



Landscape and Visual Appraisal

Heathlands Riding Est, Heathlands Rd, Wokingham

July 2025

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REVISIONS:

Date	Rev	Description	Initials
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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has been prepared by David Paginton who is a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI) and Practitioner Member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (PIEMA). David is also a professional member of the Arboricultural Association (M.Arbor.A).
- 1.2 This landscape and visual appraisal (LVA) is prepared to support a planning application submission for 10 dwellings with associated access and landscaping.
- 1.3 In line with the guidelines of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) GLVIA 3, this landscape appraisal takes a 'proportionate' approach, taking into consideration the scale, extent and nature of the proposals and the anticipated sphere of influence and effect the proposals are considered to have upon the surroundings.
- 1.4 The objective of the LVA is to assess the baseline landscape and visual character of the site and study area, and the potential landscape and visual effects that would arise from the proposals, including the proposed access and landscaping.
- 1.5 The LVA considers the potential effects of the proposals on:
- Landscape elements and features such as vegetation, topography and water bodies etc.,
 - Visual amenity; and
 - Landscape character.
- 1.6 The primary objectives of the LVA are as follows:
- To identify, describe and evaluate the current landscape character of the site and its surrounding area;
 - To identify, describe and evaluate any notable individual landscape elements and/or features within the site;
 - To determine the sensitivity of the landscape to the type of development proposed;
 - To identify potential visual receptors (i.e. people who would be able to view the proposed development) and to evaluate their sensitivity to the type of changes proposed; and

- To identify and describe any effects of the proposals in so far as they affect the landscape and/or views and to evaluate the magnitude of change owing to those effects.

Site Visit

- 1.7 The visual assessment was undertaken at the end of April 2025 when foliage was largely present. Consideration has also been given to the effect on visibility in winter months due to the absence of foliage, and summer due to the presence of foliage.

Caveats

- 1.8 It is acknowledged that by virtue of carrying out the 'visual' element of this assessment, the author has an inherent 'bias' against the proposals to which this report relates. When carrying out the site visit and taking photos from the chosen viewpoint locations (from publicly accessible areas and vantage points), the report's author is actively and deliberately 'looking' for the 'site' within the local landscape.
- 1.9 In reality, visual receptors such as users of the public rights of way network and motorists alike will not 'actively' be 'looking' for the site whilst traversing the public rights of way and road network. Whilst each visual receptor will have a varying degree of appreciation for their surroundings, depending on what they are doing (playing sport, walking, driving), their efforts will typically not be concerned with 'actively' and 'deliberately' looking for any given 'site' or 'proposed development'.
- 1.10 The photoviews were accurate at the time they were taken. Site conditions can be subject to change, for example garden and field boundary hedgerows can be cut/trimmed by landowners/farmers, trees can be felled by landowners or blown over by adverse weather, and new trees can be planted. Therefore, the extent of visibility can potentially increase or decrease since the photoviews were taken. Such eventualities are not within the control of the report's author. The assessment of visibility within photoviews is accurate at the time of writing.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 This LVA has been undertaken with regard to the following best practice guidance:

- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) – Landscape Institute/Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA);
- TGN 06/19 Visual Representation of development proposals - Landscape Institute/Institute 2019

2.2 As recommended within the published guidance, landscape (elements and character) and visual effects are assessed separately.

APPENDIX 1 – METHODOLOGY

2.3 For the purposes of this assessment, unless otherwise stated, changes to landscape and visual amenity as a result of the proposed development are considered to be permanent and non-reversible.

Format of Report

2.4 After the first section of the report sets out the baseline scenario and includes a policy review, the second part (the assessment part) of the report will focus on two key elements of landscape and visual assessment.

2.5 There are two important ways any development proposals can affect the landscape.

- Visually, or
- Physically.

Visual Assessment

2.6 Of the two ways, how the proposals are perceived visually in the landscape is perhaps the most important consideration and has a bearing upon mitigation by design, such

as any proposed planting recommendations, the siting of the proposals, the scale and materials used.

Landscape Character and Quality of the Proposals/Design

- 2.7 Once the visual amenity of the site is understood, the focus then lies with the character, the physical being and quality of the design of the proposals. A site not widely visible with the surroundings is no excuse for bad design and proposals that do not emulate local character and anchor themselves to their setting.
- 2.8 The section focusing on landscape character will include detailing the different elements of the proposals (such as planting, height and massing, materials, access and parking, and lighting), and setting out how the design team have designed the proposals to accord with local policy and design guidance recommendations.

3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policy and in combination these policies give the Government's vision of sustainable development. The NPPF emphasises the need for good design, promoting healthy communities and conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 3.2 Regarding landscape and green infrastructure, the Natural Environment section of the NPPF provides a policy context for open countryside and green infrastructure. The key objectives are to protect valued landscapes and, where possible, provide net gains in biodiversity.
- 3.3 The NPPF has been of material consideration as part of our assessment of the site and its setting, and the proposals shall take on board the overall framework guidance and principles contained within the NPPF.

Local Planning Policy

Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework Adopted Core Strategy

Development Plan Document January 2010

3.4 The following policies are of most relevance to the proposals in landscape terms:

CP3 - General Principles for development

Planning permission will be granted for proposals that:

- a) Are of an appropriate scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area together with a high quality of design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land users including open spaces or occupiers and their quality of life;
- b) Provide a functional, accessible, safe, secure and adaptable scheme;
- c) Have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape (including river valleys) or geological features or water courses.
- d) Maintain or enhance the ability of the site to support fauna and flora including protected species;
- e) Use the full potential of the site and contribute to the support for suitable complementary facilities and uses;
- f) Contribute to a sense of place in the buildings and spaces themselves and in the way they integrate with their surroundings (especially existing dwellings) including the use of appropriate landscaping;
- g) Provide for a framework of open space in secure community use achieving at least 4.65 ha/1,000 population provision together with recreational/sporting facilities in addition to private amenity space;
- h) Contribute towards the provision of an appropriate sustainable network of community facilities;
- i) Do not lead to a net loss of dwellings and other residential accommodation or land; and
- j) Do not lead to a loss of community or recreational facilities/land or infrastructure unless suitable alternative provision is available.

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 Masterplans, Development Briefs, Concept Statements and Design Codes.

CP9 – Scale and location of development proposals

The scale of development proposals in Wokingham borough must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location, together with their accessibility. Development proposals (in addition to the Strategic Development Locations in policies CP18-21) within development limits will be acceptable in:

- 1) The major development locations of Earley, Green Park, Shinfield (North of M4), Twyford, Winnersh, Wokingham and Woodley;
- 2) The modest development locations of Arborfield Garrison, Pinewood (Crowthorne), Finchampstead North, Ruscombe, Shinfield, Spencers Wood, Three Mile Cross and Wargrave.
- 3) The limited development locations of Arborfield Cross, Barkham Hill, Charvil, Finchampstead, Hurst, Riseley, Sindlesham, Sonning and Swallowfield.
- 4) The boundary of the Science Park proposed under policy CP16 as defined in the Managing Development Delivery DPD.

Affordable housing on rural exception sites will be permitted adjoining the Development Limits of Modest or Limited Development Locations, if a need is demonstrated for residents, workers or other people with family connections within the Parish Council's area.

Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document 2014

- 3.5 This document has various policies which the proposals must accord with in terms of architectural detailing, design quality, site layouts etc, all of which are relevant, but are not exactly 'landscape' considerations.
- 3.6 The following are considered the most pertinent to this report and the proposals in landscape terms.

Policy TB21: Landscape Character

1. Proposals must demonstrate how they have addressed the requirements of the Council's Landscape Character Assessment, including the landscape quality; landscape strategy; landscape sensitivity and key issues.
2. Proposals shall retain or enhance the condition, character and features that contribute to the landscape.

Wokingham Borough Design Guide SPD June 2012

3.7 The design guide has various sections relating to types of development, and requirements asked of developers and what information must be included in application submissions. The guide has various policies which the proposals must accord with in terms of architectural detailing, design quality, site layouts etc, all of which are relevant, but are not exactly 'landscape' considerations.

3.8 The following are considered the most pertinent to this report and the proposals in landscape terms.

G1: Development must respond positively to its site and local context, including;

- Topography and orientation of the site;
- Existing natural and landscape features of value, including the countryside, the Green Belt, mature trees, hedges and field patterns, ponds, rivers and wetlands etc;
- Heritage assets and their settings, for instance archaeological features, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and conservation areas;
- The local settlement pattern and network of routes; and
- Neighbouring properties.

G8: Development proposals should minimise their environmental impact and, where mitigation is necessary, this should be designed into proposals as a positive feature, wherever possible.

R12: Boundary treatments should be designed to contribute positively to the character of the areas and to the quality of the public realm.

G2: Development must create a sense of place that responds positively to the character of the local area in terms of urban design, architecture, landscape and public realm qualities.

R1: Residential development should be designed to contribute positively towards the historic or underlying character and quality of the local area. This may be achieved through blending in with a strongly positive existing character, responding where relevant to the positive elements of its historic context or, where the site is large enough to allow for a distinctive identity to be created, by establishing a new character that relates well to the existing.

R2: New housing should respond to its context, in particular taking opportunities presented by the physical characteristics of the site and surroundings, including

- incorporating existing features of value into the proposals, such as existing buildings, structures, landscape, rivers, ponds and wetlands, trees and hedgerows;
- capitalising on the potential offered by the land form and orientation of the site;
- relating well to neighbouring land uses and properties; and
- being designed to minimise and/ or mitigate any potential adverse environmental impacts relating to such issues as ecology, drainage and noise.

RD1: New development and associated landscape should retain, incorporate and enhance features that contribute towards the landscape character and biodiversity of the area.

RD3: The location and design of new development must respond to and should not harm the setting of the village in the landscape.

RD5: New development in the rural area should respond to the typical forms of buildings in the village or locality.

RD8: The relationships between public and private space and the transition between them in new developments should relate to the existing character of the village.

RD2: New development associated with existing villages or hamlets should retain, enhance and incorporate some of the existing features and characteristics of the settlement pattern, wherever possible.

RD4: New development must be carefully composed in relation to important views into or out of a village, so that the setting of the village in the landscape is maintained or enhanced.

RD7: New buildings should respond to the materials, details and colours that may be distinctive to a locality.

RD9: The location, siting and design of new development on the edge of settlements must be carefully designed to:

- create an edge to the built up area with a character that relates to the local pattern; and
- incorporate soft landscape to soften the edge of settlements and to help integrate new housing into its rural setting.

4 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL BASELINE

- 4.1 This report takes a considered and ‘proportionate’ approach to the assessment of likely landscape and visual effects associated with the proposals.

Site Location

- 4.2 The site is located to the north west of Crowthorne and the south of Gardeners Green. The site is positioned within a triangular area between Nine Mile Ride B3430 to the south, Heathlands Road to the west, and Hatch Ride to the north. The site comprises of the existing Heathlands Riding School, which includes existing buildings, a menage, areas of hardstanding, fencing, and delivery and access areas.

APPENDIX 2 – SITE LOCATION PLAN

- 4.3 By the nature of the site’s location, and considering the scale and extent of the proposals, the anticipated influence of the proposals will be extremely localised and well contained. By virtue of the sites enclosed nature, visual amenity is likely to be limited and confined to the immediate areas enclosing the site.
- 4.4 Effects upon character will be limited to the immediate environs as this appraisal will confirm.

Scale of the site

- 4.5 It is useful to identify the scale of the site area, to better understand how this relates to its surroundings, and what the potential scale of the proposals could be in relation to the site. The site is a medium sized parcel of land as shown on the landscape features plans (appendix 3).

Scale of the proposals

- 4.6 It is useful to identify the scale of the proposals in relation to the site, to better understand how the proposals relate to the site itself, how much of the site is being developed, and what the potential visual sphere of influence is anticipated to be, in respect of the proposals.

- 4.7 The proposals relate to developing the site for residential development and associated access and landscaping. Only a small/medium part of the site will be developed for built form components of the development, with the rest proposed as soft landscaped gardens associated with each plot. The proposals are large in comparison to the site area, with all of the site being developed for residential development, combining both built form and residential garden areas.

