14 Landscape & Visual Impact

14.1 Introduction

14.1.1 This chapter of the Environmental Statement has been produced by Savills Urban Design Studio. It has been prepared by a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute and Recognised Practitioner of the Urban Design Group.

14.1.2 It describes and evaluates any changes to landscape character, features and visual amenity that may arise due to Proposed Development as set out in the Parameter Plans and described in Chapter 3. It also considers the potential additional mitigation benefits as set out in the Illustrative Landscape Strategy drawing.

14.1.3 The main objectives of this chapter are as follows:

- Review relevant landscape policies and designations relating to the Site.
- Establishment of the baseline landscape and visual conditions, including the sensitivity/value of receptors
- Identification and assessment of the magnitude of any potential effects
- Identify proposed additional mitigation
- Appraisal of the significance of any residual effects

14.2 Assessment methodology

14.2.1 The Landscape and Visual chapter (LVIA) chapter appraises the baseline and effects on landscape character, landscape features and visual amenity. This section describes the policy background and how the methodology has been informed by the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment 3rd edition* ('GLVIA3', Landscape Institute & IEMA, 2013.)

International Landscape Policy Context

14.2.2 The UK signed and ratified the European Landscape Convention (ELC) in 2006-2007. This international convention focuses specifically on landscapes, promoting the importance of policies relating to their protection, management and creation. It applies to all landscapes, towns, open countryside, coast and inland areas, and includes ordinary and degraded landscapes as well as those afforded protection. The ELC does not confine itself to cultural or man-made landscape elements alone, but to all elements and the way they interact. The use of Landscape Character Assessment to inform policymaking is a well-established example of the implementation of the convention in the UK.

14.2.3 The ELC recommends that landscape policies should aim to 'protect, manage or plan' as defined below:

- "Landscape protection: action to conserve and maintain the significant or characteristic features of a landscape, justified by the landscape's heritage value derived from its natural configuration and/or human activity.
- Landscape management: action from a perspective of sustainable development, to ensure the regular upkeep of a landscape, so as to guide and harmonise changes which are brought about by social, economic and environmental processes.

- Landscape planning means: strong forward-looking action to enhance, restore or create landscape."

National Planning Policy – Landscape Matters

A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (HM Government, 2018, updated 2019)

14.2.4 The 25 Year Plan sets out strategic environmental policy covering a range of aspirations. Goal 6 'enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment' sets out the commitments to ensure we conserve and enhance the beauty of the natural environment, and make sure it can be enjoyed, used by and cared for by everyone. It sets out the following measures as ways to achieve this goal:

- *"Safeguarding and enhancing the beauty of our natural scenery and improving its environmental value while being sensitive to considerations of its heritage.*
- *Making sure that there are high quality, accessible, natural spaces close to where people live and work, particularly in urban areas, and encouraging more people to spend time in them to benefit their health and wellbeing.*
- *Focusing on increasing action to improve the environment from all sectors of society." (Page 28)*

14.2.5 This goal, along with the other seven presented in the 25 Year Plan, are supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (see below).

National Planning Policy Framework

14.2.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (updated December 2024) (NPPF) is a material consideration in dealing with planning applications for development. The Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied and provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

14.2.7 The NPPF describes how the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to achieve sustainable development through three overarching objectives. Objective c), the 'environmental objective', is to

"protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy" (NPPF paragraph 8).

14.2.8 Policy sections that are particularly relevant to the landscape design of the Site are:

Section 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment'

14.2.9 Paragraph 187 states that Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

"[…] a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan).

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;[…]"

Natural Environment Planning Practice Guidance

14.2.10 The NPPF is supplemented by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The Natural Environment PPG (published 2016, updated February 2025), explains the key issues in implementing policy to protect biodiversity and natural environment and provides advice on how the character of landscapes can be used to inform planning decisions and what green infrastructure is and why it is important in delivering sustainable developments.

14.2.11 It makes reference to the National Planning Policy Framework, stating:

"it is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes".

14.2.12 The Natural Environment PPG also goes on to state, "*the cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully*" (Paragraph: 036 Reference ID: 8-036-20190721, Revision date: 21 July 2019).

14.2.13 At paragraph 037, the PPG identifies that landscape character assessments can be prepared, as well as Landscape and Sensitivity and Capacity Assessments to help assess the type and scale of development that may be accommodated without compromising landscape character (Paragraph: 037 Reference ID: 8-037-20190721, Revision date: 21 July 2019). The PPG also states that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment can be used to demonstrate the likely effects of a Proposed Development.

Adopted Local Planning Policy

Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (January 2010) and Wokingham Borough Managing Development Delivery Plan (February 2014)

14.2.14 The primary policies relating to landscape and visual amenity are set out in the WBC 'Adopted Core Strategy' (2010) and 'Managing Development Delivery Plan' (2014).

14.2.15 Core Strategy Policy CP1 Sustainable Development requires planning proposals to: *"maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment".*

14.2.16 Core Strategy Policy CP3 General Principles for Development requires planning proposals to:

"Have no detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape (including river valleys) or geological features or water courses.

Maintain or enhance the ability of the Site to support fauna and flora including protected species;"

14.2.17 Delivery Plan Policy CC03: Green Infrastructure, Trees and Landscaping seeks to include green infrastructure networks within developments. Supporting paragraph 2.19 sets out the need for landscape and visual impact studies where the Site is located on or adjacent to development limits or where it may have an impact on the surrounding townscape. Relevant requirements of this policy are:

"Development proposals should demonstrate how they have considered and achieved the following criteria within scheme proposals:

a) Provide new or protect and enhance the Borough's Green Infrastructure networks, including the need to mitigate potential impacts of new development
b) Promote accessibility, linkages and permeability between and within existing green corridors including public rights of way such as footpaths, cycleways and bridleways
c) Promote the integration of the scheme with any adjoining public open space or countryside
d) Protect and retain existing trees, hedges and other landscape features
e) Incorporate high quality, ideally, native planting and landscaping as an integral part of the scheme.

3. Development proposals which would result in the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure will not be acceptable."

14.2.18 Delivery Plan Policy TB21: Landscape Character requires that:

"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."

14.2.19 Amongst other requirements, Delivery Plan Policy TB23: Biodiversity and Development requires that development proposals:

a) "Provide opportunities, including through design, layout and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing
b) Provide appropriate buffer zones between development proposals and designated Sites as well as habitats and species of principle importance for nature conservation
c) Ensure that all existing and new developments are ecologically permeable through the protection of existing and the provision of new continuous wildlife corridors, which shall be integrated and linked to the wider green infrastructure network"

Emerging Local Planning Policy

14.2.20 The Site has a draft allocation in the *Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update: Proposed Submission Plan 2023-2040* and is covered by Policy SS13. With regards to landscape and visual matters, this requires the Loddon Garden Village to deliver:

"f) a multi-functional country park which is accessible to settlements beyond the garden village,

g) A solution to avoid or mitigate the impact of development upon the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area through the provision of sufficient Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) (subject to monitoring of the quality and quantity standards)."

14.2.21 Policy SS13 sets out requirements for masterplanning the Loddon Garden Village:

"3. The siting, layout, and form of development, including landscaping should:

a) Draw on and enhance the site's context, changes in topography and its considerable natural assets such as the River Loddon and Barkham Brook, irreplaceable habitats, and hedgerows, trees, woodland and other features;

b) Protect and retain the permanent physical and visual sense of separation of Arborfield and the defined settlements of Arborfield Cross and Shinfield;…

d) Establish a comprehensive and integrated network of high-quality and attractive active travel routes…

e) Incorporate measures to protect the separate identity of Carter's Hill;

f) Incorporate measures to conservation and enhancement of heritage assets, including listed buildings, through appropriate design and the provision of sufficient space;…

h) Locate higher development densities … subject to site specific sensitivities such as landscape, character and heritage;…

j) Draw on the recreational and ecological opportunities of the River Loddon and Barkham Brook to create a multi-functional country park which provides coherent ecological networks, recreational opportunities and active travel connectivity.

5….The masterplan must provide:

a) A coordinated and comprehensive landscape led approach to development of the whole Loddon Valley Garden Village…

b) A strategy for the quantum and distribution of land uses, access points, design and layout principles … which draws on a detailed understanding of the area's characteristics, opportunities and constraints;

6. Development proposals should devise and implement a comprehensive strategic landscape and green and blue infrastructure strategy that:

a) Provides a new country park incorporating the River Loddon and Barkham Brook that contributes to, and enhances, coherent ecological networks and habitats, which are integrated into the wider green and blue infrastructure beyond the garden village;

b) Protects and enhances the identified attributes of the River Loddon Valued Landscape and Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape;

c) Provide a network of connected, accessible and high-quality open spaces that includes tree lined streets, opportunities for local food growing and natural play, that integrate with the wider green and blue infrastructure network;

d) Retains, and incorporates appropriate buffers for, ancient woodland, ancient or veteran trees, watercourses, hedgerows, and other trees into the connected green and blue infrastructure of the Site;

e) Provides a network of safe, attractive, landscaped and accessible public rights of way across the site, and where appropriate demonstrates how they connect into the existing rights of way network;

f) Contributes to establishing the Loddon long distance footpath for active travel;…

8. Development proposals should devise and implement a comprehensive ecological strategy that:...

c) Provide a suitable buffer between the built development and ecological areas, including (but not limited to) Local Wildlife Sites, areas of irreplaceable habitat and areas of priority habitat; and

d) Provide measures to avoid and mitigate the impact of development on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. This will include the provision of sufficient and accessible Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace on-Site (as set out in Policy NE3)."

14.2.22 In addition, the draft Local Plan has other policies relating to Green Infrastructure, Trees and Valued Landscapes across the Borough.

14.2.23 Policy C4: 'Green and Bue Infrastructure and Public Rights of Way' requires green and blue infrastructure to be protected and enhanced for their biodiversity, recreational, amenity, health, townscape and landscape value, and their contribution towards mitigating and adapting to climate change. It requires development proposals to plan for a network of publicly accessible green and blue infrastructure from the outset as appropriate and avoid the loss, fragmentation, isolation or other adverse impacts on networks of habitats and existing green and blue infrastructure unless replacement provision can be provided

14.2.24 Policy NE4: Trees, Woodland, Hedges and Hedgerows seeks to protect existing trees, woodland, hedges and hedgerows and ensure they are well integrated within the public realm, in a suitably landscaped setting.

14.2.25 Policy NE5: Landscape and Design supports development proposals that adopt a landscape led approach which protects and enhances the character and distinctiveness of landscapes using the most up-to date landscape studies (including the Landscape Character Assessment and Design Guide and any successor document). It requires development proposals to be *"demonstrably informed by, and respond to, the distinctive characters set out in the Landscape Character Assessment and other relevant assessments, which provide an understanding of the valued characteristics, features and quality of local landscape character areas."*

14.2.26 Policy NE5 also requires development proposals to be accompanied by a landscape and visual impact assessment proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed Landscape schemes should be set within an overall masterplan for the proposed development, and should incorporate landscape spaces, public realm and green and blue infrastructure to achieve a sense of place, improve health and wellbeing and mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

14.2.27 Policy NE6 Valued Landscapes covers the protection of a number of proposed Valued Landscapes across the borough. The Site includes parts of the 'River Loddon' Valued Landscape.

14.2.28 Policy NE6 requires development proposals located within or affecting a valued landscape to have particular regard to the following attributes:

"a) Landscape quality (condition); b) Scenic quality; c) Rarity; d) Representativeness; e) Conservation interests; f) Recreation value; g) Perceptual aspects; and h) Associations."

14.2.29 3. It states that development proposals affecting Valued Landscapes

"will only be supported where they protect, and where appropriate, integrate with and/or enhance the special features, characteristics and qualities of the landscape, unless the benefits of the development in that location clearly outweigh the harm."

Neighbourhood Plans

14.2.30 The Loddon Garden Village Site lies across the Shinfield and Arborfield & Barkham parishes, both of which have 'made' neighbourhood plans. These have policies that reflect those in the Local Plan, seeking to provide developments with high quality landscapes and that respect the setting of the existing settlements. Relevant policies are set out below.

Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan Made Version February 2017

14.2.31 The area of the Site to the north-west of the River Loddon is covered by the Shinfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan. Relevant policies require:

- appropriate space for hard and soft landscape works, provision of appropriately high quality and high specification sustainable landscape works and tree planting, particularly at settlement boundaries, in the public realm and along designated green routes and green route enhancement areas (existing and proposed); and the design of road and service layouts to ensure the sustainable retention, where appropriate, of existing landscape features, including trees and historic landscape features, and to allow space for new sustainable landscape works (Policy 2)
- retention of trees, hedgerows, Habitats of principal Importance, ancient woodlands, Local Wildlife Sites and ponds together with appropriate design of buffer zones (Policy 6)

Arborfield and Barkham Joint Neighbourhood Plan Made Version December 2019

14.2.32 The area of the Site to the south-east of the River Loddon is covered by the *Arborfield and Barkham Joint Neighbourhood Plan*. Relevant policies relating to landscape design and access to the countryside comprise:

- Policy IRS2: Recognise, Respect And Preserve Identity And Rural Setting Of Settlements
- Policy IRS3: Protection And Enhancement Of The Natural Environment And Green Spaces
- Policy AD3: High Quality Development With Generous Open Space, Properly Landscaped
- Policy GA2: Implement Local Network Of Green Routes For Non-Motorised Users

Guidance and Best Practice

14.2.33 The following guidance has been used:

- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd edition* (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) ('GLVIA3').
- *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (Natural England, October 2014)
- *Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals* (Landscape Institute 2019)
- *Technical Guidance Note 08/19 Camera Auto Settings* (Landscape Institute 2019)
- *Technical Guidance Note 09/19 Earth Curvature* (Landscape Institute 2019)

Baseline Surveys

Desk-based Review

14.2.34 Baseline data has been collected via a desk-based survey and a number of Site visit through both the summer and winter months.

14.2.35 The desk-based survey has comprised a review of:

- Aerial photography
- OS mapping
- GIS database of national and local landscape, ecology and heritage designations. This chapter does not comprise an ecological or heritage review, but considers whether any natural and heritage assets contribute to the landscape character of the Site.
- National and local planning policy relating to landscape and visual matters,
- National and local landscape character assessments, comprising:
    - Natural England's *National Landscape Character Areas*
    - *Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment* (November 2019)
    - *Wokingham Valued Landscapes Assessment (September 2024)*

Site Visit

14.2.36 A number of Site visits were undertaken by a Chartered Landscape Architect and Urban Design Group Recognised Practitioner from 2022 – 2025 in both the winter and summer months. The Site visits confirmed the information arising from the desk study, produced a photographic record of the Site, highlighted any landscape features not already apparent from the desk study and enabled potential views into and out of the Site to be appraised. The photographs provided in Appendix 14.1 were taken in March 2025, when the leaves had fallen, enabling the maximum extents of visibility to be assessed.

Geographical Scope

14.2.37 The Site visit extended to Earley in the north-west, Winnersh in the north-east, Shinfield in the west, Barkham in the east and Arborfield Garrison in the south. This helped us to refine where visual change may occur. This 'Study Area' shown on the figures in Appendix 14.1 extends to incorporate areas where there may be changes to views, approximately 1km from the boundaries of the Site in each direction.

Photography

14.2.38 Photographs were taken with a Canon EOS 5D digital full frame SLR camera with a 50mm lens. This is compliant with Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 06/19 *Visual Representation of Development Proposals*. Photographs are presented as 'Type 1' Visualisations, namely Annotated Viewpoint Photographs. These are presented as panoramas to give a more realistic representation of the wider context. Locational data was surveyed with a Garmin GPS.

Figures

14.2.39 The baseline surveys are summarised in Section 14.3, with accompanying figures in Appendix 14.1. These comprise:

- Landscape Designations (Figure 14.1),
- Landscape Character Assessments (Figure 14.2),
- Site Landscape Character (Figure 14.3),
- Landscape and Movement context (Figure 14.4),

- Site Landscape Features (Figure 14.5),
- Landform and Water Features (Figure 14.6),
- Photography Viewpoints (Figure 14.7)
- Views (Figure 14.8 – 14.23)
- Illustrative Landscape Strategy (Figure 14.24)

Landscape Assessment Methodology

14.2.40 The appraisals are based on an evaluation of the 'sensitivity' of the landscape and visual receptors and the 'magnitude' of the changes.

14.2.41 The overall 'sensitivity' of the landscape receptor (Table 14.3) is based on an evaluation of the combination of the 'value' of the visual receptors (Table 14.1) and their 'susceptibility to change' (Table 14.2) caused by the Proposed Development.

14.2.42 'Value' refers to the value that is attached to different landscapes by society, bearing in mind that a landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.19). The baseline review considers the individual elements and aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape and the condition/quality and 'representativeness' of its elements and features. Judgements are based on the criteria set out in Table 14.1, as derived from GLVIA3 paragraphs 5.20 to 5.31 and 5.44 to 5.45.

Table 14.1 Landscape Value Criteria

Landscape Value	Criteria
High	A landscape element or area of high scenic/ perceptual qualities in good condition. Highly valued for its quality and/or Landscape character, and may be designated at a national or international level, such as World Heritage Sites, National Parks and Landscapes and Registered Parks and Gardens.
Medium	A Landscape element or area of medium scenic/ perceptual qualities, in at least moderate condition. May be designated at a regional or local level, for example, Conservation Areas and Valued Landscapes. It may also include undesignated Landscapes with some of the following: High scenic quality Intact Landscape character Presence of distinctive elements/ features in the landscape Features of particular landscape or cultural heritage importance Recreation value Historical associations
Low	An undesignated landscape that has some landscape features that contribute to its sense of place and are of value to the local community, but that may be in mixed condition and include some detractors that weaken its overall character and scenic quality.
Very Low	A landscape with few or no scenic/ perceptual qualities and in poor condition, not particularly valued, and not designated.

14.2.43 'Susceptibility to change' refers to the ability of the landscape receptor (the overall character or quality/condition of a particular landscape type or area, or an individual element and/or feature, or a particular aesthetic and perceptual aspect) to accommodate the Proposed Development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies (GLVIA3 paragraph 5.40). The categorisation for susceptibility to change is set out in Table 14.2.

Table 14.2 Landscape Susceptibility to Change Criteria

Landscape susceptibility to change	Criteria
High	An area where landscape character would be noticeably changed by the proposed scheme, either due to the loss of important landscape features, or due to the introduction of new features that are not typical of the area. The potential for intrusive development may also be due to a relatively open character with few elements that could screen the Proposed Development.
Medium	A landscape which is partially tolerant to change of the type proposed. This may be due to the presence of existing landscape detractors or the relative lack of a strong concentration of typical landscape characteristics. The capacity of the landscape to

Landscape susceptibility to change	Criteria
	accept change may also be due to the presence of some elements that may screen the proposed scheme, such as vegetation, buildings or landform features.
Low	An area that is tolerant of substantial change of the type proposed. This may be due to a lack of existing distinctive landscape elements or characteristics, the presence of a number of landscape detractors, or the presence of elements that may screen the proposed scheme.

Table 14.3 Overall Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape susceptibility to change (from Table 14.2)	**Landscape Value** (from Table 14.1)			
	High	**Medium**	**Low**	**Very Low**
High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low
Medium	Medium	Medium	Low	Very Low
Low	Low	Low	Low	Very Low

14.2.44 The scale of the changes arising from the proposals has then been appraised. The potential effects are also judged according to whether they are:

- Adverse, beneficial or neutral
- Direct or indirect
- Temporary or permanent
- Reversible or irreversible
- Cumulative

14.2.45 Definitions of the contributors to magnitude of change are provided in Tables 14.4 (size of effect). 14.5 (duration of effect) and 14.6 (geographical extent). These three elements are then considered together in Table 14.8 to give the overall 'magnitude' of each effect.

