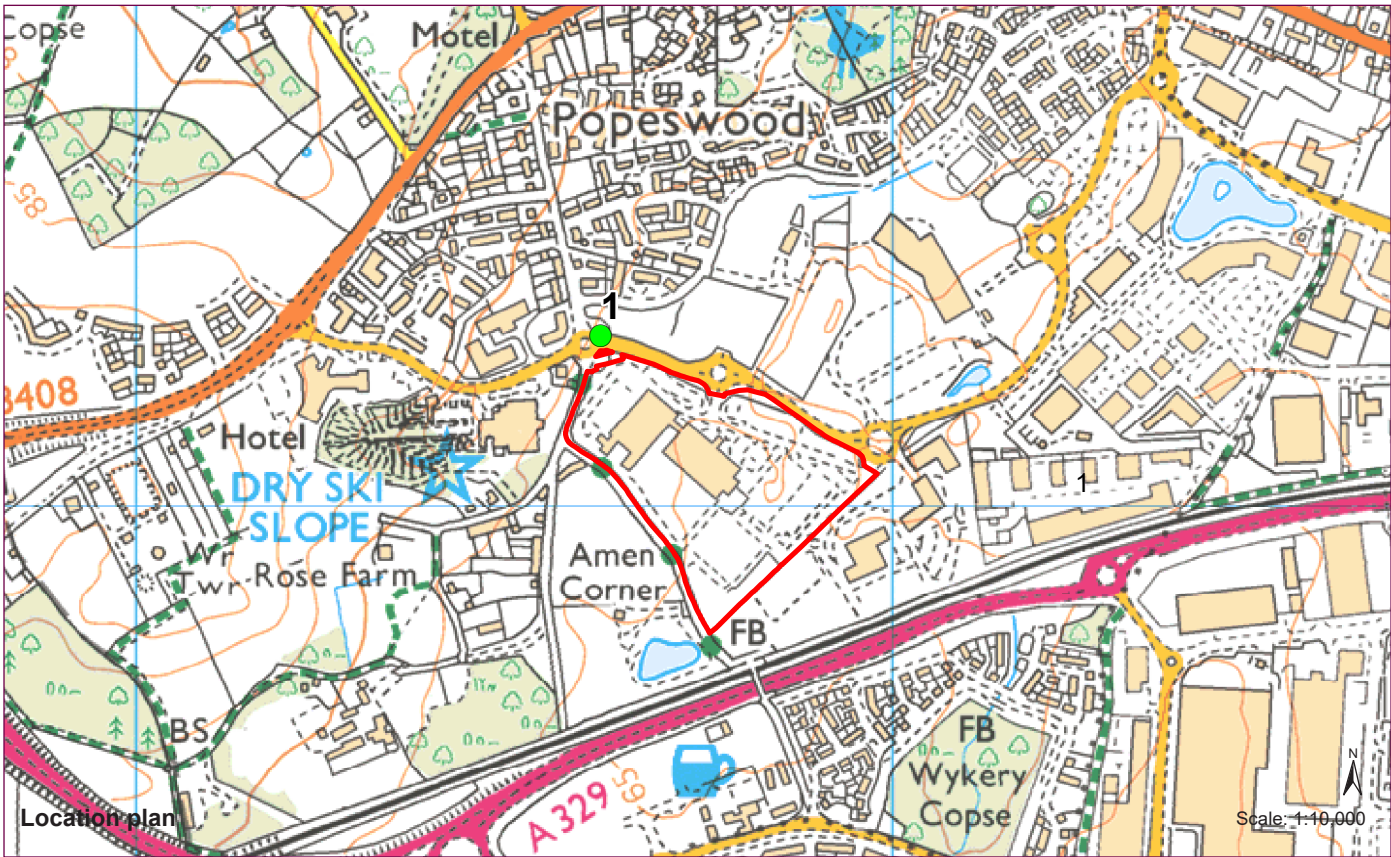
Figure Number 4 Rev -

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3708-0008-02



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Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

	Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 39 m OS reference: 484614, 169227	Direction to site: southeast Viewpoint height: 72 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: Approx. 75° Viewing distance: 300mm @ A3	 Data Centre  Data Centre hidden	Existing and Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 1 Cain Road, Bracknell Figure: 6
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Proposed wireline view

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Existing view



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Existing view



Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

 Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 143 m OS reference: 484890, 169280	Direction to site: south Viewpoint height: 69 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: Approx. 75° Viewing distance: 300mm @ A3	 Data Centre  Data Centre hidden	Existing and Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 2 Farley Wood Community Centre, Bracknell Figure: 9
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Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03



Bracknell Data Centre

Date of Photo: 15/12/2020
Lens Type: 50mm

Distance to site: 143 m
OS reference: 484890, 169280

Direction to site: south
Viewpoint height: 69 m AOD

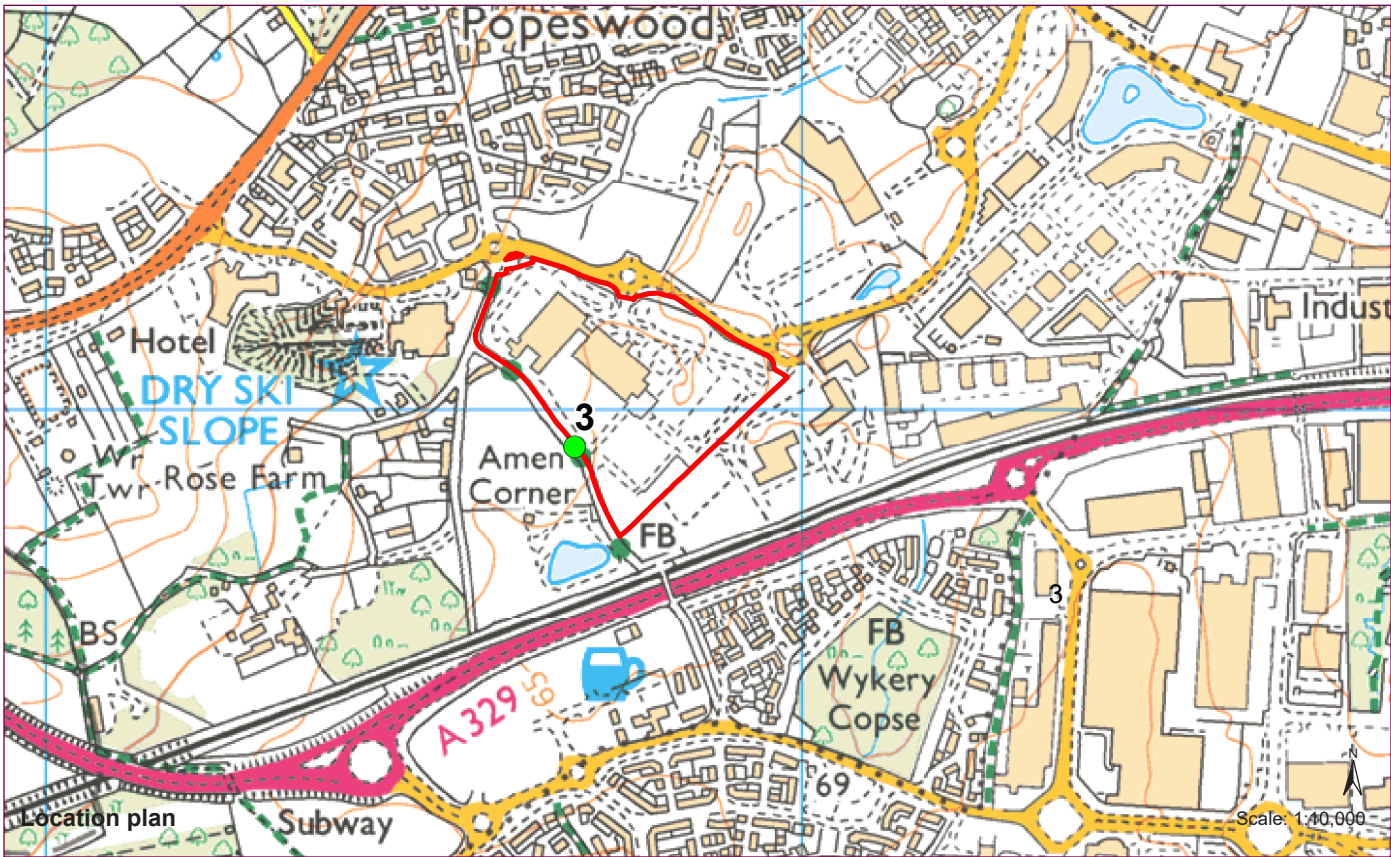
Horizontal field of view: 39.6°
To be viewed at comfortable arms length

