

# Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

August 2025

Hayes Lane, Slinfold

Prepared by  
CSA Environmental

On behalf of:  
The Incidental Land  
Company Limited

Report No: CSA/5675/04

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 CSA Environmental has been appointed by the Incidental Land Company Limited to undertake a landscape and visual impact assessment ('LVIA') of land at Hayes Lane, Slinfold (the 'Site'). The report is in relation to the promotion of the Site for up to 38 new homes, infrastructure and open space and vehicular access from Hayes Lane. This assessment has informed the preparation of a Development Framework Plan and a Landscape Strategy (**Appendix F**).
- 1.2 The Site extends to approximately 3.93 hectares and adjoins the south eastern edge of Slinfold, West Sussex. Immediately to the west is Hayes Lane, while the Downs Link long distance footpath and Sustrans route 223 follow a bridleway alongside the northern boundary. The Site lies within the administrative area of Horsham District Council. The location and extent of the Site is shown on the Location Plan at **Appendix A** and on the Aerial Photograph at **Appendix B**.
- 1.3 This assessment describes the landscape character and quality of the Site and the surrounding area, and its visual characteristics. The report then goes on to discuss the suitability of the Site to accommodate development, and the potential landscape and visual effects on the wider area.

### Methodology

- 1.4 This assessment is based on a site visit undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced Landscape Architect in June 2025. The weather conditions at the time of the latest survey were sunny and visibility was very good for the survey period. Deciduous vegetation was in leaf.
- 1.5 In landscape and visual impact assessments, a distinction is drawn between landscape effects (i.e. effects on the character or quality of the landscape irrespective of whether there are any views of the landscape, or viewers to see them) and visual effects (i.e. effects on people's views of the landscape from public vantage points, including public rights of way and other areas with general public access, as well as effects from any residential properties). This report therefore considers the potential impact of the development on both landscape character and visibility. The methodology utilised in this report is contained in **Appendix H**.
- 1.6 Photographs contained within this document (**Appendix C**) were taken using a digital camera with a lens focal length approximating to 50mm, to give a similar depth of vision to the human eye. In some instances, images have been combined to create a panorama. The photographs and visualisations within this report have been prepared in general conformance with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 06/19, as set out in the Methodology in **Appendix H**.



## 2.0 LANDSCAPE POLICY CONTEXT

### National Planning Context

- 2.1 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'). Section 15 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 187 of the document states that the planning system should contribute to the protection and enhancement of the natural and local environment through, among other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, '*... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)*'. The paragraph also outlines that the planning system should recognise 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.*'
- 2.2 The Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') adds further context to the policies contained in the NPPF. The guidance as relevant to this assessment covers landscape and the natural environment, and the design of new developments.
- 2.3 The National Design Guide (2019) has been produced as part of the PPG. It provides guidance to '*... illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.*' The National Model Design Code (July, 2021) expands upon the ten characteristics of good design providing an overarching framework for design.
- 2.4 Those sections of the NPPF and PPG relevant to this assessment are summarised in **Appendix E**.

### Local Policy Context

#### Horsham District Planning Framework (2015)

- 2.5 The Horsham District Local Plan was adopted in 2015 and comprises the Horsham District Planning Framework. The document sets out the planning strategy for the District up to 2031. The main adopted policies from this document relevant to this assessment are set out below.
- 2.6 **Policy 25: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character** states that the natural environment and landscape character, including among other things, the landscape, landform, development pattern and protected landscapes, will be protected against inappropriate development. Furthermore, the development proposals will be supported where they protect, conserve and enhance the landscape and townscape character, and maintain settlement separation. It also states that proposals should maintain and enhance the green infrastructure network.

- 2.7 **Policy 26: Countryside Protection** states that outside the boundaries of the built up area, the rural character and undeveloped nature of the countryside will be protected against inappropriate development. Any proposal must be essential to its countryside location and meet one of a number of criteria, including enabling the sustainable development of rural areas.
- 2.8 **Policy 30: Protected Landscapes** states that development proposals within or close to protected landscapes, will be supported where they do not adversely impact on the natural beauty and public enjoyment of these landscapes. Neither the Site nor the surrounding landscape are protected landscapes.
- 2.9 **Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity** states that, among other things, development will be supported where it maintains or enhances the existing green infrastructure network. Proposals which result in the loss of existing green infrastructure will be resisted unless new opportunities which mitigate and compensate for this loss, can be demonstrated.
- 2.10 **Policy 32: The Quality of New Development** states that development should be of high quality and inclusive design, and will be expected to, among other things, provide an accessible, safe, attractive and functional environment, as well as complementing the local distinctive character and contributing to a sense of place. The policy also states that development should help to secure a framework of high quality open spaces to meet identified needs.
- 2.11 **Policy 33: Development Principles** states that development will be required to, among other things, ensure its scale, massing and appearance is sympathetic to its surroundings including any important views; retain existing important landscape features including trees, hedges and watercourses; and where applicable take account of relevant character assessments and design guides.
- 2.12 **The Horsham District Local Plan 2023 – 2040** was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination. However, the Inspector's Interim Findings recommend withdrawal of the plan due to concerns regarding its legal compliance.

#### **Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan (2018)**

- 2.13 The Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan was made in September 2018. The Site is covered by **Policy 7: East of Hayes Lane**, which states that residential development at site PDS8 (which forms the western part of the Application Site), will be supported where:

*'1. The design positively responds to the prevailing character of the surrounding area (i.e. a linear proposal which mirrors that on the opposite side of Hayes Lane);*

*2. The houses are no more than two and a half storeys in height to reflect the local vernacular;*

*3. Proposals allow for the retention of existing mature trees and hedges;*

*4. Proposals include an appropriate buffer to enable and improve access to the Downs Link; and*

*5. Proposals seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity and existing ecological networks.'*

2.14 The supporting text to the policy states that there are hedgerows and trees to all boundaries which help screen the site from the surrounding countryside. It also notes that the principle of development of this site was established and supported by Horsham District Council, in 2015. A copy of the Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map is included at **Appendix G** of this LVIA, and shows the Site comprising PDS8 and the 'buffer zone'.

2.15 There are several other policies within the Neighbourhood Plan of relevance to this report and the Site. They are briefly set out below.

2.16 **Policy 3 Green Infrastructure** states that development proposals will be supported where they protect and retain, wherever possible, the identified green infrastructure and valued landscape features, including the Downs Link, hedgerows, and public rights of way and their setting. The policy also sets out that the Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan supports the maintenance of connectivity of public rights of way.

2.17 **Policy 4 Conserve and Enhance Biodiversity** states that development proposals which aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity, will be supported.

2.18 **Policy 5 Development Principles** sets out that development proposals which seek to respect the design, density and layout of the surrounding area, as detailed in the Slinfold Parish Design Statement, will be supported.

#### **Horsham District Planning Framework Green Infrastructure Strategy (April 2014)**

2.19 Horsham District Council produced a Green Infrastructure Strategy to inform the production of planning policy to ensure that future strategic development delivers, protects, improves and enhances the green infrastructure network.

2.20 The Study sets out in paragraph 7.1 that new development should contribute to the enhancement of green infrastructure provision, both within the development and by providing links to the wider countryside.

## **Slinfold Parish Design Statement (July 2006)**

- 2.21 The Slinfold Parish Design Statement ('SPDS') is referenced within the Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan and had been produced to provide guidance for development proposals in the area and to influence local planning policy and decisions. The SPDS sets out the area's visual character and describes how it can be protected and enhanced.
- 2.22 The relevant landscape and visual guidelines set out within the SPDS include:
- The overriding consideration is that the rural village feel of Slinfold should be retained and maintained;
  - Any development that does occur must respect the historic form and layout of the village and the defined 'built-up area' boundary;
  - Hedgerows must be protected and regenerated if possible; and
  - Loss of trees should be limited, but where existing trees do have to be felled, new ones should be planted in their place.

## 3.0 SITE CONTEXT

### Site Context

- 3.1 The Site is located immediately to the south east of the settlement edge at Slinfold, West Sussex. Hayes Lane runs parallel to the western Site boundary, with the Downs Link bridleway running adjacent to the northern boundary. The location and context of the Site is illustrated on the Location Plan at **Appendix A** and on the Aerial Photograph at **Appendix B**.
- 3.2 The historic core of Slinfold lies approximately 500m to the north of the Site, with the village having expanded away from this to the south and north, including the recent development of 3 other sites identified for housing in the adopted neighbourhood plan. As a result, the village now contains a variety of house types and styles.
- 3.3 Neighbouring development to the north at Six Acres and Welwyn Way is relatively recent and suburban in character, comprising medium density, 2 storey detached and semi-detached properties. To the north of Six Acres, the residential area comprises post-war detached, semi-detached and terraced two storey dwellings. Further north, Hayes Lane leads to the historic core of the settlement, which is concentrated along the street, and forms part of the Slinfold Conservation Area as illustrated on the Designations and Local Policy plan at **Appendix D**.
- 3.4 Immediately to the west of the Site are pre-war, 2 and 2.5 storey dwellings along Hayes Lane, with occasional 1970's and more recent infill housing. To the west of these houses is a 21<sup>st</sup> Century development of 23 new homes, accessed off Brick Lane, with the Slinfold Tennis Club, a pavilion and football pitch located to the west, off Maydwell Avenue.
- 3.5 Beyond this to the west is an area of medium to large industrial buildings, accessed off Stane Street (A29).
- 3.6 To the east and south of the Site are small to medium sized agricultural fields, with an irregular pattern of dense hedgerows and frequent areas of encroaching scrub and rough grassland. The land is mostly in pastoral use, and large blocks of mature woodland occur here, including the Ancient Woodland at Holmbush Upper Rough, approximately 450m south of the Site. There are also several farmsteads within this area, and small pockets of settlement located alongside the network of roads and lanes which cross the wider farmland. The small town of Billingshurst is located approximately 4.8km south west of the Site.
- 3.7 Barton Cottage is located immediately south of the Site along Hayes Lane. The field of grazed pasture east of Barton Cottage and south of the Site separates the Site from the Grade II Listed Wild Harry's building and

associated barn, located approximately 210m south of the southern Site boundary.

### **National Landscape Character**

- 3.8 Natural England has produced profiles for England's National Character Areas ('NCAs'), which divides England into 159 distinct natural areas, defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. The Site lies within The Low Weald NCA (Area Profile 121).
- 3.9 The NCA profile describes The Low Weald as a broad clay vale that is typically low lying. A generally pastoral landscape with arable farming associated with lighter soils on higher ground. Field boundaries of hedgerows and shaws, enclose small, irregular fields. The area has an intricate mix of woodland much of it ancient, including extensive broadleaf oak over hazel and hornbeam coppice.

### **County Landscape Character**

- 3.10 West Sussex County Council ('WSCC') published 'A Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape' in October 2005, which incorporates a Landscape Character Assessment. The assessment divides the County into regional character areas, with the Site falling within the Low Weald area. It further sub-divides these regional areas, and the Site is located in the Central Low Weald (LW6) character area. The key characteristics of the Central Low Weald of relevance to the Site are summarised below:
- Gently undulating landform;
  - Small to medium sized pasture fields, enclosed by shaws, woodlands and hedgerows;
  - Dense cover of ancient broadleaved woodlands and conifer plantations;
  - Green lanes and droveways; and
  - Many scattered, traditional Wealden farmsteads and cottages and a few linear villages.
- 3.11 The Strategy states that unsympathetic urban development, changes in settlement pattern, loss of woodland cover and the vulnerability of the rights of way network due to poor drainage management and increased use, are amongst the key landscape and visual sensitivities of the character area.
- 3.12 The Landscape Management Guidelines set out within the Strategy for the Central Low Weald character area include:
- Maintain the historic character of the area, including the pattern of small fields and droveways;

- Encourage landscape enhancements to existing village edges;
- Consider the cumulative impact on landscape character of small developments and land use change, and avoid the introduction of suburban styles and materials; and
- Conserve and enhance the rights of way network.