14.2.46 The magnitude of the changes has been assessed at two different points:

- During construction and at Year 0 of occupation (assuming no vegetation planting in any phase is established).
- Year 15 after completion of the final phase visible/relevant to that specific receptor group (when mitigation planting throughout the scheme is well established).

14.2.47 Adverse landscape effects are undesirable and result from negative impacts. Beneficial effects are desirable and result from positive impacts. Neutral effects are neither adverse or beneficial.

14.2.48 It is assumed that all operational changes would be permanent and irreversible for this development.

Table 14.4 Scale/Size of Landscape Effects

Landscape Scale/ Size of Change	Criteria
High adverse/ beneficial	The proposals would be at total variance (adverse) or totally accord (beneficial) with the key characteristics of the existing landscape, and/or there would be a very noticeable loss or change in landscape elements, features or characteristics. Beneficial effects would restore, recreate, or permanently benefit the condition or character of the landscape.
Medium adverse/ beneficial	The proposals would noticeably be at odds (adverse) or fit well (beneficial) with the key characteristics of the existing landscape, would noticeably improve or harm the condition or character of the landscape, and/or would result in the partial loss or alteration to one or more key landscape elements, features or characteristics.
Low adverse/ beneficial	The proposals would not quite fit (adverse) or have a degree of fit (beneficial) with the key characteristics of the existing landscape, and/or there would be minor loss or alteration of landscape elements, features or characteristics. Beneficial effects would go some way towards improving the condition or character of the landscape.
Negligible adverse/ beneficial landscape impact	The proposals would create a just discernible loss/change, or improvement to the key characteristics of the existing landscape. The proposals may not be uncharacteristic of the existing landscape.
No change	The proposals would not cause any change to the key characteristics of the existing landscape.

Table 14.5 Duration of Landscape and Visual Effects

Duration	Criteria
Long term	More than 10 years
Medium term	Five to 10 years
Short term	Zero to five years

Table 14.6 Geographical Extent of Landscape and Visual Effects

Geographical Extent	Criteria
Site Level	Within the development Site itself.
Site Setting	Within the immediate setting of the Site.
Landscape Type/Character Area	At the scale of the landscape type or character area within which the proposal lies.
Larger Scale	Influences several landscape type or character areas.

Table 14.7 Overall Magnitude of Landscape and Visual Effects

Magnitude	Criteria
High adverse/ beneficial	Effects of high scale/size affecting larger medium or Site setting geographical extent over the long or medium term.
Medium adverse/ beneficial	Effects of high scale/size affecting the Site level geographical extent over the long or medium term; or Effects of high size/scale affecting a larger, medium, Site setting or Site level geographical extent over the short term; or Effects of medium scale/size affecting larger, medium, Site setting or Site level geographical extent over the long or medium term.
Low adverse/ beneficial	Effects of medium scale/size affecting larger, medium, Site setting or Site level geographic extent over the short term; or Effects of low size/scale affecting the larger, medium, Site setting or Site level over the long or medium term.
Negligible adverse/ beneficial	Effects of low scale/size affecting the larger, medium Site setting or Site level scale over the short term; or Effects of negligible scale/size affecting the larger, medium, Site setting or Site level geographical extent and over the long, medium or short term.

14.2.49 The overall significance of the effects is then considered by considering the magnitude of change and sensitivity of the receptor group, as set out in Table 14.5. As recommended by the GLVIA3, the rationale for this process is described wherever possible, rather than relying solely on the matrix. For the purposes of the assessment, impacts of moderate and above are considered to be significant.

Table 14.8 Overall Significance of Landscape Effects

Receptor Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Substantial	Major	Moderate	Negligible
Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Visual Assessment Methodology

14.2.50 The assessments are based on an initial appraisal of the 'sensitivity' of the key views/ visual receptors. These are selected as a representative selection of key views, as agreed with Wokingham Borough Council. Initially the sensitivity of the visual receptors are appraised, (see Table 14.9) based on a combination of the 'value' of the receptor (see Table 14.10) and its 'susceptibility to accept change' (see Table 14.11).

Table 14.9 Visual Receptor - Value Criteria

Value	Criteria
High	Views with high scenic value, views to heritage assets or valued landscape features. Recognition of value shown through planning designations or in relation to heritage assets. Views may be referenced in tourist guides or maps and accompanied by facilities to facilitate their enjoyment, such as parking or interpretation boards.
Medium	Views of medium scenic value. Views not necessarily promoted widely for their value, but may be appreciated by the local community as a popular place to walk/ visit.
Low	Views are of low value, for example, due to landscape detractors, and may only be seen for periods of shorter duration such as visibility from roads or railways.

Table 14.10 Visual Receptor - Susceptibility to Change Criteria

Susceptibility to Change	Criteria
High	Residents at home. People engaged in outdoor recreation whose attention is likely to be focused on the townscape and particular views. Visitors to heritage assets or other attractions where views are an important contributor to the experience. Communities where views contribute to the townscape setting enjoyed by residents.
Medium	Travellers on road, rail or other transport, where travel involves recognised scenic routes. People at their place of work where views are an important contributor to the setting and quality of working life.
Low	Vehicle users on roads used principally for passage, where the attention is not necessarily focused on the view. People engaged in outdoor sport or recreation which does not involve or depend upon appreciation of views of the townscape. Occupants of places of work whose attention may be focused on the work and where the setting is not important to the quality of working life.

Table 14.11 Visual Receptor: Overall Sensitivity

Susceptibility to change (from Table 14.10)	**Value** (From Table 14.9)		
	High	**Medium**	**Low**
High	High	Medium	Low
Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Low	Low	Low	Low

14.2.51 The magnitude of the changes to visual amenity arising from the Proposed Development is then appraised according to the criteria set out in Table 14.12. The potential effects are also to be judged according to whether they are:

- Adverse, beneficial or neutral
- Direct or indirect
- Temporary or permanent
- Reversible or irreversible
- Cumulative

14.2.52 Adverse visual effects are undesirable and result from negative impacts. Beneficial effects are desirable and result from positive impacts. Neutral effects are neither adverse nor beneficial.

Table 14.12 Scale of Visual Change: Definitions

Size/ Scale of Effect	**Criteria**
High	Where the development would cause a dominant or complete change to the composition of the view, and the appreciation of landscape character, contrasting in terms of form, scale and mass, height, colour and/or texture. Views of the scheme are unlikely to be screened to any extent.
Medium	Where the development would cause a clearly noticeable change in the existing view, which would have some effects on its composition, and/or the appreciation of landscape character. It would not result in a dominant change to the view however and the overall effect is likely to be mitigated either due to distance from the viewer, complementary colours and textures, or the presence of some screening elements.
Low	Where the development would cause a perceptible change in the existing view, but would not materially affect its composition, or the appreciation of landscape character, either due to its distance from the viewer, the presence of screening elements or complementary colours and textures. Views of the proposals are more likely to be glimpsed rather than full.
Negligible	Where the development would cause a barely perceptible change in the existing view, either due to the presence of screening elements or distance from the viewer. Whilst the development would be visible, it would not result in a change to the overall composition of the view or landscape character of the area.
No change	No observable change to the view.

14.2.53 The magnitude of the changes to visual amenity arising from the Proposed Development has then been appraised according to the matrix provided in Table 14.7. The potential effects are either negative or positive and direct or indirect. This table also provides notes on the following aspects of the views, as recommended by GLVIA3 paragraph 6.27:

- Whether the view is full/partial/glimpse.
- The proportion of the development that would be visible.
- The distance of the viewpoint from the development and whether the scale of the development within the view.
- Whether the view is stationary or transient.
- The nature of the changes to the view.

14.2.54 The overall significance of the effects is then judged by utilising the categories set out in Table 14.13. As recommended by the GLVIA3, the rationale for this process is described wherever possible, rather than relying solely on the matrix. For the purposes of the assessment, impacts of moderate and above are considered to be significant.

Table 14.13 Significance of Visual Effects

	Magnitude of Visual Change (From Table 14.9)			
Sensitivity of Visual Receptor (From Table 14.8)	**High**	**Medium**	**Low**	**Negligible**
High	Substantial	Major	Moderate	Negligible
Medium	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Negligible

Temporal Scope

14.2.55 Our landscape and visual assessment covers the construction and occupation phases of the Proposed Development. For the landscape appraisal, the operational effects are taken to be at Year 0 and assume no specific mitigation planting. We do however, suggest how effects could be further reduced if mitigation planting is secured through Reserved Matters applications; this forms part of a 'residual effects' assessment, with the assessment at Year 15 following planting (when planting will have matured).

Consultation

14.2.56 In addition to the EIA scoping exercise we have liaised with the Wokingham Borough Council Landscape Officer to gain agreement on which viewpoints should be assessed. We have also liaised with Council officers throughout the masterplanning process to gain input on landscape mitigation measures and the design development has been informed by consultation responses from WBC. Meetings have included attendance at two Green Infrastructure workshops, a Site visit with the Council's Landscape Officer and DM officers and a Design Review Panel.

Assumptions and Limitations

14.2.57 The baseline review has been undertaken based on information readily available at the time of the assessment, the published documents set out in this chapter, and on Site visits undertaken in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

14.2.58 In undertaking the assessment of landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development, the following assumptions have been made:

- This landscape and visual assessment does not consider the significance of heritage assets, or any potential direct or indirect impacts on these assets or their settings. This assessment is made in Chapter 9 'Cultural Heritage'.
- The establishment and growth rates of the landscape mitigation proposals are based on established forestry (Forestry Commission/Enterprise) methods and it is assumed that planting of new trees and shrubs would achieve a height of 7 to 10 m after 10 to 15 years, allowing for the local growing conditions/environment. This timescale could be shortened if semi-mature specimens are used.
- The Proposed Development is based on that set out in the Parameter Plans (see Chapter 3). In particular, as shown on the Building Heights Parameter Plan, the tallest buildings would be a maximum of 18m high. The location of open space in relation to development is also assessed as shown on the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan.
- The visual assessment focusses on public views and visual amenity. Whilst the report does consider potential impacts on views from private residences, it is not a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment. No access was gained to private properties when undertaking the assessment.
- The assessment considers daytime visual effects only.

14.3 Baseline conditions

Current Baseline – Landscape

Landscape Designations

14.3.1 Designations are shown on Figure 14.1.

14.3.2 The Site is not covered by any adopted landscape amenity designations. Part of the Site is covered by the draft 'River Loddon Valued Landscape' designation, as described in the Wokingham Borough Council Valued Landscapes Assessment (September 2024) and covered by Policy NE6 in the *Wokingham Borough Local Plan Update 2023 - 2040 Proposed Submission Plan.* The proposed Eco Valley area to the north-west of the River Loddon and the southern and northern parts of the Garden village lie within the River Loddon Valued Landscape. Adjacent to the red line boundary, east of Mole Road, an area of countryside is covered by the 'Barkham and Bearwood' Valued Landscape. Given that these are draft local designations they are considered to have a 'medium' value. The River Loddon Valued Landscape would have a 'high' susceptibility to change, given that development is proposed in part of this area. As no development is proposed within or close to the Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape this area has a 'low' susceptibility to change.

14.3.3 To the east of Mole Road, part of this Valued Landscape is also a Registered Park and Garden. Effects on the setting of this heritage asset are covered by Chapter 9 Built Heritage of this Environmental Statement. This also includes Hall Place Farmhouse (Grade II listed building)

and the Site of St Bartholomew's Church Scheduled Monument, and adjacent Simonds Family Tomb Scheduled Monument.

14.3.4 There are four areas of ancient woodland within the Site boundary, 'St John's Copse', 'The Gorse' ('The Grove'), 'Loader's Copse' and 'Brick Kiln Coppice' (see Figure 14.5). The first three of these are classified as 'Sites of Local Importance' within the Wokingham Managing Development Delivery Plan ('MDD') and covered by Policies CP7 of the Core Strategy and TB23 of the MDD.

14.3.5 There are three confirmed TPO covering trees within the Site,

- TPO 1883/2022, a woodland order covering trees to the north of Church Lane, Arborfield, to the west of Reading Room Cottage.
- TPO 1883/2022, a woodland order covering trees to the north of Church Lane, Arborfield to the west of St. Bartholomew's Church
- TPO Number: 134D/1978, an area order covering a linear group of trees to the south-east of the Lower Earley Way/Meldreth Way roundabout.

14.3.6 In addition there are two TPOs relating to trees adjacent to the Site boundaries:

- TPO 1883/2022, an area order covering trees within the grounds of St. Bartholomew's Church, Arborfield.
- TPO 1780/2021, covering three oaks and an ash tree within Carter's Hill.

14.3.7 Effects on Wildlife designations are covered in Chapter 11 Ecology.

Landscape Character

14.3.8 The study area is covered by two tiers of landscape character assessments, the national Landscape Character Assessment (Natural England, last updated 2012), and the district-level Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment (November 2019). The character area boundaries in these respective assessments are shown on Figure 14.2. The parts of the Site that have a draft Valued Landscape designations are also described in the Wokingham Valued Landscape Assessment (September 2024) document.

14.3.9 In addition, we have produced a more detailed Landscape Character Assessment of the Site, at Figure 14.3, informed by the WBC Landscape Character Assessment.

National Landscape Character Areas

14.3.10 The Site is covered by two National Landscape Character Areas. The majority lies within NCA115 Thames Valley, however a small area at the southern part of the Site is within NCA 129 Thames Basin Heaths.

14.3.11 NCA115 Thames Valley is a mainly low-lying, wedge-shaped area, widening from Reading, which includes Slough, Windsor, the Colne Valley and the southwest London fringes. The River Thames is described as provides a unifying feature through a very diverse landscape of urban and suburban settlements, infrastructure networks, fragmented agricultural land, historic parks, commons, woodland, reservoirs and extensive minerals workings. The area is typified by much development, both in the past and planned for the next 20 years, and with 'virtually no undisturbed land'.

14.3.12 Key characteristics of the Thames Valley described in the assessment that are relevant to the study area are:

- *"Flat and low-lying land*
- *The underlying geology is dominated by the London Clay which, over much of the area, is overlain by river-lain sands and gravels.*
- *The numerous hydrological features provide unity to an area which otherwise lacks homogeny; these features include the River Thames and its tributaries…*
- *The field pattern is medium-scale and irregular, with smaller fields to the west…*
- *The area has an urban character, and there are very few villages of more traditional character…"*

14.3.13 The assessment states that 'farming is limited and that where it survives, grazed pasture is the major land use with the landscape being generally 'open, flat and featureless'. The field pattern is described as being medium-scale and irregular.

14.3.14 NCA129 stretches westwards from Weybridge in Surrey to the countryside around Newbury in Berkshire. It is described as a densely settled area with gardens amounting to a significant area of greenspace. The area has a relatively high percentage of woodland, reflecting its low-grade agricultural land. These are often planted on former heathland. In general, the Site is not typical of the characteristics, however *'valley floors with ditches… watercourses… mills … relict water meadows'* is a key characteristic that is reflected in this southern part of the Site.

14.3.15 In general, the character of the Site is not strongly typical of the either NCA115 nor NCA129, and given that Wokingham Borough Council has its own Landscape Character Assessment, this is used in the assessment below.

Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment

14.3.16 The Site is covered by three landscape character areas. Area A2 'River Loddon Valley' covers the River Loddon and all land to the west of the river, as well as a small amount of land to its east. Area C1 'Arborfield River Terrace' covers the central part of the Site, running parallel to the River Loddon, including the Centre for Dairy Research farm ('CEDAR'), Carter's Hill, Hall Farm and the village of Arborfield. Area J2, 'Arborfield & Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay' covers a strip of farmland along the Site's eastern edge, running parallel to Mole Road. The Character Assessments provides a comprehensive and relevant set of key characteristics for the areas within the Site, as summarised in Table 14.14.

14.3.17 Character Area A2 is judged by the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment (page 57) to have a 'moderate' landscape condition**,** although the fragmenting effects caused by views to the large scale development and busy infrastructure corridors are noted.

14.3.18 The individual landscape components of Character Area C1 are judged by the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment to be in 'moderate-poor' condition. Whilst it is described as a tranquil rural environment, the hedgerow network and historic field system have declined (page 100).

14.3.19 The individual landscape components of Character Area J2 are judged by the Wokingham Borough Landscape Character Assessment to be in 'moderate' condition due to the pattern of arable and pastoral fields, and remnant wetland influences associated with Barkham Brook. However, the assessment describes how the hedgerow network is fragmented (page 240).

Table 14.14 Wokingham Borough Landscape Assessment Key Characteristics

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics
Area A2 River Loddon Valley	• Broad, flat alluvial floodplain around 40-45m AOD underlain by riverine alluvium and river terrace deposits. • The alluvial soils are affected by high groundwater levels, while the loamy soils on the low ridges of the river terrace gravels are better drained and in use as arable fields. • The River Loddon follows a meandering course within braided channels. • Streams and tributary rivers join the Loddon • Wooded backdrop is provided by scattered blocks of deciduous woodland and copses, interlinked woodland belts and scattered mature trees and scrub. The semi-natural woodlands include frequent areas of Ancient Woodland, all of which are designated as LWSs. • Pasture and arable farmland in medium and large irregular geometric fields, divided by post and wire fencing, post and rail fencing, gappy hedgerows and drainage ditches. The areas closest to the river are affected by flooding and are characterised by pasture and wet meadow • Wetland character, including BAP priority habitats of floodplain grazing marsh, wet woodland, lowland fen and lowland meadows. • Important historic riverside features include traditional brick humpback bridges and water mills • Low-density scattered settlement pattern of villages and farmsteads • Tranquil and rural character away from river crossings and visual influence of large scale settlement in adjacent areas. • Little public access to the floodplain • Busy roads cross the flood plain, including the M4 and Shinfield Eastern Relief Roads • Pylons, residential and commercial development are distinctive visual features in this open and flat landscape, with development very visible along the edges of this character area. The new landmark Science and Innovation Park building at Shinfield is a notable feature in the landscape
Area C1 Arborfield River Terrace	• Gently undulating river terrace landform between 45-50m AOD to the east of the River Loddon floodplain. • The area is underlain by London Clay and river terrace gravels which give rise to loamy soils which are better drained than the floodplain, and therefore intensively farmed.

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics
	• Small water features including tributary stream running through the Holt and drainage channels and ponds. • Intensive arable farmland with medium to large fields bound by indistinct boundaries, mainly post and wire fencing, with occasional gappy remnant hedgerows. Some horse paddocks present, and cattle grazing at the University of Reading farm and Centre for Dairy Research. • Small woodland and copses break up the agricultural plain. Mixed lowland deciduous woodland dominates, with some wet woodland designated as LWS • Remnant historic parkland associated with the former Arborfield Hall. The presence of mature oaks provides a strong silhouette against the open sky. • Low-density settlement of farmsteads, except for the area north of the M4 at Winnersh • Large, modern agricultural buildings are prominent features of the landscape. • Tree-lined narrow lanes, tracks, byways and footpaths allow recreational access to the river terrace, and access to the Loddon floodplain • Clear long-distance views across the adjacent floodplain due to the unvaried topography. The spire of Arborfield Church provides a landmark feature in distant views. • Rural character and sense of remoteness, due to the predominance of narrow lanes and tracks rand very low density settlement. This is interrupted by the M4, and the Arborfield Cross Relief Road.
Area J2, 'Arborfield & Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay'	• A gently undulating landscape between 50m and 65m AOD, underlain by London Clay with localised areas of River Terrace Gravels. Shallow wooded valleys follow the course of the Barkham Brook, which is geologically marked by areas of alluvium. • Consistent pattern of water bodies including streams, drainage channels, ditches and open water bodies of various sizes resulting from the clayey and loamy soils which impede drainage. • Wooded context provided by characteristic mature hedgerow and in-field trees, combined with woodland belts, and the wooded horizons of the surrounding hills. This creates a loose sense of enclosure. • Arable farming dominates, with pasture on higher ground and horse paddocks near settlement. Fields are large and geometric, bound by fragmented hedgerows supported by post and wire. Fields used for paddocks are often subdivided with horse tape.