— Data Centre
- - - Data Centre hidden

**Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 2 Farley Wood
Community Centre, Bracknell
Figure: 10**



Existing view



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Existing view






Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

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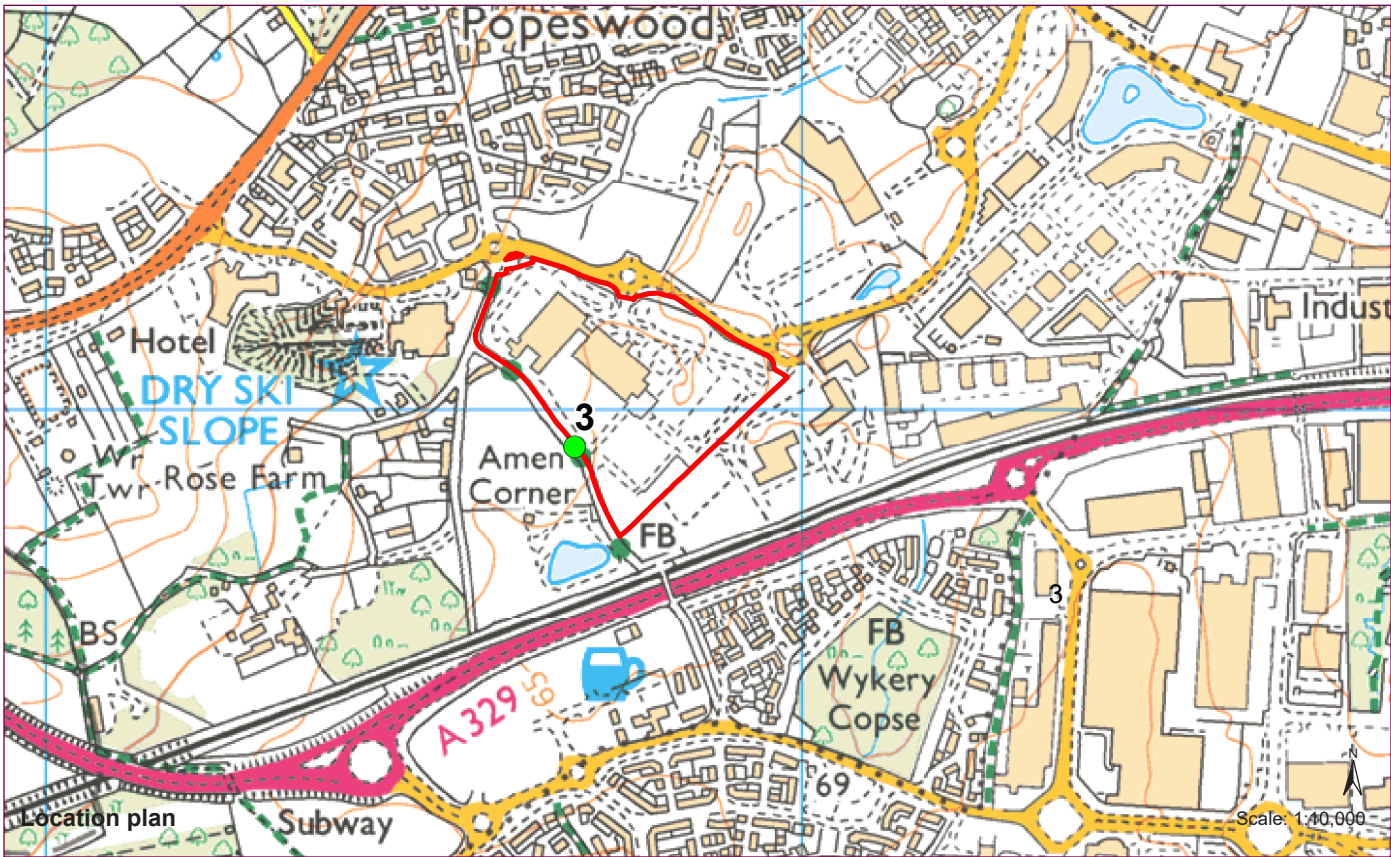


Proposed wireline view

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Existing view



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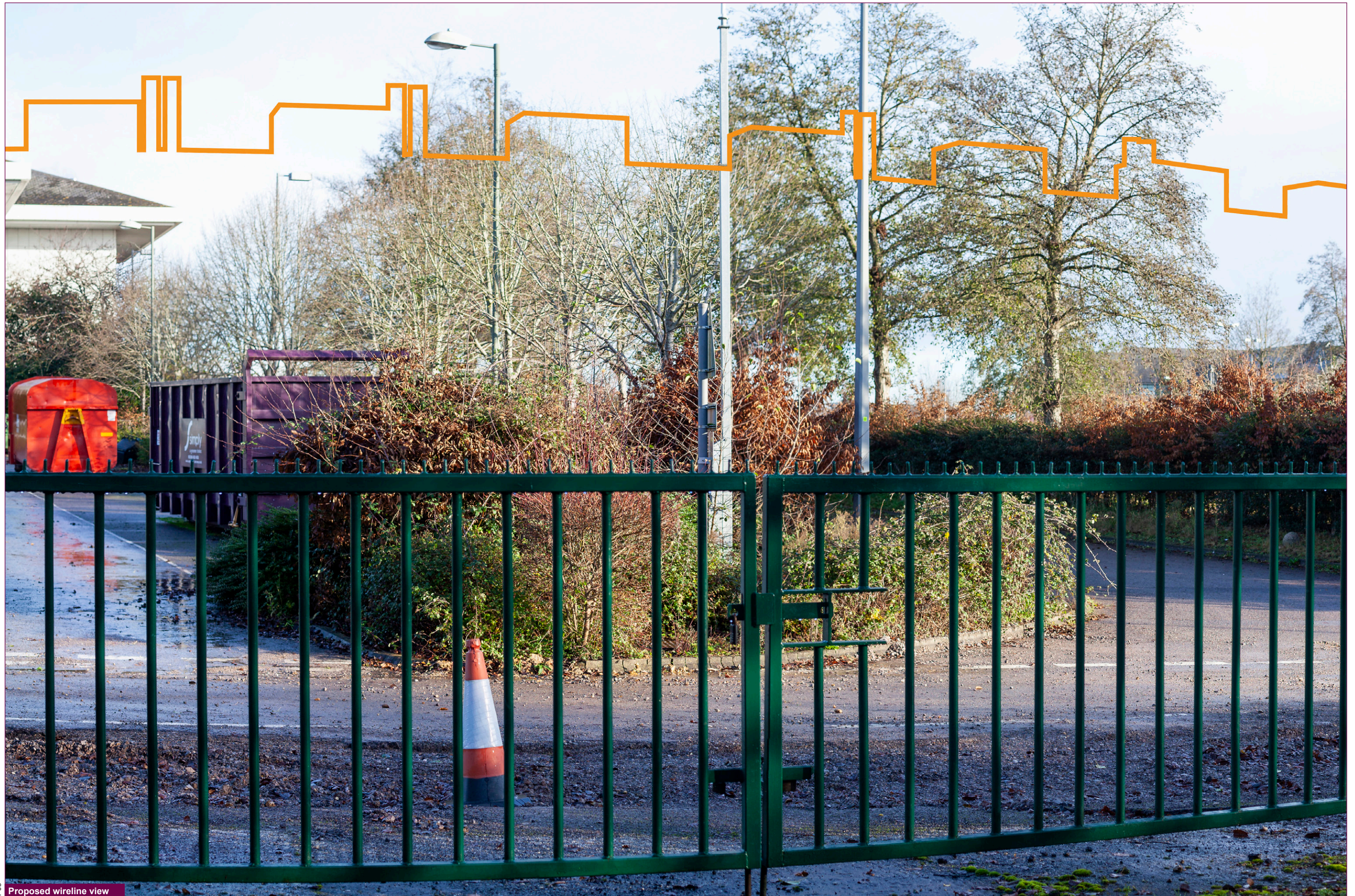
Existing view






Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

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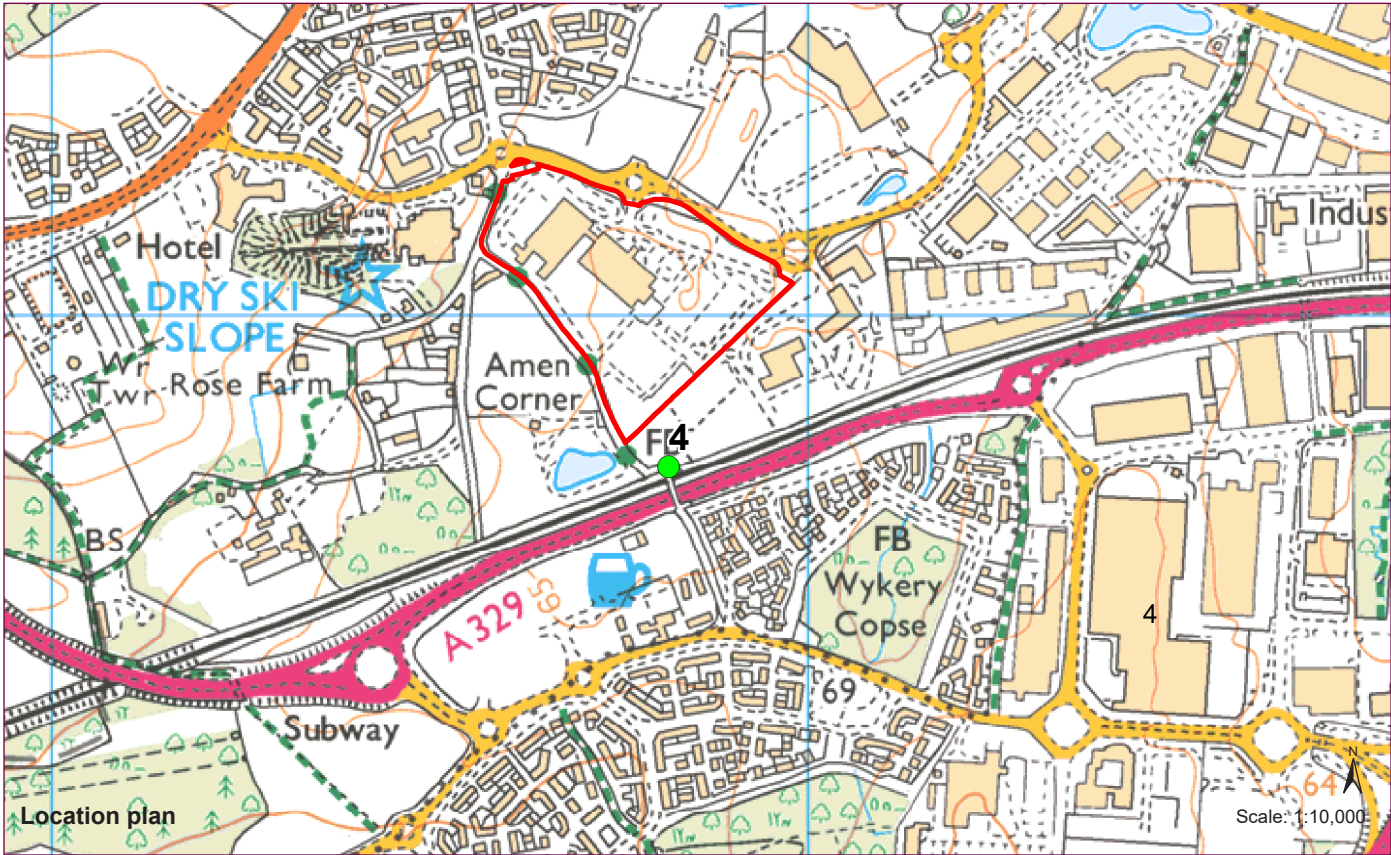


Proposed wireline view

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Existing view



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	Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 61 m OS reference: 484816, 168801	Direction to site: north Viewpoint height: 69 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: Approx. 75° Viewing distance: 300mm @ A3	Existing View and Photo Location: Viewpoint 4 Bridge over A329 and Railway, Bracknell Figure: 17
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Existing view






Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

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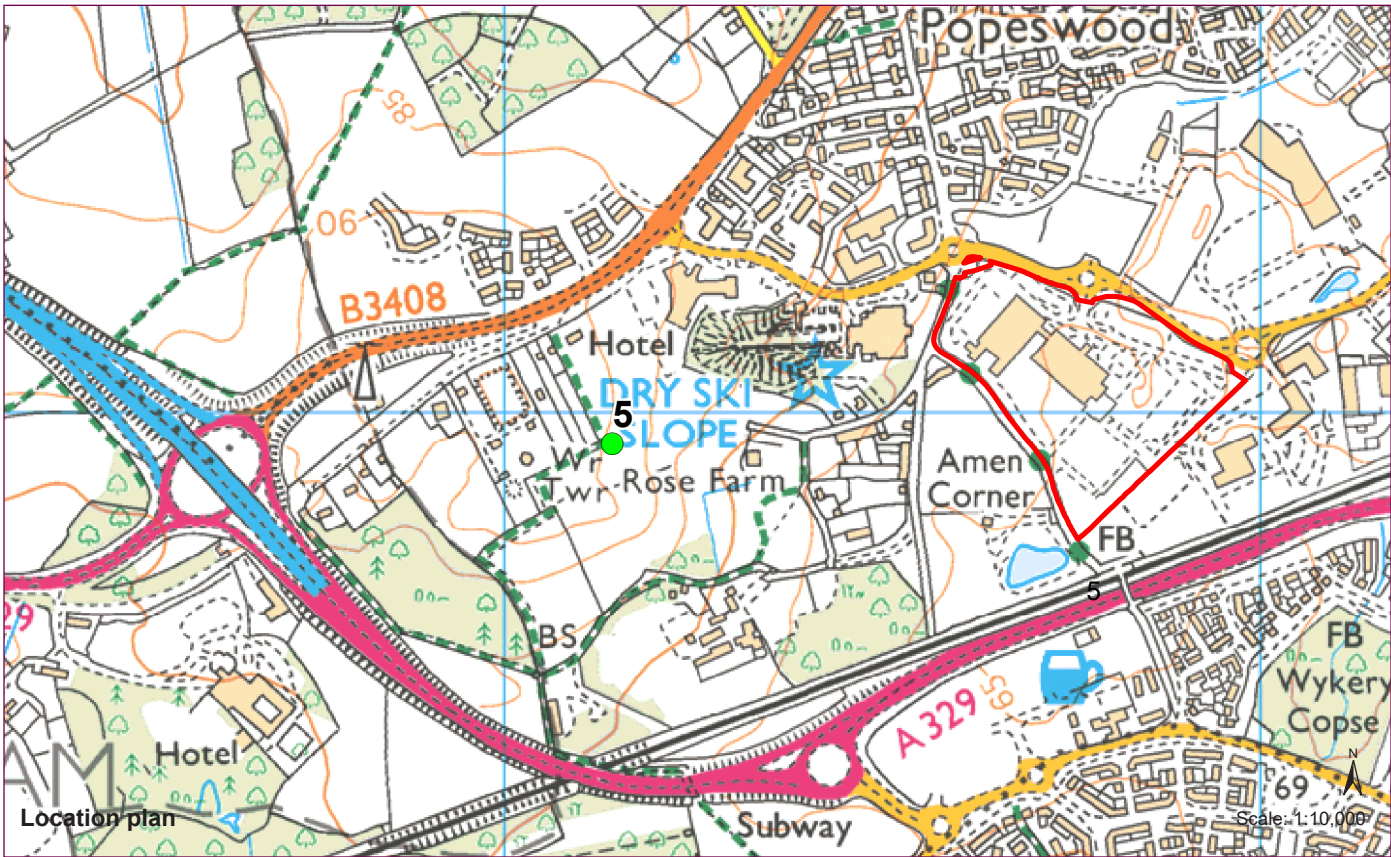