### **District Landscape Character**

#### Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment (October 2003)

- 3.13 Horsham District Council has prepared the 'Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment' (October 2003) as a basis for conserving and enhancing the character and sense of place within the District.
- 3.14 The Landscape Character Assessment classifies the Site as lying at the western edge of 'G2: Itchingfield and Barns Green Wooded Farmlands' Landscape Character Area ('LCA'). It is bordered a short distance north and west by 'G3: Slinfold and Five Oaks Wooded Farmlands' LCA. The key characteristics of the Itchingfield and Barns Green Wooded Farmlands LCA, which are evident on or within the vicinity of the Site, include:
- Undulating ridges and valleys with strong linear field pattern;
  - Strong sense of enclosure;
  - Mainly horse grazed pasture and set aside fields;
  - Narrow country lanes with wide grass verges; and
  - Local mix of traditional building materials including timber framing, weatherboarding, brick and tile hanging.
- 3.15 The Assessment states that the overall landscape condition is declining, and that the area has a moderate sensitivity to change, due to the landscape having a moderate intrinsic value and as a result of the extent of change which has already affected the area.
- 3.16 In terms of planning and land management guidelines for the landscape character area, the Assessment suggests:
- Ensure new development responds to the dispersed historic settlement pattern and mix of building materials; and
  - Development should be well integrated into the surrounding landscape with new woodlands and hedgerows included where appropriate.
- 3.17 The Slinfold and Five Oaks Wooded Farmlands LCA lies to the north and west of the Site and has similar characteristics to the Itchingfield and Barns Green Wooded Farmlands LCA. It is described as a gently undulating, wooded landscape of small hedged pastures and some larger arable fields. The Assessment concludes that the landscape condition of this LCA is good,

and that it has a high sensitivity to change due to its many landscape qualities and rural character.

- 3.18 From our own assessment of the Site and its surroundings, we would broadly agree with the description of the landscape character and would note that the Site benefits from a strong sense of enclosure due to the dense vegetation along its eastern boundary.

Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessments (Apr 2014 and May 2021)

- 3.19 The Site is not assessed in the 2021 Horsham District Landscape Capacity Assessment as it is identified as land committed for development. However, it was included in the 2014 assessment which formed part of the evidence base for the Horsham District Development Framework. The Assessment includes an examination of the capacity around Slinfold in terms of its capacity to accommodate medium to small scale housing development (100-500 dwellings, no more than 8.5m in height, and an average density of 30-40 dph, amongst other assumptions).
- 3.20 The Site is assessed as part of a land parcel, comprising roughly the western half of the Site and a parcel of land north of the Downs Link bridleway and south of Six Acres, identified as Landscape Study Area SF5. The capacity of the eastern part of the Site is not assessed within the document.
- 3.21 The Assessment describes the Site as being moderately steep, comprising of small-medium scale pasture fields bounded by hedgerows. It states that the landscape is in good condition due to the intact hedgerows, and that the Landscape Study Area partially contributes to the setting of the village. We would note that the Site is, however, relatively level.
- 3.22 The Assessment states that partial enclosure is provided by the hedgerows and wooded shaws, but that development on the more elevated landform is likely to be visually prominent. It concludes that the Landscape Sensitivity of Area SF5 is moderate-high, and that the Landscape Value is moderate, due to the amenity value of the Downs Link. It assesses Area SF5 as having a low-moderate landscape capacity, concluding that there is limited capacity for small scale housing development.
- 3.23 From our assessment of the Site and the surrounding area, we would agree that the existing hedgerows provide enclosure to the Site, and that the Downs Link increases the landscape value of the area. We however consider that the Site has good capacity to accommodate small to medium scale residential development, due to its relationship with the existing settlement edge of Slinfold and the enclosed nature of the Site due to the dense treed hedgerows which bound it.



### **Statutory and Non-Statutory Designations**

- 3.24 There are no statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character or quality covering the Site or land within the vicinity of it.

### **Conservation Area, Scheduled Monument and Listed Buildings**

- 3.25 The Designations and Local Policy Extract Plan at **Appendix D** identifies a number of Listed Buildings located within the settlement at Slinfold. A number of farmsteads within the countryside to the south and east of the Site are also Listed. The Slinfold Conservation Area lies approximately 500m to the north of the Site. The majority of Listed Buildings in the vicinity of the Site are located within the Slinfold Conservation Area, and intervisibility between these and the Site are prevented due to the intervening built form and existing vegetation.
- 3.26 The nearest Listed Buildings to the Site are located around 210m to the south at Wild Harry's and comprise a 17<sup>th</sup> Century timber-frame and red brick building and an associated 18<sup>th</sup> Century barn, which are both Grade II Listed. The southern and eastern Site boundaries are visible from the rear of these Listed Buildings.
- 3.27 Two further Grade II Listed Buildings occur approximately 330m north east of the Site. These are the Gaskyns building and an associated outbuilding. There is no intervisibility between the Site and these Listed Buildings due to the dense vegetation along the Downs Link bridleway.

### **Public Rights of Way**

- 3.28 An unmade public footpath (SLD-1467) leads from Hayes Lane through the southern part of the Site, linking Hayes Lane in the west to the area around Holmbush Manor Farm south east of the Site, and beyond to the A264 Five Oaks Road. Public footpath SLD-3782 meets this path in the south east corner of the Site, running through the eastern part of the Site to meet the Downs Link (SLD-3569-1) at the northern edge of the Site. The Downs Link long distance route leads in an easterly direction along a dismantled railway line and runs along a bridleway adjacent to the northern boundary of the Site.
- 3.29 A footpath (SLD-1468) linking Hayes Lane in the west and Bramble Hill Farm in the east, via Holmbush Manor Farm, is located approximately 200m to the south of the Site. A further public footpath (SLD-1466) which leads south from the centre of Slinfold in the direction of Ranfold Oak Farm to the south east, passes approximately 130m from the Site at its closest point. There are further bridleways and public footpaths to the south of Holmbush Manor Farm, including a path which links Ranfold in the south east with Hayes Lane in the vicinity of Holmbush Upper Rough. A further public footpath lies

approximately 600m east of the Site, and connects Lyons Road in the north to Five Oaks Road in the south.

**Tree Preservation Orders ('TPO')**

- 3.30 Five trees along the Site boundary with Hayes Lane are covered by TPO 1482. No trees within the interior of the Site are covered by TPOs.
- 3.31 This was confirmed via the Council's online mapping, on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025.

## 4.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND VISIBILITY

### Site Description

- 4.1 The Site extends to approximately 3.93 hectares and is irregular in shape. It comprises a single field of pasture with patches of scrub and scattered immature and semi-mature trees. It is heavily vegetated along its boundaries with unmanaged mature hedgerows and tree lines, which comprise mostly oak with some ash, grey willow, hawthorn, hazel and hornbeam. The Site and its immediate context are shown on the Aerial Photograph in **Appendix B**, and on the photographs in **Appendix C**.
- 4.2 The western boundary is defined by a dense, unmanaged hedgerow, with several mature trees up to approximately 15m in height. The northern boundary is defined by a mature hedgerow with numerous mature trees, including several mature oak trees. Towards the centre of the northern boundary there is a break in vegetation and the palisade fence at the boundary, where public footpath SLD-3782 meets the Downs Link path beyond.
- 4.3 The eastern boundary is demarcated by a dense belt of trees and outgrown hedgerow, with self sett young trees encroaching into the eastern part of the Site. The southern boundary comprises understorey vegetation with several mature oak trees adjacent to the public footpath that runs along the inside of the boundary.
- 4.4 The Site contains long grassland and scrub, with some young/semi-mature trees scattered within it, with the trees becoming more dense in the eastern part of the Site.

### Topography

- 4.5 The land within the Site gently slopes down from approximately 41.5 m Above Ordnance Datum ('AOD') in the south, to 36m AOD in the north east corner. Beyond the Site to the north, the landform falls away gradually to the centre of the residential area of Slinfold before rising towards Rowfold Farm. To the south of the Site, the landform rises steadily towards the woodland at Holmbush Upper Rough and Ranfold Grange. Land to the east and west of the Site remains relatively level or gently undulating.

### Visibility

- 4.6 An assessment of the visibility of the Site was undertaken and a series of photographs taken from public vantage points, rights of way and public highways. The assessment was undertaken in June 2025, and the vegetation was in full leaf. The viewpoints are illustrated on the Location Plan and Aerial Photograph contained **Appendices A** and **B** and on the photographs in **Appendix C**.

- 4.7 The undulating nature of the surrounding topography and the highly contained nature of the Site due to the existing surrounding vegetation, the relatively low-lying nature of the Site, and its proximity to housing in Slinfold, restrict opportunities for views. Photographs illustrating the views towards the Site are contained in **Appendix C**, and the photograph locations are illustrated on the Location Plan and Aerial Photograph contained in **Appendices A** and **B** respectively. The principal views towards the Site are discussed below.

Table 1 – Visual Baseline		
Visual Receptor	Sensitivity	Description of Views
Public footpath SLD-3782 and SLD-1467 within the Site (Photographs 1 – 4, and 11)	High	There are open views of the interior of the Site from public footpath SLD-3782 where it crosses the eastern part of the Site. Views from a section of SLD-1467 which crosses through the southern part of the Site are filtered by tree cover in the south of the Site, with partial, framed views into the Site where it meets SLD-3782.
Downs Link bridleway (photographs 4 and 6)	High	Views towards the Site from the Downs Link bridleway are heavily filtered by the hedgerows and trees along the northern Site boundary, such that only partial views are available. Towards the centre of the northern boundary there is a break in vegetation where public footpath SLD-3782 meets the bridleway, with the Site partially visible through and alongside the palisade fence at the Site boundary. Winter views from the bridleway will be less filtered. As the bridleway continues east of the Site, views of the interior of the Site are screened by the density of vegetation along the bridleway and at the eastern edge of the Site.
Residential Area at Welwyn Way and Six Acres (photographs 5 and 15)	Medium	Views of the interior of the Site from the adjoining residential areas are screened by the embanked route of the Downs Link bridleway and by the established trees and vegetation alongside the public right of way. Opportunities to view the Site from public vantage points further north from within Slinfold are prevented by the intervening built form.
Public footpath SLD-1466 (Photograph 7)	High	Views from the public footpath which leads south east from the Downs Link towards Ranfold Oak Farm, are prevented by the intervening vegetation.
Public Footpath SLD-1467 and SLD-1468 (Photograph 8, 9 and 10)	High	Views from public footpath SLD-1467 and SLD-1468 which crosses the farmland south east of the Site are for the most part prevented by the density of intervening field boundary vegetation. As this footpath approaches the south east corner of the Site there are views of the eastern boundary vegetation. However, the interior of the Site is screened by the density of tree cover.
Views from Hayes Lane (Photographs 12 – 14, and 16)	Medium	Opportunities to view the interior of the Site from public vantage points along Hayes Lane are restricted by the dense vegetation along the western Site boundary. There is a framed view into the Site at the existing field gate at the north west corner. In winter, views into the Site will be filtered. As Hayes Lane continues north and south of the Site boundary, views are rapidly screened due to the road alignment and intervening housing and roadside vegetation.
<b>Residential Receptors</b>		
Properties at Welwyn Way and Six Acres	Medium	Views from the houses situated at the southern edges of the residential area at Six Acres are screened by the intervening trees that line the Downs Link bridleway on either side. There are partial views from 1 <sup>st</sup> floor windows of a small number of dwellings at Welwyn Way, through gaps

(reciprocal views at photograph 3)		in the tree cover at and alongside the boundary and filtered views into the Site will be available in winter.
Properties on Hayes Lane, (Photographs 12 and 14, and reciprocal views at photographs 2 and 3)	Medium	Views from first floor and ground floor windows of properties which face the Site look towards the dense vegetation at the western edge of the Site. In summer, views of the interior of the Site are largely screened, although there will be some filtered views into the Site when deciduous vegetation is out of leaf in winter.
Wild Harry's / Holmbush Manor Farm	Medium	Views from the rear of these properties are generally screened by intervening vegetation. There may be some intervisibility with the tree cover on the southern and eastern edge of the Site, particularly in winter views from 1 <sup>st</sup> floor window. However, the interior of the Site is likely to remain heavily screened by the density of intervening vegetation.
Barton Cottage	Medium	Barton Cottage is situated adjacent to the southern Site boundary, however, windows in the property do not look towards the Site. Views from the curtilage of the dwelling into the Site are prevented by intervening garden vegetation and the dense vegetation along the southern Site's boundary.