Scale of visual influence upon surroundings

- 4.8 The site is considered a medium sized site, and the proposals are large. The site visit and visual assessment confirm and support the authors view that the sphere of influence of the proposals upon its surroundings is very localised on account of the intervening vegetation and built form as shown in the viewpoints taken as part of the visual appraisal.
- 4.9 Having identified the anticipated sphere of influence the scale of the proposals are likely to have on its surroundings, the focus of this appraisal can be narrowed to an area of study 'proportionate' to the scale, extent and nature of the proposals.
- 4.10 Visual amenity and landscape character will be assessed as part of this appraisal. It is prudent to note, however, that the scale of the proposals is not considered likely to have any effect greater than negligible upon the character of the national and local character areas in their entirety, given these are large geographic areas by comparison. Given the enclosed nature of the site (as identified on the enclosure plans within appendix 3), any effects identified within this appraisal are likely to be in relation to the site and its immediate environs, to the extent shown on the viewpoint location plan (appendix 7) as this appraisal will demonstrate.
- 4.11 The following section describes the individual elements, attributes, and key characteristics of the existing site and local landscape, which together contribute to an understanding of the landscape character.

APPENDIX 3 – LANDSCAPE FEATURES PLANS

4.12 The following physical landscape attributes will be described;

- Topography and Landform
- Hydrology and Water Features
- Landscape Framework – Tree and Vegetation Cover
- Public Rights of Way
- Public Highways and Transport Corridors
- Settlement Pattern and Built Form
- Landscape Designations
- Landscape Character

Topography/Landform

4.13 The site is located at the 71-72m AOD contours. The landscape surrounding the site gently undulates, with landform gently undulating in all directions. The landform undulates between 65-75m AOD immediately adjacent to the site.

4.14 The site is not in an elevated position relative to its surroundings.

Hydrology and Water Features

4.15 There are no water features within the site.

Landscape Framework – Tree and Vegetation Cover

4.16 The site is located in a landscape that contains dense vegetation in various forms. There are lots of dense large woodland blocks in the host landscape, aligning either side of Nine Mile Ride, Heathlands Road and Honey Hill. The landscape is very well treed, with a strong vegetated network of roads, with pockets of housing and commercial areas enclosed by trees.

Public rights of way

4.17 The site does not have public access. The closest right of way is immediately north along Hatch Ride. There is one other rights of way are located south of Nine Mile Ride, to the west of Heath Lake.

- 4.18 The photoview location plan (appendix 7) identifies other public rights of way in the immediate area.

Public Highways and Transport Corridors

- 4.19 The site is located immediately south of Hatch Ride, which is the closest road to the site. None Mile Ride is located south, Honey Hill to the east, and Heathlands Road to the west.

Landscape Designations

- 4.20 The site is not located within or adjacent any nationally protected landscapes.
- 4.21 The local designations mapping show the site is within 'countryside' where policy CP9 of the core strategy 'Scale and location of development proposals' applies to the site and proposals.
- 4.22 The site is located within a Valued Landscape as set out in the Valued Landscapes Topic Paper, within the Forest and Rides Valued Landscape.

APPENDIX 4 – DESIGNATIONS

Landscape Character

- 4.23 Landscape character assessments are documented at national, regional and local levels, and vary greatly in their level of detail, dependant on the scale and complexity of the landscape to which each assessment relates.
- 4.24 Landscape character assessments at national level for example provide more high level and generic descriptions for much wider geographic areas, compared to more local level assessments which provide more detailed descriptions and recommendations for much smaller local areas.
- 4.25 Therefore, to provide a robust assessment in respect of landscape character in relation to any proposal/development, it is of key importance to carry out a bespoke character assessment of any given project site and the local 'receiving' landscape

within which the site is located and has the potential to affect as a result of the proposals being implemented.

4.26 The following have therefore been carried out to better understand the landscape character of the site and local landscape (appendix 6);

- Review of relevant national, regional, local landscape character assessments and identify characteristics of the site and local landscape;
- Complete a character field survey sheet, undertaken at the time of the site visit; and photographic record.

Review of National, Regional and Local Landscape Character Assessments

4.27 The site and the surrounding landscape have previously been assessed as part of a number of published landscape character assessments. These published landscape character assessments form a hierarchy from the national level to the district/local level.

National Landscape Character

4.28 England is divided in to 159 National Landscape Character Areas (NCAs). The site is located within NCA 129 'Thames Basins Heaths'.

4.29 Whilst it is considered good practice and appropriate to consider national character assessments when considering the effects of proposals upon landscape character, the proposals to which this report relates are so small in nature, scale and extent that assessments against national character assessments are not considered appropriate.

4.30 It is considered that at this small scale of project there would be no material change to the key characteristics of the NCA within the wider landscape as identified above.

Local Landscape Character

4.31 A desktop study was undertaken to find relevant information on landscape character in respect of the site and proposals. The main document readily available for

reference, relative to landscape character assessment was the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment 2008.

4.32 The Landscape Character Assessment shows the site is positioned as being within Landscape Character Type M 'Forested and Settled Soils', within the landscape character area M1 'Forested and Settled Sands'.

4.33 Key characteristics are set out below.

Key Characteristics

- **An elevated landscape** rising to 90m AOD, comprising a shelving plateau, underlain by acidic sands. The infertile sandy soils influence land cover and ecological character.
- **Large swathes of interconnected forestry and woodland** dominate the area, which has little farmland. These consist of large coniferous plantations as well as mixed woodlands with sandy heaths. Stands of Scots Pine and exotic species are particularly distinctive.
- **A number of large lakes**, including Longmoor Lake, King's Mere and Queen's Mere, originally excavated in late 19th century for brick making, now form a focus for recreation.
- **The underlying heathland character** typifies areas of woodland clearings such as California Park and adjacent to roads.
- **Rich semi-natural habitats** associated with the poorly draining acidic soils including BAP priority habitat lowland heathland and lowland dry acid grassland. Large acidic lakes or meres are surrounded by wetland and wet woodland; Longmoor Bog and Heath Lake are nationally important SSSIs.
- **Long straight roads** such as Nine Mile Ride (which originated as historic 'rides' created through the historically open landscape of the Royal Forest of Windsor) give a strong linear character to the landscape. Characterised by roadside rhododendron 'hedges' and occasional colourful patches of gorse and heather.
- **The locally listed historic park at Ravenswood**, which originated as a medieval deer park within the Royal Forest of Windsor.
- **Strong settlement character**, with a low density pattern of detached houses lining the historic rides, which have provided a framework for settlement. Residential properties of relatively unremarkable post-war and modern suburban character in a variety of styles.
- **Good public accessibility** including formal parks such as California Country Park, LNR (including Longmoor Bog and Heath Lake) and areas of open access Forestry Commission land (such as Gorrick Plantation) connected by a network of bridleways and footpaths.
- **Localised area of remoteness** within woodlands and smaller areas of pasture, mire and heath, which provide a sense of tranquility.
- **A highly enclosed landscape** created by the often continuous swathes of dense woodland, except for framed views along the rides.

4.34 The valued landscape attributes are as follows;

Valuable Landscape Attributes

- **The elevated plateau and wooded skyline** visible and forming a backdrop in the wider landscape.
- **Large expanses of mixed woodland containing mature trees** which are important ecological habitats and provide a sense of place and history as well as opportunities for recreation. Stands of Scots pine provide characteristic landmark features.
- **The distinctive pattern of interconnected woodland and forestry, interspersed with sandy heaths, lakes, bogs and wet woodland** and occasional pastoral fields which provide scenic quality and visual diversity (a variety of colours and textures and changing seasonal interest) and provide a naturalistic sense of place to the suburban development.
- **Acid heathland, large lakes and bogs** which provide nationally important BAP priority habitats, nationally recognised as SSSIs, as well as opportunities for recreation.
- **Distinctive long straight historic roads following the route of rides through the former Royal Forest of Windsor** which provide a cultural record of the past as well as allowing views into a landscape well enclosed by trees.
- **The locally listed historic park at Ravenswood**, one of only four medieval deer parks in the district.
- Settlement pattern of low density post-war properties in large plots along long straight rides and notably **the occasional wooded gaps between areas of settlement**. Integration of development in the wooded landscape and absence of commercial, industrial buildings /large or tall built structures.

- **Valued areas for recreation** including tracts of open access land and the extensive network of bridleways and public footpaths which allow enjoyment of the landscape.
- **The continuous network of woodland and forestry which helps to provide physical and visual separation between settlements** and to filter and screen views to the settlements within the area, as well as provide an attractive setting to housing.
- **Important vistas to the Wellingtonia Avenue** (within LCA M2) which provides a sense of place.
- **Localised areas with a sense of tranquility and even remoteness**, removed from the roads and visual influence of settlement, which provide an escape in close proximity to the urban population.

4.35 The landscape condition is as follows;

Landscape Condition

The landscape is in overall **good condition**, with a distinctive pattern of built and natural elements, including woodland, wetland, open pasture, and heathland habitats, with large lakes, continuous interconnected forestry and a cohesive settlement character. Although much of this landscape has a 'suburban' character it does have a very strong sense of place; however there has been fragmentation of heathland and wetland habitats.

4.36 The key issues are as follows;

Key Issues

- Changes in deciduous woodland structure through loss of species diversity and spread of sycamore, rhododendron and other invasive/exotic species. The expansion of the coniferous content of woodlands in the past has resulted in a change in character of the woodlands and had a negative impact on the ground flora. However, there are positive signs that woodlands are being brought back into management.
- Effects on tree health or species composition of woodland and heathlands as a consequence of pathogens and climate change.
- The influence of woodland fell cycles within forestry has an influence on wider landscape character, particularly along wooded ridgelines.
- Changes in management that could result in loss and fragmentation of heathland or wetland habitats as a result of scrub encroachment or conversion to forestry.
- Drainage operations associated with development altering ground water levels and affecting wetland habitats.
- High demands for recreation due to proximity to large centres of population, particularly mountain biking and quad biking, leading to erosion and impact on tranquillity. Erosion of rights of way, special archaeological, ecological and other landscape features is a continuing concern in this well-populated area.
- Pressure for intensification of golf courses that have an impact on the character of the landscape.
- Pressure for new residential development and supporting infrastructure, both inside and outside the area, impacting on landscape character. Development of a new settlement at the Arborfield Garrison SDL and the extension of the existing Hogwood Industrial Estate immediately to the west of the LCA (in adjoining LCA J2) could potentially impact California Country Park.
- Continued pressure for expansion, infill and densification within existing settlements, particularly at Crowthorne, leading to loss of open pasture, heathland and woodland habitat and potential amalgamation with adjacent settlements, such as development at Oakham Park (off Old Wokingham Road and Hatch Ride) and extension of the caravan site on the east shore of Longmoor Lake. There is also pressure for backland development to the rear of properties of Nine Mile Ride and unauthorised development between Nine Mile Ride and Ravenswood Park potentially eroding the landscape of the parkland.
- Continuing pressure for new roads or improvements to existing roads, in this well-populated and commercially vibrant area, impacting tranquillity, particularly in relation to the Arborfield Garrison development and the consequent increase in traffic along Nine Mile Ride.
- Continued pressure for infill development between settlements, particularly along the A321 and B3016 along the southern side of Wokingham, and where the landscape provides tranquil, distinct gaps, and 'breathing space' of rural character between built forms.
- Increasing suburbanisation including frontage development and the use of close board fencing along the rides, which is incongruous to the character of the area and also leads to tree losses which themselves harm the character of the area and the Green Rides.
- Increasing demand for communication masts, pylons and poles leading to visual intrusion of these elements in the elevated landscape and in views to the wooded backdrop from elsewhere.

4.37 The landscape strategy is as follows;

Landscape Strategy

To maintain the landscape character of the *Finchampstead Forested and Settled Sands* the following strategy is required: to conserve and enhance existing character. The key aspects to be conserved and actively managed are the characteristic forestry and woodland; the rarer open landscapes of heath, mire lakes and pasture; important wildlife habitats; historic landscape features associated with the Royal Forest and recreational use. In particular there is an opportunity to consider restoration of heathland within the woodland context. The aim should be to link and connect existing heathland areas.

In terms of development, the aim is to conserve and enhance the rural setting and gaps between settlements and maintain the low density domestic character of development.