Proposed wireline view


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Existing view



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	Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 454 m OS reference: 484142, 168959	Direction to site: east Viewpoint height: 90 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: Approx. 75° Viewing distance: 300mm @ A3	Existing View and Photo Location: Viewpoint 5 PRoW BIN FP14, Amen Corner, Bracknell Figure: 20
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Existing view






Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

 <p>Bracknell Data Centre</p>	<p>Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm</p>	<p>Distance to site: 454 m OS reference: 484142, 168959</p>	<p>Direction to site: east Viewpoint height: 90 m AOD</p>	<p>Horizontal field of view: Approx. 75° Viewing distance: 300mm @ A3</p>	<p>— Data Centre - - Data Centre hidden</p>	<p>Existing and Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 5 PRoW BIN FP14, Amen Corner, Bracknell Figure: 21</p>
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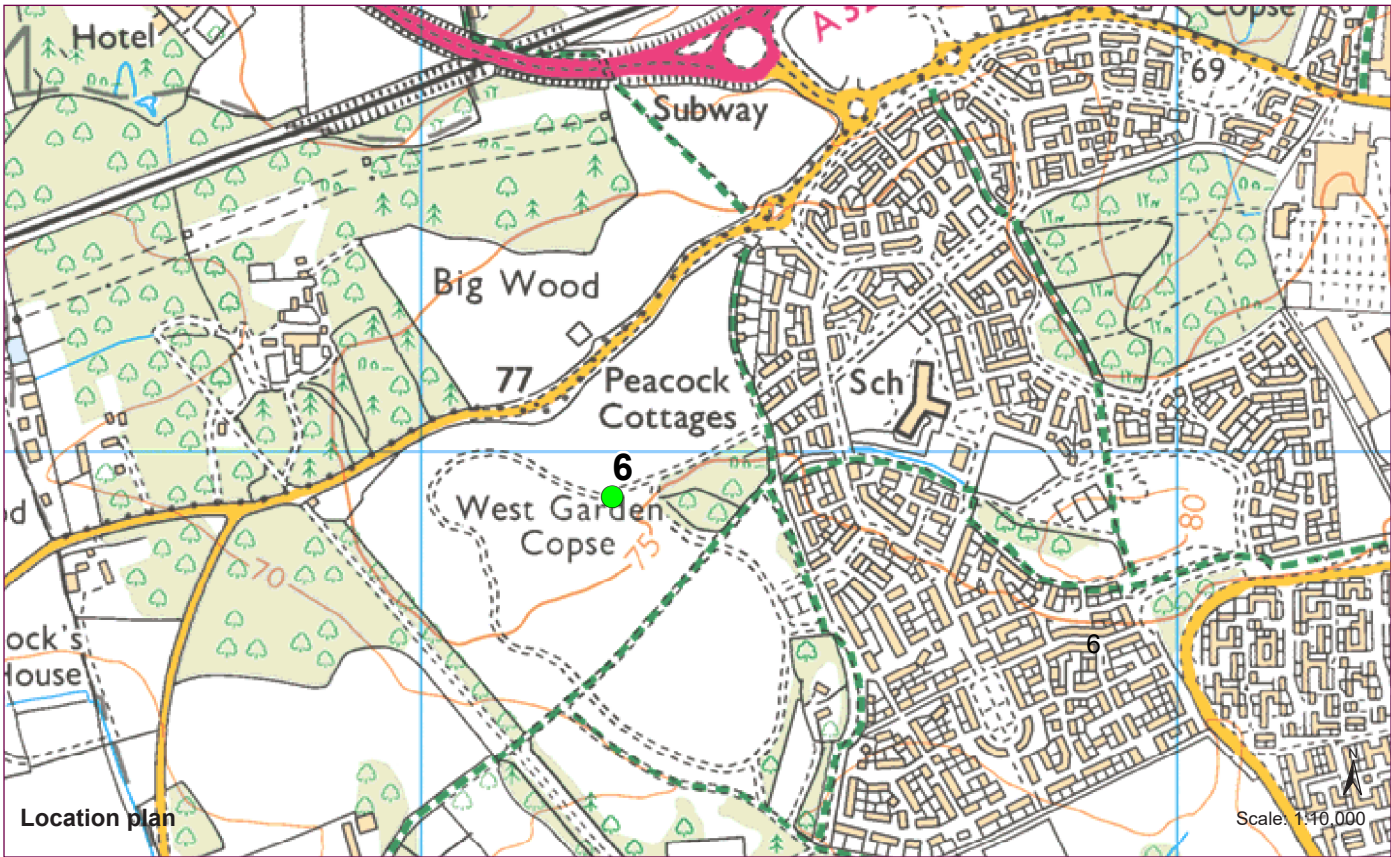


Proposed wireline view

 RPS MAKING COMPLEX EASY	Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 454 m OS reference: 484142, 168959	Direction to site: east Viewpoint height: 90 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: 39.6° To be viewed at comfortable arms length	 Data Centre  Data Centre hidden	Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 5 PRoW BIN FP14, Amen Corner, Bracknell Figure: 22
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Existing view