## Landscape Features

- 4.8 The Site boundaries are defined by mature tree lines / groups, mainly oak with an understorey including hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, and field maple. The interior of the Site comprises rough grassland and areas of scrub and self sett trees, again predominantly oak. The condition and quality of the trees and vegetation have been assessed in the Tree Survey which accompanies the application (RPS Group).

**Table 2 – Landscape Features Baseline**

Landscape feature	Sensitivity	Description of Feature
Trees	High (Mature trees)  Low (regenerative vegetation within Site)	The Site is bordered by mature tree lines and tree groups which provide a high level of containment and contribute to the local landscape character. There are a number of smaller trees and areas of scrub which have established within the eastern part of the Site, which are less significant landscape features. Tree species are predominantly oak. The majority of the boundary trees are assessed as Category A and B in the Tree Survey (moderate and high arboricultural quality and value) and are considered to be of high landscape quality, value and sensitivity due to their contribution to the treed character of Hayes Lane and the wider landscape. The self sett trees within the Site are judged to be low landscape and arboricultural quality and value.
Thicket / Understorey / Hedgerow	Medium	Outgrown hedgerow and native shrub understorey are present on the Site boundaries adding to the density of vegetation and wildlife value.

<b>Watercourses</b>	Medium	There is a seasonally wet ditch alongside the eastern edge of the Site.
<b>Grassland and scrub</b>	Medium	The interior of the Site comprises rough grassland and scattered scrub vegetation.

### **Landscape Quality, Value and Sensitivity**

- 4.9 Neither the Site nor the surrounding area is covered by any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character or quality. The Site comprises an area of disused pasture with patches of scrub and scattered immature and semi-mature trees. There are a number of significant trees/hedgerows at the boundaries of the Site, however, the overall landscape quality of the Site is considered to be medium. The Site is allocated for residential development in the Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.10 The Site lies at the southern approach to the settlement at Slinfold, and the existing hedgerow / tree line along the Site boundaries make a contribution to the setting of the road. The Site is publicly accessible via the public footpath along the southern boundary and through the eastern part of the Site. The Site contains no known heritage assets. It is therefore considered to be of medium landscape value.
- 4.11 The townscape to the north and west of the Site comprises 20<sup>th</sup> Century houses, and although pleasant, it is not of architectural or historic value. The fields to the east and south of the Site are similar in character to the Site itself, comprising grassland with dense hedgerows which contain mature trees. The Site's character is however, unlike many of the fields in its vicinity, affected by the adjoining built settlement, and its sensitivity is therefore lower. The surrounding landscape and townscape is assessed as being of medium landscape/townscape quality and value.
- 4.12 The wider landscape around Slinfold is pleasant and is assessed within the Horsham District Landscape Character Assessment as being of medium to high landscape sensitivity.

**Table 3 – Landscape Character Baseline**

<b>Landscape / townscape character area</b>	<b>Sensitivity</b>	<b>Existing Conditions</b>
<b>The Site and immediate surroundings</b>	Medium	The Site comprises an area of rough pasture and encroaching scrub and semi-mature trees. It is bounded by mature tree lines and hedgerows which are assessed as being of medium and high landscape quality. The Site is bordered by housing on Hayes Lane to the west and north and has a high degree of visual containment in views from the surrounding landscaping.

		The neighbouring farmland to the east is similar in character to the Site, comprising a network of small and medium size, pastoral fields bordered by outgrown field hedgerows and tree lines.
<b>Townscape character of immediate surroundings</b>	Medium	Opposite the Site on Hayes Lane, housing comprises 20 <sup>th</sup> Century detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings set back from the road with relatively narrow front gardens. There is more recent estate housing at Welwyn Way and Six Acres to the north of the Site.
<b>Wider Landscape Character</b>	Medium - High	The wider landscape comprises undulating, mixed farmland. Typically, with an irregular field pattern and mature, often heavily treed field boundaries and frequent woodland blocks.

## 5.0 SUITABILITY OF THE SITE TO ACCOMMODATE DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The following section considers the ability of the Site, in landscape terms, to accommodate the proposed development and the potential impacts on the character of the landscape and visual amenity of the area. The findings of this assessment have informed the preparation of a Development Framework Plan ('DFP') which is contained in **Appendix F**. A Landscape Strategy Plan has also been prepared which shows the approach to the proposed landscaping on the Site (**Appendix F**).

5.2 The key development principles shown on the DFP and Landscape Strategy are summarised below:

- Proposed residential development of up to 38 dwellings, up to 2½ storeys in height;
- Vehicular access provided via a new junction on Hayes Lane at the north western corner of the Site. The access point has been located in line with the existing field access and avoids impacts on significant trees at the Site frontage. However, some Category C and Category B trees and hedgerow will require removal;
- The majority of the established high quality boundary vegetation will be retained and protected. There will be some removal of lower quality trees and shrubs within the interior of the Site to accommodate the new homes and drainage features;
- New homes can be set back from the Site boundaries and orientated to overlook the boundary vegetation;
- Open space to be provided at the northern, southern and eastern boundaries;
- The existing public footpath SLD-1467 in the south of the Site is to be retained along its current route and set within a green corridor;
- There will be a minor diversion of Public Footpath SLD-1466 to run through the open space in the eastern part of the Site;
- The open spaces will be laid out as semi-natural areas, with opportunities for recreation as well as habitat creation;
- A new Natural play area will be located in the south of the Site, which will include timber play equipment and natural play elements; and
- A sustainable drainage basin will be located within the eastern part of the Site and landscaped to form an integral part of the open space.



- 5.3 In the following section, a brief commentary is made on the effects of developing the Site against a series of landscape criteria. The landscape and visual effects are summarised in tables 4, 5 and 6 below.

### **Relationship to Existing Development**

- 5.4 The Site is well related to the residential development at Slinfold, being located adjacent to existing housing to the north and west. The proposals will extend development no further south than existing development at Hayes Lane, and no further east than existing development at Six Acres. The dense boundary vegetation provides strong containment to the Site to the south and east.
- 5.5 The Development Framework Plan demonstrates how the proposed development is set back from Hayes Lane and the properties along it, in order to create an appropriate relationship with the existing residential area. The vast majority of the tree line adjacent to the road will remain and continue to contribute to the treed character along the eastern edge of the street. The Landscape Strategy shows that development would form a double row of houses, with properties orientated to address the open spaces and vegetation at the Site boundaries. This reflects the character of the residential form to the west and north, where housing extends from Hayes Lane, with the development at Brick Lane, Welwyn Way and Six Acres located to the rear of frontage development on Hayes Lane.

### **Heritage Assets**

- 5.6 There will be no impact on views from the Conservation Area, due to the intervening built development and vegetation. The proposed development is separated from the Conservation Area by intervening residential development and will not impact the Conservation Area's setting.
- 5.7 The new homes may be partially visible in heavily filtered views from the Grade II Listed Buildings at Wild Harry's to the south. However, the dense intervening vegetation will continue to form a firm separation between the new homes and the Listed Buildings.

### **Effects on Landscape Features**

- 5.8 There are a number of mature hedgerows with numerous trees at the Site's field boundaries, and the majority of these can be retained and incorporated into the development layout. There will be some loss of vegetation on the Site frontage with Hayes Lane in order to provide vehicular access to the Site. There will also be some loss of scrub and young and semi-mature trees within the Site as a result of the new development and the sustainable drainage strategy.

- 5.9 There are significant opportunities for landscape enhancements at the boundaries of the Site, and within the open spaces to the east and south. The existing boundary hedgerows can be supplemented with new native thicket and tree planting to increase the ecological and landscape value of these areas, while new tree and shrub planting and meadow grassland creation can be incorporated within the proposed areas of public open space. In addition, the introduction of a SuDS basin within the proposed public open space will create new habitat and increase biodiversity on the Site.

**Table 4 – Effects on Landscape Features**

<b>Landscape features and Sensitivity</b>	<b>Nature of Effect and Mitigation</b>	<b>Magnitude of Change</b>	<b>Year 1 Effect</b>	<b>Year 15 Effect</b>
<b>Trees</b>  <b>High sensitivity</b> (Mature trees)  <b>Low sensitivity</b> (regenerative vegetation within Site)	The proposed access on Hayes Lane will impact on a group of Category B oak trees (Tree Group G6 in Tree Survey) and understorey vegetation, resulting in its partial removal. Vegetation loss on the Site frontage will largely be limited to the width of the road, with the vast majority of the mature trees at the Site boundaries retained. There will be some loss of young oak trees within the interior of the Site as a result of the new houses and the attenuation basin and outfall. To compensate for these losses, new tree planting will be undertaken within the open spaces and throughout the development area. Trees planting will be predominantly native within the open space, and will be installed at a variety of sizes, including advanced nursery stock and semi-mature trees. Overall, the proposals can provide a net increase in tree cover and species diversity.	Slight	Negligible adverse	Slight Beneficial
<b>Thicket / Understorey / Hedgerow</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	There will be a small loss of understorey vegetation at the Site frontage (part of tree group G6). There will be a loss of a section of outgrown hazel hedgerow (Category C). New hedgerows and thicket planting can be installed at the edge of the development and to reinforce the existing boundary vegetation.	Slight	Negligible adverse	Slight beneficial
<b>Watercourses</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	The existing seasonal ditch will be retained. An outfall from the SuDs basin will be installed alongside this ditch.	Slight	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse

<b>Grassland and scrub</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	The majority of the existing grassland and pockets of scrub will be lost within the western part of the Site. Areas of retained grassland will remain within the eastern and southern parts of the Site and areas will also be sown with an appropriate meadow / amenity seed mix, and will benefit from regular management to improve floral diversity and interest.	Moderate	Moderate adverse	Moderate – Slight adverse
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### Public Rights of Way

- 5.10 The public footpath which runs within the south of the Site will be retained along its current route and will be separated from the new homes by existing trees and open space. The public footpath in the east of the Site will be the subject of a minor diversion to route it through the open space. The rights of way within the Site can be re-surfaced with permeable bound gravel material to improve access and links to the Downs Link bridleway to the north.

### Visual Effects

- 5.11 As noted in the previous section there are relatively few opportunities to view the Site from the surrounding area as a result of intervening vegetation, existing development at Slinfold, and the prevailing undulating topography. The key visual effects of development at the Site are set out in Table 5 below.

