

Appendix E.4 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Methodology

Great Billing Sand and Gravel Extraction and Restoration

Landscape and Visual Impact
Assessment (LVIA) Methodology

On behalf of

The logo for Anglian Water, featuring the word 'anglianwater' in a bold, blue, lowercase sans-serif font.

Project Ref: 30755 | Rev: Draft | Date: June 2017



Document Control Sheet

Project Name: Great Billing Sand and Gravel Extraction and Restoration

Project Ref: 30755

Report Title: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Methodology

Date: June 2017

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	R James	Assistant Landscape Architect		
Reviewed by:	N Jones	Landscape Associate		
Approved by:				
For and on behalf of Peter Brett Associates LLP				

Revision	Date	Description	Prepared	Reviewed	Approved

This report has been prepared by Peter Brett Associates LLP ("PBA") on behalf of its client to whom this report is addressed ("Client") in connection with the project described in this report and takes into account the Client's particular instructions and requirements. This report was prepared in accordance with PBA's Fee Proposal and Terms and Conditions addressed to the Client ("Appointment"). This report is not intended for and should not be relied on by any third party (i.e. parties other than the Client). PBA accepts no duty or responsibility (including in negligence) to any party other than the Client and disclaims all liability of any nature whatsoever to any such party in respect of this report.

Prohibition of copies:

This report is not to be copied to third parties without express consent from PBA.

© Peter Brett Associates LLP 2017

Contents

- 1 Introduction 1**
- 2 Potential Effects 2**
 - 2.2 Scoping Report..... 2
 - 2.3 Landscape Features..... 3
 - 2.4 Landscape Character 3
 - 2.5 People’s Views and Visual Amenity 4
- 3 Methodology 7**
 - 3.2 Baseline Data for the Landscape and Visual Assessment 7
 - 3.3 Site Appraisal and Photographic Record 8
 - 3.4 Assessment Stages..... 8
 - 3.5 Duration of Effects..... 8
 - 3.6 Nature of Effects..... 8
 - 3.7 Assessment of Landscape Effects 8
 - 3.8 Assessment of Effects on Views and Visual Amenity 13
 - 3.9 Landscape and Visual Mitigation Measures..... 15
 - 3.10 Assessment of Significance of Landscape and Visual Effects..... 15

This page is intentionally blank

1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) identifies and assesses the negative and positive effects and significance of change arising from the proposed development on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.

1.1.2 The Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment", (3rd Edition, 2013) notes in paragraph 1.17, page 9, in reference to the European Union Directive 2011/92/EU:

*'The Directive is clear that the emphasis is on the identification of **likely significant** environmental effects. This should embrace all types of effect and includes, for example, those that are positive/beneficial and negative/adverse, direct and indirect, and long and short term, as well as cumulative effects. Identifying significant effects stresses the need for an approach that is in proportion to the scale of the project that is being assessed and the nature of its likely effects. Judgement needs to be exercised at all stages in terms of the scale of investigation that is appropriate and proportional. This does not mean that effects should be ignored or their importance minimised but that the assessment should be tailored to the particular circumstances in each case.'*

1.1.3 The LVIA was carried out by chartered landscape architects at Peter Brett Associates LLP, a registered practice with the Landscape Institute and a corporate member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA).

2 Potential Effects

2.1.1 Potential landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development are those upon:

- a. Landscape features;
- b. Landscape character; and
- c. People's views and visual amenity.