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics
	• Small-scale wet woodland and wetland habitats scattered on the edge of the area • A dense settled character influenced by modern development with little consistent style or form. • Older scattered settlement of farms, hamlets and small nucleated villages at Barkham and Arborfield Cross. • A network of busy local roads cross the area. They tend to be rural in character, with ditches, hedges and hedgerow trees, sometimes opening directly onto the arable fields. The A327 adds noise and movement to the area. • Public rights of way run between the settlements, and provide access for recreational use • A rural character away from development and roads, with views across to adjacent character areas including across the Loddon Valley.

Savills Landscape Character Assessment

14.3.20 As part of our baseline assessment Savills has adapted the WBC Assessment to provide a more detailed appraisal. This utilises recognisable site features rather than contours as boundaries for the character areas and also subdivides the Character Areas where there are clear geographically specific changes to their character which wouldn't have been practical to differentiate within the WBC Assessment. These are shown on Figure 14.3. Key characteristics for these areas generally reflect those set out in the WBC assessment (Table 14.14) but any differentiations are summarised in Table 14.15 below. These character areas form the basis of our impact assessment in Section 14.5.

14.3.21 The assessment subdivides the River Loddon Landscape character into the area adjacent to the M4 motorway at the north of the Site, and the area south of this. Adjacent to the M4 (CA2), the landscape character has been influenced by the urban fringe of Reading/Earley and the M4 corridor, including views of buildings, pylons and vehicles. Whilst this area is within the draft Valued Landscape, it is judged to have a 'low' landscape value. The presence of woodland and hedgerow provides a degree of screening to new development and this area is unlikely to have views of the proposed buildings, however it has a 'medium' susceptibility to change caused by the development of the new motorway bridge and access road.

14.3.22 Further to the south, the remainder of the River Loddon corridor (Area CA2) has a stronger rural character and remote feel, however there are glimpses through to large new buildings within the Thames Valley Science Park as well as pylons and overhead power cables. The value of this landscape is judged to be 'medium'. Given its rural character, it has a 'high' susceptibility to change.

14.3.23 At the southern end of the Site, on the eastern side of the River Loddon, there is an area of the Arborfield River Terrace associated with the grounds of Arborfield Hall (CA3) The hall was demolished in the middle of the twentieth century and its original parkland has now been ploughed for arable use and many of the original parkland trees have decay. This area is also within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape however and is judged to be of 'medium' value.

The historic associations of the area and limited built development mean that it has a 'high' susceptibility to change.

14.3.24 In the centre of the eastern side of the River Loddon there is an extensive area of arable farmland. This area (CA4) is judged to have a 'low' value. It is not within a draft Valued Landscape and is dominated by arable fields. The area has a relatively remote feel with visual enclosure provided by mature vegetation and benefits from some views towards St. Bartholemew's Church. It therefore has a 'high' susceptibility to change from new development.

14.3.25 Along the Mole Road corridor, there is an area of mixed pasture and arable land that occupies a higher part of the river terrace. This landscape is visually more connected with human activity, including Mole Road and the settlements of Sindlesham and Carter's Hill as well as the football training ground at Bear Wood. This area is situated within a draft Valued Landscape and is judged to be of 'Medium' value. Given its relatively strong rural character it has a 'high' susceptibility to change.

Table 14.15 Savills Landscape Assessment: Key Characteristics

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics
CA1 Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor	• Flat floodplain with irregular pasture fields and small fragmented woodlands, subdivided by mature hedgerows. Includes one ancient woodland (Loader's Copse), situated to the south of the M4. • Visually enclosed by adjacent wet woodland situated within Area CA2. • Pattern of fields has been affected by the construction of the M4, which is a strong dividing element within the landscape. A pedestrian underpass provides access between the two areas of landscape • Meandering route of the River Loddon is generally screened by riverside vegetation. • Glimpsed views of the M4 corridor which runs on an embankment. • Pylons and overhead cables cross the area, further contributing to an urban fringe character. • Views towards Lower Earley Way and adjacent housing within the northern part of the area. This area to the north of the M4 feels physically separated from the area to the south, and relates more closely to the urban fringe of Earley than the villages of Sindlesham or Arborfield.
CA2 Loddon River Valley: Loddon West	• Floodplain including the River Loddon and an extensive area of pasture and arable fields and small woodlands to the west of the river. Narrower area of woodland/mature trees along the eastern boundary of the River Loddon. • Two relatively small areas of ancient woodland, St. John's Copse and The Gorse. • Small irregular blocks of predominantly wet woodland, including the Rushy Mead Local Wildlife Site. Whilst not ancient woodland these are

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics
	generally listed on Natural England's Priority Habitat Inventory as Deciduous Woodland • Glimpsed views towards buildings at the TVSP to the north at the western end of the area and housing on the eastern side of Shinfield to the east. • Views towards the River Loddon generally screened by mature bankside vegetation. • The central parts of this character area feel relatively remote, with visual enclosure provided by the small woodlands and riverside trees and a lack of public access. • Public footpaths within the southern part of the valley link it with Hall Farm to the south-east, Arborfield Road to the west and the Eastern Relief Road to the east.
CA3 Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland	• Remnant parkland character associated with Arborfield Hall (since demolished). Historic integrity has been compromised through the removal of the hall, partial loss of the original St Bartholomew's Church and over-mature parkland trees. • Avenue connecting with Arborfield is a strong albeit fragmented, landscape feature. • Previous parkland pasture now used for arable food production. • Mature trees along the Reading Road, banks of the River Loddon and at Arborfield provide good visual enclosure. • Visual interconnectivity with the more open wider arable farmland to the north. • Views to the listed St Bartholomew's Church at Arborfield to the east.
CA4 Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East	• Area of mixed arable and pasture agricultural fields forming part of the University of Reading's Research Centre. • Land gently slopes up towards Arborfield to the south and down to the River Loddon to the south, but includes some areas of relatively level landform in the centre. • Remote feel within much of the area due to visual containment provided by mature trees along the River Loddon to the north-west and areas of mature hedgerow trees within strong hedgerow buffers. • Public footpaths connect Carter's Hill with Hall Farm and Arborfield (these include tracks known as Barretts Lane and Cartershill Lane). • Views to the listed St Bartholomew's Church at Arborfield to the south-east.

Landscape Character Area	Relevant Key Characteristics
CA5 Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay: Mole Road	• Area of predominantly arable farmland occupying an area of rolling landscape to the immediate west of Mole Road, between Arborfield and Sindlesham. • Barkham Brook runs down a narrow valley to the south of the hamlet of Carter's Hill. • To the south-east, the landform rises towards The Coombs, providing visual enclosure from the wider area. This is further supplemented by the mature hedgerow trees and woodland that typify this hillside. To the north-east, the Bearwood College Registered Park and Garden provides further visual screening, with its mature boundary hedgerows. • Glimpsed views of the football training ground here contribute to a more semi-rural setting to Sindlesham to the north. • Hedgerows within the Site are typified by mature tree planting which further contribute to visual screening and an established rural character. • Small areas of woodland, especially to the north of the hamlet of Carter's Hill. These are either included in Natural England's 'Priority Habitat Inventory' (Deciduous Woodland) or 'Ancient Woodland' Inventory. • Views into the eastern parts of the Site are generally limited to Mole Road, Parkcorner Lane and Betty Grove Lane (Byway open to all traffic). • A number of public rights of way run through this character area, especially focussing on the hamlet of Carter's Hill.

Landscape Features

Land Use and Vegetation

14.3.26 The Site is described in Chapter 2 above. Primarily the Site comprises a number of arable fields (31% of the Site) and modified grassland fields (37%) subdivided by native hedgerows with trees. Other vegetation types include woodland (10%), other neutral grassland/Lowland meadow (12%), scrub (2%), and wetland (2% of the Site). A full breakdown of the vegetation types across the Site is provided in Chapter 11.

14.3.27 The pasture areas of the Site are reflective of the historic meadow landscape that would have typified the landscape, and whilst these have been improved over years, in landscape terms these areas are judged to be of 'medium' value. The arable areas reflect more recent agricultural changes and are judged to be of 'low' value.

14.3.28 The Site has a few isolated buildings and clusters of buildings across it. These reflect its agricultural uses and comprise:

- Twentieth century house and two bungalows within the original Arborfield Hall area
- Two pairs of semi-detached twentieth century cottages at the southern end of the Arborfield Hall avenue.

- Cluster of buildings at Hall Farm, including the listed Hall Place Farmhouse listed building and associated farmyard buildings, the International Cocoa Quarantine Unit, two cottages and a number of twentieth century barns.
- Cluster of twentieth century buildings at the CEDAR, including offices and barns and a pair of semi-detached cottages.

14.3.29 The listed building is judged to be of 'high' value, reflecting its historic rural character and of 'high' susceptibility to change. The twentieth century farm buildings and houses are not reflective of local vernacular and judged to be of 'negligible' value and susceptibility to change.

14.3.30 Vegetation on the Site includes four areas of ancient woodland (St. John's Copse, The Gorse, Loader's Copse and an area adjacent to St. Bartholomew's Church, Arborfield) as well as small, scattered areas of more recent woodland (New Covert, Rushy Mead, The Grove plus other un-named areas) as shown on Figure 14.5. Some of the latter include wet woodland that have developed in the floodplain of the River Loddon.

14.3.31 The Ecology Assessment (Chapter 11) has mapped over 90 hedgerows covering approximately 16km in length. These range from species-poor roadside hedgerows (typically Hawthorn) to species-rich native hedgerows with trees, sometimes associated with banks or ditches. The majority of the hedgerows mark field boundaries and lanes. Whilst some have become sparse and gappy due to lack of management, some include mature and/or veteran trees (see Appendix 11.6 for the separate Veteran Trees note). Others, especially to the south-east of the River Loddon, are more modern straight-line hedgerows that are regularly flailed.

14.3.32 The Ecology Chapter describes the baseline habitats on the Site in further detail.

14.3.33 All areas of ancient woodland and trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders are judged to be of 'high' value, whilst all other areas of woodland and hedgerows are of 'medium' value. The trees and hedgerows all have a 'medium' susceptibility to change, given that generally the development can avoid the removal of trees and hedgerows.

14.3.34 The Ecology Chapter describes that a total of 188 trees have been characterised as Veteran Trees and a further 135 as Other Trees of Ecological Interest (OTEI). All 188 veteran trees are referrable to the description of veteran trees in The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024, and of these 17 are referable to the description in the NPPF. Further details, including the methodology for defining a veteran tree, can be found in Appendix 11.6. The veteran tree and OTEI are predominantly Pedunculate Oak and Ash, largely associated with field boundaries, and the Ecology Chapter concludes that many generations of these species are likely to have been present in this landscape over the centuries.

Landform and Water Features

14.3.35 Landform is shown on Figure 14.6. The Site occupies a broad valley floor and valley-sides, focussed on the River Loddon and its tributaries, including Barkham Brook. Along the River Loddon and flood-plain to the north-west the landform sits at approximately 40m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

14.3.36 On the eastern side of the Site, the land rises gently up to 55m AOD with St. Bartholomew's Church at Arborfield sitting on a localised hill at Arborfield. Beyond the Site, the landform continues to rise up more steeply towards Arborfield Cross and to the west beyond Bearwood College towards Wokingham.

14.3.37 To the north-west, the Thames Valley Science Park also lies on a slightly more elevated river terrace, with the landform continuing to rise towards Earley and Reading beyond.

14.3.38 With regards to water features, the River Loddon is a distinctive and influential feature within the landscape of the Site and wider area. Given the amount of riverside vegetation along its length the river itself is not actually visible from much of the Site. On the north-western side of the river, the floodplain includes 7km of ditches and streams and is known to flood during periods of wet weather. To the south of the river, the landform rises away from the floodplain and has fewer (approximately 2km) ditches and streams. The Barkham Brook is a named stream however, flowing northwards towards the Loddon and has formed a distinct, localised valley within the landscape.

14.3.39 The river valley topography and associated water features are judged to be of 'high' value. The valley location of the Site mean that the surrounding topography provides a good degree of visual enclosure to any changes occurring within the Site and construction can take place without requiring significant adaptions to landform or the need for cut and fill. The susceptibility of this landscape characteristic to accept change is therefore judged to be 'medium'.

Access

14.3.40 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the Site, as listed in Chapter 2 and shown on Figure 14.5. The Parameter Plans show that all of these can be accommodated within the development and would not require diversions. All public rights of way are judged to be of 'high' landscape value. Visual effects on users of the footpaths are covered in in the Visual Assessment section below.

14.3.41 There is no Open Access land (Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) within the Site.

Table 14.16 Landscape Receptor Baseline Summary

Landscape Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity
Landscape Designations			
Draft River Loddon Valued Landscape	Medium	High	Medium
Draft Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape	Medium	Low	Low
Bearwood College Registered Park & Garden	High	Medium	Medium
Trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders	High	High	High
National Landscape Character Areas			
NCA 115 Thames Valley	Not assessed – large areas that isn't representative of the Site's character		
NCA 129 Thames Basins Heaths			
WBC Landscape Character Areas			
A2 Loddon River Valley	Not assessed – separate Savills landscape character provides further sub-divisions of these character areas see below.		
C1 Arborfield River Terrace			
J2 Arborfield & Barkham Settled & Farmed Clay			
Adapted WBC Landscape Character Areas (sub-divided by Savills)			
CA1 Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor	Low	Medium	Low
CA2 Loddon River Valley: Loddon West	Medium	High	Medium

Landscape Receptor	Value	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity
CA3 Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland	Medium	High	Medium
CA4 Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East	Low	High	Medium
CA5 Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay: Mole Road	Medium	High	Medium
Landscape Features			
Land Use: Pasture Farmland	Medium	High	Medium
Land Use: Arable Farmland	Low	High	Medium
Land Use: Built Form – Hall Place Farmhouse	High	High	High
Land Use: Built Form – Twentieth Century Farm Buildings, Bungalow and Houses	Very low	Low	Very low
River valley landform and water features	High	Medium	Medium
Trees – Ancient Woodland, Trees covered by TPOs and Category A Trees	High	Medium	Medium
All other trees	Medium	Medium	Medium
Hedgerows	Medium	Medium	Medium
Access - PRoWs	High	Medium	Medium

Future Baseline - Landscape

14.3.42 If the Proposed Development were not to go ahead, the baseline landscape of the Site would not change, assuming that the University of Reading CEDAR (see Chapter 2 – Site and Local Context) facilities remained in place. The farmland would continue to be managed as arable and pasture with the associated woodlands and hedgerows retained.

Current Baseline – Visual Amenity

14.3.43 The site visits showed that the Site is well concealed from the wider area, with undulating hills to the north (Earley and Whitley areas of Reading) and south (towards Arborfield Cross and The Coombes, Barkham) and existing mature tree planting around field boundaries and within woodlands. Potential visual receptors would comprise users of the public rights of way within the Site and highways and houses immediately around the Site boundaries.

14.3.44 Visual receptors that could experience change are described in Table 14.17, with representative photographs provided in Figures 14.8 to 14.23. Table 14.17 also evaluates their sensitivity according to the definitions set out in Tables 14.9 and 14.10

14.3.45 The value of the views are generally either ‘low’ or ‘medium’. The low value views include highways in the foreground, often with urban infrastructure such as pylons and housing, such as the views from Cutbush Lane bridge, the M4 and Lower Earley Way. Elsewhere within parts of the Site, views are judged to be of ‘medium’ value. These views are generally within the draft Valued Landscape designated area, and are relatively remote in character, with fields and hedgerows in the foreground and wooded backdrops. The undulating nature of the valley topography provides further interest to some of these views.

14.3.46 A few views are judged to be of ‘medium’ value. These are primarily views that include fields, hedgerows and trees, but have their rural character eroded by an urban context, such as footpaths to the east of the Shinfield Eastern Relief Road.

14.3.47 With regards to the susceptibility of the receptors to accept change, the majority of visual receptors are either road users (Mole Road, M4, A347 Arborfield Road and Reading Road) which have a ‘low’ susceptibility to change, or users of public rights of way, which have a ‘high’ susceptibility to change.

Table 14.17 Visual Receptor Baseline Summary

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Value of View	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
Views from the north						
1	1km from M4 motorway bridge and spine road.	Users of Cutbush Lane bridge over M4 (Footpath SHIN39)	Low	High	Medium	Elevated view of the M4 motorway. Roadside vegetation and a bend in the road provides a good degree of screening. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
2,3	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of Lower Earley Way	Low	Low	Low	View dominated by the Lower Earley Way infrastructure in the foreground together with pylons in places. Existing vegetation provides a good degree of screening of the Site. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
-	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of Meldreth Way	Low	Low	Low	View dominated by the highway infrastructure in the foreground. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
-	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of M4 motorway	Low	Low	Low	View dominated by the M4 infrastructure in the foreground. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
Views from the east						
4	0km + from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Users and Residents of Betty Grove Lane (Byway open to all traffic ARBO5)	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across fields, some of which are within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Footpath users with high susceptibility to change.
	0km + from proposed allotment Site.	Residents and users of Julkes Lane, Carter's Hill, (ARBO 4A footpath)	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across fields, some of which are within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Existing housing and hedgerows provide a degree of screening. Footpath users with high susceptibility to change.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Value of View	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
	0.23km+ from proposed self-build units. 0.31km from Proposed Development parcels to the south of Carter's Hill					
5	0.17km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Users of Parkcorner Lane, Carter's Hill	Medium	Medium	Medium	Rural view across arable field. Backdrop of mature trees within hedgerows in the distance together with occasional houses within the southern part of Sindlesham, on Mole Road and Betty Grove Lane for example. Foreground hedges and trees further filter the views. Visual receptors likely to include vehicular users as well as recreational users such as cyclists.
9	0.8 km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site 0.34km from proposed housing on eastern side of the development.	Users of Mole Road	Medium	Low	Low	Views along this rural corridor benefit from mature hedgerows and rolling farmland, however the road infrastructure of the Mole Road reduces the overall value of the view. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
10	0.94km from housing on eastern side of the development.	Users of PRoW at ARBO9, north of Arborfield Waste Water Treatment Works	Medium	High	Medium	View within draft Barkham & Bearwood Valued Landscape, across rolling farmland with strong rural character with pasture, hedgerows and oak trees within hedgerows. Footpath users have high susceptibility to change.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Value of View	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
Private	0km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Residents of Mole Road & Wheatsheaf Close, Sindlesham	Not assessed			Private views that would have domestic gardens in the foreground.
Views from the south						
11	0.47km from housing in the south-eastern part of the development.	Users of Mole Road to the south of the Site	Medium	Low	Low	Views dominated by infrastructure of Mole Road in the foreground but benefit from mature roadside hedgerows and trees. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
12	0km from south-eastern boundary of the Site	Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic off Church Lane, Wokingham	Medium	High	Medium	View of track enclosed by mature hedgerows with numerous oak trees. Glimpsed through to small part of the Site. Recreational users have a high susceptibility to change.
13	0.47 km from proposed school buildings.	Visitors to St. Bartholmew's Church yard, Arborfield	Medium	High	Medium	Views generally include graveyard in the foreground and existing hedgerow provides filtered screening. Fields within the Site slope down immediately beyond the church however, with long views across the River Loddon towards Earley.
14	0.00 to 0.25 km from proposed southern boundary of the Site.	Users of A327 Arborfield Relief Road/Ordnance Way	Low	Low	Low	View dominated by foreground road infrastructure of A327, albeit with mature hedgerow vegetation along the Site's southern boundary remaining from the original Arborfield Hall parkland. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
15	0.00 km from the proposed southern boundary of the Site.	Users of A327 Reading Road, Arborfield immediately adjacent to the Site's southern boundary	Low	Low	Low	View dominated by foreground road infrastructure of A327, including existing roundabout. A small section of the Site's southern boundary is visible in the foreground to middle distance, comprising mature hedgerow and tree vegetation.
16	0.29 km from proposed housing	Users of A327 Arborfield Road, Shinfield	Low	Low	Low	Views towards the Site are rural and include fields within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape, however road