Table 5 - Visual Effects				
Visual Receptor and Sensitivity	Nature of Effect and Mitigation	Magnitude of Change	Visual Effect Year 1	Visual Effect Year 15
<b>Public footpath SLD-3782 and SLD-1467 within the Site (Photographs 1 – 4, and 11)</b>  <b>High sensitivity</b>	Views of the new homes from SLD-1467 which crosses the southern part of the Site will be heavily filtered by the retained trees which flank this route. There will be filtered views mainly in winter and a framed view towards the houses and open space at the junction with SLD-3782.  There will be open views of the new homes from public footpath SLD-3782 which will be routed through the open space in the east of the Site. New landscaping within the open space will provide a pleasant environment for users of the route, but there will be a large change in	Slight (SLD-1467)  Substantial (SLD-3782)	Slight adverse  Substantial – moderate adverse	Negligible adverse  Moderate adverse

	the visual context due to the introduction of housing, although there is already some intervisibility with existing residential areas to the west and north.			
<b>Downs Link bridleway (photographs 4 and 6)</b>  <b>High sensitivity</b>	Views of new housing in the north of the Site from the Downs Link bridleway will be filtered by the dense hedgerows and trees along the southern side of the bridleway. These views will be from the section of the bridleway adjacent to the Site and in the context of housing at Welwyn Way and Six Acres. New native thicket and tree planting at the edge of the Site will add to the screening vegetation at the northern boundary in due course.	Slight	Moderate - Slight adverse	Slight adverse
<b>Residential Area at Welwyn Way and Six Acres (photographs 5 and 15)</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	Views of the new homes will be partially screened and filtered by the embankment and vegetation along the route of the Downs Link. Views will be less filtered in winter. Additional planting at the northern edge of the Site will add to the depth and screening of the established vegetation once established.	Slight	Slight adverse	Slight adverse
<b>Public footpath SLD- 1466 (Photograph 7)</b>  <b>High Sensitivity</b>	The new homes will not be visible due to the density of intervening vegetation.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>Public Footpath SLD- 1467 and SLD-1468 (Photograph 8, 9 and 10)</b>  <b>High sensitivity</b>	Views of the new homes will for the most part be prevented by intervening field boundary vegetation. As the route approaches the south east corner of the Site there are views of the tree cover at the east and southern edge of the Site. The new homes will be screened in summer views. There may be some heavily filtered views of roof lines in winter from a short stretch of the footpath.	Neutral (majority of the route)  Negligible (Stretch to the south east)	Neutral  Negligible adverse	Neutral  Negligible adverse
<b>Views from Hayes Lane (Photographs 12 – 14, and 16)</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	There will be heavily filtered views of the new homes from Hayes Lane, opposite the Site through the existing vegetation which will for the most part remain. There will be a framed view into the development from the new access point. Views will be less filtered in winter when vegetation is out of leaf. Filtered views will be	Moderate - Slight	Moderate – slight adverse	Slight adverse

	experienced in the context of existing housing west of the road, and the treed character of the route will remain intact.			
<b>Residential Receptors</b>				
<b>Properties at Welwyn Way and Six Acres (reciprocal views at photograph 3)</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	Filtered views of housing in the north of the Site will be visible, mainly from first floor windows which look towards the Site.	Slight	Slight adverse	Slight adverse
<b>Properties on Hayes Lane, (Photographs 12 and 14, and reciprocal views at photographs 2 and 3)</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	Filtered views of housing in the Site will be visible through the boundary vegetation from dwellings which face towards the Site. The new access will also be visible, and there will be more open, framed views into the Site from a small number of properties adjacent to the access point.	Moderate - Slight	Moderate – slight adverse	Slight adverse
<b>Wild Harry's / Holmbush Manor Farm</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	There is very little intervisibility between the rear of this property and the Site due to intervening vegetation. There may be some views of rooflines in winter when tree cover is less dense.	Negligible	Negligible adverse	Negligible adverse
<b>Barton Cottage</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	The dwelling does not have windows which face the Site and views of the new homes from the curtilage will be screened by vegetation in the garden and in the south of the Site.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
<b>Seasonal Variation</b>				
The above assessment is based upon an appraisal of summer views. When the vegetation is out of leaf views from Hayes Lane and dwellings and public realm to the north will be less filtered as set out in the commentary above.				

### Landscape Character and Quality

- 5.12 The Site is relatively ordinary in character, and it is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character or quality. The plans at **Appendix F** shows how the Site could be developed while retaining the majority of the mature vegetation on the Site, as well as the

public footpaths within the south and east. New planting could also be incorporated to strengthen the boundary hedgerows and enhance the Site's biodiversity. Although the character of the field will inevitably change from a pastoral field to a residential development, the character along Hayes Lane will not significantly change, as the new homes will, for the most part, be screened by the intervening dense boundary hedgerow and trees, and where they are visible, they will not appear out of character within this southern edge of Slinfold which already contains residential development. The majority of the vegetation along Hayes Lane will be retained and will continue to form a dense visual screen.

- 5.13 The Site is well contained by virtue of the dense boundary vegetation, and development at the Site will not visually intrude on the surrounding landscape or townscape. Similarly, the well contained nature of the Site, the dense vegetation along the development edges, and the fact that there are very limited opportunities for medium or long distance views of the new homes mean that the proposed development will not materially affect the character of the wider landscape.
- 5.14 The Site could be developed in line with the principles set out above and shown on the Landscape Strategy, without resulting in significant effects on the Site's landscape features, or the adjoining landscape and townscape character. Development here will form a considered extension to the settlement of Slinfold.
- 5.15 The effects on the landscape character of the Site and the surrounding landscape / townscape are set out in Table 6 below:

Table 6 – Effects on Landscape Character				
Landscape / townscape character area and Sensitivity	Nature of Effect and Mitigation	Magnitude of Change	Year 1 Effect	Year 15 Effect
<b>The Site and immediate surroundings</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	The Development Framework Plan shows how the Site could be developed while retaining the majority of the mature vegetation on the Site, as well as the public footpath within the south and east. New planting could also be incorporated to strengthen the boundary hedgerows and enhance the Site's biodiversity. The character of the field will inevitably change from a pastoral field to a residential development. The new homes would be well related to the existing settlement pattern at the south east edge of Slinfold and would be well contained by virtue of the dense	<u>Site:</u>  Substantial - moderate	<u>Site:</u>  Moderate adverse	<u>Site:</u>  Moderate – slight adverse (as new planting matures)
		<u>Immediate surroundings:</u>  Negligible	<u>Immediate surroundings:</u>  Negligible adverse	<u>Immediate surroundings:</u>  Negligible adverse

	boundary vegetation. Development at the Site will not visually intrude on the surrounding landscape.			
<b>Townscape character of immediate surroundings</b>  <b>Medium sensitivity</b>	The character along Hayes Lane will not significantly change, as the new homes will be heavily filtered in views by the intervening dense boundary hedgerow, and where they are visible, they will not appear out of character within the southern edge of Slinfold which already contains residential development. The majority of the hedgerow along Hayes Lane will be retained and will continue to form a dense visual screen and the treed character along this stretch of the street will remain. The new access will be visible, but there are other access points and driveways along Hayes Lane, and this feature will not be a discordant element.	Slight	Slight adverse	Slight - Negligible adverse as the new homes and vegetation become assimilated within the landscape
<b>Wider Landscape Character</b>  <b>Medium – High sensitivity</b>	The well contained nature of the Site, the dense vegetation along the development edges, and the fact that there are very limited opportunities for longer distance views of the new homes mean that the proposed development will not materially affect the character of the wider landscape.	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral

### Cumulative Effects

- 5.16 We are not aware of any significant developments, that are approved or allocated, within the vicinity of the Site which would affect this assessment.

### Lighting

- 5.17 The Site is currently farmland and is unlit. The neighbouring farmland to the south and east is similarly unlit. The residential area to the immediate west and north of the Site has street lighting and background lighting from properties.
- 5.18 The proposal is for a medium density residential development with associated lighting. The development is not anticipated to give rise to any abnormal night time effects and will result in a small increase in background lighting levels which will be seen in the context of existing lighting within the neighbouring residential area.

## **Construction Phase**

- 5.19 There will be temporary landscape and visual effects arising from the construction phase of the scheme. These will include, amongst other things, stock piling of materials, temporary hoardings/fencing and vehicle and plant movements, both on Site and on the surrounding road network. It is not anticipated that the scheme will give rise to any abnormal landscape or visual effects above those that would be expected from a development of this nature. It is anticipated that the extent and timing of these effects will be controlled through a Construction Management Plan.



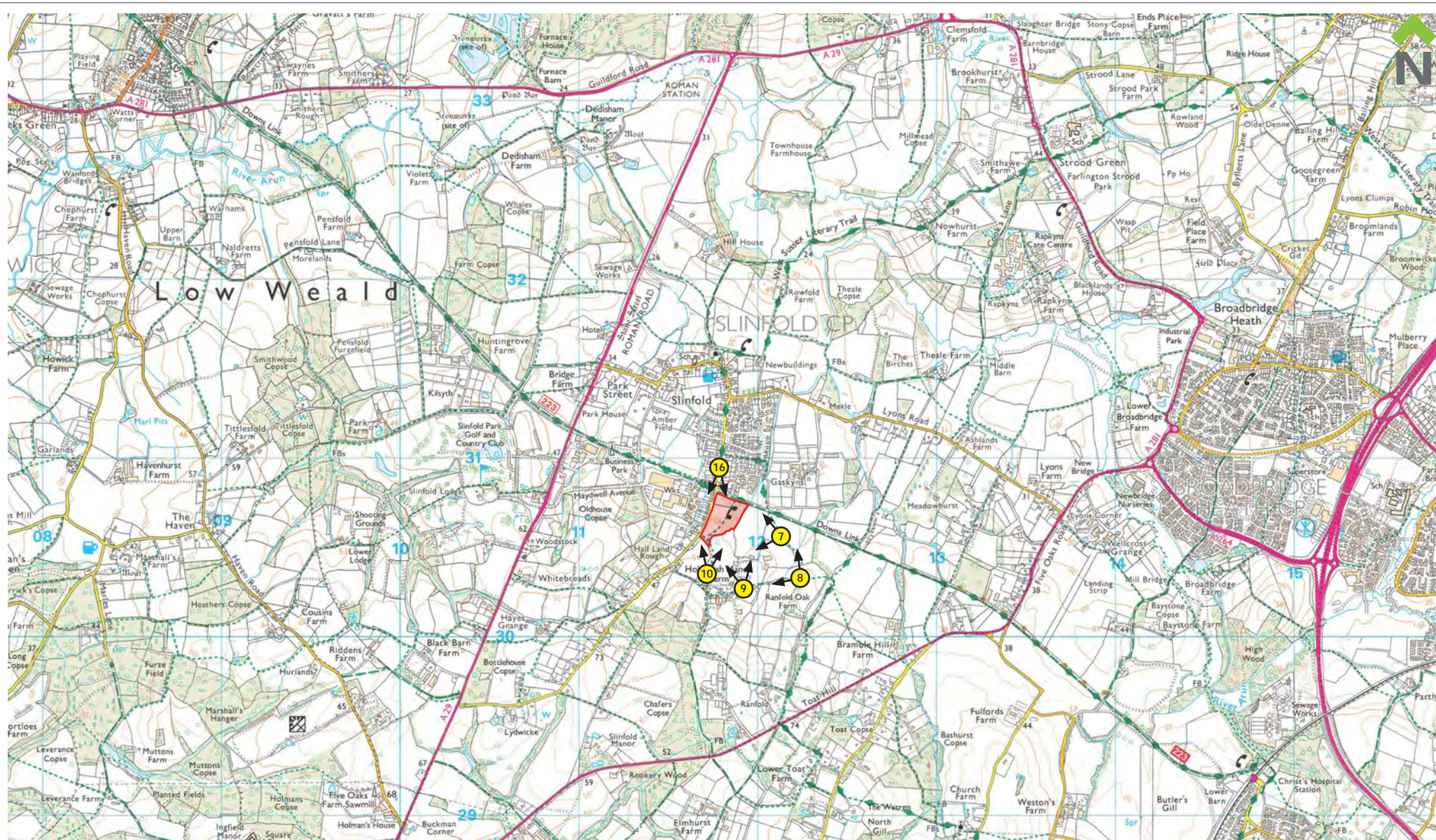
## 6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Site is located on the south eastern settlement edge of the village of Slinfold. It lies to the east of Hayes Lane and to the south of the Downs Link bridleway, which incorporates a long distance walking route and the Sustrans route 223. The Site is very well contained by the existing dense boundary hedgerows and trees.
- 6.2 The Site is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory designations for landscape character or quality and is generally of medium landscape quality, comprising pasture with patches of scrub and scattered immature and semi-mature trees.
- 6.3 The Development Framework Plan and Landscape Strategy show how residential development can be accommodated on the Site without giving rise to any significant landscape or visual impacts on the surrounding area. The Landscape Strategy also shows how mitigation measures can be incorporated to further soften or screen views, provide biodiversity enhancements and recreational benefits.
- 6.4 Development would be well contained by the dense vegetation on the Site boundaries and would complement the existing settlement pattern at the edge of Slinfold.
- 6.5 The majority of landscape features along the boundaries of the Site will be retained and incorporated within the development proposals, and there are opportunities to provide new native planting within areas of open space and at the Site boundaries, along with appropriate management.
- 6.6 In landscape terms, residential development on the Site, in accordance with the principles set out in Section 5 and the Development Framework Plan would not give rise to any significant landscape or visual effects on the surrounding countryside or townscape.