2.2 Scoping Report

2.2.1 A Scoping Report was submitted to the Local Planning Authority in October 2015, including an outline of the proposed scope and methodology for the LVIA. Comments received in the Scoping Opinion regarding landscape and visual issues are summarised in **Table 1.1** below, together with how the LVIA responds to those comments:

Table 1.1: Summary of Scoping Report Responses

Consultees	Context	Comment of Consultee	Assessment Response
Northampton Borough Council	Viewpoints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In terms of Paragraphs 7.2.22 and 7.2.23 the list of visual receptors should include the residential area to the east and south of Ecton Brook Road and the Ecton Lane Travellers site. View points should be included in these locations.</i> 	These areas were re-visited on a site visit 18.10.2016, no views were found of the application site from either the residential area to the east and south of Ecton Brook Road or Ecton Lane Travellers site. Record photographs were taken however we do not consider it necessary to include these as viewpoints within the assessment.
Northamptonshire County Council	Viewpoints, landscape and visual effects, restoration proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Consider if there is a view of the development site and associated operations from locations identified by Northampton Borough Council (as above)</i> <i>The proposal for planting a screening belt of Poplar trees should carefully be considered in relation to how suitable it is in landscape terms</i> <i>The landscape and visual amenity impacts of the plant site and water and silt management areas also need to be assessed</i> 	The Poplar belt has been changed in the revised restoration plan to a belt of mixed native species woodland. The ZTV for the scheme is based on modelling the height of the plant and its visibility from the surrounding area. The landscape and visual assessment will consider each of the elements of the scheme (plant, water and silt management areas, and extraction areas) when assessing impacts.

Consultees	Context	Comment of Consultee	Assessment Response
The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire	Restoration proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We welcome the extra species rich grassland along the valley of the tributary brook;</i> • <i>The wet habitats look promising and need to complement and fit with all the various wet habitats that will be created in the adjacent permitted sites. It's important that the habitat created is seen as a whole complex which makes a major addition to the habitats and species of the Upper Nene Gravel pits SSSI and SPA;</i> • <i>We also welcome the creation of filed edge habitats within the arable restoration areas. These need to be contrived in such a way that the agricultural activities are unable to gradually erode them;</i> • <i>Our other caveat of course, as discussed, is that your consultants need to be able to show that what's proposed is feasible (right soil types, right amount and quality of water etc.) and that the areas are capable of being appropriately managed once created.</i> 	

2.3 Landscape Features

2.3.1 Landscape features of the site which will potentially be affected by the proposals include:

- a. Sections of hedgerow for access;
- b. The public right of way (TE10) running north to south through the site is likely to experience short term effects during the enabling works. The public right of way will remain open, and no diversions are anticipated as a result of the mineral extraction operations, however, an access road will cross the byway at one point and a temporary diversion is likely to be needed during construction of a bridge;
- c. Change in land use, from arable fields to mineral extraction areas during operation, and back to arable fields, new hedgerows and areas of habitat upon completion; and
- d. Temporary change to the sense of place arising during operation.

2.4 Landscape Character

- 2.4.1 The most significant effects on landscape character will be during the extraction phase as the arable fields of the site are converted to areas of gravel extraction. The nature of the effects caused during the enabling works will be reversible for the most part, and the character of the landscape will experience moderate beneficial effects through the restoration strategy.
- 2.4.2 The subsequent restoration will seek to enhance landscape structure in line with the character of the area, providing opportunity for positive landscape effects. Although the character of the site will be altered as a result of the extraction operations: the addition of field boundaries, wetland areas and waterbodies will have a positive effect on the landscape character of the area.