4.38 The landscape guidelines are as follows;

Landscape Guidelines

- **Conserve distinctive wooded skylines.** Consider the impact of any development on skylines, particularly where it would have the potential to be highly visible from adjacent character areas. Develop sympathetic fell cycles to maintain positive character, particularly phased cycles along sensitive skylines to ensure that the wooded backdrop is maintained. Particular care should be taken in the siting of communication masts or other vertical elements, which have the potential to be highly visible in this elevated landscape.
- **Conserve and enhance the wooded character of the landscape.** Increase the extent of BAP priority habitat lowland mixed deciduous woodland in the forested areas using locally occurring native species in order to create a more mixed woodland character. Retain open areas of heath, mire, lakes and pasture within the forested areas and existing views into these areas, especially from historic rides. Continue to promote appropriate management through natural regeneration, control of non-native species and coppicing as a management tool for neglected woodland.
- **Conserve, enhance and manage heathland, grassland, and wetland habitats** particularly BAP priority habitats, from development, changes in land use and encroachment by secondary woodland and scrub. An area of land centred around Gorrick Plantation, Queen's Mere and King's Mere is part of the Thames Basin Heaths BOA. This network of natural habitats, which extend into Bracknell Forest, has been identified as a target for habitat creation and restoration and positive management of heathland and bog habitats. An appropriate heathland management regime is critical.
- **Enhance integration of recreation** into the landscape, avoiding features which would lead to greater (sub) urbanisation of the rural character.
- **Enhance informal recreational enjoyment of the landscape** but balance this with continued conservation of valuable landscapes, heritage assets and semi-natural habitats. Consider zoning of activities to ensure ecologically valuable or more sensitive elevated landscapes are protected from damaging activities and ensure appropriate management of informal recreation, particularly in relation to the Rights of Way network.
- **Conserve and enhance the integration of urban edges** through wooded boundaries and large-species trees and maintain the important vistas along rides. In particular protect the sensitive areas of open land adjacent to Arborfield Garrison in the western part of this area.
- **Enhance sense of place through careful planning and design** (including siting, massing, scale, materials and landscape – and sensitive lighting to retain dark skies at night) to minimise the impacts of any potential new development and particularly vertical elements on valuable attributes.
- **Conserve the rural character between adjacent towns and village centres**, to protect the individual identity of settlements, and retain their sense of physical and visual separation that helps define them. In particular protect the sensitive areas of open land remaining along the B3016 and the A321 between Finchampstead and Wokingham, retain blocks of woodland along the rides and rear of properties under threat from backland development.
- **Consider undertaking character appraisals/village design statements** of key settlements in Wokingham Borough e.g. Finchampstead to identify features worthy of conservation. Maintain the **small scale, low density domestic character of settlement** set within large plots avoiding greater densities of development or tall/large structures.
- **Use appropriate tree planting to help integrate roads** in relation to proposed junction improvements and the extension of Nine Mile Drive to the west of the character area. Encourage retention of wooded edges and boundaries along roads, while retaining existing views to open countryside and wooded ridges. Minimise fencing and other boundary structures.
- **Conserve and enhance historic features associated with the Royal Forest of Windsor** including the medieval parkland at Ravenswood and the straight rides.
- **Reduce and prevent further noise and light pollution** through the sensitive siting of any new development, especially any proposed night-time lighting.

Local Landscape Value

- 4.39 The local planning authority have recently published a review of the borough's landscapes to identify the landscapes of the highest quality and most value that could potentially merit designation as locally valued landscapes. Paragraph 1.1 of this review states that *"This assessment has been prepared to help understand the landscape characteristics and attributes of Wokingham Borough, and whether there is evidence to support identification as a 'valued landscapes. This assessment therefore presents the background evidence, including the relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance and the methodology."*
- 4.40 The site and surrounding area re located within the proposed Forest and Rides Valued landscape area.
- 4.41 The Valued Landscapes Assessment states that:
- 'This valued landscape centres on the locally listed medieval park of Ravenswood, formally Bigshotte Railes, but now the site of a charitable education facility – which lies to the south of the B3040 Nine Mile Ride; and on the Gorrick Plantation land, which lies to the north of that road.'* (Page 110)
- 4.42 *'...generally the road network is characterised by smaller historic lanes together with the 18th Century historic straight rides which are characteristic. It is these historic straight rides, most often lined with either dense woodland or linear development, which help define the character and extent of the valued landscape. The contribution that the straight rides, such as Nine Mile Ride, make to the character and appearance of the area has been widely recognised by Inspectors conducting planning appeals, notably the decisions for Land at and to the rear of 240 Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead and Land at Pineridge Park, Nine Mile Ride, Wokingham, where, the Inspector, for the latter, stated:*
- 4.43 *'Nine Mile Ride is a designated Green Route and has historical landscape significance by reason of once being part of Windsor Forest. The trees and woodlands along the*

Ride make a strong contribution to its amenity value by creating a backdrop to built development and a prominent skyline of tree canopies. The depth of woodland blocks strengthens the remote woodland character of the area and the sense of enclosure’.

(Page 111)

- 4.44 *‘The historic and landscape links between the straight rides, the park and the wider landscape of the Royal Forest are what gives this valued landscape its’ cohesiveness, character and distinctive shape. By identifying these attributes in the Forest and Rides Valued Landscape it ensures that development will be carefully planned and sensitively designed to maintain and enhance connection of the historic straight rides with the verdant character of the wider valued landscape.’ (Page 111)*

Site Character

- 4.45 The site has no public access, and feels a sense of enclosure and tranquillity on account of the mature woodland to the east, and further to the south. The area is generally peaceful, but the tranquillity and peace are frequently disturbed by horses running around the paddock and users of the site managing the horses between the menage, training areas, paddock and deliveries turning up to the site.
- 4.46 The site is influenced heavily by human activities, with lots of fencing, hard surfacing, large buildings, poached and eroded paddocks and land, and areas of debris and materials around existing buildings.
- 4.47 The skylines are generally vegetated.
- 4.48 The topography is broadly flat, with no remarkable features of character beyond the boundary vegetation.
- 4.49 Views are restricted in and out of the site on account of the neighbouring woodland, wooded areas, vegetation and adjoining land uses.
- 4.50 The site is at the end of a track which features various styles of urbanizing features, boundary walls and gates and different houses along the length. The site entrance is delineated by an electric gate to prevent unauthorized access, commensurate with

other gates seen along route. The site feels very urbanised, enclosed by vegetation, in an area also very urbanised and eroded by human influence.

Completed Character Field Survey Sheet

- 4.51 During the site visit, a landscape character field survey sheet was filled in to record the observed characteristics of the site and the local landscape. A photographic record was prepared also, which identifies means of enclosure within and around the site, existing materials and architectural styles, and examples of access and planting already present within close proximity to the site (appendix 6).

5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 5.1 This section describes the key components of the proposals, and the nature of the anticipated effects that are likely to occur. It then draws upon the landscape and visual baseline information and summarises key constraints and opportunities that need to be considered and incorporated within the proposals.
- 5.2 A 'mitigation by design' approach has been taken as part of the project, meaning that during the course of design evolution, landscape, visual and character considerations were considered as an integral part of the design process.
- 5.3 In summary, the proposals comprise;

10 new dwellings comprising of semi-detached and detached dwellings, with associated access and landscaping.

APPENDIX 6 – SITE LAYOUT

Proposals

- 5.4 The following section will describe how the proposals respond to the following key considerations.
- External Materials (Roofs, Walls)
 - Height and Massing
 - Access

- Landscaping Works

External Materials (Roofs, Walls)

- 5.5 At this stage, there are no architectural elevations or detailed plans showing the materiality of the proposals.
- 5.6 The new housing must use materials that are congruous to the area, in keeping with the character of the local vernacular, and that emulate the prevailing character of the area. Provided they do that, the new house should be in keeping with the local character.

Height and Massing

- 5.7 At this stage, there are no architectural elevations or detailed plans showing the height and massing of the proposals. The site layout shows the massing of the proposals, which would appear to be inclusive of generous plot sizes that emulates the spacious character of existing houses in the immediate area.
- 5.8 The new housing will be to the same heights of existing houses in the existing area.

Access

- 5.9 The existing access will be used with a new internal road access serving the 10 new plots and also Heathlands.

Landscaping Works

- 5.10 A landscape proposal plan has been provided as part of the application submission.
- 5.11 A new mixed native hedge with scattered native tree planting will be installed along the southern boundary and down the site access, to create a new vegetated boundary, and a native edge to the development. Rural post and rail fencing with mesh behind will be installed instead of as more urbanised fence.

- 5.12 A combination of shrub planting, single species and mixed native hedge planting will be included within the on-plot design to soften the urban fabric of the development.
- 5.13 When the visual assessment of the photo views describes any screening or filtering of any assessed views, there are assumptions made in respect of proposed planting and the anticipated heights that proposed planting can be hoped to achieve.
- 5.14 Any tree planting will be supplied at extra heavy standard size at 14-16cm with a height at year 1 of 4-4.5m. In year 8 these trees, subject to species and external factors considerations affecting tree growth rates, be expected to reach around 6-6.5m in height and be around 8.5m high by year 15.
- 5.15 Any native hedge planting areas would be planted at 40-60cm at year 1, and be expected to be around 3.5m in year 8, and 5-7m in year 15, unless managed at a lesser height, which in this case is likely to be around 2.5-3m commensurate with typical countryside rural hedgerow management.

Lighting

- 5.16 There is no lighting information available at the time of writing, however several assumptions can be made as to the nature of the lighting required and typical for such a setting.
- 5.17 It is anticipated that the proposals would be fitted with very minimal external lighting such as downward facing security lighting and porch lights. Nevertheless, the local planning authority would have the ability to restrict any such external lighting by condition should the proposals gain planning consent.
- 5.18 There will be no requirement for obtrusive lighting features such as floodlighting and there will be no aurora around the site at night.
- 5.19 The internal access is not understood to require any lighting.
- 5.20 The site is well enclosed, so there will be very limited outward visibility of lighting on site into the dark countryside and village environment.

6 ASSESSMENT OF ANTICIPATED VISUAL EFFECTS

- 6.1 A visual assessment of the proposals has been undertaken to determine how the proposals would likely have a bearing on the visual amenity of the immediate vicinity of the site and the surrounding landscape/countryside. This assessment was undertaken at the end of April 2025 when foliage was largely present. Consideration has been given to winter months when visibility is at a maximum due to the absence of foliage, and in summer when foliage is present and visibility is at a minimum.
- 6.2 A number of representative viewpoints have been identified on which to base a visual assessment.

APPENDIX 7 – PHOTOVIEW LOCATION PLAN

- 6.3 The detailed assessment of these representative viewpoints sets out how the baseline view will be affected visually by the proposals.

APPENDIX 8 – DETAILED VISUAL ASSESSMENT

Effects Upon Visual Amenity

- 6.4 As illustrated within the visual assessment, the enclosed nature of the site greatly reduces the potential visual effects arising from the proposals.
- 6.5 There are several features that limit the outward visibility of the site.
- The site is not located in a prominent location relative to its surroundings, with no higher landform affording views back down towards the site.
 - Intervening vegetation, built form, boundary features, and undulating topography in the surrounding landscape prevents views back towards the site.

Viewpoints

- 6.6 The summary table in appendix 9 sets out the initial visual effects and the effects at year 15.
- 6.7 The viewpoints that were taken as part of the visual assessment have been assessed at;

Year 1 - when the proposals have been built, and the access and landscaping has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and

Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow the planting to have established, and grown sufficiently to provide any softening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.

- 6.8 The photoviews are formatted on A3, such that if you were to hold them up at arm's length, they would be a 100% representation of the view you would see.
- 6.9 Visual assessment is subjective, and what one person might consider is a beneficial change, another could be of the opposite view and consider the same thing negative.
- 6.10 For all viewpoints, the sensitivity of the receptor is high.
- 6.11 The site visit confirmed that the site is very well secluded and outward visibility is greatly restricted on account of the dense trees and woodland that enclose the site, as well as surrounding built form. In that regard, there were only 3 views taken as part of the visual assessment, as there were no other areas the site could potentially be seen from. The 3 views were taken from near the site entrance.

Viewpoint 1

- 6.12 This view from 10m back from the site entrance shows the main view of the existing site entrance approach to the site along Hatch Ride. Even when stood within proximity, the boundary fencing and dense vegetation hide the site from view.

Magnitude of change

- 6.13 No change.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

- 6.14 No change.

Viewpoint 2

- 6.15 This view is taken from Hatch Ride, just past the site entrance, where the ride cuts through dense trees along the site's northern boundary. The site is not visible on account of the dense trees and vegetation and the boundary fencing beyond.

Magnitude of change

- 6.16 No change.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

- 6.17 No change.

Viewpoint 3

- 6.18 This view is taken from around 25m back from the site entrance along Hatch Ride. The site is not visible on account of the. Intervening boundary fencing and. Vegetation in between the site and the viewpoint. There is a very narrow glimpse of the top of an existing structure on the site which is just discernible in the background of view.

Magnitude of change

- 6.19 The view would subtly change with filtered views of a very small part of new houses, in the background of a heavily filtered view. The change to the view. Would largely be unnoticeable.
- 6.20 The magnitude of change would be negligible and the nature of the change adverse.

Scale of Effect Years 1 and 15

- 6.21 In year 1, the scale of effect would be minor adverse using the methodology in table 18 (appendix 1).
- 6.22 By year 15, the scale of effect would reduce to negligible adverse, and neutral over time.

