

Battleaxes, Bristol Road, Wraxall, BS48 1LQ

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Part 1 of 3

STUDIO
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ARCHITECTURE





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Battleaxes: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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1. Preface

- 1.1 Architecture by Studio HIVE, a Registered Practice of the Royal Institute of British Architects, has produced this landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) on behalf of Studio HIVE for the refurbishment and extension of The Battleaxes Inn and development of 9no. dwellings within its grounds.
- 1.2 The site and its surrounding landscape were assessed during December 2022.
- 1.3 The aim of this report is to provide a full assessment of the potential landscape and visual effects of a proposed development upon the receiving landscape, in line with current legislation and guidance. It comprises two main assessments, the first for landscape and the second for visual effects.
 - Landscape effects derive from changes in the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in its character and how this is experienced. This may in turn affect the perceived value ascribed to the landscape. Due to the inherently dynamic nature of the landscape, change arising from a development may not necessarily be significant.
 - Visual effects relate to the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes and to the overall effects with the respect of visual amenity.
- 1.4 This document includes an appraisal of the following:

Landscape Impacts:

 - direct impact upon specific landscape elements within and adjacent to the site;
 - effects on the overall pattern of the landscape elements which give rise to the landscape character of the site and its surroundings; and
 - impacts upon any special interests in and around the site.

Visual Impacts:

 - direct impacts of the development upon views in the landscape; and
 - overall impact on visual amenity.
- 1.5 Following mitigation measures, vegetation growth and weathering, significant visual impacts would remain for 4 of the 28 viewpoints. For the remaining receptors the views of the development will remain largely unchanged or have only glimpsed views at such a distance that it would be difficult for the casual viewer to appreciate the difference. The 3 viewpoints with residual impacts are those which border the site's boundary and are of high receptor sensitivity.
- 1.6 When this development is assessed in context with the wider landscape, the visual impact would be reduced, visually blending in with the surrounding suburban landscape to the south.



2. Methodology

Introduction

- 2.1 As a matter of best practice the assessment will be undertaken in accordance with the methods outlined in the following best practice guidance:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition), published by the Landscape Institute and the IEMA (2013) (GLVIA)
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment, published by Natural England (2014).
- 2.2 The principal objectives of the LVIA are:
- Identify and classify the existing landscape likely to be affected by the construction and operation of the proposal;
 - to identify the 'visual receptors with views of the proposed development; and
 - to assess the significance of effects on the prevailing landscape character and visual amenity, taking into account the measure proposed to mitigate any impacts identified.
- 2.3 The assessment has been conducted in line with the published best practice guidelines noted above and includes a desk-based review of relevant published guidance, including legislation and policy, baseline information production, and information followed by a number of detailed site appraisals.

Baseline Study & Desktop Study

- 2.4 In accordance with the GLVIA and other best practice guidance noted above, both the landscape and visual assessments will include baseline studies that describe, classify and evaluate the existing landscape and visual resources, focusing on their sensitivity and ability to accommodate change.
- 2.5 The initial study area was set to a radius of approximately 2 km from the centre of the site on the basis that, beyond this distance (in its geographical situation and context), this form of development when seen by the human eye, would be hardly discernible or not legible.

Site Visit and Field Work

- 2.6 A site visit supplemented the desktop study and helped to determine the existing conditions and the setting of the proposed development site as well as the potential influence (or effects) of the proposed development on views from surrounding visual amenity receptors.

Assessment of Effects and Impact

- 2.7 Using the criteria outlined, guided by the GLVIA, the landscape and visual character have been assessed using well-reasoned professional judgement.
- 2.8 Selected photo-montaged visual representations have been used to illustrate the potential effects of the proposed development from selected publicly accessible and agreed viewpoints within the surroundings.

Mitigation, Enhancements and Recommendations

- 2.9 Mitigation is defined in the Landscape Institute Guidelines as: 'Measures proposed to prevent/avoid, reduce and where possible remedy (or compensate for) any significant adverse landscape and visual effects...' (GLVIA, page 57, para 4.21).
- 2.10 The effectiveness of proposed mitigation, as well as, the proposed 'enhancements' of the existing has been analysed, and overall conclusions drawn about the development potential of the site in terms of likely residual landscape and visual effects.