2.5 People's Views and Visual Amenity

- 2.5.1 A computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) was created to establish the theoretical extent to which the proposed development is likely to be visible in the surrounding area. The ZTV was used to guide the initial selection of representative viewpoints to be included within the visual impact assessment.
- 2.5.2 Adverse changes to views are likely to arise during operation, where views of arable fields will change to views of the sand and gravel extraction and associated plant.
- 2.5.3 There are likely to be positive changes to views upon completion as a result of the restoration scheme in which new hedgerows and area of habitat will be seen in addition to the restored arable fields.
- 2.5.4 The selection of viewpoints was made on the basis of the following types of publicly accessible viewpoints:
- representative viewpoints (for example, representing views of users of a particular footpath);
 - specific viewpoints (for example, a key view from a specific visitor attraction);
 - illustrative viewpoints (chosen to demonstrate a particular effect/specific issue); and
 - any important sequential views (for example, along key transport routes).
- 2.5.5 Potential visual receptors include:
- a. Users of the byway through the site and along the northern boundary of the eastern portion;
 - b. Users of other local public rights of way including the Nene Way long distance path;
 - c. People within the villages to the north and south of the site: the western edge of Ecton, the south-western edge of Earls Barton, the northern edge of Cogenhoe; and
 - d. Users of roads, in particular Lower Ecton Lane adjacent to the north of the site, the A45 and the B573;
 - e. People within the residential area to the east and south of Ecton Brook Road; and
 - f. People within Ecton Lane Travellers site.

2.5.6 As a result of reviewing the ZTV and potential visual receptors, the representative viewpoints set out in **Table 1.2** were considered likely to experience significant visual effects and were therefore used for the visual impact assessment.

Table 1.2: Selection of Representative Viewpoints for Visual Impact Assessment

Viewpoint Reference	Location	Reason for Inclusion
1	Byway at northern site boundary	Public right of way adjacent to site
2	Public right of way to west of Ecton	Land at higher elevation to site, on northern side of valley
3	Footbridge over A45 containing the Nene Way	Long distance path
4	Nene Way to north of River Nene	Long distance path
5	Church of St Mary the Virgin, Whiston	Grade I Listed Building
6	Footpath to east of Cogenhoe	Public right of way
7	Nene Rise, Cogenhoe	Residential area on edge of Cogenhoe village
8	Northamptonshire Round Route through Cogenhoe Conservation Area	Long distance path, Conservation Area
9	Footpath adjacent to Bowl Barrow 530 m north east of Rose Farm	Scheduled Monument, public right of way
10	Ecton Conservation Area	Conservation Area, land at higher elevation to site, on northern side of valley
11	Lower Ecton Lane	Road adjacent to northern site boundary
12	Byway through site	Public right of way through site
13	B573	View from an elevated section of the road
14	Edge of Earls Barton	View across valley from edge of residential area

- 2.5.7 Viewpoints which were identified as likely to experience visual effects that will not be significant, were scoped out for the visual impact assessment, and are set out in **Table 1.3**.

Table 1.3: Scoped Out Viewpoints

Viewpoint Location	Reasoning
Castle Ashby, Registered Park and Garden	Approximately 2km from site, intervening vegetation
Earls Barton Conservation Area	Intervening buildings
Great Billing Conservation Area	Enclosed within residential area – no intervisibility with site
Ecton Brook Linear Park	Enclosed by vegetation
Footpath to east of Ecton, passing South Lodge (Listed Building)	Intervening topography and vegetation
Earls Barton Motte Castle (Scheduled Monument)	Enclosed within residential area
Clifford Hill Motte Castle (Scheduled Monument)	Intervening vegetation, buildings and sewage works
Place House Moat and Fishpond (Scheduled Monument)	Overlapping layers of intervening vegetation
Residential area to the east and south of Ecton Brook Road	Intervening buildings within the residential area and intervening vegetation along the A45
Ecton Lane Travellers site	Intervening dense hedgerow and structures within the waste water treatment works.