## **Appendix A**

Site Location Plan  
(Showing near and middle distance photo locations)





Site Boundary
 X Photo Locations
 X Contextual Photos

**CSA**  
 environmental

Dixies Barns, High Street,  
 Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT  
 t 01462 743647  
 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk  
 w csaenvironmental.co.uk

Project	5675 Hayes Lane, Slinfold
Drawing Title	Site Location Plan
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited

Date	May 2025	Drawing No.	CSA/5675/112
Scale @ A4	NTS	Rev	-
Drawn	IP	Checked	TV



## **Appendix B**

Aerial Photograph  
(Showing near distance photo locations)



 Application Boundary     Photo Locations



Dixies Barns, High Street,  
Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT  
**t** 01462 743647  
**e** ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk  
**w** csaenvironmental.co.uk

Project	5675 Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No.	CSA/5675/113	Rev	-
Drawing Title	Aerial Photograph	Scale @ A4	NTS	Drawn	IP
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Date	July 2025	Checked	CA

## **Appendix C**

Photosheets





**Photograph 1** View from Public Footpath 3782 within the Southern portion of the Site looking North

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 10:35  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: North

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -





**Photograph 2** View from View from Public Footpath 3782 looking West within the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 10:42  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: West

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -



Properties on Hayes Lane



**Photograph 3** View from View from Public Footpath 3782 looking North West within the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 10:45  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: North West

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -



Public Footpath 3782

Downs Link Trail



**Photograph 4** View from junction of Public Footpath 3782 and Downs Link looking West along the Northern Site boundary

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 10:48  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: West

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -





**Photograph 5** View from open space at Six Acres looking South West toward the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 10:51  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: South West

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -





**Photograph 6**  
View from Downs Link trail looking West towards the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Planar projection  
75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 10:52  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 40°  
Looking direction: West

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT <div><div>t</div>01462 743647</div> <div><div>e</div>ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk</div> <div><div>w</div>csaenvironmental.co.uk</div>
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**Photograph 7** View from Public Footpath 1466 looking West towards the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 10:56  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: West

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -





**Photograph 8**  
View from Public Footpath 1467 looking West  
towards the Site (screened by field boundary  
vegetation)

Visualisation Type 1  
Planar projection  
75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 11:11  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 40°  
Looking direction: West

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT <div><div>t</div>01462 743647</div> <div><div>e</div>ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk</div> <div><div>w</div>csaenvironmental.co.uk</div>		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -



Approximate extent of Site



Photograph 9

View from Public Footpath 1467 looking North towards the Site (screened by vegetation)

Visualisation Type 1  
Planar projection  
75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 11:16  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 40°  
Looking direction: West

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT <div><div>t</div>01462 743647</div> <div><div>e</div>ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk</div> <div><div>w</div>csaenvironmental.co.uk</div>
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Approximate extent of Site  
Trees at south east corner of Site



**Photograph 10** View from Public Footpath 1467 looking North towards the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 11:22  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: North

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -





**Photograph 11**  
View from junction of Public Footpath 3782 and 1467 looking North into the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Planar projection  
75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 11:27  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 40°  
Looking direction: West

		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -





**Photograph 12** View from Hayes Lane looking North East towards the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 11:29  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: North East

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT <div><div>t</div>01462 743647</div> <div><div>e</div>ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk</div> <div><div>w</div>csaenvironmental.co.uk</div>
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Panorama 13 For context only



Photograph 13  
View from Hayes Lane looking North East towards the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Planar projection  
75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 11:29  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 40°  
Looking direction: North East

		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -





**Photograph 14** View from Hayes Lane looking South towards the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Cylindrical projection  
48% @ A3, 96% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 11:38  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 90°  
Looking direction: South

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -





Panorama 15 For context only



Photograph 15  
View from Welwyn Way looking South towards the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Planar projection  
75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 11:40  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 40°  
Looking direction: South

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -



Approximate extent of Site



Photograph 16

View from Hayes Lane looking South towards the Site

Visualisation Type 1  
Planar projection  
75% @ A3, 150% @ A1  
25.06.2025, 13:38  
Canon 1300D 1.6x, Canon EF-S 18-55mm  
HfoV 40°  
Looking direction: South

<div><div>CSA</div><div>environmental</div></div>		Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT t 01462 743647 e ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk w csaenvironmental.co.uk		
Project	Hayes Lane, Slinfold	Drawing No. CSA/5675/114		
Drawing Title	Photosheets	Date July 2025		
Client	The Incidental Land Company Limited	Drawn IP	Checked CA	Rev -



## **Appendix D**

### Designations and Local Policy Plan



## Legend

 Site Boundary

## Designations

### Heritage

 Conservation Areas

Listed Buildings (Grade)

 I


 II\*

 II

### Ecology

 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Ancient Woodland

 Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland

 Ancient Replanted Woodland

## Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan 2014 - 2031

 PDS8 - East of Hayes Lane

 Buffer Zone

0 0.5 1 km



Dixies Barns, High Street,  
Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT

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**Project** 5675 Hayes Lane, Slinfold

**Drawing Title** Designations and Local Policy Extract Plan

**Client** The Incidental Land Company Limited

**Date** June 2025

**Scale** Refer to scale

**Drawn** IP

**Drawing No.** CSA/5675/115

**Rev** -

**Checked** TV



## **Appendix E**

### National Landscape Policy Context

## 1.0 APPENDIX E – NATIONAL LANDSCAPE POLICY CONTEXT

### National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

- 1.1 National policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') and those parts relevant to this assessment are summarised below.
- 1.2 Paragraphs 10 and 11 of the NPPF state that at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be applied in relation to both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 1.3 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF states that strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for, among other elements, the *'(d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.'*
- 1.4 Section 12 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should support the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Paragraph 132 states that *'... design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics.'* Paragraph 133 requires local authorities to prepare design guides and codes which act as a framework to reflect local character and design preferences to create high quality designed places which are beautiful and distinctive.
- 1.5 Paragraph 135 states that planning policies and decisions, should ensure that developments, amongst others:
  - *'will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
  - *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
  - *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change...'*
- 1.6 Paragraph 136 highlights the importance of new and retained trees to the character and quality of urban environments, with appropriate species choice for the location and the needs of all users.
- 1.7 Paragraph 137 states that the design quality should be integral to the evolution and assessment of proposals, and paragraph 139 goes on to state that poorly

designed development should be refused, particularly where it does not follow local or government design guidance.

- 1.8 Section 15 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 187 of the document states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment through, among other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, '*... (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)*'. The paragraph also outlines that the planning system should recognise 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.*'

- 1.9 Paragraph 188 highlights that plans should:

*'... distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.'*

- 1.10 Paragraph 193 notes that in the process of determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply several principles. Among these, the paragraph notes that, '*(c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists*'.

### **Planning Practice Guidance**

- 1.11 The Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') as relevant to this assessment covers landscape and the natural environment and the design of new developments. The PPG may be out of date in its reference to NPPF paragraph numbers, and where this is the case, the latest paragraph number has been included in the text in square brackets.
- 1.12 Paragraph 001 (ID 26-001-20191001) of the Design: process and tools section sets out the purpose of the guidance, which aims to explain the process and tools that can be employed to achieve well-designed places. The guidance refers to paragraph 134 [139] of the NPPF which relates to ensuring good design, and states that the section should be read in conjunction with the National Design Guide (published Oct, 2019), which it notes should be used in both plan-making and decision making. Ten good design characteristics are

identified in the National Design Guide, and these are set out as follows in the PPG:

- Context
- Identity
- Built form
- Movement
- Nature
- Public places
- Uses
- Homes and buildings
- Resources
- Lifespan.

1.13 Paragraphs 006 and 007 deal with masterplans, stating that they should be site specific and should '*... set the vision and implementation strategy for a development...* '. Paragraph 006 notes that they may need to be accompanied by other technical reports including landscape assessment and proposals for securing biodiversity net gain.

1.14 The Natural environment section of the guidance aims to explain the key issues to consider in relation to the implementation of policies to protect and enhance the natural environment, including local requirements.

1.15 Paragraph 004 defines Green Infrastructure, while in paragraph 005 it explains its importance as a natural capital asset that provides multiple benefits, including enhanced biodiversity, landscapes and urban cooling. In paragraph 006 the guidance sets out the planning goals green infrastructure can assist in achieving, and these are:

- *Building a strong, competitive economy;*
- *Achieving well-designed places;*
- *Promoting healthy and safe communities;*
- *Mitigating climate change, flooding and coastal change;*
- *Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.*

1.16 The final paragraph (008) in the green infrastructure sub-section notes that:

*'Green infrastructure opportunities and requirements need to be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals, as an integral part of development and infrastructure provision, and taking into account existing natural assets and the most suitable locations and types of new provision.'*

1.17 Within the Biodiversity, geodiversity and ecosystems section, the topic of net gain has been included. Paragraph 020 describes net gain as '*... an approach to development that leaves the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. Net gain is an umbrella term for both biodiversity net gain and wider environmental net gain.*'

1.18 In the Landscape section of the guidance, paragraph 036 refers to that part of paragraph 180 of the NPPF which deals with the recognition of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside in local plans, and the need for strategic policies to '*... provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes. This can include nationally and locally-designated landscapes but also the wider countryside.*' Paragraph 036 goes on to note that:

*'Where landscapes have a particular local value, it is important for policies to identify their special characteristics and be supported by proportionate evidence. Policies may set out criteria against which proposals for development affecting these areas will be assessed. Plans can also include policies to avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and to set out necessary mitigation measures, such as appropriate design principles and visual screening, where necessary. The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully.'*

### **National Design Guide**

1.19 The National Design Guide (2019) provides guidance to illustrate '*... how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice.*'

1.20 The guidance identifies ten good design characteristics and the following are of most relevance to landscape and visual assessment (our emphasis):

- Context is described as '*... the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.*' The Guide goes on to state that,

*'An understanding of the context, history and cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments. It means they are well grounded in their locality and more likely to be acceptable to existing communities. Creating a positive sense of place helps to foster a sense of belonging and contributes to well-being, inclusion and community cohesion.*

- The identity or character of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them. It is not just about the buildings and how a place looks, but how it engages with all of the senses. Local character

*makes places distinctive. Well-designed, sustainable places with a strong identity give their users, occupiers and owners a sense of pride, helping to create and sustain communities and neighbourhoods.*

- *Nature contributes to the quality of a place, and to people's quality of life, and it is a critical component of well-designed places. Natural features are integrated into well-designed development. They include natural and designed landscapes, high quality public open spaces, street trees, and other trees, grass, planting and water.'*

1.21 The National Model Design Code (July, 2021) expands upon the ten characteristics of good design providing an overarching framework for design. The document provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It is split into two parts; Part 1 focusing on the coding process, and Part 2 comprising guidance notes.