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Value of View	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
	at southern end of the Site.					infrastructure in the foreground reduces its value. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
Views from the west						
-	1.00 km from proposed housing at southern end of the Site.	Users of Shinfield Eastern Relief Road	Low	Low	Low	Views towards the Site are rural and include fields within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape, however road infrastructure in the foreground reduces its value. Road users have a low susceptibility to change.
Views from within the Site						
17, 18	Partially within a proposed green corridor running through the self-build part of the Site	Users of ARBO5A footpath (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the south of Gravelpit Wood)	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across fields, some of which are within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Footpath users with high susceptibility to change.
6	0.09 km from proposed spine road.	Users of ARBO5 Byway open to all traffic (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the north of Gravelpit Wood)	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across fields, some of which are within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Footpath users with high susceptibility to change.
7, 8	0.22 km from proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Users of ARBO4A Byway open to all traffic (joining Carter's Hill with Mole Road)	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across fields, some of which are within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Footpath users with high susceptibility to change.
19, 20, 21, 22	Partially within a proposed green	Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic (joining Julke's	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across fields, some of which are within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Footpath users with high susceptibility to change.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Value of View	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
	corridor running through the Site.	Lane, Carter's Hill with Church Lane, Arborfield, via CEDAR farm buildings)				
23	Within a proposed green corridor running through the Site.	ARBO2 footpath connecting the CEDAR farm buildings with Hall Farm	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across wide arable fields. Area does not fall within a Valued Landscape and includes modern buildings of CEDAR.
24, 25,26,	Within a proposed green corridor running through the Proposed Development.	ARBO1 Footpath linking the River Loddon at Hall Farm with Arborfield	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view along historic avenue within the former Arborfield Hall parkland. Fields immediately adjacent to the path are within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Footpath users have a high susceptibility to change.
27	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG. 0.2km from buildings at Hall Farm.	SHIN4 footpath, linking Oldhouse Farm with the River Loddon at Hall Farm	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across fields within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Mature vegetation along the route of the River Loddon screen views of land to the south-east of the River. Footpath users have a high susceptibility to change.
16	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG. 0.2km from buildings within southern part of the Site	SHIN5 footpath, linking connecting A327 Arborfield Road with the footbridge over the River Loddon at Hall Farm.	Medium	High	Medium	Rural view across fields within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Footpath users with high susceptibility to change. Glimpses of housing on the eastern edge of Shinfield and buildings at the Thames Valley Science Park on the skyline and pylons within the fields slightly erode the rural character. Mature vegetation along the route of the River Loddon screen views of land to the south-east of the River.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Value of View	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
No view	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG. 0.73km from buildings within southern part of the Site	SHIN6 footpath, connecting A327 Arborfield Road with Cutbush Lane East	Medium	High	Medium	

Future Baseline – Visual Amenity

14.3.48 If the Proposed Development were not to go ahead, the visual amenity of the Site is unlikely to change, assuming that the University of Reading CEDAR facilities remained in place and there are no changes to the surrounding highways such as Mole Road, Lower Earley Way and the M4 motorway. The farmland would continue to be managed as arable and pasture with the associated woodlands and hedgerows retained.

14.4 Inherent design mitigation

14.4.1 Measures to mitigate the potential landscape and visual effects of the development have been considered and integrated throughout the process of Site promotion and masterplanning. These involve measures to avoid, reduce and offset, remedy or compensate for the potential effects, and have included consideration of the siting of development, protection of existing landscape elements and creation of new landscape features.

14.4.2 The inherent mitigation measures are those committed to on the Parameter Plans. In the case of landscape, this comprises the retention of existing vegetation and provision of generous areas of open space and undeveloped land, as shown on the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan. As this is an outline application, the detailed design of some of these features would be subject to reserved matters applications, however the Illustrative Landscape Strategy (see Figure 14.24) demonstrates how these elements can be incorporated within an emerging detailed design for the Proposed Development.

14.4.3 The Proposed Development shown in the Parameter Plans has been designed to incorporate a generous setting of open space, both surrounding the Site and within the layout of the proposed buildings and highways. These inherent design mitigation elements include:

- Built development located to avoid the diversion or extinguishment of any Public Rights of Way.
- Built development located to incorporate all existing hedgerows, with the only loss of hedgerows to be where new highways cut through them for access/sight line purposes.
- Built development located to allow the retention of all existing trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders and all ancient woodland, together with a minimum 15m buffer of semi-natural land to protect root systems and canopies.
- Tree Root Protection Zones and Veteran Trees would include a root protection zone in line with that set out in the Chapter 11 Ecology.
- Built development located to allow the retention of all woodland except a small amount of woodland to accommodate the spine road to the north of Carter's Hill.
- Built development located to allow the retention of all veteran trees other than four (three ash, one alder and one common lime).
- Built development designed to allow for the retention of the majority of mature trees, with buildings focussed in the areas of existing arable farmland which have no trees (subject to further detailed design work at reserved matters stage).
- The existing historic avenue connecting Arborfield with Hall Farm would be retained within a green corridor, with opportunities for enhancing the management of existing trees and providing new trees.

- Hall Place Farmhouse would be retained within the layout, enabling them to contribute to the historic character of the landscape here.
- Land to the north-west of the River Loddon to be retained as the Eco Valley, including a SANG area. This would conserve the existing vegetation here as well as provide opportunities for new planting, paths and water features.
- Land adjacent to the south-eastern bank of the River Loddon to be retained within a linear open space linking the two areas of SANG (the SANG Link) and a further SANG area within the northern part of the Site. This land would retain existing vegetation and provide opportunities for its maintenance. The SANG Link would also provide opportunities for new paths/board walks and permanently wet ponds.
- Incorporation of large area of sports pitches to the north of St. Bartholomew's Church Arborfield, to conserve the setting of the church and allow views of this local landmark when seen from the new development.
- Network of open spaces shown within the Parameter Plans would provide multi-functional green spaces to be provided within easy access of all homes. This can incorporate existing vegetation as well as new tree planting to screen/soften views of new properties. The spaces would also provide space for new facilities within the landscape, such as sports, play and food-growing.
- SuDS basins can be designed as positive landscape features, including opportunities for natural play and permanently wet ponds.
- The majority of development parcels would accommodate buildings no more than 3.5 storeys in height (less than 12m). Buildings along the River Loddon edge of the Site would be no more than 2.5 storeys (9m), to respect the setting of the river and proposed SANG and Eco Valley.
- The tallest buildings would be placed in the centre of the Site, away from the wider existing road network.

14.5 Potential and residual effects: Landscape Receptors

14.5.1 This section assesses the potential effects on the landscape character and features within the Site during its construction and operational phases. Potential effects during the operational phase are taken at Year 0 following completion of the final phase of development, given that the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan does not specifically refer to open space typologies or the detailed planting approach. The residual landscape effects assume that strategic landscape planting has taken place and is well established (at 15 years after planting). The specific location and design of the planting would be covered by future planning applications.

Construction Phase

14.5.2 A description of the construction works and phasing of the different elements of the Proposed Development is set out in Chapter 3. Development would be built in a phased approach so that the construction effects would not occur simultaneously across the whole of the Site. In addition, as each stage is completed, the temporary effects turn to the permanent effects of the built development. However, for clarity, this impact assessment deals with construction effects and operational effects separately, and assume these occur simultaneously, across the entire Site.

14.5.3 The assessment is based on the following assumed activities/features during construction:

- The construction of Site accesses off Reading Road (A327), the Lower Earley Way/Meldreth Way roundabout, and Betty Grove Lane
- The construction of a bridge across the M4 motorway, linking with the Lower Earley Way access.
- The construction of a vehicular bridge across the River Loddon close to the M4 crossing.
- Excavations/soil stripping activity.
- Presence of Site hoardings/fencing, including protective fencing to vegetation to be retained.
- Removal of, or remedial works to, vegetation at the Site boundaries.
- Presence of temporary haul roads.
- Presence of fixed and mobile vehicles and construction plant, including cranes.
- Presence of materials stockpiles.
- Presence of Site compound/hut, and temporary utilities.
- Presence of completed and partially completed buildings, streets and open spaces.
- Removal of small areas of woodland to accommodate construction.
- Cultivation of land for open spaces.

14.5.4 The potential effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape character and feature receptors identified in the section above are assessed according to the 'sensitivity' of the landscape receptor and the 'magnitude' of the landscape effect. These are then combined to assess the significance of the landscape Impact during the construction period. The results are summarised in Table 14.18.

14.5.5 The assessment shows that during construction the only significant effects on designated landscapes would be a 'direct moderate adverse' effect on a small part of the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape at the southern end of the Site where housing is proposed within this draft designated area.

14.5.6 With regards to effects on landscape character, the only significant effects of construction would be on the parts of the Site that would have the new roads, bridges and buildings within them. The construction would have a 'direct moderate adverse' effect on the part of area CA2 Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor and CA3 Loddon River Valley: Loddon West which would have the M4 and River Loddon bridges and spine road constructed within or adjacent to them. These small areas also form part of the WBC Landscape Character Assessment Area A2 River Loddon and National Character Area NCA 115 Thames Valley.

14.5.7 The construction would also have a 'direct moderate adverse' effect on the character of CA3 Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall parkland and CA4 Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East. These areas would both experience a change from arable farmland to a construction Site. These effects would also relate to the small parts of WBC Landscape Character Assessment Areas C1 Arborfield River Terrace and J2 - Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay and National Character Areas NCA 115 Thames Valley and NCA129 Thames Basin Heaths in which this part of the Site is located.

14.5.8 The construction would also have a 'direct moderate adverse' effect on the landscape of a small part of CA5 Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay: Mole Road. This would result in an area of arable fields being changed to the construction of the proposed area of self-build plots, the gypsy and traveller Site and two allotment Sites. These effects would also relate to the small parts of WBC Landscape Character Assessment Areas C1 Arborfield River Terrace and J2 - Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay and National Character Areas NCA 115 Thames Valley in which this part of the Site is located.

14.5.9 With regards to the effects of construction on specific landscape features within the Site the construction would result in the removal of:

- Extensive areas of arable farmland to the south-east of the River Loddon.
- The removal of 0.04ha of Rushy Mead woodland to allow the construction of the new spine road (based on measurements set out in Chapter 11 Ecology).
- The removal of approximately 1.35ha of Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh to accommodate the proposed River Loddon bridge crossing and associated roads (based on measurements set out in Chapter 11 Ecology).
- The removal of approximately 1.25km of hedgerows and/or treelines (based on measurements set out in Chapter 11 Ecology).
- Culverting of a number of existing watercourses and a small number of floodplain ditches to facilitate access.
- The removal of 0.17ha of woodland that is not ancient/Local Wildlife Site (based on measurements set out in Chapter 11 Ecology).
- The removal of the individual/groups of trees (according to *The Outline Planning Submission (Arboriculture) Baseline Tree Survey To BS5837:2012 Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Proposed Tree Retention & Removal, Tree Protection Plan & Arboricultural Method Statement* (FLAC, June 2025), as follows[1]:
  - The partial removal of 3 no. Category A woodland areas.
  - The partial removal of 5 no. Category B woodland areas.
  - The partial removal of 1 no. Category B woodland areas.
  - The partial removal of 2 no. Category A tree groups.
  - The removal of 2 no. Category B tree groups and partial removal of a further 11 no. Category B tree groups.
  - 11 no. Category C tree groups and the partial removal of a further 11 Category C groups.
  - The removal 6 no. Category C individual trees.
  - The removal 16 no. Category B individual trees.
  - The removal 2 no. Category A individual trees.

[1] *Excluding the proposed allotments, self-build area and gypsy and traveller site areas which require further detailed surveys*

- The removal of four veteran trees (2 no. ash, 1 no. alder and 1 no. common lime) as defined by the Biodiversity Net Gain Regulations 2024.

14.5.10 All veteran trees as defined by the NPPF would be retained. In landscape terms, both ash are classified in the FLAC assessment as Category 'C' and in 'poor' physiological condition. The common lime is also of 'poor' condition, and is category 'U' with a short life expectancy. Their importance therefore relates to their ecological value rather than landscape. The alder is of 'good; physiological condition and is Category 'B' however forms part of a cluster of other trees that would be retained, reducing the overall effect of its loss.

14.5.11 Overall, the construction would have significant (moderate adverse) effects on the grassland, trees and arable land uses across the Site together with the loss of over 1km of hedgerows. Other effects on landscape features would be minor or negligible.

Table 14.18 Potential Landscape Effects during Construction

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.3)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
Landscape Designations							
Draft River Loddon Valued Landscape	Medium	Areas of the Site to the south of the River Loddon, with proposed housing: High adverse	Direct	Short term	Site setting	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct
		Areas of the Site adjacent to the M4, accommodating the new spine road and bridges over the M4 and River Loddon : High adverse	Direct	Short term	Site setting	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct
		Areas close to Proposed Development with views towards it: Medium adverse	Indirect	Short term	Site setting	Low adverse	Minor adverse indirect
Draft Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape	Low	Low adverse (western edge only, where there are views towards the Site)	Indirect	Short term	Site setting	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse indirect
Bearwood College Registered Park & Garden	Medium	Low adverse (western edge only, where there are views towards the Site)	Indirect	Short term	Site setting	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse indirect
Trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders	High	No change	N/A	N/A	N/A	No change	No change
Landscape Character Areas							
CA1 Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor	Low	High adverse (construction of bridges and roads over M4 and River Loddon)	Direct	Short term	Site setting	Medium adverse	Minor adverse direct

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.3)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
CA2 Loddon River Valley: Loddon West	Medium	High adverse (northern end of area, where construction of bridges and roads over M4 and River Loddon would be visible and eastern edges where housing construction would be visible)	Direct	Short term	Site setting	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct
		Negligible adverse (southern end of area, where only development would be path construction & tree planting)	Direct	Short term	Site Level	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse direct
CA3 Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland	Medium	High adverse (construction of new housing and road infrastructure)	Direct	Short term	Site setting	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct
CA4 Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East	Medium	High adverse (construction of new housing and road infrastructure)	Direct	Short term	Site setting	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct
CA5 Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay: Mole Road	Medium	High adverse (northern end of area, where construction self-build plots, allotments & Gypsy & Traveller Site would be visible)	Direct	Short term	Site setting	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct
		Low adverse (southern end where existing fields would remain undeveloped)	Indirect	Short term	Site setting	Negligible adverse	Minor adverse indirect
Landscape Features							
Land Use: Grassland	Medium	Medium adverse (loss of 1.35ha coastal and floodplain grazing	Direct	Short term	Site level	Low adverse	Minor adverse direct

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.3)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
		marsh replaced by construction site)					
Land Use: Arable Farmland	Medium	High adverse (majority of arable land would be replaced by construction site)	Direct	Long term	Site level	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct
Land Use: Built Form – Hall Place Farmhouse	High	No change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No change
Land Use: Built Form – Twentieth Century Farm Buildings, Bungalows & Cottages	Negligible	Demolition of some buildings. Negligible adverse.	Direct	Short term	Site level	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse direct
River valley landform and water features	Medium	Low adverse (localised cut and fill to accommodate development but retention of overall valley character). Culverting of a number of watercourses and small number of ditches.	Direct	Short term	Site level	Low adverse	Minor adverse direct
Trees – Ancient Woodland, Trees covered by TPOs	High	No change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No change
All other trees	Medium	Medium adverse. Removal of 0.04Ha of Rushy Mead woodland and a further 0.17ha of other non-ancient/LWS woodland. Removal of 4 veteran trees to facilitate access (see Chapter 11 Ecology)	Direct	Long term	Site level	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.3)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
		together with a relatively low proportion of other Category A, B and C trees.					
Hedgerows	Medium	Medium adverse. Removal of 1.25km of hedgerows.	Direct	Long-term	Site level	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse direct
Access - PRoWs	Medium	Negligible adverse (Potential short-term closures for re-surfacing only)	Direct	Short-term	Site level	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse direct

Potential and Residual Effects on Landscape Receptors during Operation

14.5.12 The potential effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape character and feature receptors identified in the section above are assessed, according to the 'sensitivity' of the landscape receptor and the 'magnitude' of the landscape impacts. These are then combined to assess the significance of the landscape effect.

14.5.13 The assessments assume that areas shown in the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan will accommodate new planting (inherent mitigation) but at this stage assumes no specific planting locations as this would form part of the later planning applications. The results are described in Table 14.19 below, with assessments at Year 0.

14.5.14 References to Year 15 effects relate to residual effects following additional and specific strategic planting mitigation relating to landscape character and features. These would be subject to later planning applications.

Potential and Residual Effects on Landscape Designations

14.5.15 The appraisal shows that there would be localised significant effects on the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape, however this is not an adopted designation at the time of writing.

14.5.16 The introduction of the new vehicular bridges over the M4 motorway and its connection with Lower Earley Way to the north, together with a further roundabout and vehicular bridge across the River Loddon just south of the M4 would introduce large new areas of infrastructure into this part of the draft designated landscape. Given that the draft Valued Landscape is not a national landscape designation and the character of this area of the Valued Landscape is already compromised by the M4 corridor with its gantries, eight carriageways, together with the Lower Earley Way to the north and a run of pylons with overhead cables, this lowers the baseline value of this area, meaning that the overall potential and residual effects would range from 'major' to 'moderate' adverse according to the distance from the M4.

14.5.17 To the south-east of the River Loddon, some of the proposed housing areas would also lie within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. There would be a 'moderate' to 'major adverse' effect on these limited parts of the draft Valued Landscape, as the existing farmland is replaced by built environment and new open spaces. As mitigation planting matures, the residual effects on this part of the Valued Landscape would still be significant but would diminish to 'moderate' adverse.

14.5.18 In addition, there would be some adjacent areas of the Site which lie within the draft Valued Landscape area which would remain open and undeveloped but would have filtered views of the new Proposed Development. This would include the area around Carter's Hill and to the south of the new River Loddon bridge/highway crossing. This area could experience 'potential moderate adverse' indirect effects on its rural setting however this would diminish to 'minor adverse indirect' as additional mitigation planting matures.

14.5.19 To the north of the River Loddon, the proposed Eco Valley area within the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape would experience 'moderate beneficial' changes. Here, access would be opened up to the public with a series of naturalistic new paths and boardwalks, with existing woodland and modified grassland managed to enhance its wildlife diversity.

14.5.20 The Proposed Development would have no direct impacts on the draft Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape which lies to the east of Mole Road. From the western side of this draft Valued Landscape there would be some glimpsed views of new housing on the eastern side of the Site, however by Year 15, these would be benefitting from the establishment of vegetation

within the green spaces that would wrap around this Site boundary. The effect on this rural landscape would at most be 'minor adverse' and indirect only, with the majority of the area of the draft designation having no views of the Site at all.

14.5.21 Similarly the Bearwood College Registered Park and Garden lies immediately to the east of Mole Road, within part of the draft Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape. This parkland is predominantly wooded in nature. The western part of the designation, immediately adjacent to the Site is occupied by a football training ground facility and already has its landscape character compromised here. The Proposed Development would have, at most, a 'minor adverse indirect' effect on this part of the Registered Park and Garden, with glimpsed views of new housing and allotments, set beyond existing retained fields along Mole Road.

14.5.22 The Proposed Development would have no effect on trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders or the areas of ancient woodland within the Site.

Potential and Residual Effects on Landscape Character

14.5.23 The Site has been sub-divided into five landscape character areas, based on the Wokingham Borough Council Landscape Character Assessment, but with adjusted boundaries to provide more detailed analysis.