3 Methodology

- 3.1.1 Peter Brett Associates LLP's methodology for LVIA is based on the Landscape Institute / Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (3rd Edition, 2013) (GLVIA3), combined with our professional experience and judgement.
- 3.1.2 The assessment of landscape and visual effects aims to be as objective as possible, however professional judgements are required to be made, as the "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" (3rd Edition, 2013) explains in paragraph 2.23, page 21:
- 'Professional judgement is a very important part of LVIA. Whilst there is some scope for quantitative measurement of some relatively objective matters, for example the number of trees lost to construction... much of the assessment must rely on qualitative judgements, for example about what effect the introduction of a new development of land use change may have on visual amenity, or about the significance of change in the character in the landscape and whether it is positive or negative.'*
- 3.1.3 The LVIA considers the effects on landscape (including landscape character) and people's views / visual amenity as separate assessment components.
- 3.1.4 The assessment of landscape and visual effects makes comparison with the baseline year of 2016 (Year 0). Three scenarios were identified for the assessment of effects: Year 1 – during enabling works, Year 9 – during extraction, reclamation and restoration (selected as a year of peak activity in excavation and reclamation works) and Year 35 – once restoration is complete and planting is assumed to have successfully established and grown to provide effective mitigation.
- 3.1.5 A ZTV plan was created, based upon the proposed development. This was generated by selecting spot locations within the plant and operations area and assigning maximum heights of 12m to those spot locations, to simulate the height of the plant. The ZTV computer software processes landform data and other selected features influencing the extent of visibility (visual barriers), for example, woodland and settlements, in order to identify the theoretical extent of the area from which the proposed development is likely to be visible. It is important to note that the ZTV illustrates the worst-case scenario, in that it will only take into account the landform and principal areas of woodland and settlements. In reality other features, such as hedgerows or street trees, are likely to provide additional filtering of views.

3.2 Baseline Data for the Landscape and Visual Assessment

- 3.2.1 A data trawl was undertaken to establish the baseline landscape and landscape character information, including topography, landscape planning designations and published sources of landscape character.
- 3.2.2 Sources of information for the data trawl include:
- Ordnance Survey OpenData for mapping;
 - Google Earth Pro for aerial photography;
 - Natural England, 2014. 'National Character Area profile: 89. Northamptonshire Vales', NE527. Sheffield: Natural England;
 - River Nene Regional Park, 2006. 'Current Landscape Character Assessment', [online] Available at: <http://www.nrpenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk/>;

- e. River Nene Regional Park, 2006. '*Historic Landscape Character Assessment*', [online] Available at: <http://www.rnrpenvironmentalcharacter.org.uk/>; and
- f. Natural England, 2015. '*Magic*' [online] Available at: <http://www.magic.gov.uk/>, for statutory and non-statutory designations.

3.3 Site Appraisal and Photographic Record

- 3.3.1 The site and surrounding area were visited and a photographic record to represent views of the selected assessment viewpoints was undertaken, in order to:
 - a. Determine the extent of visibility of existing built structures;
 - b. Determine the visibility of the proposed development, utilising the results from the ZTV plan to guide the field work;
 - c. Gain further understanding of the urban components which create the landscape character; and
 - d. Carry out the assessment of landscape and visual effects.

3.4 Assessment Stages

- 3.4.1 A three-stage assessment process was adopted for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, in accordance with the Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment guidelines. Firstly, the nature of receptors (sensitivity) was assessed. Secondly the nature of effects (magnitude) likely to result from the proposed development was assessed. Lastly, the significance of the identified landscape and visual effects on receptors was assessed, as required by the European Union Directive 2011/92/EU and UK Country Regulations.

3.5 Duration of Effects

- 3.5.1 Effects may be temporary, permanent or reversible over time. The following terminology was used to describe the duration of landscape and visual effects arising as a result of the development proposals:
 - a. Short term: less than 1 year;
 - b. Medium term: 1-15 years; and
 - c. Long term: longer than 15 years.

3.6 Nature of Effects

- 3.6.1 The nature of effects may be positive (beneficial) or negative (adverse) and direct or indirect. Direct effects are those which result directly from the development; whereas indirect, or secondary, effects may arise as a consequential change resulting from the development, for example: changes to offsite and downstream vegetation as a result of alterations to a drainage regime.

3.7 Assessment of Landscape Effects

- 3.7.1 This assesses how the proposed development will affect the landscape components of the site (the 'landscape fabric', for example: landform, land use, hedgerows and trees, public

rights of way, ponds or other features), and the key characteristics which contribute to its distinctive character (the 'landscape character').