Summary

- 2.11 The prediction and extent of effect cannot always be absolute. It is for each assessment to determine the assessment criteria and the significance thresholds, using informed and well-reasoned professional judgement supported by thorough justification for their selection, and explanation how the conclusions about significance for each effect assessed have been derived, as noted in GLVIA 3rd edition para 2.23-2.26 and 3.32-36

3. Technical Information

Introduction

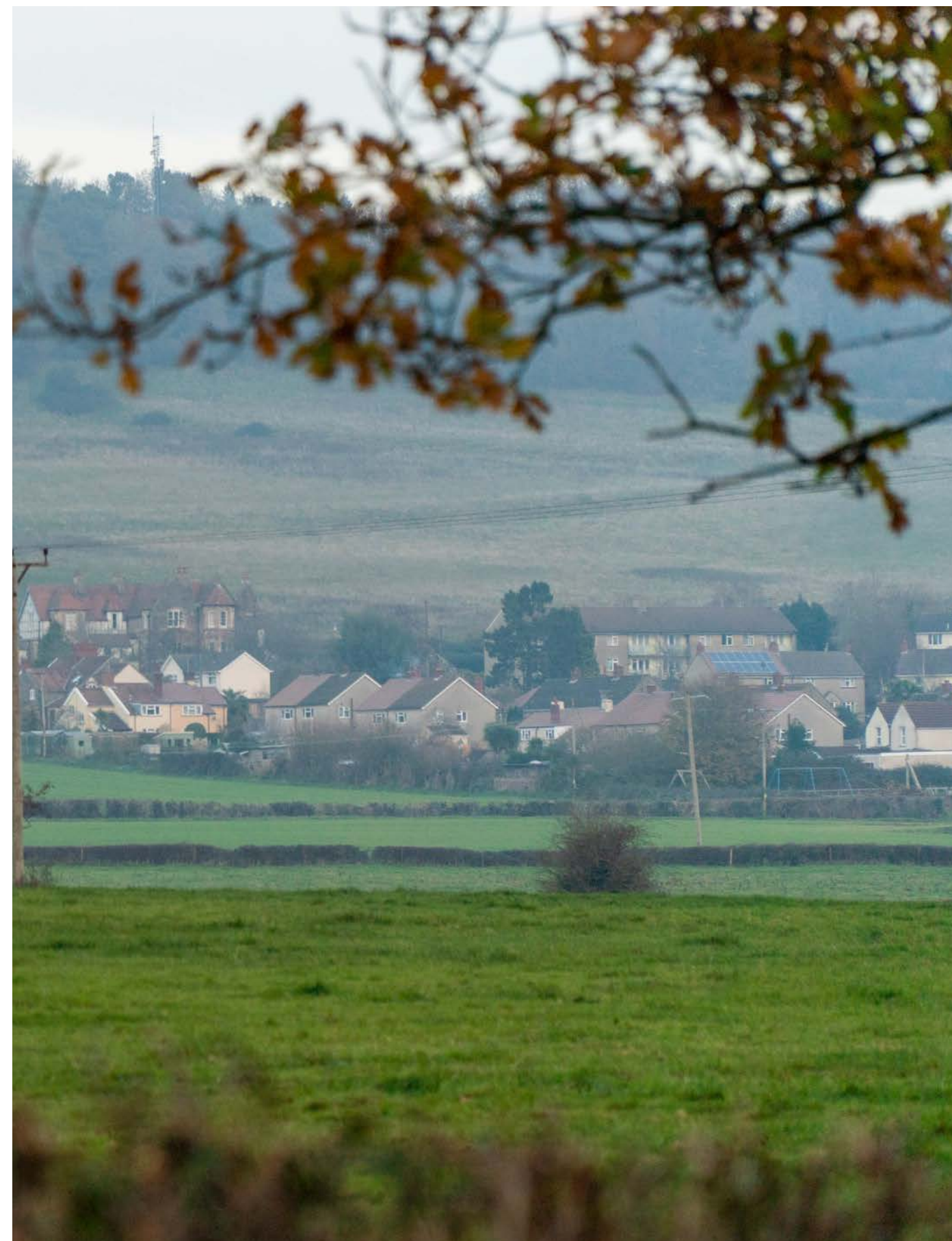
- 3.1 The Landscape Institute 'Technical Guidance Note 06/19, Visual Representation of Development Proposals, 17th September 2019 was referenced for guidance on the use of the camera and photography.