Proposed wireline view


Ref: 11741-0021-03

	Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 1.0 km OS reference: 484253, 167942	Direction to site: northeast Viewpoint height: 77 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: Approx. 75° Viewing distance: 300mm @ A3	Data Centre Data Centre hidden	Existing and Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 6 Peacock Meadows, Bracknell Figure: 24
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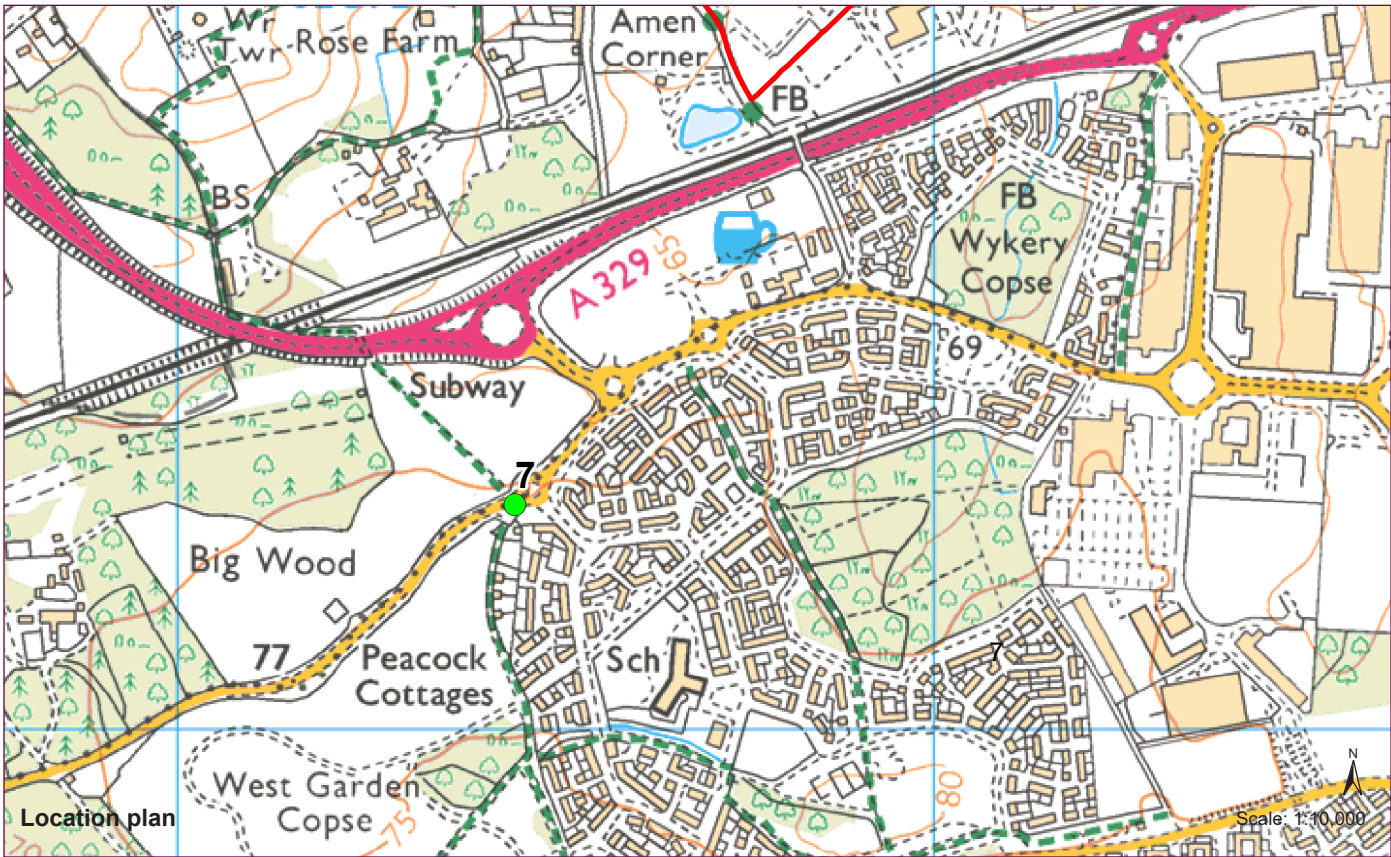
Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

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Existing view



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Existing view






Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

	Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 637 m OS reference: 484446, 168298	Direction to site: northeast Viewpoint height: 78 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: Approx. 75° Viewing distance: 300mm @ A3	 Data Centre  Data Centre hidden	Existing and Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 7 Peacock Lane and PRow BRA FP18, Bracknell Figure: 27
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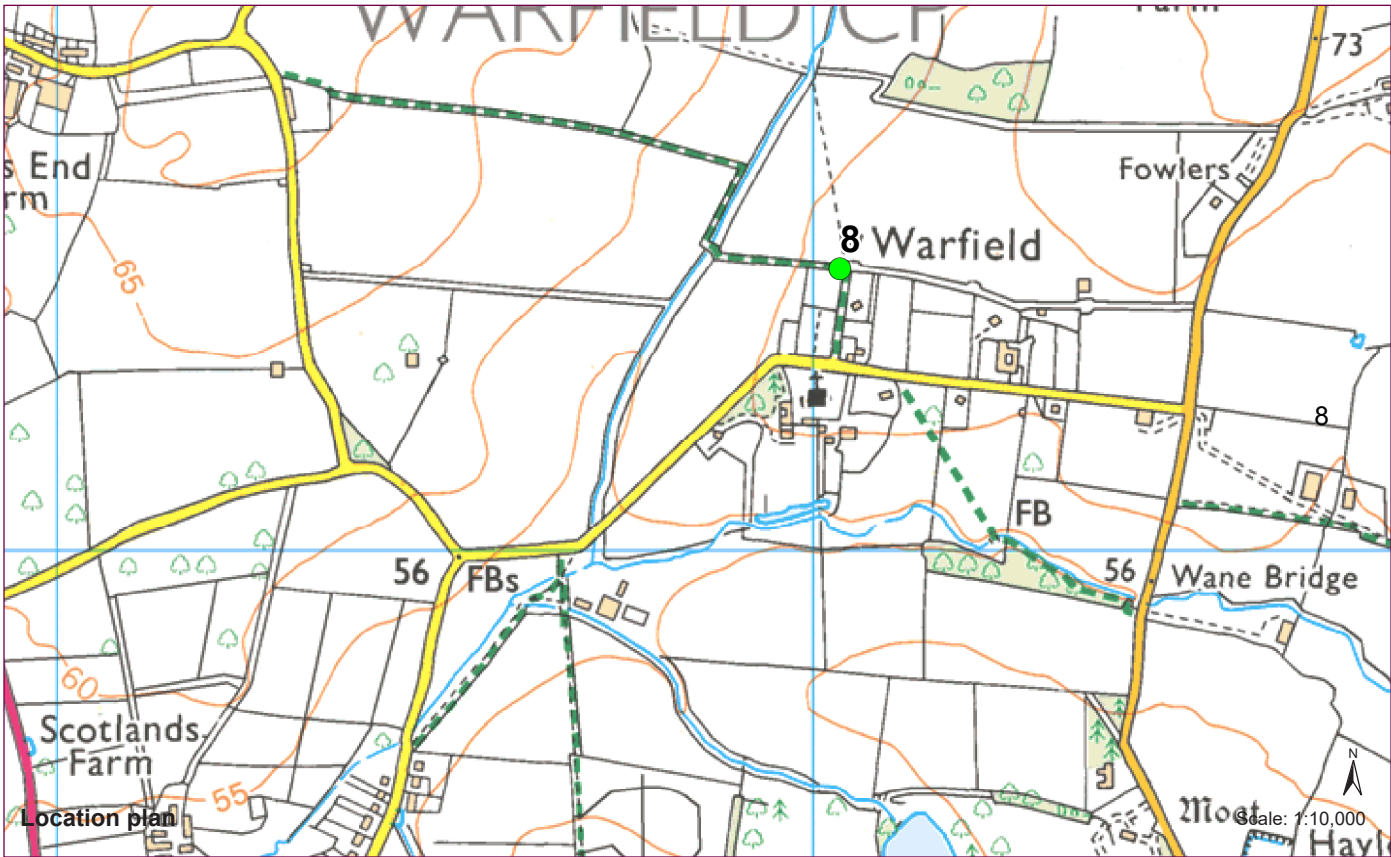