- 3.7.2 A methodical consideration of each effect upon each identified landscape receptor was undertaken, in order to determine the significance of effects, in terms of:
- a. Value and susceptibility to change (sensitivity of the landscape receptor); and
 - b. Size / scale, extent, duration and reversibility (magnitude of the landscape effect).

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

- 3.7.3 The assessment of landscape receptor sensitivity combines judgements on the value attributed to the landscape receptor and the 'susceptibility to change' of the receptor to the specific type of development proposed.
- 3.7.4 The value of potentially affected landscape receptors was assessed, including landscape character and the individual elements or features which contribute to that landscape character. Landscapes may be valued at community, local, national or international levels. Existing landscape designations were taken as the starting point for the assessment, and the value of undesignated landscapes was also assessed.
- 3.7.5 **Table 1.4** sets out the relative importance of generic landscape designations and descriptions, identifying those designations applicable to the site and study area in the third column:

Table 1.4: Landscape Designations

Typical Designation	Description	Importance (Value)	Actual Designation Applicable to the Site and Surrounding Area
World Heritage Site	Unique sites, features or areas of international importance with settings of very high quality.	International (High)	N/A
National Park, AONB, Conservation Area, curtilage of Grade I, II and II* Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, Scheduled Monuments, Ancient Woodland	Sites, features or areas of national importance with settings of high quality.	National (High)	Conservation Areas (Ecton, Earls Barton, Cogenhoe); Registered Park and Garden (Castle Ashby); Listed Buildings; Scheduled Monuments
Special Landscape Areas, Areas of Great Landscape Value, Long distance footpaths	Sites, features or areas of regional importance with intact character.	Regional (High/ Medium)	Nene Way Long Distance Path
Areas of Local Landscape Importance, Designated Public Open Space, Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)	Sites, features or areas of district importance.	District (Medium or Low)	N/A
Probably no designation, local public right of way	General countryside area valued at the local level.	Local (Medium/ or Low)	General Countryside; local public rights of way, through and adjacent to site

3.7.6 Other factors which may influence landscape value are set out in **Table 1.5**.

Table 1.5: Factors Which Influence Landscape Value

Attribute	Criteria
Landscape Quality	Intactness or physical condition of the landscape or of the individual elements which contribute to landscape character.
Sense of Place	Aesthetic and perceptual qualities which create distinctiveness.
Scenic Quality	General appeal of the landscape to the senses.
Rarity	Rarity of landscape character areas, types or features.
Representativeness	Particular characteristic/feature/element considered an important example.
Cultural Interest	The presence of wildlife or cultural heritage interest which contributes positively to the landscape.
Recreation Value	Evidence that the landscape experience forms an important part of recreational activity, e.g. as established in guidebooks.
Associations	Relevant associations with notable figures, such as writers or artists, or events in history that contribute to landscape value.

3.7.7 Where appropriate, key individual components of the landscape, including particular features, notable aesthetic and perceptual qualities, were considered in terms of importance in their own right, including whether or not they can realistically be replaced. They were also judged on their contribution to the overall character and value of the wider landscape. For example, an intact landscape in good condition, where scenic quality, tranquillity, and/or cultural heritage features make a particular contribution to the landscape, or where there are important historical associations, is likely to be highly valued. Conversely, a degraded landscape in poor condition, with no particular scenic qualities or cultural interest is likely to be considered as low landscape value.

3.7.8 Susceptibility of landscape receptors to change arising from the proposed development were based upon the criteria set out in **Table 1.6**.

Table 1.6: Landscape Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Criteria
High	Little ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline landscape and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.
Medium	Some ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline landscape and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.
Low	Substantial ability to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline landscape and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.

3.7.9 An overall assessment of sensitivity was made for each landscape receptor, based on a combined judgement of the above criteria, using the typical scales set out in **Table 1.7**.