14.5.24 The proposals would have a 'moderate adverse' effect on the landscape **CA1 Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor** in the vicinity of the bridge over the M4 and new spine road. This landscape area lies at the north of the Site and has a landscape already compromised by the M4 and Lower Earley Way corridors, with associated pylons, gantries and signage. The Proposed Development would introduce a new vehicular bridge over the M4 and spine road here, together with a new roundabout on the southern side of the M4. The south-eastern part of the character would include the northern part of the new SANG area. This would introduce new recreational paths as well as enhanced management of existing woodland and modified grassland to help restore it to its original river floodplain meadows. The proposals would therefore have a direct 'minor beneficial' effect on this part of the character area. Given the low baseline sensitivity of the area the residual effect would also be 'minor beneficial'.

14.5.25 The Proposed Development would have a potential 'major adverse' visual effect on a relatively small part of **CA2 Loddon River Valley: Loddon West**. The northern part of this character area would include part of the spine road which would cross the river floodplain on a slightly elevated embankment, joining with a new vehicular bridge over the River Loddon. With additional mitigation in the form of planting and a sensitive design of the bridge, the residual effect could diminish to 'moderate adverse' (significant). The majority of this character area however would experience a 'minor beneficial' effect on its landscape at Year 0 however, with the new Eco-Valley and SANG areas managed for enhanced public accessibility and the restoration of existing wet woodlands, water courses and modified grassland to its original river flood meadow character. The residual benefit of this enhanced landscape would increase to 'moderate beneficial' (significant) as planting matures.

14.5.26 At the southern part of the Site, **CA3 Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland** would experience a 'moderate adverse' change to the parts of its landscape that would be developed. Existing arable fields would include new homes, however the existing setting of mature vegetation around the boundaries of this area would be retained, ensuring that the new neighbourhood would retain a parkland setting. This area would also benefit from a large area of open space that would form part of the Eco Valley. This would retain the parkland feel of Arborfield Hall as well as including play and drainage features and new planting. There would be a 'moderate beneficial' (significant) effect on this part of the character area.

14.5.27 Character Area **CA4 Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East** would generally experience a 'moderate adverse' effect on its landscape character area, with the extensive areas of arable farmland replaced by new built infrastructure. There would however, be significant proportion of the landscape that would experience a potential 'minor beneficial' effect, with the arable land replaced by areas of strategic green space, including parts of SANG link, natural green space & tree planting. Green corridors have been retained throughout this area, providing connections with the River Loddon that would be of benefit for pedestrian/cycle access as well as sustainable drainage routes. With additional mitigation planting, there would be a 'moderate beneficial' effect (significant) on these parts of the character area.

14.5.28 To the south, east and north of Carter's Hill, **CA5 Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay: Mole Road** would experience a potential and residual 'moderate adverse' effect in the areas where arable farmland is replaced by self-build plots, allotments and a gypsy and traveller Site. A number of arable fields are retained within agricultural use in this area however to maintain the overall rural setting to Carter's Hill, Mole Road and Sindlesham, as well as the Bearwood College Registered Park and Garden to the east. Effects on this wider undeveloped area would be, at most, 'moderate adverse' and indirect, with filtered views of new homes slightly eroding the rural character. With additional strategic mitigation planting however, the residual effects could diminish to 'minor adverse'.

Potential and Residual Effects on Specific Landscape Features

14.5.29 Potential effects on landscape features during the operational period are set out in Table 14.19. The key effects are summarised below.

Grassland

14.5.30 Whilst this is an Outline Planning Application, the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan indicates the extensive area of open land that would accompany the proposed built infrastructure and this would have significant benefits.

14.5.31 The scheme would be accompanied by an 197.5ha Eco Valley, including 40.4ha of SANG and a further 18.17ha linear SANG link. This substantial area would be available to the public and include new paths as well as habitat enhancements. Whilst this would incorporate existing habitats such as woodland and wet grassland, it provides the opportunity for existing areas of improved grassland to be restored to lowland meadow for example, as well as the enhanced management of all habitats to maximise their diversity and longevity. According to the BNG calculations set out in the Ecology chapter, it is likely that the Proposed Development would deliver approximately 17.9ha of 'modified grassland and 37.8ha of species rich 'other neutral grassland within the SANG, SANG Link and open spaces, plus over 82 ha of enhancements to retained grasslands. The proposals would therefore have a significant ('major') potential and residual beneficial effect on grassland within the Site.

Arable Farmland

14.5.32 The only significant adverse changes to specific landscape features would be on the quantum and arable farmland. Over 100 Ha of arable farmland would be developed for built infrastructure and associated highways, parks and private gardens and associated public open space. This would have a significant potential ('major') and residual adverse effect on this land use.

Trees

14.5.33 The proposals would have no impact on the existing areas of ancient woodland or trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders. Whilst four veteran trees would need to be removed these are not important in landscape terms.

14.5.34 The area proposed for development generally has few trees, being dominated by arable farmland. The precise number of trees to be removed would be agreed at the Reserved Matters planning application stage, but it is likely that these would be very few in number and would primarily be removed for access and health and safety purposes. The parameters show that approximately 0.04ha of woodland at Rushy Mead would need to be removed to facilitate the construction of the spine road and four veteran trees to facilitate access. A number of other Category A, B and C trees would also need to be removed (see paragraph 14.5.9), however the quantum of new tree planting would more than compensate for these losses.

14.5.35 The opportunity provided by planting in the public open space, Eco Valley and along the streets mean that the Proposed Development would deliver thousands of new trees. Preliminary BNG calculations have assumed 1000 trees would be provided within the development parcels and along the spine road and over 100 new trees in the SANG and SANG Link. This would be supplemented by numerous other trees within the strategic green spaces. Overall, the Proposed Development would have a significant (‘major’) potential and residual beneficial effect on this landscape feature.

Hedgerows and Scrub

14.5.36 The development layout has been designed to incorporate all existing hedgerows within green corridors. Hedgerows would only be removed to allow vehicular and pedestrian routes to cross through. Whilst approximately 1.25km of the total 16km of hedgerow would be removed, this would be more than compensated for with the new areas of scrub planting, which the BNG calculations calculates to be 10.45ha. In addition, there would be opportunities for new hedgerows to be accommodated within the Reserved Matters design of the scheme, such as around the school playing field boundaries. Overall, given the opportunities for new hedgerow and scrub, the Proposed Development would have a significant (‘moderate’) beneficial potential and residual effect on these landscape features.

Access and Public Rights of Way

14.5.37 With regards to access throughout the Site, the Proposed Development would retain the routes of all existing Public Rights of Way. In addition, it would provide approximately 22km of new off road routes for pedestrians and cyclists as shown on the Movement Parameter Plan. This excludes the extensive network of additional footpaths that would be provided within the public open spaces that would be designed at the Reserved Matters application stages. These off-road routes shown on the Moment Parameter Plan comprise:

- Off Road Surfaced Paths : 13.67km
- Off Road Hoggin Paths : 4.66m
- Off Road Mown Paths : 4.39km

14.5.38 As well as pedestrian and cycle routes, there would also be equestrian routes and informal access to approximately 18.2 ha of public amenity space around the housing together with the 197.5ha of Eco Valley/SANG/SANG Link. Overall, there would therefore be a significant (‘major’) potential and residual beneficial effect on access within the landscape.

Landform and Water Features

14.5.39 The proposals would generally not have significant effects on landform or water features but would respect the distinctive characteristics that the River Loddon provides to the Site.

14.5.40 Earth works would be minimised, however they may be localised areas of cut and fill to accommodate the sports pitches for example. Earthworks would also be required to accommodate the spine road as it crosses over the River Loddon and both proposed bridges, especially where the new road would rise up over the M4. The road across the river valley would be integrated with the wider landscape through the use of strategic tree planting along its length. These proposals would introduce a significant ('moderate') adverse potential and residual effect on this part of the Site.

14.5.41 The Proposed Development would have negligible beneficial effects on existing streams and ditches. Whilst some of these would need to be culverted to allow access across them, there is the opportunity for their enhancement, management and restoration, having a 'negligible beneficial' potential and residual effect overall.

Table 14.19 Potential Landscape Effects during Operation (Year 0) and Residual Landscape Effects during Operation (Year 15)

Note: The assessment of 'potential landscape effects assumes there will be no specific mitigation provided by new strategic planting. This is appraised at Year 0. The assessment of 'residual' effects assumes that appropriate strategic planting can be secured through Reserved matters applications and appraises these at Year 15 when vegetation would be well established.

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.16)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
Landscape Designations							
Draft River Loddon Valued Landscape	Medium	Areas of the Site to the south of the River Loddon, with proposed housing: H • High adverse (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site setting	High adverse (Years 0 and 15)	Major adverse Direct (Years 0 and 15)
		Areas of the Site adjacent to the M4, accommodating the new spine road and bridges over the M4 and River Loddon : • Medium to High adverse (magnitude increases closer to the M4) (Year 0) • Medium adverse (Year 15)	Direct	Long term	Site setting	• Medium to High adverse (Year 0) • Medium adverse (Year 15)	• Moderate to Major adverse direct (Year 0) • Moderate adverse(Year 15)
		Areas close to Proposed Development with views towards it: • Medium adverse (Years 0) • Low adverse (Years 15)	Indirect	Long term	Site setting	• Medium adverse (Year 15) • Low adverse (Year 15)	• Moderate adverse indirect (Year 0) • Minor adverse indirect (Year 15)
		Eco Valley area: • Medium Beneficial (Year 0) • High Beneficial (Year 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	Medium beneficial (Years 0 and 15)	Moderate beneficial (Year 0 and Year 15)

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.16)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
Draft Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape	Low	Low adverse (western edge only, where there would be glimpsed views towards the Proposed Development) (Years 0 and 15)	Indirect	Long term	Site setting	Low adverse (Years 0 and 15)	Minor adverse indirect (Years 0 and 15)
Bearwood College Registered Park & Garden	Medium	Low adverse (western edge only, where there would be glimpsed views towards the Proposed Development)	Indirect	Long term	Site setting	Low adverse (Years 0 and 15)	Minor adverse indirect (Years 0 and 15)
Trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders	High	No change	N/A	N/A	N/A	No change	No change
Landscape Character Areas							
CA1 Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor	Low	New bridges and road over M4 and River Loddon within the Site • High adverse (Years 0 and 15) Proposed SANG to the south of the M4: • Low beneficial effect (Year 0) • Medium beneficial effect (Year 15)	Direct Direct	Long term Long term	Site setting Site level	High adverse (Years 0 and 15) Low beneficial (Years 0 and 15)	Moderate adverse direct (Years 0 and 15) Minor beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15)
CA2 Loddon River Valley: Loddon West	Medium	Northern end of area: bridges and roads over M4 and River Loddon would be visible and eastern edges where housing construction would be visible • High adverse (Year 0) • Medium adverse (Year 15)	Direct	Long term	Site setting	High adverse (Year 0) Medium adverse (Year 15)	Major adverse direct (Year 0) Moderate adverse direct (Year 15)

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.16)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
		Southern end of area, where Proposed Development wouldn't be visible & there would be Eco Valley and SANG enhancements. • Medium beneficial (Year 0) • High beneficial (Year 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	• Low beneficial (Year 0) • Medium beneficial (Year 15)	• Minor beneficial (Year 0) • Moderate beneficial direct (Year 15)
CA3 Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland	Medium	High adverse (arable farmland replaced with new built development) (Years 0 and 15) Farmland replaced with new open space, including natural green space & tree planting • Low beneficial (Year 0) • Medium beneficial (Year 15)	Direct Direct	Long term Long term	Site level Site level	Medium adverse (Years 0 and 15) • Low beneficial (Year 0) • Medium beneficial (Year 15)	Moderate adverse direct (Years 0 and 15) • Minor beneficial direct (Year 0) • Moderate beneficial direct (Year 15)
CA4 Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East	Medium	High adverse (arable farmland replaced with new built development) (Years 0 and 15) Arable farmland replaced with areas of strategic green space, including parts of SANG link, natural green space & tree planting. • Low beneficial (Year 0) • Medium beneficial (Year 15)	Direct Direct	Long term Long term	Site level Site level	Medium adverse (Years 0 and 15) • Low beneficial (Year 0) • Medium beneficial (Year 15)	Moderate adverse direct (Years 0 and 15) • Minor beneficial direct (Year 0) • Moderate beneficial direct (Year 15)
CA5 Arborfield and Barkham Settled and	Medium	Medium adverse. Arable farmland replaced by self-build plots, allotments & Gypsy & Traveller Site (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	Medium adverse (Years 0 and 15)	Moderate adverse direct (Years 0 and 15)

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.16)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
Farmed Clay: Mole Road		Southern end of area, where existing fields would remain undeveloped but with some views towards new homes to the north and south. • Medium adverse (Year 0) • Low adverse (Year 15)	Indirect	Long term	Site level	• Medium adverse (Year 0) • Low adverse (Year 15)	• Moderate adverse indirect (Year 0) • Minor adverse indirect (year 15)
Landscape Features							
Land Use: Grassland	Medium	High beneficial. Whilst some grassland would be replaced by spine road construction. The majority of grassland would be retained and managed within the Eco Valley. Additional areas of meadow would also be created as part of the SANG and public open spaces. (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	High beneficial . (Years 0 and 15)	Major beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15)
Land Use: Arable Farmland	Medium	High adverse (arable land replaced by development of buildings and public spaces) (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	High adverse (Years 0 and 15)	Major adverse direct (Years 0 and 15)
Land Use: Built Form – Hall Place Farmhouse & adjacent cottages	High	No change (Years 0 and 15)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No change

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.16)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
Land Use: Built Form – Twentieth Century Farm Buildings and Bungalows	Negligible	No change or Medium beneficial. Retention or replacement with new buildings or open spaces. (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	No change or Medium beneficial (Years 0 and 15)	No change or Negligible beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15)
River valley landform and water features	Medium	Negligible adverse (localised cut and fill to accommodate development) (Years 0 and 15) Negligible beneficial (retention of overall valley character and enhanced management of ditches/streams) (Years 0 and 15) Medium adverse (embankments to accommodate spine road across the Loddon Valley and at the proposed bridges) (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 and 15)	Negligible adverse direct (Years 0 and 15) Negligible beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15) Moderate adverse direct (Years 0 and 15)
Trees – Ancient Woodland, Trees covered by TPOs	Medium	No change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No change
All other trees	Medium	High beneficial. Significant numbers of new trees would be planted throughout the Green Infrastructure (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	High beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15)	Major beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15)

Potential Landscape Receptor	**Overall sensitivity** (Table 14.16)	**Size/ Scale of Effect** (Table 14.4)	**Direct/ Indirect**	**Duration** (Table 14.5)	**Geog. Extent** (Table 14.6)	**Overall Magnitude** (Table 14.7)	**Overall Significance** (Table 14.8)
Hedgerows and Scrub	Medium	Medium beneficial. Whilst existing hedgerows would be lost, there would be new scrub planting and enhanced management of existing hedgerows. (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	Medium beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15)	Moderate beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15)
Access - PRoWs	Medium	High beneficial. Existing PRoWs retained and new active travel routes provided. (Years 0 and 15)	Direct	Long term	Site level	High beneficial direct (Years 0 and 15)	Major beneficial direct

14.6 Potential and Residual Effects on Visual Amenity

Effects on Visual Receptors during Construction

14.6.1 The assessment of the visual impacts during the construction period are summarised in Table 14.20. All effects are judged to be 'short-term'. Whilst the overall construction of the Site is programmed for 15 years, given that there is no intervisibility across the whole Site, and each view would include only one phase, it is assumed that the no change in construction view would last more than 5 years and is therefore 'short term'. Assumptions on what the construction will include is set out in the Section 14.5 above.

14.6.2 The assessment shows that the main adverse effects would be on receptor groups immediately within and surrounding the Site. Beyond this, natural screening is provided by the hillside terrain to the north and south and strong existing vegetation and around and within the Site. Given the short-term nature of the effects, the overall significance of the changes are reduced.

Construction Views from the North

14.6.3 To the north of the Site, users of Lower Earley Way, Meldreth Way and the M4 motorway would have glimpsed views of the northern end of the new spine road and vehicular bridge over the M4 (Appendix 14.1, Views 1, 2 and 3). Given that existing views are of low value, already include highway infrastructure and include foreground vegetation, the construction of these elements of the Proposed Development would not result in any significant adverse effects, and would either be neutral or 'negligible adverse' only.

Construction Views from the East

14.6.4 There are few visual receptors that would have views of the proposed construction from the east. The Site is well concealed by the woodlands around Carter's Hill with few residential properties in this area. Views would primarily be from Betty Grove Lane, Sindlesham (Appendix 14.1, View 4), Julkes Lane and Parkcorner Lane Carter's Hill (View 5), Mole Road (View 9) and users of the Football Training Ground at Bear Wood and private views from residents on Julkes Lane, Betty Grove Lane, Mole Road and Wheatsheaf Close. Given the short-term nature of the effects and presence of intervening hedgerow vegetation, effects would generally be 'minor adverse'. Whilst we visited footpaths towards the Coombes/Gravel Hill (View 10) there were no obvious views of the Site due to screening by intervening mature hedgerow trees.

14.6.5 Whilst users of Betty Grove Lane Public Right of Way are judged to have 'high' overall sensitivity and changes to the view would include foreground views of the construction of the Gypsy and Traveller Site, cultivation of the allotment Site and distant filtered views of the self-build plots, the changes would be short-term, transient and not dominate the overall view, meaning that the significance of the effect is judged to be 'minor adverse'.

14.6.6 Similarly, users of Jules Lane are judged to have 'high' overall sensitivity. Changes to the view would primarily comprise foreground views of the cultivation of the allotment Site to the immediate north of the lane and distant filtered views of the self-build plots to the north. To the south there would be views of the construction of new buildings to the south of Carter's Hill in the middle distance. The changes would be short-term, transient and not dominate the overall view, meaning that the significance of the effects are judged to be 'minor adverse.'

Construction Views from the South

14.6.7 To the south, the Site is well screened from the wider area by mature hedgerows, small areas of woodland and the scattered houses at Arborfield. Whilst there would be transient views of the construction from the A347 Reading Road and Arborfield Relief Road/Ordnance Way,

these would focus on the Site access area only, with the majority of the Site concealed by existing boundary vegetation. Whilst there would be large change to the view at the A347 Reading Road adjacent to the Site access, the overall significance of this would be 'minor adverse' given that it would be a short-term effect and the visual receptor group is 'low sensitivity'.

14.6.8 More sensitive receptor groups to the south are users of the ARBO3 byway off Church Lane Arborfield and visitors to the grounds of St. Bartholomew's Church. Both of these areas would have views of the construction of the Proposed Development however given the benefits of filtering by foreground hedges and the short-term nature of the effect these would only be of 'minor adverse' significance.

Construction Views from the West

14.6.9 The construction of the proposed built development would be well screened by existing mature trees along the length of the River Loddon, when seen from public viewpoints such as the Shinfield Eastern Relief Road and public rights of way within the proposed SANG area. There would therefore be no significant effects on these potential receptor groups.

Construction Views from Within the Site

14.6.10 The only significant adverse effects caused by the Proposed Development would be to views within the Site itself. Whilst the mature vegetation along the River Loddon provides good screening to views from PRoWs to the north and west, the area to the south/east of the river includes some PRoWs which run through the Proposed Development area. These would all be retained within retained green corridors, however would experience clear changes to their views, generally with arable fields being replaced by construction.

14.6.11 Within the north-eastern part of the Site there would be 'moderate adverse' effects on users of ARBO5A footpath (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the south of Gravelpit Wood) (see Appendix 14.1, Views 17 and 18). These transient views would include the construction of the new–build plots when looking north and proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill when looking south. The central part of this PRoW runs through a green corridor within the proposed self-build area whilst the southern part of the route runs immediately adjacent to the proposed allotments.

14.6.12 Users of ARBO5B 'Byway open to all traffic' to the north of Gravelpit Wood (View 6) would also experience 'moderate adverse' effects, with glimpses through to the proposed electricity sub-station and spine road to the north. The proposed woodland would provide good screening of construction to the south and east.