## **Appendix F**

### Development Framework Plan and Landscape Strategy







 Site Boundary: **3.93ha**

**LAND USE**  
 Residential developable area:  
**1.81ha (38 new homes @ 21 dph)**  
 Building frontages

**MOVEMENT**  
 Tree-lined primary street  
 Secondary street  
 Lanes/private drives  
 Shared street space  
 Main vehicular access points  
 Pedestrian access points  
 Public footpaths  
 Public bridleways

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**  
 Areas of public open space  
 Existing vegetation  
 Tree planting  
 Wildflower meadows  
 Natural play trail  
 Seating areas  
 SuDS basins

A	06.05.25	RC	Drainage added
Rev	Date	By	Description
<div><div>Dixons Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT 01462 743647 ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk csaenvironmental.co.uk</div></div>			
Project		Hayes Lane, Slinfold	
Title		Development Framework Plan	
Client		The Incidental Land Company Limited	
Scale	1:1250 @ A3	Drawn	RC
Date	April 2025	Checked	RR
Drawing No.	CSA/5675/110	Rev	A



1. Residential Landscaping

A variety of planting across the Site will achieve a high quality landscape design and help to integrate the new development into the existing landscape framework. The proposed planting will reflect the character of the area and provide an attractive place to live, with the native species introduced within the areas of open space and to strengthen the Site boundaries. Proposed planting will be easily maintained and complement the setting of the new residential development. The proposed planting will include a high proportion of native species and flowering non-native species of known benefits to wildlife. The palette of species will create a vibrant character to the development, helping to integrate it into the existing landscape.

Below is a suggested list for the soft landscaping:

Street Tree Planting (Residential Area)

Acer compostre 'Elsrijk'  
Crataegus laevigoto 'Paul Scarlet'  
Pyrus calleryona 'Chanticleer'

Field Maple 'Elsrijk'  
Hawthorn 'Paul Searle'  
Ornamental Pear

Hedge Planting

Carpinus betulus  
Escallonia 'Apple Blossom'  
Fagus sylvatica

Hornbeam  
Escallonia  
Common Beech

Shrubs

Choisya ternata 'Sundance'  
Hebe 'Midsummer Beauty'  
Lavandula angustifolia 'Hidcote'  
Mahonia media 'Winter Sun'

Mexican Orange  
Shrubby Veronica  
English Lavender 'Hidcote'  
Oregon Grape 'Winter Sun'

Herbaceous

Geranium macrorrtizum 'White Ness'  
Rudbeckia fulgida 'Goldsturm'  
Verbena bonariensis  
Stachys byzantina

Cranesbill 'White-Ness'  
Coneflower 'Goldsturm'  
Argentinian Vervain  
Lamb's Ear

Augmentation of Existing Planting

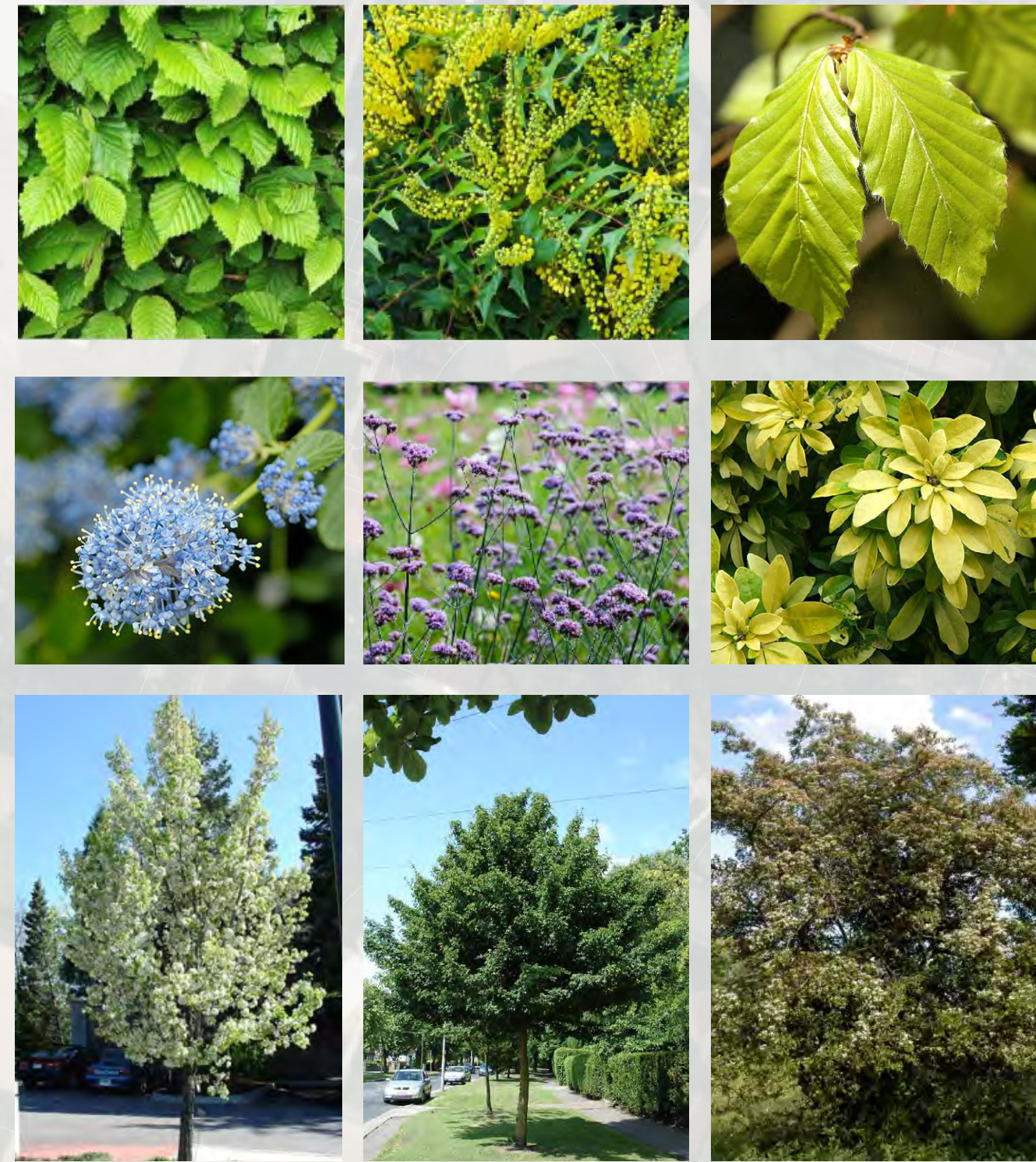
Quercus robur  
Fagus sylvatica  
Crataegus monogyna  
Corylus avellana

English Oak  
Common Beech  
Common Hawthorn  
Common Hazel  
Hornbeam  
Grey Willow  
Field Maple

Native Thicket:

Ilex aquifolium  
Crataegus monogyna  
Prunus spinosa  
Cornus sanguinea  
Rosa canina  
Sambucus nigra  
Viburnum lantana

Common Holly  
Common Hawthorn  
Blackthorn  
Common Dogwood  
Dog rose  
Common Elder  
Wayfaring tree



2. Play and Recreation Strategy

The play strategy will comprise of natural play areas located within the open space to the east and south of the new residential development where it will be overlooked by the new homes. The play strategy will focus on play features such as boulders, logs and timber play trim trail equipment reflecting the edge of settlement location. Seating / picnic areas will be provided in the south and east of the Site.



3. Sustainable Drainage Features

A drainage basin will be included within proposed the Public Open Space and designed to form an integral element of the landscaping. The basin and surrounds will be sown with a native grassland/ flora mix, providing seasonal interest and wild-life habitat.



4. Public Open Spaces and Recreational Routes

A primary route of new recreational footpath will provide safe routes linking the new open spaces and connecting to the surrounding public rights of way, with seating provided at key intervals. The recreational routes will also include a new cycleway and trim trails connecting to Hayes Lane, further enhancing sustainable travel options and enhancing play experiences for the younger population.



5. Landscape Framework

The Site is bound by existing mature trees and hedgerows to its boundaries, which provide a high degree of containment. The vast majority of these remain and the new homes will be orientated to overlook the Site boundaries. Existing young oak trees and scrub will be retained where possible within the open space to the south and east of the Site. New native tree planting will be undertaken within the open spaces. Other landscape enhancements will include improved management of the existing grassland to increase species diversity and floral interest, new scrub / thicket planting and damp grassland creation. Areas of shorter mown grass will be included at the edge of the development to encourage active games/ recreation.



LEGEND

- Site boundary
- Vehicle access
- Shared surface
- Footpaths
- Existing woodland
- Thicket planting
- Wildflower meadow
- Public Open Space
- Picnic spaces
- Front private gardens
- Rear private gardens
- Native hedge
- Ornamental hedge
- Ornamental planting
- Proposed trees
- Street trees
- SuDs Basin
- Wet thicket planting
- Natural play areas
- Short mown path
- Existing PRoW
- Diverted PRoW
- Existing Bridleway

DRAFT

Rev	Date	By	Description
-	-/-/-	-	-
Drawing Status			
FOR PLANNING			
CSA environmental			
Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT			
01462 743647 ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk csaenvironmental.co.uk			
Project Land off Hayes Lanes, Slinfold			
Title Illustrative Landscape Strategy Plan			
Client The Incidental Land Company			
Scale	NTS	Drawn	ZO
Date	August 2025	Checked	CA/BS
Drawing No.	CSA/5675/118	Rev	-