Summary

- 6.23 A summary of the visual effects is tabulated in appendix 9.

Effects Upon Residential Properties

- 6.24 The proposals are positioned within a well vegetated site, surrounded by other mature gardens and adjoining properties. As such, the secluded position limits outward visibility which might otherwise have potential to effect neighbouring residential amenity.
- 6.25 No residential properties are identified as likely to experience negative effects upon their existing views.

7 EFFECTS UPON LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS AND CHARACTER

- 7.1 In the context of the proposals described within the previous section. This section sets out an assessment of the likely physical landscape effects upon the site and the anticipated landscape effects upon the character of the relevant landscape character area of the site and its immediate context.

Likely causes of effects

- 7.2 Although any landscape has some intrinsic sensitivity, different landscapes contain a range of components which will respond differently to change, subject to the type and nature of the proposals. Therefore, in order to inform the analysis of effects, judgements should be made with reference to the specific changes which arise from the type and nature of proposals being considered.
- 7.3 The following section sets out the likely causes of effects which would occur in relation to the proposals for the site.

Causes of temporary effects during construction

7.4 The temporary construction work which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows:

- Site clearance and setting out;
- Movement and presence of associated construction vehicles;
- Presence of materials storage and machinery storage on site during construction;
- Installation of tree protection barriers to protect boundary vegetation;
- Installation of the internal access;
- Installation of the houses;
- Installations of planting proposals and landscaping.

7.5 Tree protection measures (heras barriers) will be erected prior to site construction works. All of these measures will be temporary in nature.

Causes of effects at completion

7.6 The permanent components of the proposals which may give rise to effects on landscape and visual receptors are listed as follows;

- New housing development;
- Installation of access; and
- Installations of planting proposals and landscaping integrated into the proposals (i.e. trees, native hedge planting).

7.7 Effects at completion are concerned with the long-term alteration in the landscape from the current site context, to the future scenario with the proposals in place. The building work, access and associated planting will have been completed and will be a permanent component in the landscape.

7.8 In the long term, effects will be associated with the influence of mitigation measures upon landscape character. This establishes the changes to landscape character as a result of proposed mitigation measures/planting fully established and performing their intended function. The effects are considered to be long term and not reversible.

7.9 In terms of physical landscape resources, the direct changes will be restricted to the site only.

7.10 Overall, the physical landscape effects are considered to be direct and will be limited to the extent of the site. There will be no additional direct effects on the wider areas around the site or to the wider landscape context of the local character area.

Effects Upon Landscape Elements

7.11 This section assesses the effect of the proposals on the elements and features that currently characterise the site.

7.12 In the following paragraphs effects will be assessed at;

Year 1 - when building work has been completed, and any landscape planting has been installed (but not yet established or grown); and

Year 15 – When sufficient time has gone by to allow any landscaping interventions such as hedging and grassland to have established, and grown sufficiently to provide any screening, filtering, landscape/ecological enhancements.

Topography

7.13 Topographically, the proposals will not alter the grain of the existing topography. The proposals do not require large cut and fill exercises that would fundamentally alter the key character of the topography.

Value and Sensitivity

7.14 The topography of the site is assessed as having a low susceptibility to the type of development proposed, with a low value. The sensitivity is therefore low.

Magnitude of Change

7.15 The magnitude of change to the fundamental character of the sites topography is assessed as being neutral.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

- 7.16 With a neutral magnitude of change, and a low sensitivity, the scale of effect is considered to amount to neutral.

Trees and Vegetation

Value and Sensitivity

- 7.17 Trees/vegetation are considered highly susceptible to development if they aren't protected as part of any site works.
- 7.18 The value of the vegetation on arboricultural grounds is considered to be medium/low.
- 7.19 However, the overall sensitivity must be high, as trees/vegetation are highly sensitive to most types of development.

Magnitude of Change

- 7.20 The proposals require the loss of two B grade moderate quality trees and 2 C grade low quality trees.
- 7.21 In this regard the magnitude of change is for all intense and purposes is minor adverse.

Scale of Effect Year 1 and 15

- 7.22 With a high sensitivity and a minor adverse effect to existing vegetation, the scale of effect at year 1 would be moderate adverse. Factoring in any new tree and hedge planting by year 15, tree and hedge planting will have grown and established and contribute positively to the site and its context. The scale of effect will reduce to minor adverse by year 15.

Public rights of way (PRoW)

- 7.23 There are no rights of way running through the site, and the proposals do not directly require the alteration of any rights of way. There would therefore be no direct effect to any public rights of way.
- 7.24 Any potential effects on users of the local PRoW network are considered under section 8 'Effects on Visual Amenity'.

Watercourses and waterbodies

- 7.25 There are no watercourses or waterbodies and therefore no effect.

Effects Upon Landscape Character

Effect on the published character assessments

- 7.26 The baseline section of this report identifies which national character area and which local character area the site sits within. The sensitivities and characteristics of the local character area are identified and are useful in terms of setting out key elements of landscape and visual character.
- 7.27 There are several ways any proposals can affect a character area, either physically by building on it, or visually, by being highly visible to large parts of a character area and thus eroding it visually.
- 7.28 The proposals are not physically big enough nor visually prominent enough to have any meaningful effect on either the national nor the local character areas.
- 7.29 It is typical to assess the proposals against the local character areas, or the character of the immediate context.

Landscape Value

7.30 The Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact (GLVIA 3), at Box 5.1, together with the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 02/21 set out a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes. These factors include:

- Landscape quality (condition);
- Scenic quality;
- Rarity;
- Representativeness;
- Conservation Interests;
- Recreation Value;
- Perceptual aspects; and
- Associations.

7.31 The table below seeks to assess the value of the site and its host landscape based on the above factors.

Assessment of Landscape Value of the Site and its Environs

Criteria	Assessment of Value
Landscape quality (condition)	Medium. The site is not in any nationally designated landscape. The site is within a Locally designated Valued Landscape, noted as being in good condition. The site is considered to be in a fair condition. The landscape around the site is considered to be in a good condition.
Scenic quality	Medium. The site has medium scenic quality. The local landscape has aesthetic and visual interest. The site is small and secluded. Lots of human influence, no important views, enclosed.
Rarity	Low. The site has no rare or unusual features within its boundary. The wider local area around contains few examples of rare landscape.
Representativeness	Low. The site and local host landscape possesses a few of the characteristics identified in the published character assessment.

Conservation Interest	Low/medium. The site and its setting are not recognised as having historic conservation interest. The wider valued landscape does have conservation interest.
Recreational value	Low/medium. The site is entirely private and, without general public access, has no recreational value. The site's immediate environs do have a few public rights of way passing through and in and around the immediate context, offering some recreational value.
Perceptual qualities	Low. The site affords only a restricted amount of intervisibility with the surrounding area. Lots of human influence.
Associations	Low. There is no known direct association with any historic or cultural figure and the site or the area immediately surrounding the site.

7.32 Having considered the various factors given in the above table, it is assessed that the landscape of the site and its immediate area is of medium value. The published character area guidance states that the area is in good condition. The site is only a small part of the wider area, and as the above table shows, the site does not play host to many of the features that would elevate the status of the site. The susceptibility of the local landscape to the type of development being proposed is assessed as medium. Overall, the sensitivity of the local landscape is assessed as medium.

Assessment of the Effects on Landscape Character

7.33 At the finer grain level of assessment, as expressed in the published landscape character assessment, the site and its immediate environs demonstrate few of the wider landscape's key characteristics.

7.34 The site does contribute slightly to the wider landscape but has few features of the published character assessment, has limited intervisibility with the wider landscape, with no remarkable or rare features of character. The site has no public access, and no designated status.

- 7.35 There would be a noticeable change to the appearance and character of the site with the proposals in place. The site would change from that of an active horse-riding stables and associated paraphernalia, in an enclosed wooded location, to privately manicured gardens and access associated with 10 residential dwellings. The land use would change from horsiculture to residential land use. The sound of horses and deliveries would be changed to the sounds of kids, families and cars. The comings and goings to the site would differ, in frequency in and nature, which whilst different, still amount to activity of the site.
- 7.36 The proposals have very limited outward visibility, such that the proposals would remain discreet and hidden in the wooded landscape.
- 7.37 The physical characteristics of the local landscape beyond the site would remain unchanged with the proposed development in place. The existing characteristics of the local landscape would all continue to prevail with the proposals in place.
- 7.38 The quality and condition of the site would change, and largely improved, with areas of poached and eroded fields and areas of debris cleared up and replaced with high quality and manicured landscape around each of the new houses, with private gardens, verges and a better-quality environment compared to the existing scenario. The site would become less cluttered, with paddock fencing and horse paraphernalia replaced with garden paraphernalia, simplified enclosures to the site and a small quantum of built form on site. The existing stables blocks and large buildings and areas of hard surfacing would be removed, with 10 new houses of a smaller footprint in a different arrangement, surrounding back gardens and plot frontage featuring soft landscaping. The housing sixes and plot sixes would be commensurate with the sizes of houses and gardens seen along Hatch Ride.
- 7.39 The proposed development would have only a limited effect on experiential factors such as tranquillity and visual appearance. The proposals would not be a source of disproportionate or adverse levels of light pollution or noise generation. There is already a certain level of noise generation and lighting on site as it is. Nevertheless, it

is considered that any change to the perceived level of tranquillity in the vicinity of the site would be largely imperceptible; reflective of the scale of the proposed development, and the presence of other existing urban uses and roads in the surrounding landscape.

- 7.40 In respect of night time effects, the proposed development would not introduce any outwardly noticeable light sources that would erode or degrade the immediate area and its night time character. The site is enclosed by woodland in a well wooded setting. The site is well enclosed, and intrusive forms of lighting are not proposed.
- 7.41 Any change in the visual appearance of the site would not alter substantially the material perception of the local host landscape.
- 7.42 The local landscape already accommodates a variety of examples of built form and settlement in various characters. In this context, the sight of the proposed development would not unduly affect the visual experience, appearance or perception of the landscape's character. Housing land use/built form is already an established feature of character in the immediate area and along Hatch Ride.
- 7.43 The character of the local landscape is assessed as having a moderate sensitivity. The magnitude of change that would be brought to the character of the local landscape of with the proposed development in place is assessed as low. With a low magnitude of change and an overall moderate sensitivity, the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the local landscape is assessed as minor adverse at year 1.
- 7.44 By year 15 of the operational phase, the establishment and filling out of proposed tree and hedge planting would help assimilate the proposals into the landscape further. Such planting would also bring about positive landscape benefits which accord with the guidelines for mitigation and enhancement in the local character area guidelines.

Forest and Rides Valued Landscape

- 7.45 A valued landscape is not necessarily formally designated like a National Landscape or National Park, but is identified at a local level based on its unique qualities and values placed upon them by the community. In regard to planning decisions, a valued landscape must be considered in the planning balance to ensure it is protected and enhanced for their intrinsic qualities and benefits they provide.
- 7.46 Some of the key characteristics and qualities of this valued landscape is the sense of seclusion, the trees and woodlands making a strong contribution to its amenity value by creating a backdrop to development and a prominent skyline of tree canopies, and the contribution the Rides (such as Hatch Ride) make to the character and appearance of the area.
- 7.47 The site itself, whilst within a valued landscape, doesn't itself exhibit the qualities and characterises of the wider valued landscape. The site does feel secluded, owing to the dense woodland to the east and south, and the dense trees along hatch Ride. The site is heavily urbanised, cluttered, eroded physically and visually by horses poaching the land within the multiple paddocks, and the array of fencing, buildings, areas of hard surfacing and areas of debris and materials.
- 7.48 If the site were to be proposed for housing with associated landscaping, would the housing affect the valued landscape over and above the current use of the site. The valued landscape already features housing of many forms and sizes, using various materials and designs. Whilst the land use would be different, the quality and condition of the site would be physically and visually improved, becoming a manicured and well looked after area, with less urbanising elements and more soft landscaping. Importantly, the boundary vegetation would be retained, with new landscaping installed to create new defensible green boundaries to the south. The new housing would not erode any skylines, nor detract from the wooded and secluded nature of Hatch Ride nor the character of the valued landscape.

- 7.49 To better understand the proposals and how they relate to policy, the credentials of the proposals will be assessed against the how design interventions accord with best practice guidance, and local plan policies relevant to character, landscape and visual, and green infrastructure.

Local Plan Policies relevant to landscape and character

Local Plan Policies

Policy CP3 General Principles for Development

- 7.50 The proposals have been informed by tree and landscape recommendations. Existing trees/hedges have mostly been retained, and will protected during construction.
- 7.51 The built form elements of the new dwellings adopt features of local character, both in height, massing and also architectural detailing and material use.