14.6.13 To the west of Carter's Hill there would be significant adverse effects on users of the 'Byway open to all traffic' ARBO3 that connects Carter's Hill with the CEDAR farm where it continues south towards Arborfield (see Appendix 14.1, Views 19, 20 21 and 22). These would be transient, glimpsed views of a relatively large part of the Site. Whilst this footpath would run through a proposed green corridor, there would be clear changes from arable fields to construction Site in all directions. Foreground hedgerows would provide a degree of screening however, and the changes would be 'short-term' in duration. Overall the effects would be 'moderate adverse'.

14.6.14 To the west of the CEDAR farm buildings PRoW ARBO2 connects with Hall Farm (View 23) From here there would be clear views across a relatively large part of the Site, with the current arable fields replaced by construction Sites. Given that they would be 'short-term' the overall effects would be 'moderate adverse'.

14.6.15 To the south of Hall Farm, PRoW ARBO1 (see Appendix 14.1, Views 24 and 25) connects with Arborfield, along the route of an historic avenue associated with Arborfield Hall. Users of the route would have views towards the construction of the local centre and secondary school and its playing fields to the north. To the south, receptors would have views of the construction of new housing and open space in the original Arborfield Hall Park (View 26). Effects would be 'moderate adverse', reflecting their transient, short-term nature but accepting that there would be clearly visible changes to the foreground views.

Table 14.20 Effects on Visual Receptors – During Construction

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Scale of Effect * (Table 14.12)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
Views from the north							
1	1km from M4 motorway bridge and spine road.	Users of Cutbush Lane bridge over M4 (Footpath SHIN39)	Medium	Negligible neutral	Negligible neutral	Negligible neutral	Transient glimpsed view of small part of the Site. Roadside vegetation and a bend in the road provides a good degree of screening. The proposed construction of the road bridge would, at most, be glimpsed from a short section of this path, and would be seen in distance in the context of the existing motorway in the foreground.
2,3,	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of short stretch of Lower Earley Way parallel to proposed bridge and roundabout	Low	Negligible neutral	Negligible neutral	Negligible neutral	Transient glimpsed view of small part of the Site. Roadside vegetation and a bend in the road provides a good degree of screening. The proposed construction of the road bridge would, at most, be glimpsed from a short section of this path, and would be seen in distance in the context of the existing motorway in the foreground.
-	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of short stretch of southern end of Meldreth Way	Low	Low adverse	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	Transient glimpsed view of small part of the Site at the northern point of the new spine road. View dominated by the highway infrastructure in the foreground with screening provided by vegetation each side of Meldreth Way.
-	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of M4 motorway	Low	Large Neutral	Medium neutral	Minor neutral	Transient full view of small part of the Site. Construction of new bridge would be clearly visible but in the context of the existing M4 infrastructure in the foreground .

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Scale of Effect * (Table 14.12)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
Views from the East							
4	0km + from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Users and Residents of Betty Grove Lane (Byway open to all traffic ARBO5)	Medium	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Minor adverse	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. Construction would include provision of new access and hard-standing beyond existing hedgerow with further mitigation planting for the gypsy & traveller Site plus distant views of self-building plots.
-	0km + from proposed allotment Site. 0.23km+ from proposed self-build units. 0.31km from Proposed Development parcels to the south of Carter's Hill	Users of Julkes Lane, Carter's Hill, (ARBO 4A footpath)	Medium	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Minor adverse	Transient glimpsed views of a small part of the Site. Distant views of self-build plots and associated mitigation planting, together with glimpsed cultivation of new allotment plots beyond existing hedge in foreground Existing housing and hedgerows provide a degree of screening. View towards housing to the south of Carter's Hill to the south.
5	0.17km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Users of Parkcorner Lane, Carter's Hill	Medium	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Minor adverse	Transient full views of a small part of the Site. Distant views of self-build plots beyond existing hedgerows in the distance. Clear views of cultivation of new allotment plots in the middle distance.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Scale of Effect * (Table 14.12)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
Private	0km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Residents of Mole Road & Wheatsheaf Close, Sindlesham	Not assessed – private views.				Stationary view. Private views that would have domestic gardens in the foreground.
9	0.8 km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site 0.34km from proposed housing on eastern side of the development.	Users of Mole Road to the south-east of the Site	Low	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Minor adverse	Transient glimpsed views of a small part of the Site. Mature hedgerows and retained fields in the foreground would reduce visual impact, however there would be partial views towards the erection of the self-build plots in the distance together with the cultivation and associated hedgerow planting of the proposed allotments and Gypsy & Traveller Site and eastern edge of new housing to the south of Carter's Hill.
10	0.94km from housing on eastern side of the development.	Users of PRoW at ARBO9, north of Arborfield Waste Water Treatment Works	Medium	No change	No change	No change	Site is not visible from here due to the presence of foreground hedgerows and distant trees around the Site.
Views from the south							
11	0.47km from housing in the south-eastern part of the development.	Users of Mole Road to the south of the Site	Low	No change	No change	No change	Site is not visible from here due to the presence of foreground hedgerows.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Scale of Effect * (Table 14.12)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
12	0km from south-eastern boundary of the Site	Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic off Church Lane, Wokingham	Medium	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Minor adverse	Transient glimpsed views of a small part of the Site. Mature hedgerows and retained fields in the foreground would reduce visual impact however there would be partial views of the construction Site in close proximity beyond
13	0.47 km from proposed school buildings.	Visitors to St. Bartholmew's Church yard, Arborfield	Medium	Medium adverse	Low adverse	Minor adverse	Stationary glimpsed vies of a small part of the Site. Existing hedgerow provides filtered screening. The area surrounding the church-yard slopes down away from the church, limiting views. These would comprise playing fields and an extension to the graveyard in the foreground comprising earthworks and planting. Distant views of housing and the local centre under construction would be glimpsed from the northern part of the church-yard only.
14	0.00 to 0.25 km from proposed southern boundary of the Site.	Users of A327 Arborfield Relief Road/Observer Way	Low	Medium adverse (close to new access road off roundabout)	Low adverse	Minor adverse	Transient glimpsed view of small part of the Site. The view is dominated by the foreground highway and thick vegetation along the Site's southern boundary. Construction of the new access off the existing roundabout would be visible in the middle distance from a short distance of the road.
15	0 km from proposed southern boundary of the Site.	Users of A327 Reading Road, Arborfield immediately adjacent to the Site's southern boundary	Low	Large adverse (adjacent to new access road off roundabout)	Medium adverse	Minor adverse	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. The view is dominated by the foreground highway and thick vegetation along the Site's southern boundary. Construction of the new access off the existing roundabout would be visible from a short distance of the road.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Scale of Effect * (Table 14.12)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
16	0.29 km from proposed housing at southern end of the Site.	Users of A327 Arborfield Road, Shinfield	Low	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. The view is dominated by the highway and southern part of the Eco Valley. Visible construction would comprise new planting and footpath construction within the SANG.
Views from the west							
-	1.00 km from proposed housing at southern end of the Site.	Users of Shinfield Eastern Relief Road	Low	No change	No change	No change	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Eco Valley only. The view is dominated by the highway and southern part of the Eco Valley. The construction of buildings and road bridges would be screened by existing vegetation adjacent to the road and within the Eco Valley. Limited planting is proposed at this end of the Eco Valley.
Views from within the Site							
17,18	Partially within a proposed green corridor running through the self-build part of the Site	Users of ARBO5A footpath (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the south of Gravelpit Wood)	Medium	Large adverse	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. Views of self-build units and cultivation of new allotment Site beyond the proposed green corridor in which the path is to be located.
6	0.09 km from proposed spine road.	Users of ARBO5 Byway open to all traffic (joining Betty Grove	Medium	Large adverse (short distance of the path at its northern end)	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. Views of self-build units under construction from short section of the northern part of the byway. The Gravelpit Wood to the south screens construction

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Scale of Effect * (Table 14.12)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
		Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the north of Gravelpit Wood)					views from much of the rest of the path. Construction of proposed spine road glimpsed in the middle distance would be glimpsed from a short section to the north of the path but would also benefit from some screening by the existing area of woodland to the north.
7, 8	0.22 km from proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Users of ARBO4A Byway open to all traffic (joining Carter's Hill with Mole Road)	Medium	Medium adverse (only in field gateways/ gaps in foreground hedges)	Low adverse	Minor adverse	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. Views generally screened by foreground hedges, however there would be glimpses of proposed housing under construction to the west in the middle distance through field gateways and through hedges during the winter months.
19, 20 21,22,	Partially within a proposed green corridor running through the Site.	Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic (joining Julke's Lane, Carter's Hill with Church Lane, Arborfield, via CEDAR farm buildings)	Medium	Large adverse	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse	Transient glimpsed view of a relatively large part of the Site. Whilst this footpath would run through a proposed green corridor, there would be clear changes from arable fields to construction Site in all directions. Foreground hedgerows would provide a degree of screening.
23	Within a proposed green corridor running through the Site.	ARBO2 footpath connecting the CEDAR farm buildings with Hall Farm	Medium	Large adverse	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse	Transient full view of a relatively large part of the Site. There would be clear foreground changes from arable fields to construction Site along the length of this path.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Scale of Effect * (Table 14.12)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
24. 25,26,	Within a proposed green corridor running through the development.	ARBO1 Footpath linking the River Loddon at Hall Farm with Arborfield	Medium	Large adverse	Medium adverse	Moderate adverse	Transient full view of a relatively large part of the Site. There would be clear foreground changes from arable fields to construction Site along the length of this path. To the south this would comprise housing construction whist to the north this would comprise the new secondary school and associated playing pitch with earthworks/cultivation.
27	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG. 0.2km from buildings at Hall Farm.	SHIN4 footpath, linking Oldhouse Farm with the River Loddon at Hall Farm	High	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	Transient full views of part of the Eco Valley area of the Site only. There would be no views of built development construction from here. The only changes would be the construction of new pathways and fencing within the SANG and planting of new trees .
-	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG. 0.2km from buildings within southern part of the Site	SHIN5 footpath, linking connecting A327 Arborfield Road with the footbridge over the River Loddon at Hall Farm.	Medium	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	Transient full views of part of the Eco Valley area of the Site only. There would be no views of built development construction from here. The only changes would be the construction of new pathways and fencing within the SANG and planting of new trees .
-	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG.	SHIN6 footpath, connecting A327 Arborfield Road with	Medium	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse	

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Scale of Effect * (Table 14.12)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
	0.73km from buildings within southern part of the Site	Cutbush Lane East					

* All visual effects during construction are judged to be short-term and direct.

Operational Phase – Potential Visual Effects (Year 0) and Residual Visual Effects (Year 15)

14.6.16 The assessment of the visual impacts during the operational period are summarised in Table 14.21. All effects are judged to be 'long-term' and as such the 'magnitude' of change is the same as the 'scale' (see Table 14.17), with no consideration of how this might be reduced in the short-term.

14.6.17 The effects are judged at two stages. The assessment of 'potential' visual effects assume that there is no specific mitigation planting designed to mitigate visual impacts. Any vegetation that may have formed part of the new Green Infrastructure is assessed at Winter of Year 0 and therefore wouldn't be well-established. This provides the 'worst-case' scenario.

14.6.18 A second assessment assumes that 'additional mitigation' has taken place, in the form of strategic planting to screen and soften key views of development. This assessment is taken at 15 years after planting, and therefore allows for new trees to have established. This assesses the 'residual' visual effects.

14.6.19 The assessment shows that the main adverse effects would be on receptor groups immediately within and surrounding the Site. Beyond this, natural screening is provided by the hillside terrain to the north and south and strong existing vegetation and around and within the Site. Inevitably the visual receptors within and immediately adjacent to the Site are often going to experience significant changes to their views, given the proximity of the new development to the viewpoints.

Potential Operational and Residual Effects on Views from the North

14.6.20 To the north of the Site, users of Lower Earley Way, Meldreth Way and the M4 motorway would have glimpsed views of the northern end of the new spine road and vehicular bridge over the M4 (Views 1, 2 and 3). Given that existing views are of low value, already including highway infrastructure and foreground vegetation, these elements of the Proposed Development would not result in any significant potential adverse effects, either being 'moderate neutral' or at worst 'minor adverse'. Residual effects would be the same as the potential effects as no notable new mitigation planting would be present here due to the predominance of new highway infrastructure as well as the benefits of existing vegetation.

Potential and Residual Operational Effects on Views from the East

14.6.21 There are few visual receptors that would have views of the Proposed Development from the east. The Site is well concealed by the woodlands around Carter's Hill with few residential properties in this area. Views would primarily be from Betty Grove Lane, Sindlesham (Appendix 14.1, View 4), Julkes Lane and Parkcorner Lane, Carter's Hill (View 5), Mole Road (View 9) and users of the Football Training Ground at Bear Wood (private views) as well as further private views from residents on Julkes Lane, Betty Grove Lane, Mole Road and Wheatsheaf Close.

14.6.22 Of these, the only significant potential effects would be on users of Betty Grove Lane and Julkes Lane byways. At the eastern end of Betty Grove Lane these would include foreground views of the Gypsy and Traveller Site, beyond an existing hedgerow and distant filtered views of the self-build plots. This could result in potential 'major adverse' visual effects on this receptor group. With mitigation planting around the Gypsy and Traveller Site and within the open spaces around the self-build plots these effects could diminish to 'minor adverse' residual effects.

14.6.23 Similarly users of Julkes Lane could experience significant ('moderate adverse') potential visual effects, with views towards the proposed allotment Site set behind an existing hedgerow and with distant filtered views of the self-build plots to the north. To the south there would also be

views of new buildings to the south of Carter's Hill in the middle distance. Again with mitigation planting along the edge of Julkes Lane and around the housing to the south, the residual effects could be reduced to 'minor adverse'.

Potential and Residual Operational Effects on Views from the South

14.6.24 To the south, the Site is well screened from the wider area by mature hedgerows, small areas of woodland and the scattered houses. Whilst there would be transient views of the new entrance to the Site from the A347 Reading Road and Arborfield Relief Road/Ordnance Way, neither the potential or residual effects would be significant, given the low sensitivity of the visual receptors and benefits provided the existing planting along the Site's southern boundary.

14.6.25 The only significant potential visual effects would be on users of the ARBO3 byway, off Church Lane, Arborfield, which runs adjacent to part of the Site's southern boundary. Whilst mature hedgerows and small woodland provide some screening there would be views of new homes in relatively close proximity to the path, resulting in potential 'moderate adverse' potential effects. New planting in an adjacent proposed green corridor could filter views further but is not likely to totally screen the new houses, meaning that there would be significant residual effects, especially during the winter months.

Potential Operational and Residual Effects on Views from the West

14.6.26 There would be no significant effects on views from the west. The proposed buildings would be well screened by existing mature trees along the length of the River Loddon, when seen from public viewpoints such as the Shinfield Eastern Relief Road and public rights of way within the proposed SANG.

Potential Operational and Residual Effects on Views from Within the Site

14.6.27 The main potential significant effects on visual receptors would be from within the Site itself. Whilst the mature vegetation along the River Loddon provides good screening to views from PRoWs to the north and west, the area to the south/east of the river includes some PRoWs which run through the Proposed Development area.

14.6.28 To the north of Carter's Hill there would initially be 'major adverse' potential visual effects on users of ARBO5A footpath (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the south of Gravelpit Wood) (Appendix 14.1, Views 17 and 18). These views would include self-build plots when looking north and proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill when looking south. The central part of this PRoW runs through a green corridor within the proposed self-build area, whilst the southern part of the route runs immediately adjacent to the proposed allotments meaning that there will be foreground changes to the views. With appropriate planting in this area, the effects would diminish, however would still result in a significant residual effect ('moderate adverse').

14.6.29 Users of the ARBO5B byway to the north of Gravelpit Wood (Appendix 14.1, View 6) would also experience 'major adverse' potential visual effects, with glimpses through to the proposed electricity sub-station and spine road and of the self-build homes at the northern end of the footpath from parts of the path. There is space for mitigation planting to the north, which could provide a good degree of screening here, reducing the visual effects of the sub-station and spine road to 'minor adverse however even with mitigation planting there would be clear views of the new spine road and housing from a short stretch of the northern end of this path, having a significant ('moderate adverse') residual effect.

14.6.30 To the south of Carter's Hill proposed housing would be glimpsed to the south of byway ARBO4, which connects to Mole Road (Appendix 14.1, Views 7 and 8). This public right of way benefits

from mature hedges on both sides, but views are possible through gateways and areas where the hedgerow is thin. The introduction of new homes nearby would have a 'moderate adverse' effect on this rural view, however there is the potential for mitigation planting either in the foreground or adjacent to the proposed homes, which could reduce the residual effects to 'negligible adverse'.

14.6.31 West of Carter's Hill there would be significant effects on users of the ARBO3 byway that connects Carter's Hill with the CEDAR farm and Arborfield beyond (Appendix 14.1, Views 19, 20 21 and 22). Whilst this footpath would run through a proposed green corridor, there would be clear changes from arable fields to new buildings beyond, with the setting of the path changing from rural to urban and having a 'major adverse' potential effect on receptors. Foreground hedgerows with mature trees would provide a degree of filtering however and this could be supplemented by additional planting in the green corridors. Overall the residual effects would still be significant but could be reduced to 'moderate adverse'.

14.6.32 To the west of the CEDAR farm buildings PRoW ARBO2 connects with Hall Farm (Appendix 14.1, View 23) From here the relatively open views across farmland towards Arborfield would change to a new wide street with space for green infrastructure. This would result in a 'major adverse' effect on visual receptors here. With street tree planting, residual effects would still be significant but would reduce to 'moderate adverse'.

14.6.33 To the south of Hall Farm, PRoW ARBO1 (Appendix 14.1, Views 24 and 25) connects with Arborfield, along the route of an historic avenue associated with Arborfield Hall. Users of the route would have views towards the proposed local centre and secondary school and its playing fields to the north and new housing to the south. Potential effects on receptors here would be 'moderate adverse' with little opportunity for mitigation to be provided by mitigation planting.

14.6.34 To the north-west of the river, the mature trees along the corridor of the River Loddon provide good screening from the wider area to the north. The three public rights of way here, SHIN4, SHIN5 and SHIN6 would at most, have distant glimpsed views of the development during the winter months, with the main potential effects being negligible beneficial changes to their immediate views, with new planting through the proposed SANG area.