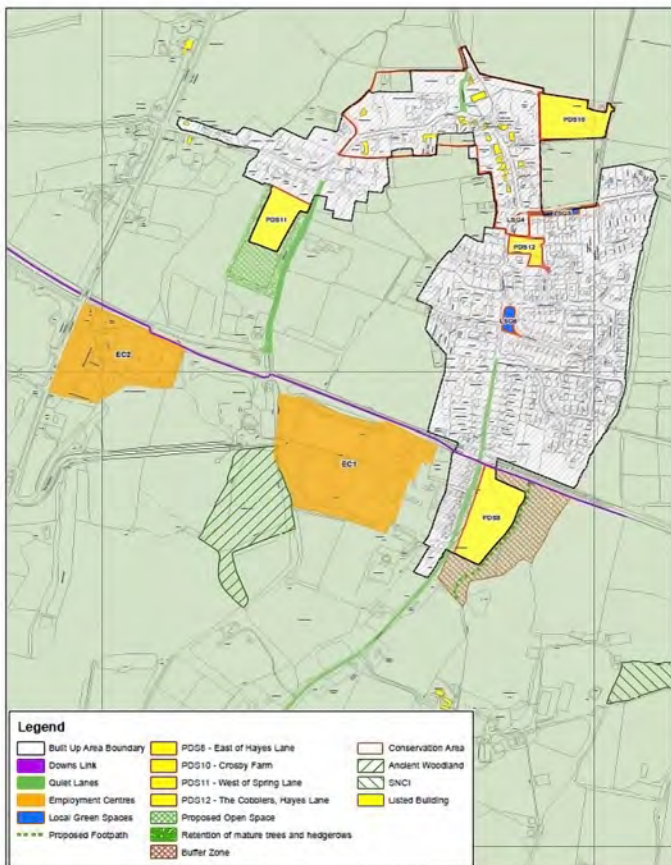


## **Appendix G**

### Slinfold Neighbourhood Plan Policies Map



# 10. POLICES MAP



## **Appendix H**

### Methodology for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## METHODOLOGY FOR LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- M1 In landscape and visual impact assessment, a distinction is normally drawn between **landscape/townscape effects** (i.e. effects on the character or quality of the landscape (or townscape), irrespective of whether there are any views of the landscape, or viewers to see them) and **visual effects** (i.e. effects on people's views of the landscape, principally from public rights of way and areas with public access, but also private views from residential properties). Thus, a development may have extensive landscape effects but few visual effects if, for example, there are no properties or public viewpoints nearby. Or alternatively, few landscape effects but substantial visual effects if, for example, the landscape is already degraded or the development is not out of character with it, but can clearly be seen from many residential properties and/or public areas.
- M2 The assessment of landscape & visual effects is less amenable to scientific or statistical analysis than some environmental topics and inherently contains an element of subjectivity. However, the assessment should still be undertaken in a logical, consistent and rigorous manner, based on experience and judgement, and any conclusions should be able to demonstrate a clear rationale. To this end, various guidelines have been published, the most relevant of which, for assessments of the effects of a development, rather than of the character or quality of the landscape itself, form the basis of the assessment and are as follows:
- 'Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment', produced jointly by the Institute of Environmental Assessment and the Landscape Institute (GLVIA 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 2013); and
  - 'An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment', October 2014 (Christine Tudor, Natural England) to which reference is also made. This stresses the need for a holistic assessment of landscape character, including physical, biological and social factors.
  - 'Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations', Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 02/21
  - 'Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition (GLVIA3)', Landscape Institutes Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01 (August 2024)

### LANDSCAPE/TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS

- M3 Landscape/townscape quality is a subjective judgement based on the condition and characteristics of a landscape/townscape. It will often be informed by national, regional or local designations made upon it in respect of its quality e.g. National Landscapes (formerly AONBs). Sensitivity relates to the inherent value placed on a landscape / townscape and the ability of that landscape/townscape to accommodate change (i.e. landscape susceptibility).
- M4 GLVIA defines susceptibility to change as *'the ability of the landscape receptor (whether 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 planning policies and strategies.'*



Landscape susceptibility can vary with:

- (i) *existing land uses;*
- (ii) *the pattern and scale of the landscape;*
- (iii) *visual enclosure/openness of views, and distribution of visual receptors;*
- (iv) *relationship to neighbouring settlement;*
- (v) *the scope for mitigation, which would be in character with the existing landscape; and*
- (vi) *the condition and value placed on the landscape.*

- M5 The concept of landscape/townscape value is considered in order to avoid consideration only of how scenically attractive an area may be, and thus to avoid undervaluing areas of strong character but little scenic beauty. In the process of making this assessment, the following factors, among others, are considered with relevance to the site in question: landscape quality (condition), scenic quality, rarity, representativeness, conservation interest, recreation value, perceptual aspects and associations.
- M6 Nationally valued landscapes are recognised by designation, such as National Parks and National Landscapes (formerly AONBs) which have particular planning policies applied to them. Nationally valued townscapes include areas identified as World Heritage Sites. Paragraph 187 of the current NPPF outlines that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes ‘...in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan’.
- M7 For the purpose of our assessment, landscape/townscape quality, value and susceptibility are assessed using the criteria in Tables LE1 and LE2. Assessing landscape sensitivity to a particular type of development is made by combining judgements on landscape value and susceptibility to the type of development proposed. The different levels of landscape sensitivity are defined in Table LS1 below.

Table LS1: Landscape / Townscape Sensitivity	
<b>Very High</b>	A landscape/townscape with a very low ability to accommodate change such as a nationally designated landscape or World Heritage Site.
<b>High</b>	A landscape/townscape with limited ability to accommodate change because such change may lead to some loss of valuable features or elements. Development of the type proposed could potentially be discordant with the character of the landscape/townscape.
<b>Medium</b>	A landscape/townscape with reasonable ability to accommodate change. Change may lead to a limited loss of some features or characteristics. Development of the type proposed would not be discordant with the character of the landscape/ townscape.
<b>Low</b>	A landscape/townscape with good ability to accommodate change. Change would not lead to a significant loss of features or characteristics and there would be no significant loss of character or quality. Development of the type proposed would not be discordant with the landscape/ townscape in which it is set and may result in a beneficial change.

- M8 There is a strong inter-relationship between landscape/townscape quality, value and susceptibility as high quality/value landscapes/townscapes usually have a low ability to accommodate change. Typically, landscapes/townscapes which carry a quality designation, and which are otherwise attractive or unspoilt will in general be more sensitive, while those which are less attractive or already affected by significant visual detractors and disturbance will be generally less sensitive. However, to avoid making this process overly formulaic, the assessment of landscape / townscape sensitivity includes a degree of professional judgement and where necessary this is explained in the narrative text within the report.
- M9 The magnitude of change is the size / scale, extent and duration of change to a landscape arising from the proposed development and was assessed using the criteria in Table LE3.
- M10 The size / scale of change relates to the loss or introduction of landscape elements resulting from the proposed change. This is particularly relevant where proposals will impact on key landscape components which contribute to local landscape character. The geographic extent is the overall area in which the landscape effects will be felt and will vary depending on the nature of the proposals. For instance, effects could be experienced at the site level, its immediate setting, at a character area level, or could impact on several landscape character areas. Duration is the expected time frame during which effects will be experienced. In some instances, such as wind / solar farms which have a limited life span, effects may be reversible as once the development is decommissioned the land can be restored.
- M11 Landscape/townscape effects are assessed in terms of the interaction between the magnitude of the change brought about by the development and the quality, value & susceptibility of the landscape resource affected (using the criteria set out in Table LE4). The landscape/townscape effects can be either beneficial, adverse or neutral. Landscape effects can be direct (i.e. impact on physical features, e.g. landform, vegetation, watercourses etc.), or indirect (i.e. impact on landscape character as a result of the introduction of new elements within the landscape or a significant increase in site traffic movement). Direct visual effects result from changes to existing views.
- M12 In this way, landscapes/townscapes of the highest sensitivity, when subjected to a high magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to give rise to 'substantial' landscape/townscape effects which can be either adverse or beneficial. Conversely, landscapes of low sensitivity, when subjected to a low magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to give rise to only 'slight' or neutral landscape effects. Beneficial landscape effects may arise from such things as the creation of new landscape features, changes to management practices and improved public access. For the purpose of this assessment the landscape/townscape effects have been judged at completion of the development and in year 15. This approach acknowledges that landscape/townscape effects can reduce as new planting/mitigation measures become established and achieve their intended objectives.

#### **VISUAL EFFECTS**

- M13 Visual effects are concerned with people's views of the landscape/townscape and the change that will occur. Like landscape effects, viewers or receptors are categorised by their sensitivity. For example, views from private dwellings are generally of a higher sensitivity than those from places of work.
- M14 In describing the content of a view the following terms are used:
- No view - no views of the development;

- Glimpse - a fleeting or distant view of the development, often in the context of wider views of the landscape;
  - Partial - a clear view of part of the development only;
  - Filtered - views to the development which are partially screened, usually by intervening vegetation - the degree of filtering may change with the seasons;
  - Open - a clear view to the development.
- M15 The sensitivity of the receptor varies according to its susceptibility to a particular type of change, and the value placed on it (e.g. greater value will be attached to a view from a recognised beauty spot, or views towards a designated heritage asset). As set out in GLVIA, paragraph 6.32, the susceptibility of visual receptors to changes in views / visual amenity is mainly a function of:
- *'The occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and*
  - *The extent to which their attention or interest is focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at particular locations.'*
- M16 Visual sensitivity was assessed using the criteria in Table VE1 by combining judgements on the value of the views and their susceptibility to change.
- M17 The magnitude of change is the degree in which the view(s) may be altered as a result of the proposed development and will generally decrease with distance from its source, until a point is reached where there is no discernible change. It takes into account the scale and extent of change in the view and the contrast between the existing landscape / townscape and the proposed development. The magnitude of change in regard to the views was assessed using the criteria in Table VE2.
- M18 Visual effects were then assessed in terms of the interaction between the magnitude of the change brought about by the development and also the sensitivity of the visual receptor affected.
- M19 As with landscape effects, a high sensitivity receptor, when subjected to a high magnitude of change from the proposed development, is likely to experience 'substantial' visual effects which can be either adverse or beneficial. Conversely, receptors of low sensitivity, when subjected to a slight magnitude of change from the proposed development, are likely to experience only 'slight' or neutral visual effects, which can be either beneficial or adverse.
- M20 Unless specific slab levels of buildings have been specified, the assessment has assumed that slab levels will be within 750mm of existing ground level.

#### **MITIGATION AND RESIDUAL EFFECTS**

- M21 Mitigation measures are described as those measures, including any process or activity, designed to avoid, reduce and compensate for adverse landscape and/or visual effects resulting from the proposed development.
- M22 In situations where proposed mitigation measures are likely to change over time, as with planting to screen a development, it is important to make a distinction between any likely effects that will arise in the short-term and those that will occur in the long-term or 'residual effects' once mitigation measures have established. In this assessment, the visual effects of the development have been considered at completion of the entire project and at 15 years thereafter.
- M23 Mitigation measures can have a residual, positive impact on the effects arising from a development, whereas the short-term impact may be adverse.

## ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

- M24 The assessment concisely considers and describes the main landscape/townscape and visual effects resulting from the proposed development. The narrative text demonstrates the reasoning behind judgements concerning the landscape and visual effects of the proposals. Where appropriate, the text is supported by tables which summarise the sensitivity of the views/landscape/townscape, the magnitude of change and describe any resulting effects.

## CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- M25 Cumulative effects are *'the additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together.'*
- M26 In carrying out landscape assessment it is for the author to form a judgement on whether or not it is necessary to consider any planned developments and to form a judgement on how these could potentially affect a project.

## ZONE OF THEORETICAL VISIBILITY (ZTV)

- M27 A ZTV map can help to determine the potential visibility of the site and identify those locations where development at the site is likely to be most visible from the surrounding area. Where a ZTV is considered appropriate for a proposed development the following methodology is used.
- M28 The process is in two stages, and for each, a digital terrain model ('DTM') using Key TERRA-FIRMA computer software is produced and mapped onto an OS map. The DTM is based on Ordnance Survey Landform Profile tiles, providing a digital record of existing landform across the UK, based on a 10 metre grid. There is the potential for minor discrepancies between the DTM and the actual landform where there are topographic features that are too small to be picked up by the 10 metre grid. A judgement will be made to determine the extent of the study area based on the specific site and the nature of the proposed change, and the reasons for the choice will be set out in the report. The study area will be determined by local topography but is typically set at 7.5km.
- M29 Different heights are then assigned to significant features, primarily buildings and woodland, thus producing the first stage of an 'existing' ZTV illustrating the current situation of the site and surrounding area. This data is derived from OS Open Map Data, and verified during the fieldwork, with any significant discrepancies in the data being noted and the map adjusted accordingly. Fieldwork is confined to accessible parts of the site, public rights of way, the highway network and other publicly accessible areas.
- M30 The second stage is to produce a 'proposed' ZTV with the same base as the 'existing' ZTV. The proposed development is introduced into the model as either a representative spot height, or a series of heights, and a viewer height of 1.7m is used. Illustrating the visual envelope of the proposed development within the specific site.
- M31 The model is based on available data and fieldwork and therefore may not take into account all development or woodland throughout the study area, nor the effect of smaller scale planting or hedgerows. It also does not take into account areas of recent or continuous topographic change from, for instance, mining operations.