Policy CP9 Scale and location of development proposals

- 7.52 The proposals look physically to accord with the prevailing density, height and massing of adjacent housing along Hatch Ride and in the locality.

Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Document 2014

Policy TB21

- 7.53 The proposals do not erode, obscure or impact any important views identified in the neighbourhood plan.
- 7.54 The built form elements of the proposals respects the character of the area, using materiality and architectural detailing which emulates the prevailing built form character of the area.
- 7.55 There is no requirement for obtrusive forms of lighting.
- 7.56 The proposals conserve the wooded and secluded nature of the site, with built form set back from vegetated boundaries.

- 7.57 Wooded skylines are preserved, and the Hatch Ride vista is maintained, with the proposals tucked back away from the ride, maintain the secluded feel when walking along Hatch Ride as it passes the site.

Wokingham Borough Design Guide

Policies G1, G2, G8

- 7.58 The built form elements of the proposals respect the character of the area, using materiality and architectural detailing which emulates the prevailing built form character of the area.
- 7.59 Existing features of the sites character (trees, sense of enclosure) are retained.
- 7.60 The size and massing of the plots and housing reflects the prevailing plot size along Hatch Ride.
- 7.61 The proposals are located in an enclosed and secluded location, and include new landscape planting to create new green boundaries which are positive design interventions that respond to recommendations for enhancement in the landscape character assessment for the area.

Policies R1, R2, R12

- 7.62 The proposals relate well to neighbouring land uses and properties, and are set back from vegetated boundaries, retaining key trees and features of character. The housing sizes, massing and architectural detailing pick up on features of character seen in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- 7.63 The boundary treatments for the site are sympathetic for the sites context and include rural fencing and native hedging.

Policies RD1, RD2, RD3, RD4, RD5, RD7, RD8, RD9

- 7.64 A full tree survey has been undertaken and informed the site layout, retaining key trees and boundary features of character.
- 7.65 The housing has been set back from the boundaries, maintaining seclusion, and the materiality of the building responding to cues of materials used in the locality. No important views are obscured, eroded or blocked by the proposals.
- 7.66 The proposals include soft landscaping to help soften the urban fabric of the development, to create new green boundaries which bring about various positive benefits in addition to being positive additions in respect of local landscape character.

Summary

- 7.67 The proposals have been underpinned by the various technical disciplines that have undertaken various surveys to inform the layout and inform the architectural detailing for the building restorations. The proposals accord with the objectives and policies of the Local Plan. In this regard, the proposals will retain important features of character, and include new measures that will enhance the character of the site and how it is perceived from the wider area.
- 7.68 The position of the site, nestled between enclosing boundary vegetation, and intervening vegetation in the surrounding landscape help anchor the site, using the landscape to limit outward visibility. The proposals would not be prominent in the landscape and are not widely visible.

8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This Landscape and Visual Appraisal has assessed the landscape and visual effects of the proposals and associated landscaping.
- 8.2 It is evident from this assessment that the visual envelope associated with the proposals would be extremely localised. Outward visibility is minimal, and the site is well nestled into its setting.

- 8.3 The proposals retain important features of character and maintain areas free from built form and maintain the green and leafy and secluded character of the site.
- 8.4 The site is already very urbanised and cluttered, and the new use of the site would be more manicured and in an improved condition.
- 8.5 This appraisal did not find any significant concerns regarding the anticipated landscape and visual effects arising from the proposals.

APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

1. The Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been undertaken with reference to best practice, as outlined in the following published guidance:
 - Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd edition) - Landscape Institute/ Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2013)
 - GLVIA3 Statement of Clarification 1/13
 - Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland - (2002) Countryside Agency / Scottish Natural Heritage
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment (2014) Natural England

Professional Judgement

2. LVIAs differ from other specialist studies because they are generally undertaken by professionals who are also involved in the design of the landscape and the preparation of subsequent management proposals. This allows the landscape assessment to proceed as an integral part of the overall scheme design rather than a discrete study carried out once the proposals have been finalised.
3. Professional judgement is a very important part of the LVIA process. Whilst there is scope for quantitative measurement of some interrelating elements (e.g. the loss of trees), much of the landscape assessment will rely on qualitative judgements that involve a degree of subjective opinion (e.g. the assessment of landscape values or what effect proposals will have on visual amenity).
4. Professional judgements are therefore based on both training/qualification and experience and are supported by clear evidence and a reasoned judgement. Accordingly, it is recommended that suitably qualified and experienced professionals carry out the LVIAs.
5. The assessment of landscape and visual effects is based on the professional judgement of a chartered landscape architect with over 14+ years' experience of undertaking landscape and visual impact assessments for projects at varying scales at complexities.

Landscape Baseline

6. The initial step in the landscape assessment is to establish the baseline landscape conditions, to determine the current elements and character of the landscape within and surrounding the site. This involved an initial desktop study of but not necessarily limited to:
 - The review of published Landscape Character Assessments;
 - The review of planning policies relevant to landscape;
 - Use of Ordnance survey maps at 1:50,000, 1:25,000 scales;
 - Use of Aerial photographs of the site and surrounding area;
 - Review of and use of datasets for rural designations from the MAGIC website (Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside);
 - Describing the existing landscape elements that contribute to landscape character, such as trees and vegetation, topography, settlement pattern, public rights of way, land use, waterbodies; and
 - Visual observations in the field – completing a character sheet during the site visit to note any visual detractors or visual qualities, the unity, level of activity, key characteristics, sense of enclosure, tranquillity etc.

Identification of Receptors

7. Once the landscape and visual baseline information about the receiving landscape has been collated this can be understood and described with an understanding of the details of the proposed change or development that is to be introduced into the receiving landscape to identify and describe the landscape effects.
8. The first step is to identify the elements and components of the landscape that are likely to be affected by the proposals referred to as landscape receptors. Potentially sensitive landscape receptors may include:
 - Physical influences on the constituent elements of the landscape (e.g. landform, topography and waterbodies);
 - Land cover of the landscape (e.g. the different types of trees and vegetation and patterns/types of tree cover);

- Influences of human activity on the landscape (e.g. the land use and its management, the character of settings and buildings and the patterns and types of fields and enclosures);
- Aesthetic or perceptual qualities of the landscape (e.g. its scale, its complexity, its openness, its tranquillity or its wildness); and
- The character of the landscape (i.e. any distinctive landscape character types or areas that can be identified), which may include published character assessment reports and / or defined character areas identified as part of the assessment process.

Identification of likely landscape effects

9. The second step is to identify interactions between the landscape receptors and the different elements/components of the development at the different stages, such as construction and operational stages.
10. Potential landscape effects that could occur during the construction and operational periods may include, but are not restricted to, the following;
 - Changes to landscape elements: the addition of new elements or the removal of existing landscape elements;
 - Changes to landscape qualities: degradation or erosion of landscape elements and patterns and perceptual characteristics, particularly those that form key characteristic elements of defined landscape character types or areas, or contribute to the landscape value; and
 - Changes to landscape character: landscape character may be affected through the incremental effect on characteristic elements, landscape patterns and qualities and the cumulative addition of new features, the magnitude of which is sufficient to alter the overall landscape character of a particular area.

Sensitivity of the receptor likely to be affected

11. For each of the landscape and visual effects identified the susceptibility of the landscape receptor to a specific change is to be judged as to is the value attached to the landscape and visual receptor. These two judgements are combined to determine the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptor. The sensitivity and the judgements on susceptibility and value will be fully described for each of the receptors.

Landscape Effects

Landscape Susceptibility

12. Susceptibility to change means the ability of the landscape receptor (whether it be the overall character or quality/ condition of a particular area, or individual element and/ or feature) to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and / or the achievement of the landscape planning policies and strategies.
13. In this context, the term landscape receptors can be expanded to cover character areas, particular landscape character types or an individual landscape element (such as trees/vegetation and topography) or feature. Landscape susceptibility will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered and to the nature or type of change that may occur.
14. Judgements about the susceptibility of a landscape receptor to change will be recorded as being high, medium or low.

Trees/vegetation

15. Trees are considered **highly susceptible** to development if they aren't protected as part of any site works.

Topography

Table 1: Topography Susceptibility –

Low	Flat land/ slightly undulating topography Many references to the type of topography within the local area Topography can easily accommodate the type of development proposed
Medium	Gently undulating/undulating land Some references to the type of topography within the local area Topography can accommodate the type of development proposed with minor regrading or localised cut and fill exercises

High	Steep/very steep topography in a hilly/mountainous area Few or no references to the type of topography within the local area Topography cannot easily accommodate the type of development proposed with major cut and fill exercises
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The following table sets out the criteria that have been considered for determining overall landscape susceptibility.

Table 2: Landscape Susceptibility –

Low	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a high capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is small scale and / or has a high level of containment, resulting in only a slight degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with extensive existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – landscapes with few / no landscape characteristics / elements / features of value are present or, where they are present, they can easily be replaced / substituted and / or loss could be satisfactorily compensated for. Nature of existing features – landscapes where detracting features or major infrastructure is present and the influence of these on the landscape is dominant. Several detractors present which have a negative influence on the character and / or experience of the landscape. Very good opportunities for mitigation and enhancement.
Medium	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a medium capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is of a medium scale and / or there is a moderate level of containment, resulting in a moderate degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with some existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – Existing landscape characteristics / elements / features of limited value and could potentially be replaced / substituted, and / or loss satisfactorily compensated for. Nature of existing features – Some detracting features and / or major infrastructure are present in the area, and these have a noticeable influence on the character and experience of the landscape. Good potential for mitigation and enhancement.

High	Scale of enclosure – landscapes with a low capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed due to the interactions of topography, vegetation cover and built form. The landscape is of a large scale and / or there is a low level of containment, resulting in a high degree of interaction between landform, topography, vegetation cover, field pattern and built form. Nature of land use – landscapes with no or very little existing reference or context to the type of proposed development. Nature of existing elements – Many of the existing landscape characteristics / elements / features of value would not be easy to replace or substitute, and it is unlikely that loss could be compensated for. Nature of existing features – Few detracting features in the area and where present, these have little influence on the character and experience of the landscape Some potential for mitigation and enhancement.
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Landscape Value

16. Landscape value is the relative value attached to a potentially affected landscape. Landscape value will vary in relation to the different stakeholders and different parts of society that use or experience a landscape.
17. Landscape value is not solely indicated by the presence of formal designations and a range of factors influence landscape value. Factors that have been considered in making judgements on landscape value include designations (both national and local), local planning documents, status of features (e.g. TPO's or Conservation Areas) and local community and interests (for example local green spaces, village greens or allotments).
18. Landscape value will vary in response to the specific landscape that is being considered in relation to its condition, sense of seclusion or isolation, the presence or absence of detracting features and the presence or absence of rare or distinctive elements and features and to what degree these form key characteristics.
19. Judgements about the value of a landscape receptor will be recorded as being High, Medium, or Low based on the information gathered in the landscape baseline (such as landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interests, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations).

The following table sets out the criteria that have been considered for determining landscape value.

Table 3: Landscape Value –

Low	Ones that have no or little rarity make no and/or make only a limited contribution to the character and local visual and amenity value and/or be of such poor condition that it has lost its ability to contribute effectively to the character of the landscape. Fair to poor representation of landscape area / type / characteristics and common. No formal designations but a landscape of local relevance (including, but not limited to, public or semi-public open spaces, village greens or allotments) and also green infrastructure and open spaces within residential areas likely to be visited and valued by the local community. Landscape condition is poor and components are generally poorly maintained or damaged. Several detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are unlikely to be a reason for visiting. Little or no contribution to public amenity, access and recreation. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has limited levels of tranquility. Rare or distinctive elements and features are not a notable component that contribute to the character of the area.
Medium	Designated areas at a Regional or County level (including, but not limited to, green belt, regional scale parks, designated as open space or a Conservation Area in local planning documents) and also considered a distinctive component or the region/county character experienced by a large proportion of its population. Good to fair representation of landscape area / type / characteristics but common. Landscape condition is fair and components are generally relatively well maintained. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has moderate levels of tranquility. Rare or distinctive elements and features are a notable component that contribute to the character of the area. Some detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are unlikely to be one of the main reasons for the visit, but make a positive contribution to the experience. Important contribution to local public amenity, access and recreation e.g. well-used public rights of way, green open spaces, common land. Ones that are notable in the landscape, with some visual and/or amenity interest but that do not make a particularly strong or important contribution to the character of the landscape or ones that are an intrinsic element of landscape but in poor condition.