Table 14.21 Effects during Operation: Potential Effects on Visual Receptors (Year 0) and Residual Effects on Visual Receptors (Year 15)

Note: The assessment of potential visual effects assumes there will be no specific mitigation provided by new strategic planting, whilst the assessment of residual effects considers that strategic planting can be secured through Reserved matters applications and appraises these at Year 15 when it would be well established.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
Views from the north						
1	1km from M4 motorway bridge and spine road.	Users of Cutbush Lane bridge over M4 (Footpath SHIN39)	Medium	Negligible neutral (Years 0 & 15)	Negligible neutral (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed view of small part of the Site. Roadside vegetation and a bend in the road provides a good degree of screening. The proposed road bridge would, at most, be glimpsed from a short section of this path, and would be seen in distance in the context of the existing motorway in the foreground.
2,3,	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of short stretch of Lower Earley Way parallel to proposed bridge and roundabout	Low	High neutral (Years 0 & 15)	Moderate neutral (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed view of small part of the Site. View dominated by the Lower Earley Way infrastructure in the foreground together with pylons in places. Existing vegetation would continue to provide a good degree of screening from much of Lower Earley Way, however the new road bridge would be visible above these trees in places. Tree clearance adjacent to the Meldreth Way/Lower Earley Way roundabout would reduce the leafy backdrop here and introduce more highway infrastructure in the foreground.
-	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of short stretch of southern end of Meldreth Way	Low	Low adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Minor adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed view of small part of the Site at the northern point of the new spine road. View dominated by the highway infrastructure in the foreground with screening provided by vegetation each side of Meldreth Way.
-	0km + from proposed M4 motorway bridge and spine road	Users of M4 motorway	Low	High Neutral (Years 0 & 15)	Moderate neutral (Years 0 & 15)	Transient full view of small part of the Site. New bridge over the motorway would be clearly visible but seen in the context of the existing M4 infrastructure in the foreground.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
Views from the East						
4	0km + from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Users and Residents of Betty Grove Lane (Byway open to all traffic ARBO5)	Medium	Medium adverse (Year 0) Low adverse (Year 15)	Major adverse (Year 0) Minor adverse (Year 15)	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. Views would include glimpses of the proposed gypsy & traveller Site beyond existing hedgerow plus distant views of self-building plots. With mitigation planting, these new areas of development can be screened during much of the year, with more open glimpses during the winter, resulting in a minor adverse residual effect.
-	0km + from proposed allotment Site. 0.23km+ from proposed self-build units. 0.31km from Proposed Development parcels to the south of Carter's Hill	Users of Julkes Lane, Carter's Hill, (ARBO 4A footpath)	Medium	Medium adverse (Year 0) Low adverse (Year 15)	Moderate adverse (Year 0) Minor adverse (Year 15)	Transient glimpsed views of a small part of the Proposed Development. Views of self-build plots and associated mitigation planting to the north, together with glimpsed cultivation of new allotment plots beyond existing hedge in foreground. Distant glimpsed views of proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill. With mitigation planting along Julkes Lane and in the open space adjacent to the self-build plots to the north and housing to the south, the allotments and adjacent housing would be partially screened, especially during the summer months, giving a minor adverse residual effect.
5	0.17km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Users of Parkcorner Lane, Carter's Hill	Medium	Low adverse (Year 0) Negligible adverse (Year 15)	Minor adverse (Year0) Negligible adverse (Year 15)	Transient full views of a small part of the Proposed Development. Distant glimpses of self-build plots and Gypsy and traveller Site beyond existing hedgerows in the distance. Views of allotments adjacent to gypsy and traveller Site.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
						Strategic planting would predominantly screen these areas of development, especially during the summer months, resulting in a negligible adverse residual effect
Private	0km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site	Residents of Mole Road & Wheatsheaf Close, Sindlesham	Not assessed – private views.			Stationary view. Private views that would have domestic gardens in the foreground.
9	0.8 km from proposed Gypsy & Traveller Site 0.34km from proposed housing on eastern side of the development.	Users of Mole Road to the south-east of the Site	Low	Low adverse (Year 0) Negligible adverse (Year 15)	Minor adverse (Year 0) Negligible adverse (Year 15)	Transient glimpsed views of proposed housing along the south-eastern edge of the Site in the distance. Mature hedgerows and retained fields in the foreground would reduce visual impact. Distant filtered views towards of the self-build plots together with glimpsed views of gypsy and traveller Site in the middle distance (partially screened by existing housing on Mole Road). With forest-scale tree planting along the south-eastern edges of the development, the new buildings would be predominantly screened for much of the year.
10	0.94km from housing on eastern side of the development.	Users of PRoW at ARBO9, north of Arborfield Waste Water Treatment Works	Medium	No change	No change	The Proposed Development would not be visible from here due to the presence of foreground hedgerows and distant trees around the Site.
Views from the south						
11	0.47km from housing in the south-eastern part	Users of Mole Road to the south of the Site	Low	No change	No change	Site is not visible from here due to the presence of foreground hedgerows with buildings in Church Lane, Arborfield beyond.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
	of the development.					
12	0km from south-eastern boundary of the Site	Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic off Church Lane, Wokingham	Medium	Medium adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Moderate adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed views of a small part of the Site to the north. Mature hedgerows and retained fields in the foreground would reduce visual impact however there would be clear glimpses towards new housing beyond. A green corridor which can accommodate new tree planting is proposed to the immediate north of the byway but even if planted it is likely that there would be glimpses of new houses beyond.
13	0.47 km from proposed school buildings.	Visitors to St. Bartholmew's Church yard, Arborfield	Medium	Low adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Minor adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Stationary glimpsed views of a small part of the Site. Existing hedgerow provides filtered screening. The area surrounding the church-yard slopes down away from the church, naturally limiting views. There would be glimpsed views of playing fields and clear views of the extension to the grave yard in the foreground. Views of housing and the local centre would be glimpsed from the northern part of the church yard only.
14	0.00 to 0.25 km from proposed southern boundary of the Site.	Users of A327 Arborfield Relief Road/Observer Way	Low	Medium adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Minor adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed view of small part of the Site. The view is dominated by the foreground highway and thick vegetation along the Site's southern boundary. The new access off the existing roundabout would be visible from a short distance of the road only.
15	0 km from proposed southern	Users of A327 Reading Road, Arborfield immediately	Low	High adverse (adjacent to new access road off	Moderate adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. The view is dominated by the foreground highway and thick vegetation along the Site's southern boundary. The new access off

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
	boundary of the Site.	adjacent to the Site's southern boundary		roundabout) (Years 0 & 15)		the existing roundabout would be visible from a short distance of this road, providing views into the new development beyond..
16	0.29 km from proposed housing at southern end of the Site.	Users of A327 Arborfield Road, Shinfield	Low	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. The view is dominated by the highway and southern part of the Eco Valley. The only changes would be new planting within the SANG. The new housing would be screened by existing vegetation along the River Loddon.
Views from the west						
-	1.00 km from proposed housing at southern end of the Site.	Users of Shinfield Eastern Relief Road	Low	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Eco Valley only. The view is dominated by the highway and southern part of the Eco Valley. The proposed buildings and road bridges would be screened by existing vegetation adjacent to the road and within the Eco Valley. The only changes would be new planting within the SANG. The new housing would be screened by existing vegetation along the River Loddon.
Views from within the Site						
17,18	Partially within a proposed green corridor running through the self-build part of the Site	Users of ARBO5A footpath (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the south of Gravelpit Wood)	Medium	Major adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Moderate adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. Views of self-build units and cultivation of new allotment Site would be clearly visible beyond the proposed green corridor in which the path is to be located. To the south there would also be distant views towards proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill. Strategic planting would not screen views of the self-build units, but could soften views of the housing to the south.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
6	0.09 km from proposed spine road.	Users of ARBO5 Byway open to all traffic (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the north of Gravelpit Wood)	Medium	High adverse (Year 0) Medium adverse (Year 15)	Major adverse (Year 0) Moderate adverse (Year 15)	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. Distant view towards the proposed spine road and sub-station, with an open space in the foreground. The Gravelpit Wood to the south screens views from much of the rest of the path. There is space for strategic planting to the north of the byway which could screen the changes to the view here. Strategic planting would not screen views of the self-build units and spine road however, but could soften views of the housing resulting in a moderate adverse residual effect.
7, 8	0.22 km from proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Users of ARBO4A Byway open to all traffic (joining Carter's Hill with Mole Road)	Medium	Moderate adverse (in field gateways/ gaps in foreground hedge, Year 0) Negligible adverse (Year 15)	Moderate adverse (Year 0) Negligible adverse (Year 15)	Transient glimpsed view of a small part of the Site. Views generally screened by foreground hedges, however there would be glimpses of proposed housing to the south-west in the middle distance through field gateways and through gaps in hedges during the winter months. With strategic planting adjacent to the foreground hedges or adjacent to the housing to the south, the views of the new houses could be further screened.
19, 20 21,22,	Partially within a proposed green corridor running through the Site.	Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic (joining Julke's Lane, Carter's Hill with Church Lane, Arborfield, via	Medium	High adverse (Year 0) Medium adverse (Year 15)	Major adverse (Year 0) Moderate adverse (Year 15)	Transient glimpsed views of a proposed green corridor; the setting of the path would change from arable fields to new buildings. Foreground hedgerows with mature trees would provide a degree of screening which could be further supplemented by additional planting.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
		CEDAR farm buildings)				
23	Within a proposed green corridor running through the Site.	ARBO2 footpath connecting the CEDAR farm buildings with Hall Farm	Medium	High adverse (Year 0) Medium adverse (Year 15)	Major adverse (Year 0) Moderate adverse (Year 15)	Transient full view of a proposed green corridor/secondary street. There would be clear foreground changes from arable fields to a linear corridor. Mitigation planting would primarily comprise street trees, given the new route a leafy character.
24. 25,26,	Within a proposed green corridor running through the development.	ARBO1 Footpath linking the River Loddon at Hall Farm with Arborfield	Medium	High adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Major adverse (Years 0 & 15)	Transient view along an existing park avenue. There would be clear foreground changes from arable fields to new housing to the south and the secondary school and playing fields to the north. The layout provides limited space for tree planting.
27	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG. 0.2km from buildings at Hall Farm.	SHIN4 footpath, linking Oldhouse Farm with the River Loddon at Hall Farm	Medium	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Transient full views of part of the Eco Valley area of the Site only. There would be no views of built development construction from here. The only changes would be new pathways, fencing and trees within the SANG.
-	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG. 0.2km from buildings within	SHIN5 footpath, linking connecting A327 Arborfield Road with the footbridge over the River	Medium	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Transient full views of part of the Eco Valley area of the Site only. There would be no views of built development construction from here. The only changes would be new pathways, fencing and trees within the SANG.

View Ref.	Approx. distance	Potential Visual Receptor	Overall Sensitivity (Table 14.17)	Overall Magnitude (Table 14.7)	Overall Significance	Description of View/ Rationale for Judgement
	southern part of the Site	Loddon at Hall Farm.				
-	Within the proposed Eco Valley/ Lourdes Meadow SANG. 0.73km from buildings within southern part of the Site	SHIN6 footpath, connecting A327 Arborfield Road with Cutbush Lane East	Medium	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	Negligible beneficial (Years 0 & 15)	

* All visual effects during construction judged to be long-term and direct.

14.7 Additional Mitigation

14.7.1 Strategic planting will help mitigate some of the visual effects, and whilst this planting is shown on the Illustrative Landscape Strategy the final design would be secured at the Reserved Matters application stages. The assessment of residual effects described in Sections 14.5 and 14.6 and shown in Tables 14.19 and 14.21 therefore gives an indication as to how effects would be reduced if such additional planting mitigation were to be incorporated in the scheme, but acknowledges that this is conditional on the specific nature of the final landscape design.

14.8 Residual effects

14.8.1 The landscape assessments in Sections 14.5 has been based on the assumption that the proposed areas of Green Infrastructure will incorporate a variety of vegetation features as an inherent part of the spaces and as reflected in the initial BNG calculations. Later planning applications can contribute to the screening/softening of the visual setting of the new development, which is classified as additional mitigation. This will result in the diminishing of the final, residual effects.

14.8.2 Likely significant residual landscape effects will be:

Designations

- Direct adverse effects on the areas of the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape in the area of the proposed housing to the south of the River Loddon and adjacent to the M4 motorway and River Loddon crossings as well as indirect effects on areas with views to the Proposed Development.
- Direct beneficial effects on the areas of the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape in the proposed Eco Valley area.

Landscape Character

- Direct adverse effects on the part of CA1 ‘Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor’ adjacent to the M4 and River Loddon crossings.
- Direct adverse effects on CA2 ‘Loddon River Valley: Loddon West’ where there are views to the new river crossing.
- Direct beneficial effects on CA2 ‘Loddon River Valley: Loddon West’ in the Eco Valley and SANG area.
- Direct adverse effects on the part of CA3 ‘Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland’ where farmland would be replaced by new development.
- Direct beneficial effects on the part of CA3 ‘Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland’ where farmland would be replaced by new open spaces, including natural green space.
- Direct adverse effects on the part of CA4 ‘Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East’ where farmland would be replaced by new development.
- Direct beneficial effects on the part of CA4 ‘Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East’ where farmland would be replaced by new open spaces, including natural green space and part of the SANG link.

- Direct adverse effects on the part of CA5 ‘Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay: Mole Road’’ where farmland would be replaced by new self-build units and the Gypsy and Traveller site.
- Direct beneficial effects on grassland throughout the Site, with additional and enhanced grassland.
- Direct adverse effects on arable farmland land use throughout the Site.
- Direct beneficial effects on trees throughout the Site
- Direct beneficial effects on hedgerows/scrub throughout the Site
- Direct beneficial effects on access and public rights of way throughout the Site.

14.8.3 With regards to the visual assessment in Section 14.6, the additional mitigation planting would reduce visual effects from a number of viewpoints. The precise benefits would be subject to the Reserved Matters applications but are likely to result in the following significant residual adverse effects:

- Users of PRoW ARBO3, off Church Lane, Arborfield
- Users of A327 Rading Road Arborfield immediately adjacent to the proposed southern entrance.
- Users of PRoW ARBO5A joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke’s Lane Carter’s Hill, to the south of Gravelpit Wood
- Users of PRoW ARBO5 Byway open to all traffic (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke’s Lane Carter’s Hill, to the north of Gravelpit Wood)
- Users of PRoW ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic (joining Julke’s Lane, Carter’s Hill with Church Lane, Arborfield, via CEDAR farm buildings
- Users of PRoW ARBO2 footpath connecting the CEDAR farm buildings with Hall Farm
- Users of PRoW ARBO1 Footpath linking the River Loddon at Hall Farm with Arborfield

14.9 Implications of Climate Change

14.9.1 The impact of climate change has been considered, based upon UK CP18 Climate Change Projections. This indicates a move towards warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. However, natural variations mean that some cold winters, some dry winters, some cool summers and some wet summers will still occur.

14.9.2 It is unlikely that these predicted changes will lead to wholescale change to the future landscape baseline within the lifetime of the Proposed Development. Changes might include certain tree species or grasslands becoming more dominant/prevalent, it is unlikely that these changes would have a prominent impact on landscape of the area. The impact of climate change on the existing and proposed tree and shrub species within the Site is also covered in Chapter 11.

14.9.3 Similarly for visual effects, it is unlikely that this climate change scenario would lead to any greater, or different, effects to those predicted, given that the screening effects currently provided by topography, and any changes relating to tree and hedgerow species composition can still continue to include specimens that provide a suitable level of screening.

14.10 Cumulative effects

14.10.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for residual negative effects of the Proposed Development to act cumulatively with other committed schemes as identified within Chapter 5, as well as the additional development proposed within the wider Loddon Valley Garden Village Strategic Development Location. This identified that due to the distance and lack of intervisibility between the Proposed Development and the other committed schemes the only potential cumulative effects would be as a result of the remainder of the Loddon Valley Garden Village Strategic Development.

Loddon Valley Garden Village Strategic Development Location

14.10.2 The proposals would not result in any significant cumulative effects, with the only nearby relevant developments being the additional housing areas at Loddon Garden Village to the north and east of the University land. To the north, the Hatch Farm proposals has limited intervisibility with the Proposed Development, and whilst there would be an effect on users of the M4, who would see the proposed road bridge and housing at Hatch Farm in close sequence, these views would not incorporate the remainder of the Proposed Development. The two Sites are separated by an area of woodland and would not reveal extensive views of either Site. This cumulative effect is not considered to be significant.

14.10.3 The Proposed Development at Newlands Farm would be seen in the foreground in views from the Mole Road corridor and would potentially screen views of the Proposed Development rather than result in any additional cumulative visual effects.

14.10.4 Taken together, all three parts of the Garden Village would inevitably result in a greater loss of arable and modified grass fields. Given the extensive provision of proposed and enhanced Green Infrastructure across all three Sites, this would not result in a significant cumulative effect.

Wider Committed Development

14.10.5 No other committed development projects would result in cumulative effects when taken into consideration with the Proposed Development due to the distances from the Site. Whilst development is taking place at the adjacent Thames Valley Science Park, this is already part of the landscape and visual baseline. The proposed Eco Valley will secure a long-term large area of open space between the Science Park and Proposed Development which will conserve the visual and physical separation of these two areas whilst creating a number of active travel links between them.

14.11 Summary

14.11.1 This impact assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Appraisal 3rd edition* (The Landscape Institute & IEMA, 2013). It assesses the effects that the Proposed Development would have on landscape designations, landscape character and features and visual amenity.

14.11.2 Potential significant landscape and visual effects have been identified through a desktop study and Site surveys undertaken by Savills between 2022 and 2025. This work also informed the masterplanning process.

14.11.3 The Proposed Development incorporates inherent mitigation measures to help avoid impacts on key landscape characteristics and sensitive views. This has included focussing development within an area currently occupied by arable farmland within the centre of the Site, enabling it to

be surrounded by an extremely generous area of open space. This includes the 194ha Eco Valley which includes a SANG and Sang Link as well as extensive areas of grassland and woods along the floodplain of the River Loddon, together with a network of green corridors throughout the Site that accommodate existing Public Rights of Way.

14.11.4 The Site is not currently designated for its landscape value but is partly covered by the draft River Loddon Valued Landscape. Some of the proposed housing together with the proposed bridges over the River Loddon and M4 motorway would be located within this designated area which would result in significant effects in localised parts of the area. Elsewhere throughout the Valued Landscape, the enhancements to the proposed Eco Valley area would result in significant beneficial effects on the landscape.

14.11.5 The effects on landscape character vary across the Site, again with significant beneficial effects across the proposed Eco Valley area to the north of the Site as well as some significant adverse effects on the character of the farmland to the south of the river. These changes are naturally inevitable, given the change from arable farmland to a new village.

14.11.6 Whilst the proposals will result in the loss of arable farmland, there will be some significant benefits to landscape features across the Site, with significant new areas of scrub, new tree planting and the restoration and creation of species rich meadows and woodlands for example.

14.11.7 The Proposed Development will not be visible from a wide area and instead is well contained by its valley floor location and presence of numerous areas of small woodland and mature hedgerow trees in the immediate area. Views are further limited by the relative lack of visual receptors in the wider area. Significant changes to views would only be experienced by users of Public Rights of Way immediately adjacent to the Site, such as Betty Grove Lane (Sindlesham) and Julke's Lane (Carter's Hill) together with views from the Public Rights of Way within the Site, which include byways connecting Carter's Hill with Hall Farm to the west and Arborfield to the south. Whilst the proposed road bridge and spine road connection to Lower Earley Way would be clearly visible to users of a short stretch of the M4 and Lower Earley Way, the effects would be neutral rather than adverse, given that the existing views are already dominated by highway infrastructure and visual receptors are low sensitivity here.

14.11.8 The proposals would not result in any significant cumulative effects, with the only nearby relevant developments being the additional housing areas at Loddon Garden Village to the north and east of the University land. To the north, the Hatch Farm proposals have no limited intervisibility with the Proposed Development, and whilst there would be an effect on users of the M4, who would see the proposed road bridge and housing at Hatch Farm in close sequence, these views would not incorporate the remainder of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development at Newlands Farm would be seen in the foreground in views from Mole Road corridor and would potentially screen views of the Proposed Development rather than result in increased visual effects. Taken together, all three parts of the Garden Village would inevitably result in a greater loss of arable and modified grass fields.

14.11.9 A summary of the assessment is set out in Table 14.23 below.

14.12 References

- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd edition* (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) ('GLVIA').
- *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment* (Natural England, October 2014)
- *Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals* (Landscape Institute 2019)

- *Technical Guidance Note 08/19 Camera Auto Settings* (Landscape Institute 2019)
- *Technical Guidance Note 09/19 Earth Curvature* (Landscape Institute 2019)
- *National Landscape Character Areas* (National England, 2013)
- *Wokingham Landscape Character Assessment* (November 2019)
- *Wokingham Valued Landscapes Assessment* (September 2024)
- *Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside* (MAGIC): Available at: http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/magicmap.aspx
- *Wokingham Borough Council (2010). Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework, Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document, January 2010*. Available at: https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/local-plan-and-planning-policies.

14.13 Assessor information

Table 14.22 Assessor Information

Chapter	Responsibility	Name	Qualifications	Assessor information
Landscape and Visual Impact Chapter	Savills	Ruth Bishop	• BSc. Hons Geography • Diploma Landscape Architecture • Master of Arts, Landscape Design • Master of Arts, Urban Design • Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute	Ruth is a Director at Savills and leads the company's Landscape team. She has over 30 years' experience in Landscape Design, Impact Assessment and Masterplanning. She is been responsible for managing and undertaking assessments and landscape-led masterplanning and Green Infrastructure design for development proposals at all scales including major road schemes and housing developments. She has a thorough understanding of the UK planning process and has undertaken many Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments for a variety of schemes and provided evidence on landscape and visual matters at planning inquiries.