Photographs

- 3.2 Photographs included in the assessment were taken when conducting the site survey.
- 3.3 The photographs used as part of the assessment were taken with a Sony a6500 camera with a Sony E 18-105mm f4 G OSS Lens, unless otherwise specified.
- 3.4 The photographs were taken in landscape format at 22mm focal length (focal length most similar to the human eye) with some supplementary photos zoomed in where there may obstruction of a direct view of the site.
- 3.5 The photographs used as part of the assessment were taken with a Sony a6500 camera with a Sony E 18-105mm f4 G OSS Lens, unless otherwise specified.
- 3.6 The camera was positioned at 1.7m above ground level, unless otherwise specified (such as a hedge, tree or other obstruction in the view).
- 3.7 Some photos included were deemed to dangerous to capture, therefore third party images were necessary, in this instance 2 images have been sourced from Google Maps street view.
- 3.8 Aerial Photographs were taken with a DJI Mini drone at varied heights during April 2022.
- 3.9 GPS location information was obtained using a hand-held GPS device and recorded against each photograph.

Viewpoints

- 3.10 A number of viewpoints from which the proposed development may be visible were selected.
- 3.11 The viewpoint photographs were taken in fine weather with good visibility in mid December 2022.
- 3.12 Each viewpoint is clearly mapped on the key, showing the location of where the photo was taken and orientation.
- 3.13 The viewpoints meet the following criteria:
- A balance of viewpoints from the main directions of view.
 - Provide a representative selection of views and receptors towards the proposed development.
 - For receptors most likely to experience the greatest change of view.





4. Legislation and Policy Context

Landscape Planning Policies

- 4.1 Guidelines, legislation and planning policy documents provide the framework for the protection and conservation of landscape within the study area, the most relevant of which are outlined below.
- 4.2 Of these, statutes exist to ensure both direct and indirect protection of our most valued and important landscapes, their intrinsic visual qualities and the individual elements and components that constitute their appeal. Those with direct relevance to the assessment comprise the following:
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
 - Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
 - Town and Country Planning Act 1990;
 - Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
 - Environment Act 1995;
 - Countryside Act 1968; and
 - The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration and provides guidance for regional and local planning.
- 4.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has at its heart a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a core ideology running through both plan-making and decision-taking - Paragraph 14 of the NPPF sets out how this should be achieved through Local Plans and planning decisions.
- 4.5 The key principles of the NPPF underpin plan-making and decision-taking. It is important to note the following, relevant key principles from the NPPF for consideration in this report:
- Taking account of different roles and character of different areas and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside;
 - Pursuing high quality design and good standard of amenity;
 - Contribution to conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 4.6 The NPPF provides guidance on how to deliver sustainable development. Relevant planning principles to this LVIA are summarised as:
- Section 7
- Requiring Good Design, which addresses the issue of good design for new developments that should respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings while being visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Proposals should promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
- Section 8
- Promoting Healthy Communities, which requires the protection and enhancement of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and access.
- Section 11
- Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, which states that valued landscapes should be protected and enhanced, and opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.

Local Planning Policies

- 4.7 The Council is in the process of preparing a new plan to take the place of the Core Strategy and Sites and Policies Plan called Local Plan 2038.
- 4.8 Draft Neighbourhood Plan for Wraxall and Failand 2022-2038.

Land Designations

- 4.9 The site itself is not subject to any designations, nor are there any within 2km and as such, no direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, due to the proximity of the site (10km) to North Somerset and Mendip Bat SAC and the nature of the proposed development, it was found that it could result in the destruction of bat roosts within the site.