High	Designated areas at an International or National level (including, but not limited to, World Heritage Site, National Parks, AONB's) and also considered an important component of the country's character, experienced by high numbers of tourists. Very good representation of landscape area / type / characteristics and / or uncommon. Landscape condition is good and components are generally regularly maintained to a high standard. In terms of seclusion, enclosure by land use, traffic and movement, light pollution and presence / absence of major infrastructure, the landscape has an elevated level of tranquility. Rare or distinctive elements and features are a key component that contribute to the character of the area. Negligible / few detractors present. The quality / qualities of, and / or features in, the landscape are likely to be one of the main reasons for the visit. Important contribution to wider public amenity, access and recreation e.g. long-distance / themed trails, well-used public rights of way, Heritage Coast, Public Open Space / Local Green Space. May be protected by / subject of planning policy.
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Table 4: Value of Topography –

Low	Topography that is typical of the immediate and wider area with many references to the same type of topography Topography that doesn't have any historic or cultural associations Topography that doesn't feature any associated features such as depressions, undulations, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that isn't noted as being a prominent or notable feature within the published character area
Medium	Topography that is typical of the immediate and wider area with some references to the same type of topography Topography that does have some historic or cultural associations Topography that does feature some/localised associated features such as depressions, undulations, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that has several notable features within the published character area
High	Topography which is not typical of the immediate and wider area with few references to the same type of topography Topography which is typical of the immediate and wider area with many references to the same type of topography and does have additional attributes and associations

	Topography that does have many historic or cultural associations Topography that does feature many associated features such as depressions, undulations, steep terrain, ridge and furrow, watercourses, waterbodies Topography that is noted as being prominent or key features within the published character area
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Note: the presence of ridge and furrow is considered high value, but will be assessed separately from overall landform of a site.

Table 5: Value of Trees and areas of vegetation –

Low	Trees and vegetation are either all or mostly categorized as Low quality (Category C and U) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains very few Medium quality (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation not designated as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO – no planning or ecological designations
Medium	Trees and vegetation are either all or mostly categorized as Medium quality (Category B) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains some Low Quality (Category C) trees/vegetation and very few High quality (Category A) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation are partly or wholly designated as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO
High	Trees and vegetation are either all or mostly categorized as High quality (Category A) in line with BS: 5837; and Site contains some Low Quality (Category C) trees/vegetation and some Medium quality (Category B) trees/vegetation and/or Trees and vegetation are designated as part of a SSSI, wildlife site or TPO

Sensitivity

20. The sensitivity attributed to a landscape element, a view, or character is determined by a combination of;

- the value that is attached to a particular landscape element feature; and

- and the susceptibility of the landscape element/feature to changes that would arise as a result of the Proposed Development as outlined in pages 88-90 of GLVIA3.

21. Therefore, landscape sensitivity is assessed combining judgements on the value attached to a landscape and the susceptibility to the type of change and nature of the development proposed.

Landscape Sensitivity

22. Landscape sensitivity is a term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposed and the value related to that receptor. Receptors can include specific elements or features or may be judged at a wider scale and include landscape character parcels, types or areas.

23. Having considered in detail the contributing factors to landscape value and the susceptibility of the site and surrounding area to the type of the development proposed, conclusions on landscape sensitivity can be drawn by balancing the judgements on value and susceptibility.

Table 6: Sensitivity of Topography -

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 7: Sensitivity of Trees and Vegetation -

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Table 8: Sensitivity of Landscape Character

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Magnitude of Change

24. The magnitude of change is determined through a range of considerations particular to each effect receptor and effect. In line with the GLVIA, the main attributes considered are:

Size/Scale of Change

The considerations set out in GLVIA 3 are summarised as follows:

- The extent to which the removal or addition of landscape features alters the existing landscape character;
- The degree to which aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the landscape are altered by removal of features e.g. hedgerows and/or the introduction of new features e.g. buildings; and

- Consideration of whether the effect changes the key characteristics of the landscape which are critical to its distinctive character.

Geographical Extent

25. This is distinct from the size or scale of effect and a range of scales that typically apply are listed below:

- Large scale effects influencing several landscape types or character areas;
- Effects at the scale of the landscape type or character areas within which the proposal lies;
- Effects within the immediate landscape setting of the site;
- Effects at the site level (within the development site itself); and
- Effects only experienced on parts of the site at a very localised level.

Duration and reversibility

26. These are separate but linked considerations. Duration is judged according to the defined terms set out in below. Reversibility is a judgement about the prospects and practicality of the particular effect being reversed in, for example, a generation. The categories used in this assessment are set out below.

Duration:

- Long term (20 years+)
- Medium to long term (10 to 20 years)
- Medium term (5 to 10 years)
- Short term (1 year to 5 years)
- Temporary (less than 12 months)

Reversibility:

- Permanent with unlikely restoration to original state e.g. major road corridor, power station, urban extension etc;

- Permanent with possible conversion to original state e.g. agricultural buildings, retail units;
- Partially reversible to a different state e.g. mineral workings;
- Reversible after decommissioning to a similar original state e.g. wind energy development; and
- Quickly reversible e.g. temporary structures.

27. With regard to Reversibility, GLVIA 3 explains that where developments have a limited life and could eventually be removed and/or the land reinstated the effects could be considered reversible. The reversibility and consideration of temporary effects is however linked to the duration of that effect such as short term (0-5yrs), medium term (5-10 yrs) and long term (20yrs).

28. For the purpose of this assessment impacts that would be considered permanent are those typically occurring over the long term, such as the construction of buildings and reprofiling of land as these cannot practicably be reversed. Vegetation removal is also considered to be permanent where it cannot be planted in the same location and reach maturity over the short or medium term. Mitigation planting has the potential to compensate for the loss of existing vegetation if similar types and species are planted and could provide similar benefits over the medium to long term. There are instances where mitigation planting could not compensate for the loss of existing vegetation such as the removal of Ancient Woodland or instances where there are rare species which form a unique habitat.

29. Temporary effects would typically occur over a short to medium term duration and would mainly occur during the construction period. Development that may result in temporary effects would typically include the introduction of temporary site security fencing, temporary hard standing areas, construction machinery, temporary buildings and compounds, haul roads, earthmoving and stockpiles, lighting etc.

30. The characteristics of the proposals and the nature of landscape and visual effects arising will vary throughout the different phases of the lifecycle of the project. LVIA undertaken as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required to include an assessment of effects at different stages of the life-cycle of the development, and commonly includes:

- Construction effects; and

- Operational Effects (often including Year 1 and Year 15 effects such that mitigation is considered).

31. Year 1 considers the effects of the development upon completion of the construction phase. The assessment of landscape and visual effects at Year 15 takes into account any proposed mitigation measures, including planting. The assessment undertaken at Year 15 assumes that planting proposals have established and grown sufficiently to become effective. For the purposes of LVIA's Year 15 effects are also considered to be the 'residual effects' of the proposals.

32. Judgements about the magnitude of impact on landscape receptors will identify whether the impact will be negative (adverse) or positive (beneficial) and will be recorded as being large, medium, small, negligible or no change, based on the criteria set out in Table 3.

Magnitude of Change on Landscape Elements and Features

33. Professional judgement has been used to determine the magnitude of direct physical impacts on individual existing landscape elements and features as follows:

Table 9: Criteria for magnitude of change for topography and landform

No change	No change to existing topography of the site
Negligible	Very small change to existing site topography across a small part of the site Very small change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a very small part of the site on the whole Very few small/no SuDS basins/ very few/no swales No cut and fill exercises Unnoticeable change to baseline topography
Low	Small change to existing site topography across a small part of the site Small change to existing site topography across the entire site Multiple small sized SuDS basins/ few swales No cut and fill exercises Development within a small part of the site on the whole Small change to baseline topography

Medium	Medium change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a half of the site on the whole Multiple medium sized SuDS basins/ multiple swales Localized cut and fill exercises Medium change to baseline topography
High	Large change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a majority the site on the whole Multiple large sized SuDS basins/ lots of swales Major cut and fill exercises Major change to baseline topography
Very high	Very large change to existing site topography across the entire site Development within a vast majority of the site on the whole Lots of large sized SuDS basins/ lots of swales Major cut and fill exercises Major change to baseline topography

Table 10: Criteria for magnitude of change for existing trees and vegetation

No change	No trees removed All existing trees/areas of vegetation retained and protected
Negligible	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered very low Very small loss of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would substantially influence the landscape of the site only The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered very small A very small amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site

Low	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered low Small loss of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would influence the landscape in the immediate setting of the site, i.e. limited to the influence of part of a single landscape character area/type The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered small A small amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
Medium	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered moderate Moderate loss of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall Geographical extent of removals would influence the landscape at a local scale, i.e. a single landscape character area/type (or potentially multiple areas/types where a site is located on the boundary between areas) The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered moderate A medium amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
High	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered high Majority loss of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered large A large amount of new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
Very high	Quantities of existing trees/areas of vegetation proposed to be removed are considered very high Total loss of existing trees/ areas of vegetation overall

	Geographical extent of removals would have a substantial influence on the landscape at a regional scale, i.e. across several landscape character areas/types The nature and scale of change to key characteristics which are critical to character is considered very large Significant new tree planting and native shrub planting (hedges and structure mix) proposed throughout the site
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Table 11: Criteria for magnitude of change for landscape character

High	Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered very large due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a very large scale, influencing several character areas or types Major alteration to, or complete loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of highly uncharacteristic, conspicuous elements, features and / activities, would result in major alteration to, or complete loss of, aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Medium	Partial alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered medium due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a moderate scale, influencing the character type within which the change is proposed but at a local level within the immediate setting of the site Partial alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are not uncharacteristic in the area, would result in partial alteration to, or loss of, aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Low	Minor alteration to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered small due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a small scale, influencing the landscape within which the change is proposed at the site level (within the site itself) and localized within the immediate setting

	Minor alteration to, or loss of, key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are characteristic in the area, would result in minor alteration to aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Negligible	Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition The size, scale and / or geographical extent of change is considered very small due to the extent and proportion of loss of, or change to, existing landscape components Effects likely to be experienced at a very small scale, experience on parts of the site with no influence beyond the site on the landscape within which the change is proposed Barely discernible alterations to key elements, features, characteristics and functions of the baseline condition, and / or the addition of elements, features and / activities which are entirely characteristic in the area, would result in barely discernible alteration to aesthetic and / or perceptual qualities
Neutral	No change to the baseline condition

Table 12: Scale of effects

		Magnitude of Change			
Sensitivity		High	Medium	Low	Negligible
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible

Nature of Effects

34. It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to state whether effects are adverse, beneficial or neutral. The landscape effects will be considered against the landscape baseline, which includes published landscape strategies or policies if they exist.
35. Visual effects are more subjective in terms of their valency as people's perception of the proposals varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes. In the assessment of visual effects, the assessor will exercise objective professional judgement in

assessing the significance of effects and will assume, unless otherwise stated, that all effects are adverse, thus representing the worst-case scenario.

Table 13: Nature of landscape/character effects

Major adverse	Be at considerable variance with the character of the receiving landscape. Degrade or diminish the integrity of a range of characteristic elements or features. Damage the sense of place. Such effects would be incapable of full mitigation and would degrade the integrity of the landscape.
Moderate Adverse	Show some variance or inconsistency with the character of the receiving landscape. Have an adverse impact on characteristic elements or features. Detract from the sense of place. Proposals are likely to be out of scale with the existing topography, grain, scale and patter of the landscape.
Minor Adverse	Not quite fit in with the character of the receiving landscape. Be at variance with characteristic elements or features. Have a limited influence on the sense of place. Proposals may not logically complement the existing topography, grain, scale and patter of the landscape and constitute an unsympathetic outcome.
Neutral/Negligible	Maintain the character of the receiving landscape. Blend in with the characteristic elements or features. Very minor levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be retained.
Minor Beneficial	Complement the character of the receiving landscape. Maintain or enhance characteristic elements or features. Minor levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable some sense of place to be restored.
Moderate Beneficial	Improve the character of the receiving landscape. Enable the restoration of characteristic elements and features partially lost or diminished as a result of changes from the absence of or inappropriate management or development.

	Moderate levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be restored.
Major Beneficial	Enhance the character of the receiving landscape. Enable the restoration of characteristic elements and features lost as a result of changes from absence of or inappropriate management or development. Major levels of planting of native species as part of the proposals. Enable the sense of place to be enhanced.