Proposed wireline view


 Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 637 m OS reference: 484446, 168298	Direction to site: northeast Viewpoint height: 78 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: 39.6° To be viewed at comfortable arms length	 Data Centre  Data Centre hidden	Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 7 Peacock Lane and PRoW BRA FP18, Bracknell Figure: 28
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Existing view



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Existing view



Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03

 Bracknell Data Centre	Date of Photo: 15/12/2020 Lens Type: 50mm	Distance to site: 4.5 km OS reference: 488035, 172374	Direction to site: southwest Viewpoint height: 64 m AOD	Horizontal field of view: Approx. 75° Viewing distance: 300mm @ A3	 Data Centre  Data Centre hidden	Existing and Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 8 PRoW WAR FP3, Warfield Figure: 30
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Proposed wireline view

Ref: 11741-0021-03



Bracknell Data Centre

Date of Photo: 15/12/2020
Lens Type: 50mm

Distance to site: 4.5 km
OS reference: 488035, 172374

Direction to site: southwest
Viewpoint height: 64 m AOD

Horizontal field of view: 39.6°
To be viewed at comfortable arms length

— Data Centre
- - - Data Centre hidden

Proposed Photowire View: Viewpoint 8 PRoW WAR FP3, Warfield
Figure: 31



APPENDICES

Appendix A

Landscape Character Descriptions

BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

The Bracknell Forest Borough Landscape Character Assessment, Prepared by LUC 2015 provides an update to the Borough's Landscape Character Assessment, produced in 2002 and incorporates information from subsequent landscape studies that include: Bracknell Forest Borough Council Landscape Analysis of Sites Allocations and an Assessment of Gaps/Green Wedges (2006); Character Areas Assessment SPD (March 2010) and the Strategic Housing Site Options Landscape Capacity Study to provide a comprehensive and up to date landscape character assessment for all land outside defined settlements.

Two Landscape character types and two landscape character areas from the Bracknell Forest Borough Landscape Character Assessment fall within the study area and are detailed below.

The Landscape Character Type C: Clay Farmlands is described as:

The Clay Farmlands character type is influenced by its underlying geology/soils and land use. It is an agricultural landscape of mixed farmland on London Clay, with a quiet and rural character and scattered small villages, hamlets, farmsteads and historic manor houses.

The key characteristics of the: **C1 Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmlands Landscape Character Area** are:

- Underlying clay geology, cut by water courses including the Cut River creating a gently undulating landform with mid-distant views across grass and arable fields to low ridgelines and wooded horizons.
- A farmed, working landscape of medium to large sized fields of mixed arable and pasture, and smaller fields around the edges of villages.
- Small deciduous woodlands and well-managed hedgerows provide rhythm and emphasis to views across the landscape.
- Quiet and rural character with limited scattered settlement well integrated into the landscape.
- Historic manor houses sited within remnant parkland landscapes, often hidden from view behind high fences or coniferous boundaries.
- Rural lanes bordered by hedgerows, grass verges and ditches.

The Landscape Character Type G: Wooded Estates is described as:

This character type is particularly influenced by the proximity of urban edges, woodland and former estates. It occurs on the sandy Bagshot Formations together with London Clay Formation, which give rise to areas of poor agricultural soils in a mosaic with more agriculturally productive areas. This results in a landscape of mixed pastoral and agricultural fields and woodlands.

The type contains remnant features of estates which developed over the 18th and 19th Centuries set within a network of woodlands.

The key characteristics of the: **G1 Easthampstead Wood Estate Landscape Character Area** are:

- A gently undulating landscape centred on the historic Easthampstead Park, now a conference centre, with remnant parkland features including avenues, a lake and woodland.
- The land rises to 80m AOD where a Victorian red brick Jacobean style mansion, is set within dense woodland.
- The area forms part of the extensive Medieval Windsor Forest and has a well wooded character, including areas of ancient woodland. Formerly the site of a Royal hunting lodge.

- The area is influenced by underlying clays and sands, providing references to the forested sands to the south and the undulating clay farmlands to the north of Bracknell.
- Mixed land uses of former parkland, mixed agricultural fields bounded by hedgerows with hedgerow trees, paddocks, woodland, grassland (including semi-improved and amenity) and a golf course, giving rise to a rather fragmented character.
- Despite proximity to built development within Bracknell, the area retains a sense of relative tranquillity largely as a result of the park and woodland elements.
- Tree cover restricts views. However, there are some notable views include the framed views along the avenue of mature trees to the Victorian mansion (now the conference centre).

Appendix B

Photomontage and Photowire Methodology

PHOTOMONTAGE AND PHOTOWIRE METHODOLOGY

Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the methods used to photograph and prepare photowires for the Bracknell Data Centre. The photomontage and photowire methodology set out below is considered to be suitable to accurately illustrate the proposed development within a selection of photographic views and has taken into account Landscape Institute (Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013; and Visual Representation of Development Proposals, Technical Guidance Note 06/19, September 2019) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH, 2014) guidelines. The same methodology is followed for photomontages or photowires however, the photowires are presented as outline wirelines rather than fully rendered images.

Procedure for Taking Photographs from Photowire Viewpoints

- 1.2 Photograph locations are shown on the attached figure and have been selected in order to:
- Meet consultee requirements, including those of Bracknell Forest Council;
 - Provide a fair representation of Bracknell Data Centre from various distances and orientations to inform the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA); and
 - Contain at least three visible reference points of existing features that can be used to verify the proposal location later in the photowire process.
- 1.3 The majority of photographs were taken in favourable weather conditions and clear visibility in the winter situation. The winter photography has been used as the baseline for the photowires.
- 1.4 A fixed 50 mm lens on a digital SLR camera was used for the photography in a format equivalent to 35 mm. A full frame sensor was used (as recommended in the SNH guidance, 2014). The same exposure setting was used for all the frames. Viewpoint locations were recorded using a hand-held GPS.
- 1.5 Where possible, the Bracknell Data Centre site was placed in the middle of the view with frames taken either side to give the landscape context. The panoramas were

photographed with the horizon in the centre using a level tripod that was rotated on the same grid co-ordinate to ensure individual frames were aligned.

- 1.6 The photographs have been taken and the following text explains the method of photowire production undertaken.

Method for Production of Photowires

- 1.7 For the purpose of LVIA assessment we produce photowires in a single frame 50 mm lens 39.6° horizontal field of view. This will produce a better representation of how the development will appear within the landscape context. Working in single frames is more accurate than using panoramas due to lens distortions and the splicing together.
- 1.8 Photowires have also been produced on panoramas to accommodate close views and give a greater context.
- 1.9 Known reference points, where possible visible to the naked eye, are used to assist in constructing the photowire, for instance landform, landmarks, buildings and structures.
- 1.10 The horizontal field of view for photowire purposes is 39.6°. However, wide panoramas were photographed to provide broad coverage of the landscape to be assessed. The panoramas are produced by splicing the photos together with specialist software. A 50% overlap was taken between frames to allow the sides of each photo to be removed when splicing to minimise distortion.
- 1.11 The panoramas are generated using Adobe Photoshop imaging software. The digital photographs are put directly into the computer program and each frame combined cylindrically to form a panoramic view. Photographs are corrected for colour, brightness and / or contrast to ensure that the image quality was optimised. Where possible the representation of the proposed development will occur towards the centre of the image and should be viewed at 300mm printed on A3 paper.
- 1.12 The Bracknell Data Centre site has been modelled to GB National Grid co-ordinates in Autodesk software using detailed topographical survey. The existing elements (buildings and other fixed features) are modelled to accurately align the views.
- 1.13 Perspective viewpoints are determined using GB National Grid co-ordinates established when taking the photographs. The camera location is determined using GPS co-ordinates and the lens type is matched within the software.