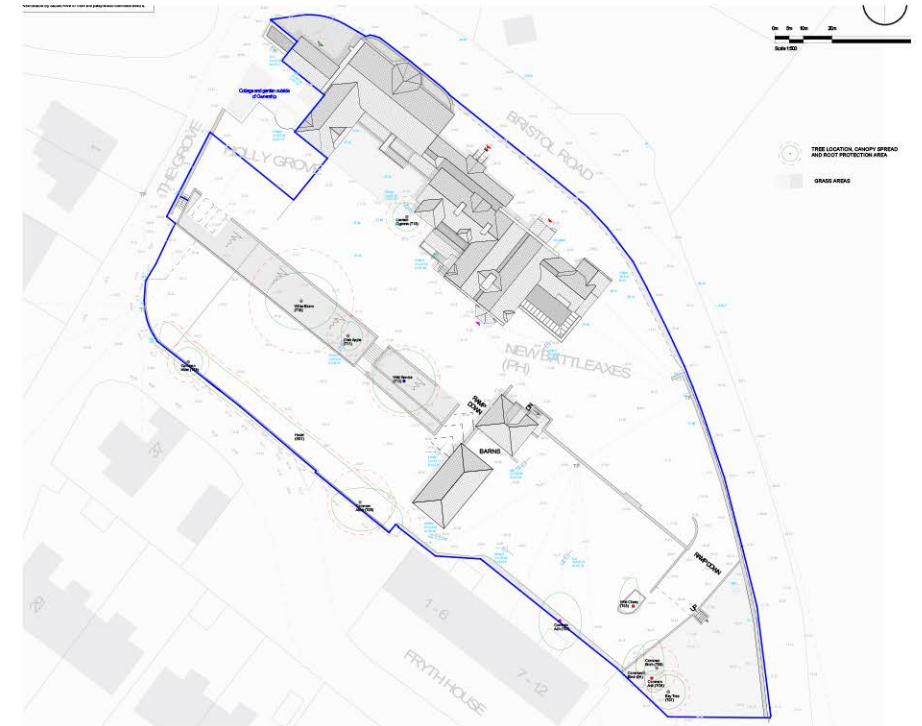
5. Project Description

Introduction

- 5.1 This report has been prepared to assess the landscape and visual amenity of the Site and resulting landscape and visual effects of the proposed development upon the receiving landscape and visual resource; considering both construction and operational phases of the proposals.
- 5.2 The description of development is as set out below:
- retention of ancillary bed & breakfast accommodation and part retention of licensed space, change of use of remainder to multi-use business and local community hub (including office and flexible work/collaboration/shop/café space falling within use class E and F(2)), internal re-configuration, internal and external fabric repairs and window replacement, refurbishment of boundary walls and out-buildings, hard and soft landscaping, circulation and car and cycle parking, together with rear two-storey extension with rooftop solar PV panels and the provision of modular 'pod' building and residential development at The Battleaxes, Wraxall.
- 5.3 As set out in the Design and Access Statement, the scheme consists of a change of use (in part), a range of internal and external works to the original building, together with the development of a modular 'pod' building and residential dwellings in the curtilage of the property, as visualised below.
- 5.4 The key components of the proposal seek to deliver the following:
- the re-use of brownfield land and the re-activation of a focal, vacant building into a thriving multi-use facility.
 - long term protection of a Listed Building.
 - new high-value job creation.
 - post-Covid restructuring and community regeneration through provision of multi-faceted/functional spaces.
 - sustainability and climate change resilience.



Proposed Site Plan



Existing Site Plan

Existing Site

- 5.5 Both the Design and Access Statement and the Heritage Impact Assessment provide an in-depth context to and analysis of the application building and the site.
- 5.6 The site sits on the edge of the Tyntesfield Estate against the busy B3130. Once an orchard, the site is now hard-surfaced with car parking covering most of the site.
- 5.7 The site contains a Grade II listed public house that dates back to 1882. Whilst two other ancillary buildings also located on site.
- 5.8 The tarmac parking areas provide the main source of new development potential. These are extensive, are not specifically referenced in the listing as providing any inherent value, and in many ways detract from the main building and its setting. Although as they are within the curtilage of the main building any new development must respect and where possible enhance the setting of the listed building.