Table 14.23 Summary of effects

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
Construction Phase					
Landscape Designations					
Draft River Loddon Valued Landscape	Medium	Removal of vegetation and construction of new bridge, spine road and housing in small part of the Valued Landscape	Inherent mitigation: Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of vegetation and integrate development with the landscape.	Minor indirect to Moderate adverse direct (depending on location)	Significant (in the parts of the construction is taking place)
Draft Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape	Low	Glimpsed views of construction to north of Mole Road.	Inherent mitigation: designed to minimise view of development from this area	Negligible adverse indirect	Not significant
Bearwood College Registered Park & Garden	Medium	Views of construction of new housing to north of Mole Road.	Inherent mitigation: Proposed Development designed to minimise view of development from this area	Negligible adverse indirect	Not significant
Trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders	High	No change.	Inherent mitigation: Proposed Development designed to avoid removal of trees covered by TPO.	No impact.	Not significant
Landscape Character Areas					
CA1 Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor	Low	Removal of vegetation and construction of new bridge, spine road and housing in part of the area	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of vegetation and integrate development with the landscape.	Minor adverse direct	Not significant
CA2 Loddon River Valley: Loddon West	Medium	Construction of new spine road and bridge across the flood plain)	Inherent Mitigation. Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of vegetation and	Moderate adverse direct	Significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
		Distant views of new bridge/spine road construction	integrate development with the landscape.	Negligible adverse direct	Not significant
CA3 Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland	Medium	Construction of new buildings and infrastructure	Inherent Mitigation. Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of vegetation and integrate development with the landscape.	Moderate adverse direct	Significant
CA4 Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East	Medium	Construction of new buildings and infrastructure		Moderate adverse direct	Significant
CA5 Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay: Mole Road	Medium	Construction of self-build/Gypsy & Traveller/Allotment areas in northern part of area. Retention of some existing fields.		Moderate adverse direct	Significant Not significant
Landscape Features					
Land Use: Grassland	Medium	Land to be replaced by construction site for proposed spine road and bridge.	None (at construction stage)	Minor adverse direct	Not significant
Land Use: Arable Farmland	Medium	Land to be replaced by buildings and associated open space and infrastructure	Incorporation of extensive areas of public open space, with potential for semi-natural landscape typologies.	Moderate adverse direct	Significant
Land Use: Built Form – Hall Place Farmhouse and adjacent cottages	High	Buildings to be retained.	Inherent mitigation. Buildings retained as part of Proposed Development	No change	Not significant
Land Use: Built Form – Twentieth Century Farm Buildings and Bungalows	Negligible	Buildings to be demolished.	None (at construction stage)	Negligible adverse direct	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
River valley landform and water features	Medium	Route and characteristics of river retained. Culverting of some ditches and localised cut and fill.	None (at construction stage)	Minor adverse direct	Not significant
Trees – Ancient Woodland, Trees covered by TPOs, Category A Trees	High	No change	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development avoids all protected trees.	No change	Not significant
All other trees	Medium	Loss of small number of category A and B trees and groups of trees, 0.04ha of Rushy Mead and 0.17ha of other non-ancient woodland	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing trees wherever possible.	Minor adverse direct	Not significant
Hedgerows	Medium	Removal of 1.25km hedgerows.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing trees wherever possible.	Moderate adverse direct	Significant
Access - PRoWs	Medium	Short-term closures when needed to allow adjacent construction/ pathway improvements.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing PRoWs.	Negligible adverse direct	Not significant
Visual Effects: North of the Site					
Users of Cutbush Lane bridge over M4 (Footpath SHIN39)	Medium	Limited views of construction of new road bridge over M4.	No mitigation.	Negligible neutral	Not significant
Users of short stretch of Lower Earley Way parallel to proposed bridge and roundabout	Low	Limited views of construction of changes to existing roundabout and tree removal.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing vegetation wherever possible.	Negligible neutral	Not significant
Users of short stretch of southern end of Meldreth Way	Low	Limited views of construction of changes to existing roundabout and tree removal.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing vegetation wherever possible.	Negligible adverse	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
Users of M4 motorway	Low	View of construction of new road bridge over M4.	No mitigation.	Minor neutral	Not significant
Visual Effects: East of the Site					
Users and Residents of Betty Grove Lane (Byway open to all traffic ARBO5)	Medium	Glimpsed views of construction of Gypsy & Traveller Site and Self-build homes	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of Julkes Lane, Carter's Hill, (ARBO 4A footpath)	Medium	Glimpsed views of construction of allotment to the north and housing to south of Carter's Hill to the south.	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of Parkcorner Lane, Carter's Hill	Medium	Distant views of construction of self-build plots beyond existing hedgerows in the distance. Clear views of cultivation of new allotment plots in the middle distance.	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of Mole Road to the south-east of the Site	Low	Glimpsed views of proposed allotments and Gypsy & Traveller Site near Betty Grove Lane and eastern edge of new housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of PRoW at ARBO9, north of Arborfield Waste Water Treatment Works	Medium	Site screened by existing hedgerows and trees.	No mitigation.	No change	Not significant
Visual Effects: South of the Site					
Users of Mole Road to the south of the Site	Low	No change. Screening by existing roadside hedgerows.	No mitigation.	No change	Not significant
Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic off	Medium	Glimpsed views of construction of new housing.	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
Church Lane, Wokingham					
Visitors to St. Bartholmew's Church yard, Arborfield	Medium	Glimpsed views of construction of playing fields and buildings from northern edge of the churchyard.	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of A327 Arborfield Relief Road/Observer Way	Low	Partial view of new site access and housing construction beyond	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of A327 Reading Road, Arborfield immediately adjacent to the Site's southern boundary	Low	View of construction of new site access and housing construction beyond.	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of A327 Arborfield Road, Shinfield	Low	Glimpsed view of new planting and paths in Lourde's Meadow SANG.	No mitigation.	Negligible adverse	Not significant
Visual Effects: West of the Site					
Users of Shinfield Eastern Relief Road	Low	No changes.	No mitigation.	No change	Not significant
Visual Effects: Within the Site					
Users of ARBO5A footpath (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the south of Gravelpit Wood)	Medium	Views of construction of self-build units and cultivation of new allotment in the foreground.	No mitigation	Moderate adverse	Significant
Users of ARBO5 Byway open to all traffic (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's	Medium	Views of self-build units under construction from short section of the northern part of the byway. The Construction of proposed spine road	No mitigation.	Moderate adverse	Significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
Hill, to the north of Gravelpit Wood)		glimpsed in the middle distance from a short section to the north of the path.			
Users of ARBO4A Byway open to all traffic (joining Carter's Hill with Mole Road)	Medium	Glimpses of proposed housing under construction to the west.	No mitigation.	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic (joining Julke's Lane, Carter's Hill with Church Lane, Arborfield, via CEDAR farm buildings)	Medium	Clear changes from arable fields to construction Site in all directions.	No mitigation.	Moderate adverse	Significant
ARBO2 footpath connecting the CEDAR farm buildings with Hall Farm	Medium	Changes from arable fields to construction Site.	No mitigation.	Moderate adverse	Significant
ARBO1 Footpath linking the River Loddon at Hall Farm with Arborfield	Medium	Foreground changes from arable fields to construction Site along the length of this path.	No mitigation.	Moderate adverse	Significant
SHIN4 footpath, linking Oldhouse Farm with the River Loddon at Hall Farm	High	Views of construction of new pathways and fencing and planting of new trees within the SANG.	No mitigation.	Negligible adverse	Not significant
SHIN5 footpath, linking connecting A327 Arborfield Road with the footbridge over the River Loddon at Hall Farm.	Medium	Views of construction of new pathways and fencing and planting of new trees within the SANG.	No mitigation.	Negligible adverse	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
SHIN6 footpath, connecting A327 Arborfield Road with Cutbush Lane East	Medium		No mitigation.	Negligible adverse	Not significant
Operation Phase					
Landscape Designations					
Draft River Loddon Valued Landscape	Medium	Removal of vegetation and new bridge, spine road and housing in small part of the Valued Landscape	Inherent mitigation: Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of vegetation integrate development with the landscape and provide Eco Valley and associated open spaces.	Major adverse (road bridges/spine road/housing) to Moderate beneficial (Eco Valley)	Significant
Draft Barkham and Bearwood Valued Landscape	Low	Glimpsed views of new homes to north and west of Mole Road.	Inherent mitigation: designed to minimise view of development from this area	Minor adverse indirect	Not significant
Bearwood College Registered Park & Garden	Medium	Glimpsed views of new homes to north and west of Mole Road.		Minor adverse indirect	Not significant
Trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders	High	No changes.	Inherent mitigation: Proposed Development designed to avoid removal of trees covered by TPO.	No impact.	Not significant
Landscape Character Areas					
CA1 Loddon River Valley: M4 Corridor	Low	New bridge, spine road and housing in small part of the Valued Landscape	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of vegetation and	Moderate adverse direct (new bridges and roads) to Minor beneficial	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
		Part of Eco Valley to south of M4 provides beneficial effect.	integrate development with the landscape.	direct (northern SANG)	
CA2 Loddon River Valley: Loddon West	Medium	New spine road and bridge across the flood plain Extensive areas of enhanced natural habitats throughout built area and Eco Valley.	Inherent Mitigation. Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of important landscape features and provide 197ha Eco Valley.	Moderate adverse direct (new bridges and roads) Minor – Moderate beneficial direct (Eco Valley & SANG)	Significant
CA3 Arborfield River Terrace: Arborfield Hall Parkland	Medium	New buildings and infrastructure together. Part of Eco Valley/new Neighbourhood Park	Inherent Mitigation. Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of vegetation and integrate development with the landscape.	Moderate adverse direct (built development) Moderate beneficial direct (new spaces)	Significant
CA4 Arborfield River Terrace: Loddon East	Medium	Arable farmland replaced with new residential neighbourhood Arable farmland replaced with areas of strategic green space, including parts of SANG link, natural green space & tree planting)	Inherent Mitigation. Proposed Development designed to minimise loss of vegetation, integrate development with the landscape and provide extensive areas of green space	Moderate adverse direct (built development) Moderate beneficial direct (new spaces)	Significant
CA5 Arborfield and Barkham Settled and Farmed Clay: Mole Road	Medium	Arable farmland replaced by self-build plots, allotments & Gypsy & Traveller Site.		Moderate adverse direct	Significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
		Some existing fields would remain undeveloped but with some views towards new homes to the north and south.		Minor adverse indirect	Not significant
Landscape Features					
Land Use: Grassland	Medium	Some grassland would be replaced by spine road construction however majority of grassland would be retained and managed within the Eco Valley. Additional areas of meadow would also be created as part of the SANG and public open spaces.	Inherent mitigation – Proposed Development incorporates extensive areas of semi-natural greenspace within Eco Valley and housing areas.	Major beneficial direct	Significant
Land Use: Arable Farmland	Medium	Majority of arable land would be used for development of buildings and open spaces.	No mitigation.	Major adverse direct	Significant
Land Use: Built Form – Hall Place Farmhouse and adjacent cottages	High	Buildings to be retained.	Inherent mitigation. Buildings retained as part of Proposed Development	No change	Not significant
Land Use: Built Form – Twentieth Century Farm Buildings and Bungalows	Negligible	Buildings to be replaced by open space or new buildings.	Higher quality new buildings or new open space	Negligible beneficial direct	Not significant
River valley landform and water features	Medium	Localised cut and fill to accommodate development. Retention of overall valley character and enhanced management of ditches/streams	Inherent mitigation. Proposed designed to minimise effects on valley landform and existing streams and ditches. Potential for new SuDS basins to be designed as new ponds	Negligible adverse direct Negligible beneficial direct	Not significant Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
		Embankments to accommodate spine road across the Loddon Valley and the proposed bridges.		Moderate adverse direct	Significant
Trees – Ancient Woodland, Trees covered by TPOs, Category A Trees	High	No change	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development avoids all protected trees.	No change	Not significant
All other trees	Medium	High beneficial. Significant numbers of new trees would be planted throughout the Green Infrastructure	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing trees wherever possible.	Major beneficial direct	Significant
Hedgerows	Medium	Medium beneficial. Whilst existing hedgerows would be lost, there would be new scrub planting and enhanced management of existing hedgerows.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing hedgerows wherever possible.	Moderate beneficial direct	Significant
Access - PRoWs	Medium	High beneficial. Existing PRoWs retained and new active travel routes provided.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing PRoWs and provide extensive new routes and areas of public access, especially in the Eco Valley area.	Major beneficial direct	Significant
Visual Effects: North of the Site					
Users of Cutbush Lane bridge over M4 (Footpath SHIN39)	Medium	Distant glimpsed view of new motorway bridge	No mitigation	Negligible neutral	Not significant
Users of short stretch of Lower Earley Way parallel to proposed bridge and roundabout	Low	New road bridge would be visible above existing trees in foreground in places.	Inerent mitigation – retention of existing vegetation along Lower Earley Way plus planting of additional trees.	Moderate neutral	Significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
Users of short stretch of southern end of Meldreth Way	Low	Increased highway infrastructure and reduced trees in backdrop.	Inherent mitigation – retention of existing vegetation along Lower Earley Way plus planting of additional trees.	Minor adverse	Not Significant
Users of M4 motorway	Low	Views of new bridge over the motorway	No mitigation	Moderate neutral	Not significant
Visual Effects: East of the Site					
Users and Residents of Betty Grove Lane (Byway open to all traffic ARBO5)	Medium	Glimpsed vies of the proposed gypsy & traveller Site in foreground and self-buildi plots in distance	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing vegetation wherever possible. Additional mitigation: Planting along boundary with Betty Grove Lane and within open space around self-build units.	Minor adverse (with strategic planting)	Not significant
Users of Julkes Lane, Carter's Hill, (ARBO 4A footpath)	Medium	Glimpses of new allotment plots in foreground. Distant glimpsed views of proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing vegetation adjacent to Julkes Lane to provide screening. Additional mitigation: Planting along boundary with Betty Grove Lane and within open space around self-build units and housing to south of Carter's Hill.	Minor adverse (with strategic planting)	Not significant
Users of Parkcorner Lane, Carter's Hill	Medium	Distant glimpses of self-build houses, Gypsy and traveller Site and allotments.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing hedgerow vegetation.	Negligible adverse	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
			Additional mitigation: Planting along boundary with Betty Grove Lane and within open space around self-build units and housing to south of Carter's Hill.		
Users of Mole Road to the south-east of the Site	Low	Glimpsed views of proposed housing and Gypsy and Traveller Site along eastern side of the site.	Inherent mitigation. Proposed Development designed to retain existing hedgerow vegetation. Additional mitigation: Tree planting within open spaces along site's south-eastern boundary.	Negligible adverse	Not significant
Users of PRoW ARBO9, north of Arborfield Waste Water Treatment Works	Medium	No change	N/A	No change	Not significant
Visual Effects: Views to South of the Site					
Users of Mole Road to the south of the Site	Low	No change	N/A	No change	Not significant
Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic off Church Lane, Wokingham	Medium	Glimpsed views towards new housing to the north of green lane.	Inherent mitigation. Existing hedgerow retained and housing set back beyond proposed green space.	Moderate adverse	Significant
Visitors to St. Bartholmew's Church yard, Arborfield	Medium	Glimpsed views of playing fields and clear views of the extension to the grave yard in the foreground. Views of housing and the local centre from the northern part of the church yard.	Inherent mitigation Retention of existing hedgerow around boundary and supplementing with adjacent hedgerow planting.	Minor adverse	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
Users of A327 Arborfield Relief Road/Observer Way	Low	Views of new access off the existing roundabout and new housing glimpsed beyond.	Inherent mitigation. Retention of existing hedgerow around boundary	Minor adverse	Not significant
Users of A327 Reading Road, Arborfield immediately adjacent to the Site's southern boundary	Low	Views of new access off the existing roundabout and new housing glimpsed beyond.	Inherent mitigation. Retention of existing hedgerow around boundary	Moderate adverse	Not significant
Users of A327 Arborfield Road, Shinfield	Low	Views of new trees and paths within Lourde's Meadow SANG area.	Inherent mitigation. Retention of existing hedgerow.	Negligible beneficial	Not significant
Visual Effects: Views to West of the Site					
Users of Shinfield Eastern Relief Road	Low	Views of new trees and paths within Eco Valley.	Inherent mitigation. Retention of existing hedgerow	Negligible beneficial	Not significant
Visual Effects: Views Within the Site					
Users of ARBO5A footpath (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the south of Gravelpit Wood)	Medium	Views of self-build units and new allotment Site. Distant views towards proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Inherent mitigation. Retention of existing hedgerow and provision of new trees.	Moderate adverse	Significant
Users of ARBO5 Byway open to all traffic (joining Betty Grove Lane with Julke's Lane Carter's Hill, to the north of Gravelpit Wood)	Medium	Glimpsed view towards proposed electricity sub-station to north and self-build units to the south. Distant views towards proposed housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Inherent mitigation. Retention of existing hedgerow and woodland. Additional mitigation. Strategic planting adjacent to the path and around housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Moderate adverse	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
Users of ARBO4A Byway open to all traffic (joining Carter's Hill with Mole Road)	Medium	Glimpsed views through foreground hedgerows towards housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Additional planting adjacent to hedgerow in foreground or in open space to north of housing to the south of Carter's Hill.	Negligible adverse	Not significant
Users of ARBO3 Byway open to all traffic (joining Julke's Lane, Carter's Hill with Church Lane, Arborfield, via CEDAR farm buildings)	Medium	Clear views of new built infrastructure beyond green corridor in foreground.	Additional tree planting within the green corridor.	Moderate adverse	Significant
ARBO2 footpath connecting the CEDAR farm buildings with Hall Farm	Medium	Transient full view of a proposed green corridor/secondary street. There would be clear foreground changes from arable fields to a linear corridor. Mitigation planting would primarily comprise street trees, given the new route a leafy character.	Additional tree planting within the green corridor.	Moderate adverse	Significant
ARBO1 Footpath linking the River Loddon at Hall Farm with Arborfield	Medium	Transient view along an existing park avenue. There would be clear foreground changes from arable fields to new housing to the south and the secondary school and playing fields to the north. The layout provides limited space for tree planting.	No mitigation.	Major adverse	Significant
SHIN4 footpath, linking Oldhouse Farm with the River Loddon at Hall Farm	High	No views of built development construction from here. The only changes would be new pathways, fencing and trees within the SANG.	No mitigation necessary.	Negligible beneficial	Not significant

Receptor	Receptor sensitivity	Description of potential impact	Proposed mitigation	Residual effect	Significant / not significant
SHIN5 footpath, linking connecting A327 Arborfield Road with the footbridge over the River Loddon at Hall Farm.	Medium		No mitigation necessary.	Negligible beneficial	Not significant
SHIN6 footpath, connecting A327 Arborfield Road with Cutbush Lane East	Medium		No mitigation necessary.	Negligible beneficial	Not significant

14.14 Mitigation commitments Summary

Table 14.24 Summary for Securing Mitigation

Identified receptor	Type and purpose of additional mitigation measure (prevent, reduce, offset, enhance)	Means by which mitigation may be secured (e.g. planning condition / legal agreement)	Delivered by	Auditable by
Construction Phase				
Trees	Root protection areas (prevent)	Planning condition	Contractor	LPA
Operation Phase				
Access routes	Provision of enhanced recreational routes through the landscape (enhance)	Planning condition	Developer	LPA
Landscape character and features	Enhancements to Eco Valley Area (enhance)	Planning condition	Developer	LPA
Strategic screen planting	Detailed planting strategies to reduce visual impact & compensate for lost plants (prevent, offset)	Planning condition	Developer	LPA