- 1.14 The wireline computer images are placed onto the photographs and scaled/positioned so that the reference features in the image match those in the photographs. The panoramic views are aligned as a cylindrical projection. Light settings are adjusted to match the time of day and weather conditions of the photograph.
- 1.15 The computer model is rendered as a 'solid model' perspective and saved as an image file thus creating the photowire.
- 1.16 Each viewpoint location is illustrated through a series of A3 figures as follows:
- The existing view as a 75° panorama with a detailed location plan and the viewpoint data; and
 - The existing view as a 75° panorama with the proposed photowire below; and
 - A single frame photowire to illustrate the project in a 50 mm format, printed to a vertical height of 260 mm.
- 1.17 Where the weather conditions for the photographs were hazy, the buildings would be adjusted so as to achieve enough contrast to enable the elements to be seen.
- 1.18 For Bracknell Data Centre eight photowire representations of the building comply with Landscape Institute Type 3.
- 1.19 The methodology provided above and that which is used to prepare the photowires is fully compliant with the relevant guidance and provides images of a high level of accuracy that are fit for purpose and proportionate to the type of proposed development and the context in which it would be seen.

References

Landscape Institute (2019) Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals.

Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3).

Scottish Natural Heritage (2014) Visual Representation of Wind Farms, Version 2.1, December 2014.

February 2020

Appendix C

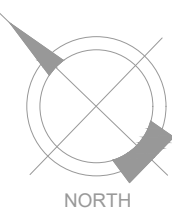
Landscape Strategy



Landscape Key:

- Application Boundary
- Outer Security Fence
- Inner Security Fence
- Water Easement
- Gravel
- Reinforced Modular Grass Paving - Supplied by Grass Concrete Ltd (or similar approved) To be sown with a wildflower mix
- Existing Trees to be Removed
- Existing trees to be Retained
- Tree canopies beyond boundary to be trimmed to avoid conflict with 10m clear zone
- Existing Vegetation
- Broadleaf Tree and Shrub Planting
- Conifer Tree Planting
- Native Shrub Planting
- Woodland Interplanting
- Hedgerow Planting
- Wildflower Grassland
- Wildflower Turf
- Restored Natural Grassland
- Woodland Wildflower and Grass Mix
- Bird Nesting Box
- Bat Roosting Box
- Invertebrate Housing
- Reptile Hibernaculum
- Hedgehog House
- Logpile
- Biohavens

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- Notes
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 2. If received electronically it is the recipient's responsibility to print to correct scale. Only written dimensions should be used.
 3. This drawing should be read in conjunction with all other relevant drawings and specifications.



P06	Retained trees added along NE boundary.	AH	DB	26.02.21
P05	Recreational ground added to South-Western perimeter.	AH	DB	10.02.21
P04	Landscape proposals updated to current site layout.	AH	DB	10.12.20
P03	Updated to current site layout.	AH	DB	16.11.20
P02	Landscape Proposals updated to current site layout.	AH	DB	27.10.20
P01	Fences and dimensions clarified, tree planting added.	AH	DB	29.09.20
Rev	Description	By	Ckd	Date



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Client

Project Bracknell Data Centre

Title Site Layout Plan - Landscape Strategy

Status	Scale	Date Created
For Planning	1:1000 @A1	October 2020
Task Team Manager	Information Author	Task Information Manager
DB	AH	DB
Document Number		
20305B-RPS-SI-XX-DR-A-9530		
Project Code - Originator - Zone - Level - Type - Role - Drawing Number		
RPS Project Number		Revision
NK020305		P06
rpsgroup.com		

Appendix D

Assessment Tables

Table D.1: Construction Phase Landscape Effects

Landscape/Townscape Receptor			Landscape Effects				Significance of Effect	
Character Area/Type	Condition	Value	Sensitivity	Description	Magnitude of Impact	Nature/ Duration	Construction	Notes
Construction Phase								
Application Site	Ordinary	Low	Medium	Demolition and clearance operations within the site to be undertaken. Some loss of vegetation and regrading of landform. Presence of tall plant including cranes, material storage mounds, site huts and movement of onsite vehicles. New planting would be implemented. Construction works in context of urban character area.	Medium	Temporary / Short term	Moderate adverse	
BF: Bracknell Urban Area	Poor to Ordinary	Low	Low	Demolition and clearance operations to be undertaken within urban area. Large scale construction in an industrial landscape. Some loss of vegetation and regrading of landform. Site within urban character area. New planting would be implemented.	Small	Temporary / Short term	Minor adverse	
RPS Townscape: Cain Road Enterprise Campus	Ordinary	Low	Low	Demolition and clearance operations within the character area to be undertaken. Some loss of vegetation and regrading of landform. Large - scale construction and presence of tall plant including cranes, material storage mounds, site huts and movement of onsite vehicles. New planting would be implemented. Construction works in context of urban character area.	Medium	Temporary / Short term	Minor adverse	
RPS Townscape: Binfield Residential	Ordinary	Medium	Medium	Demolition and construction operations in the context of existing levels of development. Presence of tall plant including cranes in context with existing vertical intrusions associated with character area.	Small	Temporary / Short term	Minor adverse	
RPS Townscape: Amen Corner Mixed Use	Poor to Ordinary	Low	Low	Demolition and construction operations in the context of existing levels of development and construction work. Presence of tall plant including cranes in context with high level buildings associated with the character area.	Small	Temporary / Short term	Minor adverse	

RPS Townscape: Jennet's Park Residential	Ordinary	Low to Medium	Low	Demolition and construction operations in the context of existing levels of development and construction work. Presence of tall plant including cranes in the context with high level buildings associated with the character area.	Negligible	Temporary / Short term	Negligible adverse
BF LCA: C1 Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland	Good	Medium	Medium	Construction works in the context of adjacent urban area and view of cranes and high-level construction. Potential indirect effects discernible from restricted parts of character area. Construction activity experienced within context of existing urban backdrop of Bracknell.	Negligible	Temporary / Short term	Negligible adverse
BF LCA: G1 Easthampstead Wooded Estate	Ordinary to Good	Low to Medium	Medium	Construction works in context of adjacent urban area and view of cranes and high-level construction. Potential indirect effects discernible from restricted parts of character area. Construction activity experienced within context of existing urban backdrop of Bracknell.	Negligible	Temporary / Short term	Negligible adverse
NCA 115: Thames Valley	Ordinary to Good	Low to High	Low	Application Site within character area. Direct impact of temporary construction works in section of NCA within urban area of Bracknell on previously developed land with some natural planting remaining on the Application Site south off Beehive Lane. Construction works in context of wider urban area.	Small	Temporary / Short term	Negligible adverse