Proposed Site Sections

Part of Green Belt

- 5.9 The application site is within the Green Belt and Chapter 13 of the Framework sets out that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.
- 5.10 Green Belt serves five purposes:
- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 5.11 Inappropriate development is, by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances (VSC) and decision takers should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt.

Enhancement

- 5.12 As outlined in the Design and Access Statement, a key vision for the project is to reinstate green spaces; replacing large hard surfacing areas with soft landscaping and shared garden.
- 5.13 The proposal sets out to enhance the greenbelt by bettering its 'setting' and 'character' through implementation of green infrastructure and elimination of brownfield;
- 5.14 The existing site has 2980 square metres of tarmacadam surface; 68% of Total Site Area and 85% of the site undeveloped area.
- 5.15 The proposal aims to reduce this with the intention on re-greening the site for both visual improvements and restoring the quality of the landscape to its once green past through the reinstatement of large lawns whilst also introducing landscaped gardens, tree avenues and planting beds.

Primary Mitigation

- 5.16 The replacement of felled trees plus the additions of further planting has been designed to help mitigate any sensitivity changes in landscape and/or visual impact.
- 5.17 Further thought in mitigation of both during construction and operation will include potential light, height, location of works and access.
- 5.18 Public consultation of design will allow key (high) receptors to provide opinion on impact and propose their own observations for an opportunity for further design of potential impact mitigation.



6. Landscape Assessment Criteria

- 6.1 Description and classification of existing landscape character has involved a review of published regional and sub-regional landscape character assessment information.
- 6.2 Local landscape character and landscape sensitivity has been defined by taking account of landform, hydrology, vegetation, settlement, land use pattern, and cultural and historic features and associations, consequently the landscape character has been categorised as follows:

Quality

- 6.3 Quality or condition relates to the physical state of the landscape and its intactness from the visual, functional and ecological perspectives, together with the state of repair of its constituent features or elements (e.g. hedgerows, woodlands, field pattern etc.). Local landscape quality within the study area has been considered based on the criteria described in the following table:

Table 1: Landscape Quality/Condition

| Landscape Quality/Condition | Typical Indicators |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Very High | All landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are in local vernacular and materials. No detracting elements are evident |
| High | Most landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Most buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Few detracting elements are evident |
| Medium | Some landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Some buildings are in local vernacular and materials and some detracting elements are evident |
| Low | Few landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Few buildings are in local vernacular and materials. Many detracting or incongruous elements are evident |
| Very Low | No landscape elements remain intact and in good repair. Buildings are not in local vernacular and materials. Detracting or incongruous elements are much in evidence |

Value

- 6.4 The value attributed to an area of landscape reflects communal perception at a local, regional, national or, occasionally, international scale. It is informed by a number of factors including scenic beauty, wildness, tranquillity and particular cultural associations. Cultural associations may be widely held at a national scale or more local in nature. Landscapes considered to be of the highest value would generally be formally designated at the national level, whereas those considered of lowest value would generally be undesignated, degraded landscapes, perhaps identified as being in poor condition and requiring either restoration or re-creation. Although value is largely determined by reference to statutory and planning policy designations, an absence of such designation does not necessarily imply the absence of value, as other factors such as scarcity or cultural associations can establish an area of otherwise unremarkable landscape as a valued local resource. The value of landscape character areas and designations has been determined using the criteria described in the following table:

Table 2: Landscape Value

| Landscape Quality/Condition | Typical Indicators |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Very High | Areas comprising a clear composition of valued landscape components in robust form and health, free of disruptive visual detractors and with a strong sense of place. Areas containing a strong, balanced structure with distinct features worthy of conservation. Such areas would generally be internationally or nationally recognised designations, e.g. AONB or National Parks |
| High | Areas primarily containing valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition and lacking prominent disruptive visual detractors. Areas containing a strong structure with noteworthy features or elements, exhibiting a sense of place. Such areas would generally be national statutorily designated areas. Such areas may also relate to the setting of internationally or nationally statutory designated areas, e.g. National Parks. Such areas may also relate to the setting of national statutorily designated areas, such as AONB. |
| Medium | Areas primarily of valued landscape components combined in an aesthetically pleasing composition with low levels of disruptive visual detractors, exhibiting a recognisable landscape structure. Such areas would generally be non-statutory locally designated areas such as Areas of Great Landscape Value |
| Low | Areas containing some features of landscape value but lacking a coherent and aesthetically pleasing composition with frequent detracting visual elements, exhibiting a distinguishable structure often concealed by mixed land uses or development. Such areas would be commonplace at the local level and would generally be undesignated, offering scope for improvement. |
| Very Low | Areas lacking valued landscape components or comprising degraded, disturbed or derelict features, lacking any aesthetically pleasing composition with a dominance of visually detracting elements, exhibiting mixed land uses which conceal the baseline structure. Such areas would generally be restricted to the local level and identified as requiring recovery. |

Character Sensitivity

- 6.5 Each landscape character area or designation is assessed for the sensitivity of its character to the introduction of the proposed development, taking into account its key characteristics, landscape elements, composition and cultural associations. Certain aspects of landscape character are particularly important indicators of the degree to which a landscape is likely to be able to successfully accommodate development. These include the general scale and complexity of its landforms and elements; the degree of enclosure or openness; the degree and nature of man-made influences upon it; and whether it offers particular experiences such as remoteness or tranquillity. The criteria used to determine the sensitivity of landscape character are set out in the following table:

Table 3: Character Sensitivity

| Character Sensitivity | Typical Indicators |
|-----------------------|--|
| Very High | <p>Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape susceptible to change and of high quality and condition.</p> <p>Scale and Enclosure: Small-scale landform/land cover/ development, human scale indicators, fine grained, enclosed with narrow views, sheltered.</p> <p>Man-made influence: Absence of man-made elements, traditional or historic settlements, natural features and 'natural' forms of amenity parkland, perceived as natural 'wild land' lacking in man-made features, land use elements and detractors</p> <p>Remoteness and Tranquillity: Sense of peace, isolation or wildness, remote and empty, no evident movement.</p> |
| High | Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Medium | <p>Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape of moderate susceptibility to change and of medium quality and condition.</p> <p>Scale and Enclosure: Medium-scale landform/land cover/ development, textured, semi-enclosed with middle distance views.</p> <p>Man-made influence: Some presence of man-made elements, which may be partially out of scale with the landscape and be of only partially consistent with vernacular styles.</p> <p>Remoteness and Tranquillity: some noise, evident, but not dominant human activity and development, noticeable movement.</p> |
| Low | Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low. |
| Very Low | <p>Landscape elements: Important elements of the landscape insusceptible to change and of low quality and condition.</p> <p>Scale and Enclosure: Large-scale landform/land cover/ development, Featureless, coarse grained, open with broad views.</p> <p>Man-made influence: Frequent presence of utility, infrastructure or industrial elements, contemporary structures e.g. masts, pylons, cranes, silos, industrial sheds with vertical emphasis, functional man-made land-use patterns and engineered aspects.</p> <p>Remoteness and Tranquillity: Busy and noisy, human activity and development, prominent movement</p> |

Visual Sensitivity of Landscape Areas:

- 6.6 The visual sensitivity of an area of landscape relates to its general level of openness, the nature and number of visual receptors present within a landscape, and the probability of change in visual amenity due to the development being visible. It should be noted that landscape visual sensitivity refers to the visual sensitivity of the entire landscape that is being assessed, rather than an assessment of the visual effects of a specific, individual development.
- 6.7 The following table provides an overview of the typical indicators of visual sensitivity, which can be used to give a transparent, reasoned judgement regarding landscape visual sensitivity.