Visual Assessment Methodology

36. The visual assessment considers the potential effect of the proposals on visual amenity; as experienced by people within the study area. They relate to 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 respect to visual amenity.
37. The effects on visual amenity will be assessed through the consideration of potential effects on receptors. Visual receptors include people in their homes, at work, undertaking recreational activities or when travelling through an area i.e. using roads, footpaths etc, where they would be likely to experience a change in the existing view as a result of the construction and operation of the proposals.
38. The visual effects may include a change to an existing view, sequential views, or wider visual amenity as a result of development or the loss of particular elements or features already present in the view. Cumulative visual effects may result when receptors gain views of similar types of development, which combine to have a cumulative visual effect.
39. It is generally accepted that the two criteria that combine to determine the scale of visual effect are the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of impact.
40. The assessment of the visual baseline within the study area will take into consideration the following:
- The area within which the proposals may be visible;
 - The different groups of people within the study area who may experience views of the proposals;
 - The identification of specific viewpoints; and

- The nature of views at the viewpoints.

Viewpoints

41. The selection of viewpoints will be based on the following criteria:

- The requirement to provide an even spread of representative viewpoints within the visual envelope, and around all sides of the Proposed Development;
- From locations which represent a range of near, middle- and long-distance views;
- Whilst private views are relevant, public viewpoints i.e. from roads and public rights of way and other area of open public access, will be selected since they are the most significant in term of the number of receptors affected;
- Views from sensitive receptors within designated landscapes

42. In accordance with the GLVIA3, the viewpoints that will be selected take account of:

- The potential number and sensitivity of viewers who may be affected;
- The viewing direction, distance (i.e. short, medium and long-distance views) and elevation;
- The nature of the viewing experience (for example static views, views from settlements and views from sequential points along routes);
- The view type (for example panoramas, vistas, glimpses); and
- The potential for cumulative views of the proposed development in conjunction with other developments.

43. The findings and conclusion of this assessment assume that all existing vegetation located outside the site would be retained unless otherwise identified for removal.

44. The assessment of visual effects was undertaken on the basis of viewpoint analysis as recommended in best practice guidelines. The viewpoints which are in different directions from the site and are at varying distances and locations were selected to represent a range of views and visual receptor types.

45. The viewpoints are representational and not exhaustive. They are taken from publicly accessible land and not from any third party, private, land.
46. The viewpoints were used as the basis for determining the effects of visual receptors within the entire study area. The viewpoints were photographed at 1.6 metres above ground level.
47. The photos were taken using a Canon EOS 5d Mark IV full frame camera using a fixed 50mm lens.

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

48. Sensitivity is determined by a combination of the value that is attached to a view and the susceptibility of the receptor to changes in that view that would arise as a result of the Proposed Development as outlined in pages 113-114 of GLVIA3. Both value and susceptibility are assessed as high, medium or low.
49. GLVIA3 says a judgement should be made as to the value of a particular view being experienced. In making a professional judgement as to the value attached to a view, the following criteria have helped guide the process. Not all the criteria have to apply to a particular view and the criteria are not in a hierarchy.

Table 14: Criteria for judging levels of visual value

Low	Views from within, or towards, undesignated landscapes and / or features of site-wide importance View is of low scenic beauty View makes a very limited contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from landscapes / viewpoints which are not particularly popular or recognised as being destinations in their own right, including infrequently used rights of way Views with no social / cultural / historic associations
Medium	Views from within, or towards, undesignated landscapes and / or features of local importance View is of moderate scenic beauty View makes a moderate contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution Views from locally-popular recreation areas / green open spaces / public rights of way, but not used by many visitors Views with social / cultural / historic associations of local importance

High	Views from within, or towards, designated landscapes and / or features of regional or countywide importance e.g. Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV), Country Parks, Conservation Areas, Grade II listed buildings, National Trust land etc., especially where contributing to the significance of an asset / feature
	View is of high scenic beauty
	View makes an important contribution to understanding of landscape function / contribution
	Views from well-used and popular visitor attractions / tourist destinations, including long-distance / themed trails, Heritage Coasts, Public Open Spaces / Local Green Spaces, used by relatively large numbers of people
	Views with social / cultural / historic associations of countywide importance

Table 15: Visual Receptors Susceptibility to Change

Low	Receptors in commercial and industrial premises, schools, playing fields etc. where the view is not central to the use
	People using main roads, rail corridors, infrequently used / inaccessible public rights of way and likely to be travelling for a purpose other than to enjoy the view
	People moving past the view often at high speed (e.g. on motorways and main line railways) and with little or no focus on or interest in the landscape through which they are travelling
	Motorists and passengers on main roads
	People working in premises where the views are not likely to make an important contribution to the setting, and / or to the quality of working life
	People engaged in outdoor sport and recreation which does not involve or depend on appreciation of views of the landscape
	Communities where views do not contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
Medium	Receptors within, or looking towards, undesignated landscapes, areas and features of local importance, and in places where the landscape / feature is not necessarily part of the reason for the visit
	People engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is unlikely to be focused on the landscape and / or particular views, and / or for whom the view is not necessarily a factor in the enjoyment of the activity
	Users of public rights of way where attention is not focused on the landscape/and/or views (for example in densely vegetated or built up areas)
	People staying in hotels and healthcare institutions who are likely to appreciate and / or benefit from views of their surroundings

	People working in premises where the views are likely to make an important contribution to the setting, and / or to the quality of working life Motorists and passengers on rural lanes Residential properties (upper stories/less use in daylight hours) Communities where views partly contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area
High	Receptors (tourists / visitors) within, or looking towards, internationally- or nationally-designated landscapes, areas and features such as World Heritage Sites, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings and other places where the landscape / feature is the main reason for the visit People using national trails and other designated routes where the view is likely to be the focus of attention Residents at home, although this will depend on the rooms occupied during waking hours People, whether residents or visitors, engaged in outdoor recreation, including users of public rights of way, e.g. walkers, riders, cyclists, boat users, motorists, whose attention may be focused on the landscape and / or particular views, and / or for whom the view is a factor in the enjoyment of the activity People travelling through the landscape on roads, rail or other routes on recognised scenic routes or where there is a distinct awareness of views of their surroundings and their visual amenity Residential properties (lower stories and gardens) Communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by residents in the area

Table 16: Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

	VALUE			
SUSCEPTIBILITY		HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
	HIGH	High	High	Medium
	MEDIUM	High	Medium	Low
	LOW	Medium	Low	Low

Magnitude of Change on Visual Impact

50. The Magnitude of Visual Impact experienced by visual receptors as a result of the development proposals will be described by reference to the:

- Scale of change in the view in respect of the loss or addition of features and changes in the visual composition, including the proportion of view occupied by the proposed development;
- Geographical extent – This is likely to reflect the orientation/ angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor; The distance of the viewpoint from the main development and the extent of the area over which the changes would be visible;
- Duration of the effect - (short 0-5yrs/ medium 5-10yrs/ long term 20yrs, temporary, permanent, intermittent/ continuous and whether the views will be full, partial or glimpses.)
- Reversibility - the ability of the proposed development to be reversed.

51. The criteria which will be used to guide the assessment of the magnitude of impact that would be experienced by visual receptors as a result of the proposals are outlined below;

Table 17: Criteria for magnitude of change for visual receptors

High	The proposals will be clearly noticeable and the view would be fundamentally changed by its presence. Direct or oblique views with changes over a notable horizontal and/or vertical extent.
Medium	The proposals will form a new element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. Direct or oblique views with a moderate horizontal and/or vertical extent of the view affected.
Low	The proposals will form a new and recognisable element within the view which is likely to be recognised by the receptor. The proposals will form a minor constituent of the view being partially visible or at sufficient distance to be a small component.
Negligible	The proposals will form a barely noticeable component of the view, and the view whilst slightly changed would be similar to the baseline situation.
No Change	No change to the existing view.
Neutral	The changes to the view are not apparent if they are positive or negative. There may be some adverse and some beneficial changes perceived in equal measure, but the nature of the changes only effect a small part of the view on the whole in a close proximity view, or a larger proportion of the view at a further distance.

Scale of Effects

52. The scale of the landscape and visual effects is determined by;

- cross referencing the sensitivity of the landscape feature, landscape character or view with;
- the magnitude of change. The scale of effects is described as major, moderate, minor, negligible, neutral or no change.

Table 18: Scale of effects

		Magnitude of Change				
Sensitivity		High	Medium	Low	Negligible	Neutral
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor	Neutral
	Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Neutral
	Low	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Neutral

Nature of Effects

53. Development results in varying degrees of visual changes to the existing landscape, and also generates pressures upon highly valued natural and built environments. The landscape is an environment that we perceive, recognise and appreciate. Protecting and enhancing the visual attributes of an existing host landscape setting is regulated by a range of policies and design guidance recommendations.

54. Development proposals often give rise to conflicts between local authorities, developers, and the public. Visual relationships between a proposed development and the existing host landscape setting are increasingly controversial. Currently, conflict resolution, based upon local authorities' policies, relies on an expert's interpretation and professional judgement on whether development proposals give rise to visual effects which are either beneficial, adverse or on occasion neutral.

55. It is a requirement of the EIA Regulations to state whether effects are adverse, beneficial or neutral. GLVIA3 states an informed professional judgement should be made as to whether visual effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity. This will need to be based on a judgement about

whether the changes will affect the quality of the visual experience for those groups of people who will see the changes, given the nature of the existing views.

56. Visual effects are more subjective in terms of their valency as people's perception of the proposals varies through the spectrum of negative, neutral and positive attitudes.
57. Although appropriately qualified landscape experts aim to provide an impartial and objective assessment of visual effects of development proposals, their evaluations are regularly combined with personal judgments. It is important to be able to arrive at a conclusion in respect of the nature of a visual effect that is reliable, measurable and repeatable, so that all parties arrive at a point of mutual interest in aiding high quality, well designed and appropriate development proposals which respect and minimise harm to the host landscape. A higher level of objectivity and quantification would facilitate a more rigorous evaluation of development proposals and the visual changes that arise from them. This would help ensure the preservation and enhancement of the primary visual attributes that contribute to the overall landscape character of the host landscape.
58. Using the methodology set out in GLVIA 3, Sensitivity x Magnitude of change = Scale of effect.
59. High sensitivity x High magnitude of change would give rise to a major effect, which is either adverse or beneficial.
60. The report's author is of the opinion that this method results in a scale of effect that does not accurately reflect the real-world scenario and take into consideration a well-balanced scale of effect, considering all of the positive and negative changes to a view.
61. In order to come to a professional opinion as to whether the nature of effect is neutral, adverse or beneficial, the following table has been created by the reports author to aid the decision making, taking into consideration the visual elements of the proposals and how these inter relate to character and design objectives in planning policy. The following table is based upon the authors experience, informed by objectives and criteria set out in local authority design guides and planning policy requirements. The table provides an indication in the types of criteria that could help inform the decision making. It is the intention to use the GLVIA 3 Sensitivity x Magnitude of change to arrive at a scale of effect, and then use the following table to inform a well-balanced consideration of the changes to the views brought about by the proposals. The overall nature of effect will be the result of the Sensitivity x Magnitude of Change, and the balance of positive and negative changes to the visuals from the following table, that will increase or reduce that scale off effect to result in a final scale of effect.

62. Positive and Negative visual changes will be itemised so that the decision making is transparent and clear for the LPA landscape officer to understand how the overall scale of visual effect has been arrived at.

63. The following table aims to move away from the assumption that all development is adverse in nature, and to create a balanced and transparent method that can be used to arrive at the professional judgement as to whether changes to existing views, brought about by development proposals, are considered adverse or beneficial in nature. If the resulting scores are equal, a neutral nature of effect would be justifiable.