Table D.2: Construction Phase Visual Effects

Receptor					Visual Effects			Significance of Effects	
VP	Type	Location	Distance	Sensitivity	Description	Magnitude of Impact	Nature & Duration	Construction	Notes
1	Road and footway/ cycle way	Cain Road, Bracknell	39 m	Medium – pedestrians/ cyclists Low – vehicle travellers	Near filtered views of demolition operation and large-scale development including cranes in urban context. Low level work and vehicle movements screened by landform and hoardings. Potential for tops of material storage mounds discernible above hoarding in winter.	Small	Temporary / medium term	Minor adverse for pedestrians and vehicle users.	
2	Public open space/ sports pitch	Farley Wood Community Centre, Bracknell	143 m	Medium – recreational users	Near partly screened or heavily filtered views of demolition operations. Boundary hoarding screened by intervening vegetation. Large-scale development including cranes above intervening vegetation.	Small	Temporary / medium term	Minor adverse	
3	Road and pedestrian/ cycle route	Beehive Road, Bracknell	5 m	Medium – pedestrians/ cyclists Low – vehicle travellers	Near heavily filtered views during demolition operations. Large-scale development in urban landscape. Low level works and vehicle movements screened by hoardings	Medium	Temporary / medium term	Moderate adverse for pedestrians. Minor adverse for vehicle users.	
4	Pedestrian / cycle bridge	Bridge over A329 and railway line, Bracknell	61 m	Medium – pedestrians/ cyclists	Near filtered views of demolition operations and large-scale development in urban context. From elevated location material storage and low level work potentially noticeable particularly in winter situation. Potential for cranes discernible above intervening vegetation.	Small	Temporary / medium term	Minor adverse	
5	Footpath	PRoW BIN FP14, Amen Corner, Bracknell	454 m	High – walkers	Near heavy filtered views. High level activity and cranes	Small	Temporary / medium term	Minor adverse	

					distinguishable in view with urban context and high level buildings.			
6	Public open space	Peacock Meadows, Bracknell	1 km	Medium – walkers, recreation users	Mid-distance screened view. High-level activity and cranes barely distinguishable filtered by intervening vegetation belt.	Negligible	Temporary / medium term	Negligible adverse
7	Road and footpath	Peacock Lane and PRow BRA FP18, Bracknell	637 m	Medium – pedestrians Low – vehicle travellers	Near view of potential high-level construction and cranes above intervening built form and vegetation.	Small	Temporary / medium term	Minor adverse for pedestrians and vehicle users.
8	Footpath	PRow WAR FP3, Warfield	4.5 km	High – walkers	Distant view where high level construction and cranes would be barely distinguishable in view at this distance above intervening vegetation and distant urban glimpse of Bracknell.	Negligible	Temporary / medium term	Minor adverse

Table D.3: Operational Phase Landscape Effects

Landscape/Townscape Receptor			Landscape Effects				Significance of Effect	
Character Area	Condition	Value	Sensitivity	Description	Magnitude of Impact	Nature/Duration	Year 1	Year 15
Operational Phase								
Application Site	Ordinary	Low	Low	The Application Site is two existing three storey office buildings, car park and vegetation. The proposed development would introduce new built elements of a similar scale to existing large scale-built form. The new building would cause some localised alteration. There would be new planting, grassland and management of the existing retained pond and woodland south of Beehive Road. With establishment of trees, woodland and shrub planting by Year 15 the building would be further integrated with the surrounding landscape.	Small	Long term	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
Bracknell Urban Area	Poor to Ordinary	Low	Low	Large scale building and redevelopment of existing commercial site not uncharacteristic of urban character area. In time landscape proposals would integrate the building with the local landscape.	Small	Long term	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
RPS Townscape: Cain Road Enterprise Campus	Ordinary	Low	Low	Large scale building in context with existing levels of development and landscape intrusions. Potential direct effects on the urban part of the LCA and wider overall character area. There would be new planting and grassland that once established would further integrate the building with the surrounding landscape by Year 15.	Small	Long term	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
RPS Townscape: Binfield Residential	Ordinary	Medium	Medium	Large scale building in an urban location and in context of adjacent character area.	Small	Long term	Minor adverse	Minor adverse

RPS Townscape: Amen Corner Mixed Use	Poor to Ordinary	Low	Low	Large scale building in an urban location and in context of adjacent urban character area and central Bracknell.	Negligible	Long term	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse
RPS Townscape: Jennet's Park Residential	Ordinary	Medium	Low	Large scale buildings in an urban location and in context of adjacent wider urban character area.	Small	Long term	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse
BF LCA: C1 Binfield and Warfield Clay Farmland	Good	Medium	Medium	Large scale buildings in an urban location and in context of more distant rural character area.	Negligible	Long term	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse
BF LCA: G1 Easthampstead Wooded Estate	Ordinary to Good	Low to Medium	Medium	Large scale buildings in an urban location and in context of more distant rural character area.	Negligible	Long term	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse
NCA 115: Thames Valley	Ordinary to Good	Low to High	Low	Large scale building in an urban location. Direct impact of data centre in section of NCA within urban area of Bracknell on previously developed land with some natural planting remaining within the Application Site south of Beehive Lane.	Negligible	Long term	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse

Table D.4: Operational Phase Visual Effects

Receptor					Visual Effects			Significance of Effects	
VP	Type	Location	Distance	Sensitivity	Description	Magnitude of Impact	Nature & Duration	Year 1	Year 15
1	Road and footway/ cycleway	Cain Road, Bracknell	39 m	Medium – pedestrians/ cyclists Low – vehicle travellers	Change to large-scale data centre building would be filtered and partly screened by intervening vegetation and landform and appear similar to existing large-scale office buildings (to be demolished). The roof line of the data centre would be at a lower level than the existing building from this viewpoint as more distant with smaller scale subsidiary buildings closer to the viewpoint that would be screened. In the summer situation the proposed data centre would largely be screened by boundary and internal vegetation in full leaf.	Negligible	Long term	Minor adverse	Negligible adverse
2	Public open space/ sports pitch	Farley Wood Community Centre, Bracknell	143 m	Medium – recreational users	Large-scale building would be partly screened or heavily filtered by intervening vegetation even in winter and appear as similar scale to existing large-scale office buildings (to be demolished). The top section of data centre would be visible above vegetation across parts of the view. Obstruction of the view by built form would shift across the view however the view to distant woodland would be maintained.	Small	Long term	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
3	Road and pedestrian/ cycle route	Beehive Road, Bracknell	5 m	Medium – pedestrians/ cyclists Low -vehicle travellers	Change of large-scale building to the view, set behind and generally filtered by boundary vegetation. Data centre building and associated landscape scheme would be different elements in the view but of similar scale and context to the existing office buildings (to be demolished). Introduction of security fence set behind boundary vegetation. Existing location of secondary access would be stopped up and planted with trees and native shrubs. Obstruction of the view by built form would shift across the view and the top section of the data centre and flues would be perceptible.	Small	Long term	Minor adverse	Minor adverse

4	Pedestrian/ cycle bridge	Bridge over A329 and railway line, Bracknell	61 m	Medium – pedestrians/ cyclists	Change of large-scale building to view. Data centre building partly filtered by intervening vegetation. Data centre building would be a different more prominent element in the view and cause partial obstruction to the view but not visually discordant seen in context of other buildings in the view.	Medium	Long term	Moderate adverse	Moderate adverse
5	Footpath	PRoW BIN FP14, Amen Corner, Bracknell	454 m	High – walkers	Data centre buildings perceptible but heavily filtered by intervening vegetation. In summer building would be screened when vegetation in full leaf. Change barely distinguishable to character or composition of view. In future baseline situation view would change with introduction of residential development in the foreground.	Negligible	Long term	Minor adverse	Minor adverse
6	Public open space	Peacock Meadows, Bracknell	1 km	Medium – walkers, recreation users	Data centre building screened by intervening vegetation. No change to character or composition of view.	No Change	Long term	No Change	No Change
7	Road and footpath	Peacock Lane and PRoW BRA FP18, Bracknell	637 m	Medium – pedestrians Low -vehicle travellers	Data centre building filtered by intervening vegetation and partly screened by intervening buildings. Change barely distinguishable from the surroundings.	Negligible	Long term	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse
8	Footpath	PRoW WAR FP3, Warfield	4.5 km	High-- walkers	Distant view where data centre building would be screened by vegetation. No change to character or composition of the view.	No change	Long term	No change	No change