Table 4: Landscape Visual Sensitivity

| Landscape Visual Sensitivity | Typical Indicators |
|------------------------------|---|
| Very High | <p>Visual interruption: Flat or gently undulating topography, few if any vegetative or built features.</p> <p>Nature of views: Densely populated, dispersed pattern of small settlements, outward looking settlement, landscape focused recreation routes and/or visitor facilities, distinctive settings, gateways or public viewpoints.</p> |
| High | Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Very High criteria but exceed those for Medium. |
| Medium | <p>Visual interruption: Undulating or gently rolling topography, some vegetative and built features.</p> <p>Nature of views: Moderate density of population, settlements of moderate size with some views outwards, routes with some degree of focus on the landscape.</p> |
| Low | Where, on the whole, indicators do not meet the Medium criteria but exceed those for Very Low. |
| Very Low | <p>Visual interruption: Rolling topography, frequent vegetative or built features.</p> <p>Nature of views: Unpopulated or sparsely populated, concentrated pattern of large settlements, introspective settlement, inaccessible, indistinctive or industrial settings.</p> |

- 6.8 The overall landscape sensitivity is derived by combining the assessed values attributed to landscape condition, landscape value, character sensitivity and effects on landscape elements and landscape

visual sensitivity, to define an overall value within the range of Very High, High, Medium, Low and Very Low.

- 6.9 Since each criterion has a varying weight in its contribution to sensitivity the overall value is determined by professional judgement.

Table 5: Magnitude of Change

| Magnitude | Description |
|-------------------|--|
| Large | Total loss of or major alteration to key valued elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements considered being prominent and totally uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be at a considerable variance with the landform, scale and pattern of the landscape. Would cause a high quality landscape to be permanently changed and its quality diminished. |
| Medium | Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be considered to be substantially uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Would be out of scale with the landscape, and at odds with the local pattern and landform. Will leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality. |
| Small | Minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not be uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. May not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape. Affect an area of recognised landscape character |
| Negligible | Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key elements, features, and characteristics of the baseline or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic when set within the attributes of the receiving landscape. Maintain existing landscape quality, and maybe slightly at odds to the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. |

Significance of Landscape Effects:

- 6.10 The significance of the landscape character effects is determined by the assessment of landscape sensitivity set against the magnitude of change as indicated by the matrix in Table 5.
- 6.11 For the purposes of this assessment and with the reference to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011, 'Significant' landscape effects would be those effects assessed to be severe, major or major/moderate and are indicated by the shading in the following table:

Table 6: Significance of Landscape Effects

| Magnitude | Sensitivity | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| | Very High | High | Medium | Low |
| Large | Major | Major | Major/Moderate | Moderate |
| Medium | Major | Major/Moderate | Moderate | Moderate/Minor |
| Small | Moderate | Moderate/Minor | Minor | Negligible |
| Negligible | Minor/Moderate | Minor | Minor/Negligible | Negligible |

7. Visual Assessment Criteria

7.1 In order to evaluate what the visual impact of the development will be and, if appropriate, what can be done, to ameliorate the impact, it is necessary to describe the existing situation to provide a basis against which any change can be assessed. The assessment of visual impact from any one location takes into account the:

- Sensitivity of the views and viewers (visual receptor) affected;
- Nature, scale or magnitude and duration of the change;
- Extent of the proposed development that will be visible;
- Degree of visual intrusion or obstruction that will occur;
- Distance of the view;
- Change in character or quality of the view compared to the existing.

Visual Receptors and Sensitivity

7.2 Visual impact assessment considers the sensitivity to change of visual receptors within the study area, and the magnitude of change associated with the introduction of the proposed development into the existing visual context.

7.3 A range of fixed visual receptors were considered, with emphasis placed on identification and selection of locations with a clear relationship to the proposed scheme where potential visual implications were deemed to be greatest. The key visual receptors normally include statutory and non statutory designated or protected areas, cultural heritage resources, residential properties and farmsteads, recreational/tourist resources, panoramic hilltop views, focused or directed views, and cumulative views. Viewpoints were selected to be representative of these visual receptor types.