Table 1.7: Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape Sensitivity	Description
High	<p>An area possessing a particularly distinctive sense of place and character, and / or attributes which make a particular contribution to the landscape or landscape character, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in good condition; • highly valued for its scenic quality; • highly valued for its landscape character; • an area with a low tolerance to change of the type proposed; • cultural heritage features or walks with cultural associations; • valued for contribution to recreational activity; • important cultural or historic associations; • irreplaceable landscape features or character; • part of a long distance footpath.
Medium	<p>An area with a clearly defined sense of place and character, and / or attributes which contribute to the landscape or landscape character, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in moderate condition; • some scenic quality valued at a local or regional level; • landscape character intact and valued at a local or regional level; • an area with partial tolerance to change of the type proposed; • may be undesignated landscape.
Low	<p>An area with a weak sense of place or poorly defined character, and / or attributes which make a contribution to the landscape or landscape character, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in poor condition; • no particular scenic qualities; • disjointed or weak landscape character; • contains a high level of discordant or detracting features; • no cultural interest; • an area that is tolerant of substantial change of the type proposed; • undesignated landscape; • a degraded landscape; • strongly influenced by detracting land uses and buildings.

Magnitude of Landscape Effects

- 3.7.10 Development proposals can create either beneficial or adverse effects upon the landscape. The assessment of landscape and visual effects was based on the scale and massing of proposed development and the consequential effects upon landscape, landscape character and people's views and visual amenity.
- 3.7.11 The magnitude of a landscape effect was assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and degree of reversibility.
- 3.7.12 The size or scale of change in the landscape relates to the loss or addition of features in the landscape which are likely to result from the proposed development, and takes into account:
- a. The extent/proportion of landscape elements that are lost or added;

- b. The contribution of those elements to landscape character and the degree to which aesthetic/perceptual aspects are altered; and
- c. Whether the effect is likely to change the key characteristics of the landscape, which are critical to its distinctive character.

3.7.13 The criteria set out in **Table 1.8** was used to assess the size and scale of landscape effects, based on the degree of change that will occur as a result of the proposed development.

Table 1.8: Landscape Effects: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Criteria
Major adverse landscape effect	The proposals will result in a total change in the key characteristics of landscape character; will introduce elements totally uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving landscape such as its massing, scale, pattern and features; and/or will destroy or permanently degrade the integrity of landscape character; or is in total conflict with established planning objectives for landscape and visual elements of enhancement of the landscape; and/or result in a substantial or total loss, or alteration of key elements/features/characteristics.
Moderate adverse landscape effect	The proposals will result in a partial change in the key characteristics of landscape character; will introduce elements uncharacteristic to, out of scale or at odds with the attributes of the receiving landscape, such as its massing, scale, pattern and features; and/or will result in partial loss, or alteration of key elements/features/characteristics; or is in conflict with established planning objectives for landscape and visual elements of enhancement of the landscape.
Slight adverse landscape effect	The proposals will result in little change in the key characteristics of landscape character and will introduce elements that do not quite fit with the attributes of the receiving landscape such as its massing, scale, pattern and features; and/or will result in a minor loss or alteration of elements/features/characteristics; and/or contribute to degrading the landscape character.
Negligible adverse landscape effect	The proposals will result in a just discernible change to landscape character/elements/features/characteristics, which is not quite in keeping with the existing landscape and landscape character.
No change	The proposals will not cause any change to the landscape character/elements/features/characteristics.
Neutral effect	As a result of the proposals, there will be a change to the landscape elements/features/characteristics, but the change will be in keeping with, and complement, the existing landscape character such that the existing character is maintained and does not cause degradation or enhancement of the character.
Negligible landscape benefit	The proposals will result in a just discernible improvement to the landscape character/elements/characteristics, such as massing, scale, pattern or features.
Slight landscape benefit	The proposals will achieve a degree of fit with the landscape character/elements/features/characteristics and provides some enhancement to the condition or character of the landscape.
Moderate landscape benefit	The proposals will achieve a good fit with the landscape character/elements/features/characteristics, such as massing, scale, and pattern; or would noticeably improve the condition or character of the landscape and enhance characteristic features through the use of local materials; and/or support established planning objectives for landscape and visual elements of enhancement of the landscape.
Major landscape benefit	The proposals will totally accord with the landscape character/elements/features/characteristics, including scale, pattern, massing; or would restore, recreate or permanently enhance the condition or character of the landscape and enhance characteristic features through the use of local materials or planting; and/or delivers established planning objectives for landscape and visual elements of enhancement of the landscape.