## VISUALISATION TYPE METHODOLOGY

- M32 The photographs and visualisations within this report have been prepared in general conformance with the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 06/19. The 'types', as set out within the Guidance, comprise the following:
- Type 1 - annotated viewpoint photographs;
  - Type 2 - 3D wireline / model;
  - Type 3 - photomontage / photowire;
  - Type 4 - photomontage / photowire (survey / scale verifiable).
- M33 Photographs were taken with a digital camera with a lens that approximates to 50mm, to give a similar depth of view to the human eye. In some cases images have been joined together to form a panorama. The prevailing weather and atmospheric conditions, and any effects on visibility are noted. Images are displayed at the most appropriate size, taking into account the published guidance, legibility at A3 paper size, and context (which is often shown for illustrative purposes only), and allows for enlarged scale printing if required.
- M34 The Guidance Note advocates a proportionate and reasonable approach, which includes professional judgement, in order to aid informed decision making.
- M35 The determination of the suitable Visualisation Type to aid in illustrating the effects of the scheme, has been determined by a range of factors as set out below, including the timing of the project, the technical expertise, and costs involved.
- M36 Where it is deemed suitable or necessary to utilise the Visualisation Types set out within the Guidance Note, the table below has been used to determine which Visualisation Type is most appropriate to the project, unless otherwise specified within the report.
- M37 The table below (based on Table 1 within the Guidance Note) sets out the intended purpose and user of the report, and the Likely Level of Effect. The Likely Level of Effect is based on Tables LE4 and VE3 in this methodology, and takes into consideration the type and nature of the proposed development, as well as the sensitivity of the host environment and key visual receptors. The Likely Level of Effect is based on an initial consideration of the landscape and visual effects of the project as a whole, and the subsequent assessment may conclude a lesser or higher level of overall effect, once completed. Table VMT also provides an indication as to the appropriate Visualisation Type, noting that it is not a fixed interpretation, and that professional judgement should always be applied. In certain instances, where there is neighbouring development which is of a similar scale to that of the proposed development, which provides a point of reference, it is not always considered necessary to produce photowire or photomontage visualisations.
- M38 Additional photographs (which do not conform to any Type) may be included to illustrate the character of the landscape/townscape, or to illustrate relevant characteristics, for example the degree and nature of intervening vegetation, or reciprocal views from residential properties.



Table VTM		VISUALISATION TYPE METHODOLOGY				
User, Purpose, and Likely Level of Effect		Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	
	A	Evidence submitted to most planning applications for EIA development accompanied by Landscape and Visual ES Chapters.				
		Neutral	Negligible	Slight	Moderate	Substantial
	B	Planning applications for most non-EIA development accompanied by LVIA/LVA, where there are potential concerns about landscape and visual effects and effective mitigation may be required. Some Landscape and Visual ES Chapters.				
		Neutral	Negligible	Slight	Moderate	Substantial
	C	Planning applications where the character and appearance of the development is a material consideration, but where a LVIA/LVA may not be required.				
		Neutral/Negligible/Slight		Moderate	Substantial	
	D	To inform the iterative process of assessment and design with client, and/or pre-application consultations with the competent authority.				
		Neutral/Negligible/Slight/Moderate		Substantial		

Table LE 1

## LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE QUALITY AND VALUE

	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Description of Landscape/Townscape Quality and Value	<p><b>Landscape Quality:</b> Intact and very attractive landscape which may be nationally recognised/designated for its scenic beauty. e.g. National Park, National Landscapes or World Heritage Site.</p> <p><b>Townscape Quality:</b> A townscape of very high quality which is unique in its character, and recognised nationally/internationally, e.g. World Heritage Site</p> <p><b>Value:</b> Very high quality landscape or townscape with Statutory Designation for landscape/townscape quality/ value, e.g. National Park, World Heritage Site, Registered Park or Garden. Contains rare elements or significant cultural/historical associations.</p>	<p><b>Landscape Quality:</b> A landscape, usually combining varied topography, historic features and few visual detractors. A landscape known and cherished by many people from across the region. e.g. County Landscape Site such as a Special Landscape Area.</p> <p><b>Townscape Quality:</b> A well designed townscape of high quality with a locally recognised and distinctive character e.g. Conservation Area</p> <p><b>Value:</b> High quality landscape/townscape or lower quality landscape with un-fettered public access, (e.g. commons, public park) or with strong cultural associations. May have important views out to landmarks/designated landscapes and few detracting features. May possess perceptual qualities of tranquility or wildness.</p>	<p><b>Landscape Quality:</b> Typically non-designated landscape area, generally pleasant but with no distinctive features, often displaying relatively ordinary characteristics. May have detracting features.</p> <p><b>Townscape Quality:</b> A typical, pleasant townscape with a coherent urban form but with no distinguishing features or designation for quality.</p> <p><b>Value:</b> An ordinary landscape/townscape of local value which may have some detracting features. Typically no statutory designations for landscape/townscape quality. A landscape which may have limited public access and/ or have pleasant views out, or be visible in public views.</p>	<p><b>Landscape / Townscape Quality:</b> Unattractive or degraded landscape/townscape, affected by numerous detracting elements e.g. industrial areas, infrastructure routes and un-restored mineral extractions.</p> <p><b>Value:</b> Landscape/townscape generally of lower quality. A landscape with limited public access, typically no designations or recognised cultural significance. Limited public views.</p>

Table LE 2

## LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY

	Very High	High	Medium	Low
Description of Susceptibility	<p>Highly distinctive landscape, / townscape with strong character generally in excellent condition, exhibiting a number of positive attributes and no or few detracting elements. Development would be entirely at odds with the scale, pattern and character of the landscape / townscape. A landscape with little ability to accommodate change of the type proposed without significant impacts on landscape / townscape character and on key characteristics and / or aesthetic or perceptual aspects of the character area. Little or no scope for mitigation.</p>	<p>Distinctive landscape / townscape with few detracting features. Landscape elements in good condition and make a positive contribution to local character. Landscape with low potential to accommodate change of the type proposed without loss or alteration of key landscape / townscape elements or adverse change to landscape / townscape character. Limited scope for mitigation.</p>	<p>Relatively commonplace landscape /townscape typically in moderate condition. Proposals would be largely compatible with the scale, pattern and character of the landscape / townscape. Proposals could be absorbed with limited impact on key landscape features, and perceptual and aesthetic qualities. Scope to provide landscape mitigation / enhancements.</p>	<p>Landscape / townscape of mixed character and / or with some detracting and intrusive elements. Landscape features pose little constraint and / or are capable of replacement. Proposals would be well related to the scale, pattern and character of the local landscape / townscape. Good potential for landscape mitigation and enhancements which would contribute to landscape / townscape character.</p>

Table LE 3 LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE

	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Neutral
Description of the Change predicted	Total loss of or significant impact on key characteristics, features or elements	Partial loss of or impact on key characteristics, features or elements	Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements	Very minor loss or alteration to one or more key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements	No loss or alteration of key landscape/ townscape characteristics, features or elements

Table LE 4 LANDSCAPE / TOWNSCAPE EFFECTS

	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Neutral
Description of the Effect	<p>The proposals will alter the landscape/ townscape in that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• will result in substantial change in the character, landform, scale and pattern of the landscape/townscape;</li><li>• are visually intrusive and would disrupt important views;</li><li>• are likely to impact on the integrity of a range of characteristic features and elements and their setting;</li><li>• will impact a high quality or highly vulnerable landscape;</li><li>• cannot be adequately mitigated.</li></ul>	<p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• noticeably change the character, scale and pattern of the landscape/ townscape;</li><li>• may have some impacts on a landscape/ townscape of recognised quality or on vulnerable and important characteristic features or elements.</li><li>• are a noticable element in key views;</li><li>• not possible to fully mitigate.</li></ul>	<p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• do not quite fit the landform and scale of the landscape/townscape and will result in relatively minor changes to existing landscape character;</li><li>• will impact on certain views into and across the area;</li><li>• mitigation will reduce the impact of the proposals but some minor residual effects will remain.</li></ul>	<p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape/townscape;</li><li>• development may occupy only a relatively small part of the Site;</li><li>• maintain the majority of landscape features;</li><li>• incorporates measures for mitigation to ensure the scheme will blend in well with the landscape/townscape and mitigates any loss of vegetation.</li></ul>	<p>The proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• change is neither better nor worse;</li><li>• maintain existing landscape/ townscape character;</li><li>• maintain the majority of landscape features;</li><li>• incorporates measures for mitigation to ensure the scheme will blend in well with the landscape/townscape and mitigates any loss of vegetation.</li></ul>

**Footnote:**

1. Each level (other than neutral) of change identified can be either regarded as 'beneficial' or 'adverse'. The above table relates to adverse landscape effects, however where proposals complement or enhance landscape character, these will have a comparable range of beneficial landscape effects.

Table VE 1

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

		High	Medium	Low
Description of the Receptor		<p>Residential properties with predominantly open views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from ground and first floors and from two or more windows of rooms mainly in use during the day.</p> <p>Users of Public Rights of Way in sensitive or generally unspoilt areas.</p> <p>Predominantly non-motorised users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside.</p> <p>Views from within an National Landscape, National Park, World Heritage Site or Conservation Area and views for visitors to recognised viewpoints or beauty spots.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with predominantly open views where the purpose of that recreation is enjoyment of the countryside - e.g. Country Parks, National Trust or other access land etc.</p>		
			<p>Residential properties with partial views from windows, garden or curtilage. Views will normally be from first floor windows only, or an oblique view from one ground floor window, or may be partially obscured by garden or other intervening vegetation.</p> <p>Users of Public Rights of Way in less sensitive areas or where there are significant existing intrusive features.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views or where the purpose of that recreation is incidental to the view e.g. sports fields.</p> <p>Schools and other institutional buildings, and their outdoor areas.</p> <p>Users of minor or unclassified roads in the countryside, whether motorised or not.</p>	
				<p>People in their place of work.</p> <p>Users of main roads or passengers in public transport on main routes.</p> <p>Users of outdoor recreational facilities with restricted views and where the purpose of that recreation is unrelated to the view e.g. go-karting track.</p>

Table VE 2		VISUAL MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE				
		Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Neutral
Description of the Change predicted	Large and dominating changes which affect a substantial part of the view.					
	Clearly perceptible and noticable changes within a significant proportion of the view.					
	Small changes to existing views, either as a minor component of a wider view, or smaller changes over a larger proportion of the view(s).					
	Very minor changes over a small proportion of the view(s).					
	No discernible change to the view(s).					

Table VE 3		VISUAL EFFECTS				
		Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Neutral
Description of the Effects	The proposals would have a significant impact on a view from a receptor of medium sensitivity, or less damage (or improvement) to a view from a highly sensitive receptor, and would be an obvious or dominant element in the view.					
	The proposals would impact on a view from a medium sensitive receptor, or less harm (or improvement) to a view from a more sensitive receptor, and would be a readily discernible element in the view.					
	The proposals would have a limited effect on a view from a medium sensitive receptor, but would still be a visible element within the view, or a greater effect on a view from a receptor of lower sensitivity.					
	The proposals would result in a negligible change to the view but would still be discernible.					
	No change in the view.					

**Footnote:**

1. Each level (other than neutral) of change identified can be either regarded as 'beneficial' or 'adverse'.





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