7.4 The locations from which the proposed development will be visible are known as visual receptors. The assessment of visual sensitivity considers both the category of visual receptor and the nature of their existing view. It takes account of the location of the receptor or viewpoint; the expectations, occupation or activity of the people present; the quality of the existing visual context; and the importance or value likely to be attributed by them to the available view. It is therefore the case that not all receptors within a given category are deemed to display equal sensitivity.

7.5 In accordance with the GLVIA, for the purposes of the visual assessment, the visual receptors have been graded according to their sensitivity to change against criteria set out in the table below.

7.6 It is sometimes the case that different categories of visual receptor might be present at a selected viewpoint (e.g. a selected location may include both residential properties and workplaces suggesting different levels of sensitivity). In such cases the primary receptor category is identified (usually the more sensitive).

Table 7: Visual Receptor Sensitivity

| Receptor Sensitivity | Description |
|----------------------|---|
| High | Occupiers of residential properties; Users of outdoor recreational facilities, including public rights of way, whose attention or interest may be focused on the landscape; Communities where the development results in changes in the landscape setting or valued views enjoyed by the community. |
| Medium | People travelling through or past the affected landscape in cars, on trains or other transport routes where higher speeds are involved and views sporadic and short-lived; People engaged in outdoor recreation where enjoyment of the landscape is incidental rather than the main interest. |
| Low | People at their place of work, Industrial facilities. |

Magnitude of Change

7.7 The visibility of the proposals and the magnitude of their change upon a view and the resulting significance of visual effect are dependent on the range of factors already outlined, together with, the angle of the sun, the time of year and weather conditions. Of equal importance will be whether the site is seen completely, or in part; whether the site appears on the skyline; whether it is viewed with a backcloth of land or vegetation; or with a complex foreground; and whether the site forms part of an expansive landscape or is visible within a restricted view. The aspect of dwellings and whether the view is from a main window or a secondary window, which may be used less frequently, is also a consideration. From highways, the direction and speed of travel are also a consideration. In the assessment magnitude of change is ranked in accordance with the following table:

Table 8: Definition of Magnitude of Visual Impact

| Magnitude | Examples |
|-------------------|---|
| Very Large | The development would result in a dramatic change in the existing view and/or would cause a dramatic change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would appear large scale and/or form the dominant elements within the overall view and/or may be in full view the observer or receptor. Commanding, controlling the view. |
| Large | The development would result in a prominent change in the existing view and/or would cause a prominent change in the quality and /or character of the view. The development would form prominent elements within the overall view and/or may be easily noticed by the observer or receptor. Standing out, striking, sharp, unmistakable, easily seen. |
| Medium | The development would result in a noticeable change in the existing view and/or would cause a noticeable change in the quality and/or character of the view. The development would form a conspicuous element within the overall view and/or may be readily noticed by the observer or receptor. Noticeable, distinct, catching the eye or attention, clearly visible, well defined. |
| Small | The development would result in a perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or character of the view. The development would form an apparent small element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Visible, evident, obvious. |
| Very Small | The development would result in a barely perceptible change in the existing view, and/or without affecting the overall quality and/or would form an inconspicuous minor element in the wider landscape that may be missed by the observer or receptor. Lacking sharpness of definition, not obvious, indistinct, not clear, obscure, blurred, indefinite |
| Negligible | Only a small part of the development would be discernible and/or it is at such a distance that no change to the existing view can be appreciated. Weak, not legible, near limit of acuity of human eye. |

Significance of Visual Effect

- 7.8 The significance of the visual effects is determined by the assessment of receptor sensitivity set against the magnitude of change as indicated by the matrix in Table below.
- 7.9 For the purposes of this assessment and with reference to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011, 'Significant' landscape effects would be those effects assessed to be severe, major or major/moderate and are indicated by shading in the following table:

Table 9: Significance of Visual Effects

| Magnitude | Sensitivity | | |
|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | High | Medium | Low |
| Very Large | Major | Major | Major/Moderate |
| Large | Major | Major/Moderate | Moderate |
| Medium | Major/Moderate | Moderate | Moderate/Minor |
| Small | Moderate | Moderate/Minor | Minor |
| Very Small | Minor | Minor | Negligible |
| Negligible | Negligible | Negligible | Negligible |