3.8 Assessment of Effects on Views and Visual Amenity

- 3.8.1 This assesses how the proposed development will affect the views available to people and their visual amenity. A methodical consideration of each visual effect upon each identified visual receptor was undertaken, in order to determine the significance of effects, in terms of:
- a. Value and susceptibility to change (sensitivity of the visual receptor, or viewer); and
 - b. Size / scale, extent, composition, duration and reversibility (magnitude of the visual effect).
- 3.8.2 Visual receptors generally comprise users of public rights of way, public open spaces, public realm or other outdoor recreational facilities, and also travellers in vehicles who may be visiting, living or working within the study area, and their views at particular places.
- 3.8.3 The following terminology is used to describe the approximate distance between the representative viewpoint and the proposed development:
- a. Local: under 0.5km;
 - b. Medium distance: 0.5km – 2km;
 - c. Long distance: beyond 2km.
- 3.8.4 The type of view, and the number of viewers likely to experience the view, is described in the following terms:
- a. Glimpsed (i.e. in passing) / Filtered / Oblique / Framed / Open Views; and
 - b. Few / Moderate / Many Viewers.
- 3.8.5 No private viewpoints were assessed. However, where appropriate, representative viewpoints were selected from publicly accessible locations within or on the edge of main settlements, property groupings or other buildings likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

- 3.8.6 The assessment of visual receptor sensitivity combines judgements on the value attributed to the visual receptor and the 'susceptibility to change' of the receptor to the specific type of development proposed.
- 3.8.7 The value assigned to views has regard to a number of factors, including:
- a. Recognition through planning or heritage assets; and
 - b. The popularity of the viewpoint, its appearance in guidebooks, literature or art, on tourist maps, and the facilities provided to enable enjoyment of the view.
- 3.8.8 The criteria for the assessment of the value of views is summarised **Table 1.9**; note that these are provided for guidance and are not intended to be absolute.

Table 1.9: Value of Views

Value	Criteria
-------	----------

Value	Criteria
High	Views from landscapes/viewpoints of national importance, or highly popular visitor attractions where the view forms an important part of the experience, or with important cultural associations.
Medium	Views from landscapes/viewpoints of regional/district importance or moderately popular visitor attractions where the view forms part of the experience, or with local cultural associations.
Low	Views from landscapes/viewpoints with no designations, not particularly popular as a viewpoint and with minimal or no cultural associations.

3.8.9 The susceptibility of people to changes in views is a function of:

- a. The occupation or activity of the viewer at a given location; and
- b. The extent, therefore, to which a person’s attention or interest may be focussed on a particular view and the visual amenity experienced.

3.8.10 For the purposes of the visual impact assessment, visual receptors’ susceptibility to change was based upon the criteria in **Table 1.10**.

Table 1.10: Visual Receptor Susceptibility to Change

Susceptibility	Type of Receptor
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents; - People engaged in outdoor recreation, including users of public rights of way, whose attention is likely to be focussed on the visual environment of the landscape and on particular views; - Visitors to heritage assets, landmarks or other attractions where views of the surroundings are an important part of the experience; - Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents; and - Travellers on scenic routes.
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travellers on road, rail or other transport routes, where the view is moderately important to the quality of the journey (e.g. on a scenic route); - People using local parks, open spaces, public realm, or walking on streets or local public rights of way, with moderate interest in their visual environment.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation, which does not involve appreciation of, or focus upon, views; - People at their place of work, where the landscape setting is not important to the quality of working life; and - Travellers, where the view is fleeting and incidental to the journey.