Table 19: Nature of visual effects – Beneficial or Adverse

	Beneficial	Adverse
Perception of appropriate visual character	Building style and materials used are in character with local context	Building style and materials used not in character with local context
	Built form elements of proposals are of high architectural merit and include the use of high-quality materials	Built form elements of proposals are of poor architectural merit and poor choice of materials used not characteristic of the local context
	The height and massing emulate the local context	The height and massing appear incongruous to the local context
	The extent of development is proportionate to the site and emulates settlement patterns in the local context	The extent of development is disproportionate and an overdevelopment of the site and incongruous to local settlement patterns
Sense of Place	Proposals help create a sense of place and/or make a positive visual statement	Proposals do not help create a sense of place and/or make a negative visual statement
	Proposals include visual elements which are recommended in LPA design guides and considered visually pleasing i.e., solar panels, green roofs, innovative/sustainable design features	Proposals include elements which are not recommended in LPA design guides and not considered visually pleasing i.e., in appropriate surfacing materials, planting, building materials
	Proposals do not give rise to any over bearing visual effects upon visual receptor	Proposals do give rise to over bearing visual effects upon visual

	I.e., overshadowing, apprehension	receptor I.e., overshadowing, apprehension
Views	Proposals are well enclosed and largely hidden from receptors	Proposals are exposed and/or largely visible from receptors
	The view is improved as a result of the proposals	The view is degraded as a result of the proposals
	Proposals are not considered a visual eye sore, blot on landscape or a visual detractor/visually contentious	Proposals are considered a visual eye sore, blot on landscape or a visual detractor/visually contentious
	Proposals maintain any published important existing views and do not erode or obscure important views	Proposal's block, erode or obscure existing published important views
	Proposals do not detract from another element/feature/landmark of visual significance within the view	Proposals do detract from an element/feature/landmark of visual significance within the view
	Proposals are appropriate for the site and local area I.e., not alien land use or features and would be considered as an evolution/progression for the location	Proposals are not appropriate for the site and local area I.e., are alien or not considered as an evolution/ progression for the location
	Proposals look visually attractive and would be perceived as aesthetically pleasing and enhance the visual environment	Proposals do not look visually attractive and would not be perceived as aesthetically pleasing and not enhance the visual environment
	Proposals improve or enhance the visible condition or perception of quality of the site or any element of it I.e., enhance the surfacing of a right of way or improve the landscape framework	Proposals do not improve or enhance the visible condition or perception of quality of the site or any element of it I.e., enhance the surfacing of a right of way or improve the landscape framework
	Proposals not considered bad neighbor development I.e., proposals that do not attract large numbers of people gathering and increased activity that detracts from the baseline view	Proposals are considered bad neighbor development I.e., proposals that do attract large numbers of people gathering and increased activity that detracts from the baseline view

	Existing built form removed from the view is not an important visual element within the view	Existing built form removed from the view is an important visual element within the view
	Proposals do not adversely affect the night time sky above/immediately adjacent the proposals	Proposals do adversely affect the night time sky above/immediately adjacent the proposals
	Proposals lead to changes to view that are easy for people to understand and appreciate	Proposals lead to changes to view that are hard for people to understand and appreciate
	The proposals do not result in a significant degree of visual modification within the view	The proposals do result in a significant degree of visual modification within the view
	New planting and fencing paraphernalia is not visible/not visually prominent and does not clutter the view	New planting and fencing paraphernalia is highly visible/visually prominent and does clutter the view
Existing Vegetation and Planting Mitigation	Proposals reinstate visually characteristic features which have become eroded or lost as a result of lack of management, damage or intensive land management or agricultural practices	Proposals do not reinstate visually characteristic features which have become eroded or lost as a result of lack of management, damage or intensive land management or agricultural practices or exacerbate the baseline scenario
	Proposals include the removal of only limited quantities of existing trees/vegetation which are mostly poor/low quality that doesn't lead to a visual deterioration in the view	Proposals include the removal of medium/high quantities of poor-quality existing trees/vegetation and/ or medium/high quality trees/vegetation that leads to a visual deterioration in the view
	Trees/Vegetation removed from the view are not key/important visual elements within the view	Trees/Vegetation removed from the view are key/important visual elements within the view
	Planting is characteristic in assemblage using species appropriate for the context	Planting is incongruous in assemblage or planting species not appropriate for the context
	Proposals include significant mitigation planting that reduce outward visual effects and improve the visual environment	Proposals include token/limited mitigation planting that reduce outward visual effects and does not improve the visual environment

	Foliage on vegetation (existing and proposed improves the view of proposals	Foliage on vegetation (existing and proposed does not improve the view of proposals
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Mitigation

64. The purpose of the mitigation is to prevent/ avoid, reduce and where possible remedy or offset any negative (adverse) effect on the environment arising from the proposals. Mitigation is not solely concerned with 'damage limitation' but may also consider measures that could compensate for unavoidable residual effects.

65. Mitigation measures are generally considered to fall into three categories:

- Primary measures, developed through the iterative design process, which have become integrated or embedded in to the project design;
- Standard construction and operational management practices for avoiding and reducing environmental effects;
- Secondary measures designed to address any residual adverse remaining after primary measures and standard construction practices have been incorporated into the scheme.

66. Strategies to address likely negative (adverse) effects include:

- Avoid impact by changing the proposal;
- Reduce the impact by changing the proposals;
- Remediation of the impact by screen planting for example;
- Compensation for the impact, for example replacement of removed trees with new tree planting; and
- Enhancement, for example creation of a new landscape or habitat.

Guidelines for mitigation

- Landscape mitigation measures should be designed to suit the existing landscape character and needs of the locality, respecting and building on local landscape distinctiveness and helping to address any relevant existing issues in the landscape.

- It must be recognised that many mitigation measures, especially planting, are not immediately effective. Where planting is intended to provide a visual screen for the development, it may also be appropriate to assess the effects for different seasons and periods of time, such as day of opening and Year 15 and potentially other periods in line with phasing. In such projections the assumptions made about growth rates should be clearly stated on the proposed landscape plans;
- Use of appropriate form, material and design of buildings. It is not always practical or desirable to screen buildings and associated development. In these cases, the scale, design, colour and texture of buildings/ structures should be carefully considered to aid integration with the surroundings;
- Alterations to landforms (including creation of bunds or mounds) together with structure planting and/ or off-site planting;
- Minimising light pollution and avoiding or reducing obtrusive light; and
- Planting: Structural planting can help to integrate and 'soften' development as well as being of potential value as a wildlife habitat. Offsite planting should also be considered where it could be of benefit to screen the proposed development from sensitive landscape and visual receptors.

67. The following assumptions for tree and scrub planting are made when assessing the visual effects upon the identified views.

- Year 1 – This is the stock size at the time of planting.
- Year 15 – This is a timescale used in visual assessment, when planting is widely accepted to have established and grown to a sufficient height to provide a good level of filtering/screening for proposals.
- Year 8 – This is a halfway point of measurement that illustrates incremental growth for proposed planting.

Type of planting	Year 1	Year 8	Year 15
Extra Heavy Standard Trees	4-4.5m	6-6.5m	8.5m
Scrub Planting/Native Transplants	60-90 cm	3.5m	5-7m

APPENDIX 2: SITE LOCATION

(credit Scarp Landscape Architecture and Environment Planning)



KEY

● Site



Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	22/4/25

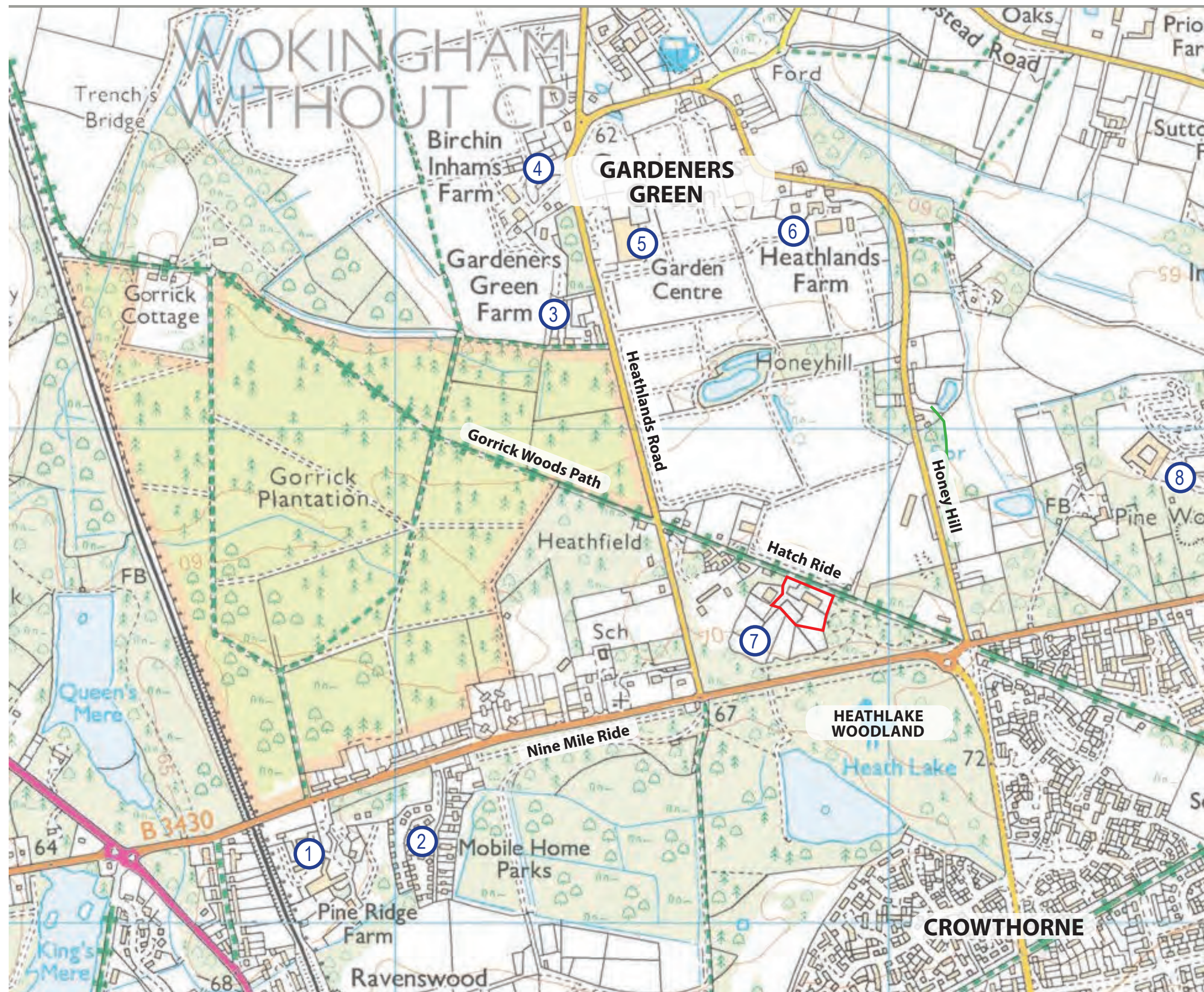
LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Heathlands Riding Est, Heathlands Rd, Wokingham

Description:
Site Location Plan

Status:
For Planning

Scale: 1:NTS @A3	Drawn I Checked DP MP	Date: 22/04/2025
Job Number: LAS 927	Drawing Number: 01	Revision: -



Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Public Footpaths
-  Restricted byway
-  Access Land
-  1 Pine Copse Park
-  2 Phoenix Residential Homes
-  3 Little Grange Nursery and South Barn Commercial Units
-  4 Birchin-Inhams Farm Commercial Units
-  5 Squire's Garden Centre/Wyevale Garden Centre
-  6 Hall Hunter Berry Growers
-  7 Heathlands Riding School
-  8 Pinewood Campus

Notes

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Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Scarp landscape architecture
environmental planning

Project
Heathlands Riding School

Client
Mr. J Norman

Dwg Title
Figure 1: Site Location and Context

Dwg No

NTS

July 2025

HEATHLANDS RIDING SCHOOL

APPENDIX 3: LANDSCAPE FEATURES PLANS

(credit Scarp Landscape Architecture and Environment Planning)



 Site

Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	22/4/25

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Heathlands Riding Est, Heathlands Rd, Wokingham

Description:
Landscape Features Plan - Site Level

Status:
For Planning

Scale:	Drawn Checked	Date:
1:NTS @A3	DP MP	22/04/2025

Job Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
LAS 927	03	-





- Site
- Main areas of woodland blocks, trees, roadside and field boundary vegetation which limits outward visibility of the site
- Areas of partial/limited visibility
- Areas of high visibility



Revision	Description	Date
-	First issue	22/4/25

LANDARB SOLUTIONS

Project:
Heathlands Riding Est, Heathlands Rd, Wokingham

Description:
Landscape Features Plan - Immediate Environs

Status:
For Planning

Scale: 1:NTS @A3	Drawn I Checked DP MP	Date: 22/04/2025
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Job Number: LAS 927	Drawing Number: 03	Revision: -
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HEATHLANDS RIDING SCHOOL

Key

-  Site Boundary
- ① Pine Copse Park
- ② Phoenix Residential Homes
- ③ Little Grange Nursery
- ④ South Barn Commercial Units
- ⑤ Birchin-Inhams Farm Commercial Units
- ⑥ Squire's Garden Centre/ Wyevale Garden Centre
- ⑦ Hall Hunter Berry Growers
- ⑧ Heathlands Riding School
- ⑨ Pinewood Campus 2025

Notes

2025 Airbus/ Google Earth

Scarp landscape architecture
environmental planning

Project Heathlands Riding School

Client Mr. J Norman

Dwg Title Figure 2: Wider Landscape Aerial
Photograph

Dwg No

NTS

July 2025