Magnitude of Visual Effects

3.8.11 The magnitude of a visual effect was assessed in terms of its size or scale, the geographical extent of the area influenced and its duration and degree of reversibility.

3.8.12 The size or scale of change in the view relates to the degree of contrast to, or integration with, the visual composition, which is likely to result from the proposed development; and is influenced by the relative time over which a view is experienced and whether it is a full, partial or glimpsed view.

3.8.13 The criteria set out in **Table 1.11** was used to assess the size and scale of visual effects, based on the degree of change to the view or composition:

Table 1.11: Visual Effects: Size/Scale of Change

Category	Criteria
----------	----------

Major adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a dominant or complete change or contrast to the view, resulting from the loss or addition of features in the view and will substantially alter (degrade or enhance) the appreciation or composition of the view.
Moderate adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a clearly noticeable change or contrast to the view, which would have some effect on the composition, resulting from the loss or addition of features in the view and will noticeably alter (degrade or enhance) the appreciation of the view.
Slight adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a perceptible change or contrast to the view, but which would not materially affect the composition or the appreciation of the view.
Negligible adverse or beneficial visual effect	The proposals will cause a barely perceptible change or contrast to the view, which would not affect the composition or the appreciation of the view.
No change	The proposals will maintain the existing view and cause no change to the view.
Neutral	There will be a change to the composition of the view, but the change will be entirely in keeping with the existing elements of the view and maintain the composition of the existing view.

3.9 Landscape and Visual Mitigation Measures

3.9.1 Measures proposed for preventing/avoiding, reducing or, where possible, offsetting or compensating for significant adverse landscape or visual effects is described. Mitigation measures comprise:

- a. Primary measures – developed through the iterative design process, and which have become integrated or embedded into the project/scheme design, such as site layout, retention of existing trees, use of vernacular materials or appropriate form, detailed design, colours and finishes, new street tree planting, or incorporation of key views and vistas;
- b. Standard construction and operational management practices – for avoiding and reducing environmental effects, such as hoardings around buildings or tree protection fencing; and
- c. Secondary measures – proposals to address residual adverse effects which remain after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme.

3.9.2 Primary mitigation measures and standard construction and operational management practices are described within **Chapter 3: The Proposed Development** of the Environmental Statement.

3.9.3 Secondary mitigation measures, if required, are described in the LVIA.

3.10 Assessment of Significance of Landscape and Visual Effects

3.10.1 Significance of landscape and visual effects vary with the location, landscape context and type of proposed development.

3.10.2 The significance of landscape and visual effects was determined from a combination of the receptor sensitivity and the magnitude of effects, as set out in **Table 1.12**.

Table 1.12: Assessment of Significance of Landscape and Visual Effects

Sensitivity of Receptor	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Slight Effect	Negligible Effect	Neutral Effect
-------------------------	--------------	-----------------	---------------	-------------------	----------------

Sensitivity of Receptor	Major Effect	Moderate Effect	Slight Effect	Negligible Effect	Neutral Effect
High	Severe Significance	Major Significance	Moderate Significance	Minor Significance	Not Significant
Medium	Major Significance	Moderate Significance	Minor Significance	Not Significant	Not Significant
Low	Moderate Significance	Minor Significance	Minor Significance	Not Significant	Not Significant

3.10.3 The above table has regard to guidance in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, (3rd Edition, 2013), at paragraph 5.56, page 92 (significance of landscape effects) and paragraph 6.44, page 116 (significance of visual effects).

3.10.4 For the purposes of the LVIA, 'Moderately Significant' effects will also be considered as significant, but to a lesser degree than (wholly) 'Significant' effects.